

To: Grays Harbor Planning Commission
Fr: Owen Shaffner, Co-Owner/Operator of Shaffner Farms
Re: Comments & Concerns Regarding Critical Areas Ordinance Draft 2

Our farm is located in the Wynooche Valley and is positioned between the Wynooche River and a small portion of Geissler Creek. Our operation consists of harvesting of hay, berries, vegetable, a pumpkin patch, and a farm stand.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THE PLANNING COMMISSION DELAY APPROVAL OF THESE REVISIONS WHICH WILL HAVE A SERIOUS IMPACT ON AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS IN GRAYS HARBOR COUNTY.

Some of our concerns are as follows:

1. Because of our location is considered a critical area, we will not be able to construct a shed to house our hay, equipment, and shop, which is in the planning stage. Our existing structures will be also restricted or threatened by the revision which would restrict the expansion of our business.
2. The inability to build a new shed will directly affect our operations significantly; this seems to be direct opposite of trying to maintain agriculture on the harbor.
3. The use of buffers will reduce my production acreage by 10%.
4. Our farm presently has our own buffers in the way of green belts.
5. Document speaks to buffer easements which **MIGHT** be used by the public. Many questions arise from this which are: 1. who is the owner of the land? 2. Who pays the taxes on land that cannot be farmed? 3. Possibility of increased vandalism; who is going to foot the bill?
6. There is language which indicated the landowner needs to contact the tribes prior to taking action on changes in the critical area. It is the county's ordinance so it their responsibility to notify the tribes. The bigger question is, why do the tribes need to be notified regarding my land?
7. All these consultants and special reports place a heavy burden on our financial position if we needed to use them. Maybe the county can provide the expertise at their expense. Another unfunded mandate.

Comments:

We are in an area that floods because a flood dam which then was converted to power generation for the City of Tacoma. It operates the dam for power and when it appears there is a flood situation the Army Corp of Engineers manages it.

Also flooding in the valley has occurred due primarily because the County replaced a 92 foot waterway bridge with a 4 ft. culvert when constructing the new bridge on Geissler Rd. The State replaced a waterway bridge with two eight foot culverts which in affect forced water over hwy. 12, causing worse flooding in the valley located north of the highway, causing homes to be lost.

Thank you, Owen Shaffner