From: Glen Veal
To: PDS comments
Subject: Replacement Guemes Ferry
Date: Wednesday, February 14, 2018 8:40:56 AM

To Whom It May Concern:

We can't think of anything that flies in the face of the overriding goal of the Growth Management Act l: "To encourage efficient multi-modal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with County and city comprehensive plans." The proposed 32 car ferry is approximately 50% larger than the present ferry "Guemes" and is contrary to other policies contained in the Transportation Element of the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan (SCCP).

Primarily, the policy 9A-1.3 (this number may have changed since I did the original research some years ago) states "The County supports alternatives to the passenger car as a possible means to relieve congestion." One of the very next policies states "The County supports expansion of public transportation service into unincorporated areas only with public support." Neither of these have been considered before proposing to replace the present Guemes ferry. Additionally, many other policies that suggest coordinating with SKAT to deal with traffic congestion are being ignored as a solution, and alternative, to the passenger vehicle. These polices should be acknowledged not ignored by Skagit County Board of Commissioners and the Public Works Dept.

These policies are particularly important because one of their main objectives is to reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles into our atmosphere which is clearly an environmental issue to help reduce the impacts of global warming. Although an electric ferry is one of the proposals for replacement, we have to acknowledge that the electricity is not carbon neutral since only 34% of it is from hydroelectric power the balance is from coal fired sources. If the electric ferry is not economically feasible due to its proposed 25 million dollar price tag and diesel engines are used instead, the proposed 32 car ferry planned is required to have two 1000 hp engines nearly doubling the present ferry's 530 hp engines!

I have given Ryan Walters a list of SCCP transportation policies that are relevant to the subject of replacing the present ferry with a much larger vessel so I won't attach them to this email but I hope they will be presented in the list of material submitted pertaining to this matter.

Finally, you only have to look at what has happened to the water availability here on Guemes in certain areas where seawater intrusion has occurred as a result of intensive development resulting from the increased volume of traffic and visitors to these areas after the Guemes came into service 40 years ago. It is not uncommon to see six cars at each of these seaside homes during the summer. We can only imagine this will increase with the advent of a new larger ferry!

Thank you for seeking opinions on the new large ferry proposal before proceeding any further. Having lived on the island for more than 70 years, and after marriage to Janice in 1968, we raised our two sons here. We can say that "improved" ferry service has only deteriorated our precious rural area and is rapidly contributing to the gentrification of Guemes Island.

Yours truly,

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