From: outlook_A5FDBB18678E0D1B@outlook.com
To: PDS comments
Subject: Replacement Guemes Ferry Proposal
Date: Wednesday, February 7, 2018 11:16:57 AM

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the development by BEAK Consultants of an environmental assessment on the "Replacement Guemes Ferry Proposal" (the Proposal). Among the matters that the BERK environmental assessment must consider, let me draw particular attention to two.

Guemes water issues. Guemes Island has a long and contentious history of water shortages and water disputes. Despite this, the Proposal is designed to bring many, many more people to visit and to live on Guemes Island, which will unavoidably increase the demand for water. The impact on the Island's water supply must inform decisions regarding the Proposal. Therefore the environmental assessment must carefully review this issue.

In the Proposal, the size of the proposed vessel is driven in large part by growth estimates for Skagit County. There is a great deal of information already in County files regarding Guemes water, its problems and limitations, and the projected growth of the County. These sources need to be carefully examined so that decision makers are fully informed. Will the influx of people countenanced by the Proposal exceed the capacity of Island water sources? Is the growth projection in the Proposal sustainable? Or even realizable in the first place? Is the growth projection, based on County-wide expectations, even relevant to the Guemes microcosm? What impacts does the increase in size of the County vessel portend in this important facet of Island and County life?

County decision makers must be empowered to avoid the exhaustion and ruination of the Guemes aquifer. They need to know the impacts of the Proposal on Island water supplies. Otherwise we are inviting enormous problems and failing to meet the legal requirements of SEPA.

Gentrification. The Proposal includes a property tax increase and a surcharge on all tickets for passage on the new boat. Obviously this is an additional burden on all islanders. This includes those living on limited incomes or fixed incomes, those operating businesses on the island, and those raising young families.

It is fair to say that such people contribute mightily to the sense of community, neighborliness, and civic pride shared and valued by islanders. If they were to be priced off the Island by the cost increases of the Proposal, it would have serious detrimental impacts on life on the Island.

It is not appropriate to ignore the predictable process of low- and moderate-income housing being squeezed out by the Proposal's increasing tax and transportation costs. Decision makers must be empowered to understand the impacts of their decisions on Island life and to design the Proposal to avoid undesirable outcomes. Thus the environmental assessment should provide relevant examination of the Project's impact on the Island's future. Without this, decision makers are not fully informed as to the impacts of the Proposal and SEPA's requirements are not met.

Carl Ullman

5162 West Shore Road
541 892 0410
bullman3@earthlink.net

Sent from Mail for Windows 10