

To Okanogan County Commissioners:

The existing Zone Code is far better for the environment than the proposed Zone Code. Therefore, the best alternative is the No Action alternative, as the proposed Zone Code will increase density beyond the capacity of groundwater for domestic use and fire fighting. Similarly, the best alternative to preserve water quality is the No Action alternative.

Agricultural lands will be better preserved under a No Action alternative than the proposed Zone Code, which allows some ag lands to be broken up for housing.

The EIS should carefully examine the County's claims of adequacy and coordination among departments in "project review and development controls". Lack of coordination among departments in the past has led to septic permits being issued without building permits, and building permits issued without an examination of the underlying land use restrictions contained in the Zone Code, especially in the flood plain.

Wild fires need to be addressed and considered in the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code. The EIS should examine an alternative that considers Zone Codes which would move to require better egress of residents and houses which are more fire resistant. This will save lives, property, and lessen the risk to first responders. Similarly, such controls may lessen erosion, landslides, and sedimentation of rivers.

The proposed Zone Code should be delayed until the Okanogan County Superior Court has ruled on the litigation challenging the Comprehensive Plan. Unless the County prevails on all counts, there is a strong possibility that the Comp Plan will be sent back to the County for revisions, and the time and resources spent on zoning and the EIS will be wasted.

The proposed Zone Code is not complete and will very likely cause moderate impact on the natural and built environments.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

Karen Bown and Eric Portmann