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Commented [AH1]: Maybe?

51

52 Introduction

53 Purpose:

54 The Comprehensive Plan guides policy decisions for future actions of Okanogan County.
55 Adopted by County Commissioners, this plan presents a vision for the future, with long-range
56 goals and policies over the next 20 years.

Commented [AH2]: accepted

57 Executive statement:

58 In 2014 the Okanogan County Board of County Commissioners adopted a revised
59 Comprehensive Plan. In 2017 the Board of County Commissioners ordered a review of the
60 comprehensive plan with special attention directed to the issues raised in the appeals brought
61 against the 2014 plan.

Commented [AH3]: We should identify those issues in the plan and prove throughout that we have addressed them.

62 The Board of County Commissioners finds that over 57% of the land in Okanogan County is
63 owned by Federal and State Agencies. Over 20% of Okanogan County is within the boundaries
64 of the Colville Indian Reservation and therefore outside of the direct planning and permitting
65 authority of the County with the exception of deeded fee lands. Of the remaining less than 23%
66 of the land mass, it is estimated that 5% is not suitable for development due to topography and
67 other critical area features. The remaining land mass must provide the inventory of land
68 necessary to provide for residential, industrial, and commercial needs both in and out of the
69 incorporated cities and towns. This land also supports the agricultural and natural resource
70 based activities that are important to the local economy. The land use designations used in the
71 Comprehensive Plan must recognize these needs while avoiding incompatible uses.

72 Compliance with Washington State Statutes:

73 This Comprehensive Plan is being prepared in compliance with the Planning Enabling Act 36.70
74 RCW. "The purpose and intent of this chapter is to provide the authority for, and the
75 procedures to be followed in, guiding and regulating the physical development of a county or
76 region through correlating both public and private projects and coordinating their execution
77 with respect all subject matters utilized in developing and servicing land, all to the end of
78 assuring the highest standards of environment for living, and the operation of commerce,
79 industry, agriculture, and recreation, and assuring maximum economies and conserving the
80 highest degree of public health, safety, morals and welfare".

Commented [AH4]: accepted

81 Implementation of the Goals and Policies:

82 This plan is a policy document to guide future development of Okanogan County. To implement
83 the goals and policies of the Comprehensive plan the regulatory documents including zoning,
84 critical areas, land division codes are used to enforce-apply the policies of this plan.

Commented [AH5]: accepted

85 The goals and policies will help guide future policy decisions as new development or changes
86 occur to help maintain the rural character and lifestyle that make Okanogan County a wonderful
87 place to live, work and visit.

Commented [AH6]: accepted

88 Zoning and the Comprehensive Plan

89 The zoning regulations describe what type of land use and specific activities are permitted in
90 each designation. The zoning also provides procedures for planned developments and rezones.
91 The zoning map and regulations must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Commented [AH7]: accepted

92 Consistency between the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning

93 The comprehensive plan is a policy document to guide future development decisions. ~~Part of~~
94 ~~the review of this plan will be consistency with the county zoning.~~ This document ~~could will~~
95 inform changes to the zoning regulations to keep ~~that~~ consistency.

Commented [AH8]: accepted

96

97

98

99 Community Plans and Community Planning Areas

100 Okanogan County has several diverse areas that have an individual sense of community. It is
101 recognized that these areas ~~will may~~ benefit from a more focused planning approach. This plan
102 supports future creation and revision to sub-area plans. Community Plans currently consist of
103 the following:

- 104 • Methow Valley More Completely Planned Area
- 105 • Methow Valley More Completely Planned Area Sub Unit A

Commented [AH9]: develop a section with a process as to how to designate and implement the community planning areas.

Commented [AH10]: accepted

106

107 Vision Statement:

108 Okanogan County, with pride in our Native American heritage, and pioneer and mining history,
109 looks forward to bringing up another generation informed by tradition. We share a love of a
110 rural lifestyle surrounded by natural beauty, open spaces, thriving fish and wildlife populations,
111 abundant recreational opportunities and nourished by clean air, clean water and a healthy
112 environment.

113 Okanogan County is vast and beautiful. The diverse and rugged natural environment has
114 fostered a range of historic uses and distinct communities. This plan supports the opportunity
115 for the residents of geographically and culturally distinct areas to develop sub-area plans that
116 reflect their community values.

117 Okanogan County recognizes that wise stewardship of natural resources is fundamental to our
118 rural economy. Forests in the highlands provide timber, grazing for our cattle industry and
119 recreational opportunities. Rich valley soils support our long standing agricultural heritage.
120 Clean water provides the lifeblood of agriculture in our orchards, vineyards, fields and verdant
121 gardens.

122 Our vision for the future involves the following guiding principles:

- 123 • Sustaining agriculture, forestry, tourism and commerce that provides a wide range of
124 family-supporting employment opportunities.
- 125 • Honoring and supporting the many traditional uses and lifestyles while accommodating
126 orderly development.
- 127 • A broad range of housing options, supported by efficient public services.
- 128 • Wise and efficient use of water, to protect senior water rights and ecosystems and allow
129 for sustainable development.
- 130 • Recognize distinct communities in Okanogan County through sub-area plans.

Commented [AH11]: accepted again

131

132

133 Five Year Review

134 The Board of County Commissioners shall order the review of the Comprehensive Plan and
135 Comprehensive Land Use Designation Map five years from the date of the first approval and
136 every five years thereafter. The Board of County Commissioners will adopt by resolution a
137 Scope of Work describing the process for the five year review.

138 Nothing in this section shall be construed to require any future Board of County Commissioners
139 to review and revise every section of the Comprehensive Plan. The level and areas of review will
140 be identified in the Scope of Work adopted by the Board of County Commissioners.

141 Comprehensive Plan Objectives

142 • The revised Okanogan County Comprehensive Plan will be consistent with the
143 Vision Statement approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

144 • The County will develop and implement a public involvement strategy to ensure
145 the opportunity for early and continuous citizen participation throughout the
146 Comprehensive Plan update process.

147 • The County will actively consult the Colville Confederated Tribes as a recognized
148 tribe with reservation land within the boundaries of the county when updating the County
149 Comprehensive Plan. The County will establish a protocol for integrating the updated

150 Plan with the Comprehensive Plan prepared by the Tribes for the Colville Reservation
151 and Trust Lands as is necessary and appropriate.

152 • Okanogan County shall periodically review the Critical Areas Ordinance,
153 Shorelines Master Program, Flood Management Programs, and Hazard Mitigation Plan
154 as required by state law and/or at the discretion of the Board of County Commissioners
155 to ensure compliance with the land use policies contained in this Comprehensive Plan.

156 • In partnership with the incorporated cities and towns, the County will establish
157 City Expansion Areas that will provide adequate land to meet projected needs of the city
158 or town.

159 • It is the intent of Okanogan County to adopt a Comprehensive Plan that contains
160 the required elements in accordance with RCW 36.70 Planning Enabling Act. The
161 Comprehensive Plan will be used as a tool to protect the customs, cultures, and
162 economic stability of Okanogan County and as a guide to promote consistency amongst
163 other adopted regulation whether mandated or elective.

164 • It is the expectation of Okanogan County that when State, Federal, or Regional
165 agencies prepare, implement, and update plans and regulations, that they are consistent
166 with the County's Comprehensive Plan and adopted regulation.

167 Background/Population Projections

168 Demographics:

169 Okanogan County is located in North Central Washington, bordered on the north by British
170 Columbia, Canada, the Columbia River to the south, the Cascade Mountains to the west, and
171 Ferry County to the east. The County covers 5,281 square miles, making it the largest county in
172 Washington. Only 30% of the land within the county is in private ownership due to the amount
173 of state and federal land. The Colville Indian Reservation, located in the southeast corner of the
174 county, occupies approximately 700,000 acres of Okanogan County and is an integral part of the
175 heritage of the county.

176 Agriculture and forestry are the major economic generators for the county and are the
177 foundation for the region, which employs approximately 5,756 people. Government, retail
178 trade, services, tribal enterprises, and manufacturing are a few of the major employers within
179 the county. Omak, the regional center for services and trade, is experiencing a great deal of
180 growth. There is also increasing commercial development pressure in the area between the
181 Canadian border and Oroville. The City of Coulee Dam is the location of Grand Coulee Dam, one
182 of the largest concrete structures in the world, and largest electricity producer in the United
183 States. The Dam also has a visitors center with guided tours, background movies, and extensive
184 information of the region. The Methow Valley, located in the western portion of the county, is
185 quickly becoming a destination for outdoor lovers and enthusiasts and includes hundreds of

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square miles of cross-country ski trails, snowmobile parks, mountain biking, fishing, camping, hiking, and offers many tourist accommodations and weekend get-a-ways, and a possible four seasons destination resort.

Commented [AH14]: Add age demographics, population stats for tribe and large employer of the county,

Commented [AH15]: Work on language to summarize the many benefits of the area and descriptions.

Population: Historic and Projected

The current population according to U.S. Census in 2018 was 42,132.

Historic Population:

The tables and graphs below show the historic population trend from 1960 to 2000.

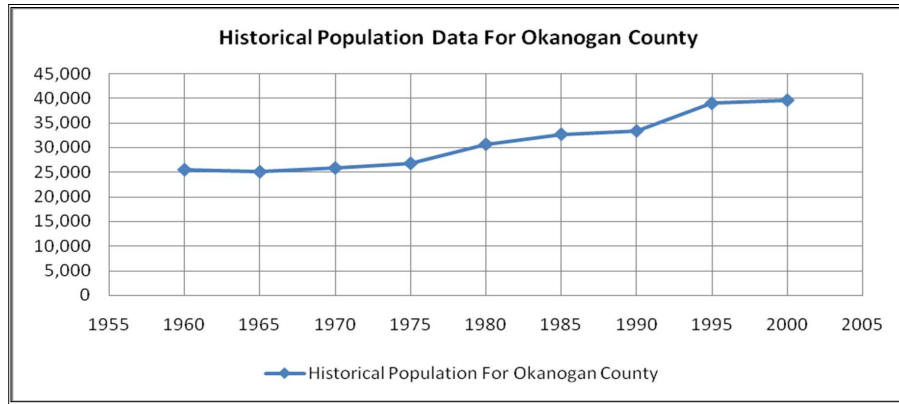
Table 1: HISTORICAL POPULATION OF OKANOGAN COMPARED TO WASHINGTON									
MEDIUM SERIES: HISTORY 1960 TO 2000									
	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000
State	2,853,214	3,065,000	3,413,250	3,567,890	4,132,353	4,415,785	4,866,663	5,407,004	5,894,121
Okanogan	25,520	25,100	25,867	26,800	30,663	32,687	33,350	38,943	39,564

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Note: Census totals may differ slightly from other publications due to use of corrected or uncorrected counts.

Unrounded numbers not meant to imply accuracy.

OFM/Forecasting | October 2007

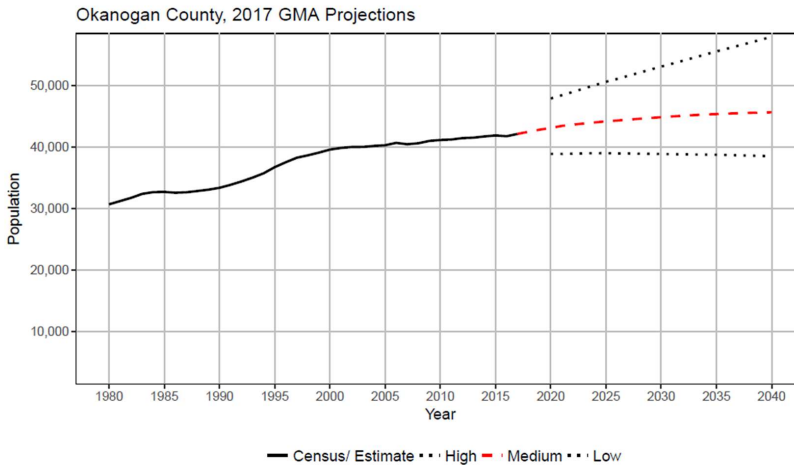


Growth Management Population Forecast:

Table 2:							
<u>Projections of the Total Resident Population for Growth Management</u>							
<u>2017 GMA Projections Medium Series: 2010 to 2040</u>							
	<u>Census</u>	<u>Estimate</u>	<u>Projections</u>				
	<u>2010</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2030</u>	<u>2035</u>	<u>2040</u>
<u>State</u>	<u>6,724,540</u>	<u>7,310,300</u>	<u>7,638,415</u>	<u>8,085,043</u>	<u>8,503,178</u>	<u>8,894,306</u>	<u>9,242,022</u>
<u>Okanogan</u>	<u>41,120</u>	<u>42,110</u>	<u>43,084</u>	<u>44,149</u>	<u>44,824</u>	<u>45,335</u>	<u>45,621</u>
<u>OFM/Forecasting and Research December 2017</u>							

Commented [AH16]: Check to see if this is up to date

Figure 2: 2017 GMA population Projections



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Natural Environment and Resources Element:

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Introduction:

Okanogan County has several distinct communities due to a beautiful diverse and rugged landscape, plentiful natural resources and opportunities for outdoor recreation. The purpose of this plan is to promote resource compatible development by including goals and policies to protect and enhance the quality of the natural environment and the stewardship of the land for current and future generations while balancing the interest of property owners.

Commented [AH18]: Add something regarding the amazing wildlife diversity this County has.

Critical Areas:

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The legislature of the state of Washington has in Chapter 36.70A RCW, mandated each county to designate critical areas and adopt development regulations that protect these areas pursuant

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to chapter 36.70A.170 RCW. The protection measures ~~must~~shall be consistent with this Comprehensive Plan adopted pursuant to chapter 36.70 RCW.

“Critical Areas” include the following:

Wetlands:

“Wetlands” are areas that are inundated or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas. Wetlands do not include those artificial wetlands intentionally created from nonwetland sites, grass-lined swales, canals, detention facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, farm ponds, and landscape amenities, or those wetlands created after July 1, 1990, that were unintentionally created as a result of the construction of a road, street, or highway. However, wetlands may include those artificial wetlands intentionally created from nonwetland areas to mitigate conversion of wetlands, if permitted by the county or city.

Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas:

“Critical aquifer recharge areas” are areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water, including areas where an aquifer that is a source of drinking water is vulnerable to contamination that would affect the potability of the water, or is susceptible to reduced recharge.

Frequently Flooded Areas:

“Frequently flooded areas” are lands in the flood plain subject to at least a one percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year, or within areas subject to flooding due to high groundwater. These areas include, but are not limited to, streams, rivers, lakes, coastal areas, wetlands, and areas where high groundwater forms ponds on the ground surface.

Fish and Wildlife Conservation Areas:

“Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas” are areas that serve a critical role in sustaining needed habitats and species for the functional integrity of the ecosystem, and which, if altered, may reduce the likelihood that the species will persist over the long term. These areas may include, but are not limited to, rare or vulnerable ecological systems, communities, and habitat or habitat elements including seasonal ranges, breeding habitat, winter range, and movement

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261 corridors, and areas with high relative population density or species richness. Counties and cities
262 may also designate locally important habitats and species.

Commented [AH20]: insert citation footnote for all of the definitions

Commented [AH21]: Describe those locally important species and ranges here such as mule deer migration patterns habitat and studies that have been done over the years to capture the locally important species. Check critical areas GMA document that is from the 90's.

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264 **Geologically Hazardous Areas:**

265 "Geologically hazardous areas" are areas that because of their susceptibility to erosion, sliding,
266 earthquake, or other geological events, are not suited to siting commercial, residential, or
267 industrial development consistent with public health or safety concerns. Projects will need
268 additional engineering requirements and possibly studies.

269 **Shoreline Management Act:**

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270 The Shoreline Management Act RCW 90.58 requires Okanogan County to develop and
271 implement our Shoreline Master Program. The shoreline master program governs lakes over 20
272 acres and streams and rivers with more than 20 cfs mean annual flow. Upland shorelands
273 extend 200 feet from the ordinary high water mark or the floodway if it has been delineated as
274 well as associated wetlands. Shorelines of statewide significance include lakes at least 1000
275 acres and rivers flowing 200 cfs mean annual flow in Eastern Washington and associated
276 wetlands.

277 The Shoreline Management Act establishes preferred shoreline uses that are consistent with
278 preventing damage to the natural environment or are unique to or dependent on the use of
279 Washington's shorelines. Preferred uses include single family residences, shoreline recreation
280 uses, water dependent industrial and commercial developments, and other developments
281 which provide public access.

Commented [AH22]: Check preferred shoreline uses described in 90.58. Agriculture importance near the shoreline statement for importance.

282 Okanogan County's SMP was updated June 2018. The goals and policies developed in that plan
283 are adopted by reference into this Comprehensive Plan.

284

285

286 **Water Resource Inventory Areas:**

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287 Okanogan County has 7 different Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIA), of which 5 are
288 located partially within the county. WRIA 48 has a watershed plan adopted in 2005. The
289 watershed council is now working on the implementation phase of the plan. WRIA 48 has an
290 instream flow rule that regulates water withdrawals. ~~There are some areas that are closed to~~
291 ~~further appropriation~~ Areas that are in hydraulic continuity with the closed surface waters are
292 closed to further appropriation. Seven reaches have a two cfs set aside for specific uses listed.
293 Currently the county is working on a well tracking system to monitor consumptive water usage
294 against the 2 cfs set aside. WRIA 49 has a watershed plan that was developed in 2009.

Commented [AH23]: Check citations and update for RCW 90.94

295 Engrossed ~~substitute~~ Substitute ~~senate~~ Senate bill-Bill 6091 has required an addendum to this
296 plan evaluating consumptive use of permit exempt wells and the offsets necessary for those
297 uses including net ecological benefit.

Commented [AH24]: accepted

298 **Water Resources:**

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299 **Goals and Policies**

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300 **GOAL 1: MAKE A CLEAR, CONSCIOUS CONNECTION BETWEEN WATERSHED** 301 **PLANNING AND LAND USE PLANNING IN OKANOGAN COUNTY**

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302 When land use, water use, and other community decisions are made they should be
303 made with the full weight of all plans ensuring that the use is compatible in all plans.
304 Strategies to accomplish this goal may include:

305 **Policies:**

306 • Utilize existing information and best available science to identify areas where
307 water is legally and physically available; use zoning to direct development to
308 such areas to avoid over development elsewhere.

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309 • 1) Give substantial attention and weight to municipal water needs where it is
310 demonstrated that water conservation is being practiced, where growth is
311 planned and concentrated in the effort to control sprawl, and where utility and
312 infrastructure planning and investments are evident.

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313 • 2) Acknowledge that agricultural lands will be converted to other uses. The
314 conversion of agricultural land to other activities results in different demand on
315 water supply. Options should be pursued to keep those lands that are not
316 identified for such conversion in viable agricultural production.

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317 • Acknowledge that climate change is reducing the water stored in snowpacks and
318 pursue mitigation strategies that avoid future water shortages.

Commented [AH25]: Next time pick up here for further conversation.

319 • 3) Continue to develop detailed data for water resources in all portions of the
320 watershed to determine and address the impacts that may be posed by
321 continued incremental growth in rural lands.

Commented [AH26R25]:

322 • 4) Utilize zoning provisions to guide growth where it is appropriate, avoiding
323 those areas for higher density subdivision where it is obvious that water is scarce
324 and senior water rights may be affected.

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325 • 5) Participate in water planning activities in British Columbia where most of the
326 flow in WRIA 49 originates.

327

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328 **Ground water supply:**

329 Goal: Further study of aquifers in WRIA 48 and WRIA 49.

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330 Due to the geology of Okanogan County, aquifers are in varying degrees of hydraulic
331 continuity with surface water bodies, and differ greatly in the amount of water they can
332 produce. While a number of studies have been conducted, no definitive study in either
333 WRIA 48 and/or 49 accurately measures or models the carrying capacity of any aquifer
334 nor does any study project the recharge rate of groundwater aquifers from precipitation.

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335 Policies:

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- 336 • Okanogan County will seek funding made available to further study the carrying
337 capacity of groundwater aquifers and the rate at which they are recharged by
338 precipitation.
- 339 • Because of the complex and differing nature of the groundwater aquifers in
340 Okanogan County, the process for site specific review of land use proposals
341 should be created so as to take into account that specific areas within larger land
342 use designations that may be capable of supporting a higher level of
343 development.
- 344 •

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345 Goal: Protect the ground water supply for existing and future uses.

346 Policies:

- 347
- 348 • To ensure consistency with this Comprehensive Plan, review of the Zone Code
349 and other development regulation should consider the data that is available in
350 terms of available groundwater supplies in any given area. This coupled with
351 considerations such as access to the transportation and power grid, geologic
352 hazard areas, frequently flooded areas, proximity to services, etc. should inform
353 the zone designations and the intensity and type of development they allowed
354 into areas best able to support it.

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355 ~~Because of the complex and differing nature of the groundwater aquifers in Okanogan~~
356 ~~County, the process for site specific review of land use proposals should be created so~~
357 ~~as to take into account that specific areas within larger land use designations that may~~
358 ~~be capable of supporting a higher level of development.~~

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359 ~~In preparing the development regulation that implements this plan and subsequent land~~
360 ~~use proposals, the following principles will be considered:~~

Commented [AH27]: These were moved under a specific goal.

- 361 • Okanogan County recognizes the importance of groundwater supplies to the
362 economic well-being of the area. Every effort will be made to make groundwater
363 available for beneficial use within the constraints of the law.
- 364 • Nothing in this section shall be construed in a manner that impairs an existing
365 legal right to withdraw groundwater or divert surface water for beneficial use.

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e) ~~Okanogan County will seek funding made available to further study the carrying capacity of groundwater aquifers and the rate at which they are recharged by precipitation.~~

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Commented [AH28]: This was moved under a specific goal.

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- Okanogan County will consider opportunities to improve/create surface or groundwater storage of water provided by periods of high water flow to enhance groundwater supplies and to augment in-stream flow of surface waters during seasonal low water periods.
- Okanogan County will support the formation of water banks in areas where feasible to mitigate for water uses from groundwater wells exempt from permitting in accordance with RCW 90.44.050 as well as creating the opportunity for those seeking an individual or group domestic water supply to obtain a water supply of sufficient seniority to minimize the potential for interruption due to low in-stream flows or impairment of senior water rights.
- Okanogan County will craft and adopt local regulation for the administration and tracking of permit exempt wells.
- Okanogan County will actively participate with all agencies with jurisdiction in controlling the illegal diversion of surface water and illegal withdrawal of groundwater.

Water Rights

Okanogan County recognizes a water right as private property and affords it the same protection. Okanogan County adheres to the premise of "first in time, first in right" that is a foundation block of Western water law. A water right put to a beneficial use, including a temporary dedication to in-stream flow, should be protected from relinquishment to the state.

Okanogan County further recognizes that keeping the right to use water within Okanogan County is critical to its economic health. Okanogan County encourages water right holders to consider all other options to protect their water right or to realize profit from its use before offering it for sale outside of the County.

Goal: Protect water rights

Policy:

- Okanogan County will attempt to create incentive based programs to encourage the owner of water rights to keep them in the County. Such programs might include:
 - a. Water banking.

- 401 b. Density bonuses as adopted in a Performance Based Density Bonus that
- 402 promotes the use of water in the County or promotes the transfer of water
- 403 for use in the County.
- 404 c. Seeking funding for the acquisition of water rights for use in the County.
- 405 d. Promote the re-issuance of water rights lost through relinquishment within
- 406 Okanogan County.
- 407 e. Review and minimize the impacts caused by the transfer of water outside
- 408 of the County. This statement should not be construed in any manner to
- 409 imply any interference with the owner's right to sell their water right to any
- 410 buyer.

412

413 **Wildfire:**

414 Wildfire is a serious problem in Okanogan County. The county is still recovering from the
415 catastrophic 2014 Carlton Complex and 2015 Okanogan Complex fires. Many homes and
416 livelihoods were affected.

Commented [AH29]: Get the stats and more information from Ted.

417 **Wildfire: Goal: Protect life and property in rural Okanogan County from fire hazards.**

418
419 **Policy's.**

- 420 • Promote best practices in structural fire resistance design for new construction.
- 421 • Encourage cluster developments to reduce the wildland urban interface areas.
- 422 • Review county road standards to require defensible ingress and egress roadways
423 constructed to adequate standards to allow the passage of firefighting equipment and
424 other emergency vehicles. After development of the road reviewed and accepted it is
425 up to the landowner to maintain the road to that standard.
- 426 • Encourage where feasible the undergrounding of electrical utilities to reduce their
427 exposure to fire.
- 428 • Encourage where feasible new developments in high-risk areas include secondary
429 egress.
- 430 • Educate communities about the unique challenges of wildfire in the wildland urban
431 interface.
- 432 • Update and Implement the Community Wildfire protection plan to reduce the risk of
433 wildfire and mitigate the impacts if a fire occurs.
- 434 • Develop required plat note on new subdivision proposals stating "This property is in a
435 high wildfire risk area. If there is not adequate ingress/egress and defensible space, fire
436 fighter safety shall be prioritized over protection of property".
- 437 • Support programs available for firesafe communities' i.e firewise etc.
- 438 • Support forest resource management for fire resiliency.
- 439 • Support responsible shrub-steppe management for fire resiliency.
- 440 • Federal/state/ tribal /local forest owners shall have a fuel reduction plan.
- 441 • Promote post fire rehabilitation and flood mitigation.
- 442 • Okanogan County or closest qualified contractor resources shall be used for fire
443 suppression activities first.
- 444 • Provide educational materials on fire safe construction and landscaping.

445

446

447 **Natural Resource Lands:**

448 **Agricultural Lands:**

449 Agricultural land means land primarily devoted to the commercial production of horticultural,
450 viticulture, floricultural, dairy, apiary, vegetable, or animal products or of berries, grain, hay,

straw, turf, seed, Christmas trees not subject to the excise tax imposed by RCW 84.33.100 through 84.33.140, finfish in upland hatcheries, or livestock, and that has long-term commercial significance for agricultural production. Lands designated cannot be characterized by urban growth. The land must be capable of being used for agricultural production based on their physical and geographic characteristics.

Purpose

The intent of Okanogan County's Agricultural Resource land use category is to implement the Growth Management Act planning goal related to maintaining and enhancing natural resource-based industries, which includes productive agricultural industries. This category is intended to preserve, stabilize, and enhance the primary agricultural land base which is being used for, or offers the greatest potential for, continued production of agricultural products and harvesting. The Agricultural Resource land use category carries out this goal by establishing a variety of zones in which agriculture is a permitted use.

General Description

Agricultural Resource Lands are those lands primarily devoted to or important for the long-term commercial production of horticultural, viticultural, floricultural, dairy, apiary, vegetable, and livestock.

The location of agriculture has been strongly influenced by the construction of irrigation facilities. Cultivated agriculture and orchards in Okanogan County are heavily concentrated in and around the valley floors, while grazing lands are located along many of the hillsides. Many forested portions of the County that are mostly state and federal lands are leased out for summer pasture.

Designation Criteria:

Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 365-190-050 (1) states that in classifying and designating agricultural resource lands, counties must approach the effort as a county-wide or area-wide process. Counties should not review resource lands designations solely on a parcel-by-parcel process. Reviews on a county-wide or area-wide basis must meet the Agricultural Resource land mapping criteria.

- 1) Generally meets criteria for agricultural resource lands of long-term commercial significance as defined by state laws and regulations.
 - a) May contain prime soils according to the Natural Resource Conservation Service.
 - b) May include "pockets" of non-agricultural land uses.
 - c) May contain high-value crops; specifically, areas where tree fruits, vineyards, specialty field crops.
 - d) May include a variety of residential uses related to agricultural activities including farm worker housing and family farm dwellings.

- e) May include compatible uses such as the marketing of regional agricultural products from one or more producers; the production, marketing and distribution of value added agricultural products; or packing and cold storage plants.
- f) May include non-agricultural accessory uses or activities as long as they are consistent with the size, scale and intensity of the existing agricultural use on a property.
- 2) Lands located within an irrigation district and receiving water, or
- 3) Lands where dryland farming, pasture or grazing outside of irrigation districts is predominant.
- 4) Lands enrolled in one of the current use assessment programs.
- 5) Lands located outside established city expansion areas.
- 6) Criteria for de-designating agricultural resource lands shall follow the "Agricultural Resource De-designation Analytical Process" found below. The agricultural resource de-designation criteria will be used for plan amendments and updates to change a land use from Agricultural Resource to another land use designation. The agricultural de-designation process shall not apply when re-designating agricultural resource lands to some other Resource Land designation.
- 7) Soils considered to be an Agricultural Resource of Long Term Commercial Significance are primarily those soils listed as 'Prime' in the WEB Soil Survey of Okanogan County dated September 7, 2017. This list of soils, however, does not include similar soils as those listed as Prime that are located on slopes with a gradient higher than 2 degrees. Slopes with a gradient up to and including 15 degrees are considered suitable for growing tree fruit and grapes based on good drainage and the ability for cold air to fall down gradient. The limiting factor for slopes is one of safety when operating machinery.

Tax Status

Tax Status indicates the current land use and tax rate being claimed by the property owner and reported by the Assessor. An inference can be made by looking at the current tax status as to the property owners' intent for the land. This intent alone cannot be considered when determining the appropriateness of the land for designation as Agricultural Land of Long-term Commercial Significance, but may be another indicator of the possibility of a more intense use of the land. When the majority of the parcels within the study area have a tax status other than Agriculture, then it is considered one factor for possible removal of the area from resource designation

Predominant Parcel Size

Larger parcels are thought to be more suitable for commercial agriculture. Areas with predominant parcel sizes of 5 acres or more that are in proximity to other lands that meet other designation criteria; such as soils and current use tax classification, should be considered for inclusion in the agricultural resource designation.

Availability of Public Facilities

Of the list of various public facilities provided by the County and Cities, roads, sewer and water are the three whose presence could possibly add pressure to develop land at a higher use. These facilities can be mapped and evaluated for their proximity to agricultural lands and a determination as to the effect this proximity would have regarding pressure to develop. Water and sewer are normally confined to the city and its city expansion area although sewer and water systems do exist outside of incorporated cities and their expansion areas

Proximity to the City Expansion Area

Parcels should be evaluated for their distance from a City Expansion Area. The further away from the City Expansion Area the less influence it has on a parcel to develop at some higher use. No resource land should be designated within a city expansion area.

Land Use Settlement Patterns and Their Compatibility with Agricultural Practices and Intensity of Nearby Uses

Land Use Settlement Patterns and the Intensity of nearby uses provide similar information as Proximity to Urbanized Areas in that they show residential or other development that may represent prohibitive impacts to commercial agriculture. These developed areas outside of the city expansion areas require consideration for their potential impact to agriculture.

History of Land Development Permits Issued Nearby

The History of Development Permits Issued nearby may also serve as evidence of pressure to develop at some higher use. A history of permitting activity is a way of looking at nearby permitting patterns, which may give an indication of future development activities.

Final Determination

A final assessment of a particular area's eligibility as Agricultural Land of Long Term Commercial Significance is based on an analysis of the designation criteria, primarily soils and current use tax classification, along with surrounding lot sizes and densities and proximity to urban centers.

Zoning

Zone designations that support agricultural activities and encourage larger lot sizes should be considered for lands in the agricultural resource designation. Smaller lots and/or higher densities may be allowed in subdivisions that utilize a clustering approach and that have a demonstrated legal and physical water supply.

Agricultural Resource De-designation Criteria:

WAC 190-365-050 clearly states that the Agricultural Resource mapping criteria is to be used on a county-wide or area-wide basis. Within the framework and guidelines established in WAC 190-365-050, the de-designation process will consider the following criteria for a site-specific determination of the suitability of the land remaining in the Agricultural resource designation. The criteria to be considered is as follows:

- a) Soils
- b) Relationship or proximity to the City Expansion Area
- c) Predominant parcel size
- d) Changing climate or soil conditions such that the land no longer holds long term commercial significance for agriculture
- e) Changing crop markets and growing requirements the land can no longer be devoted primarily to agriculture hence no longer holds long term commercial significance for agriculture
- f) Topographic limitations
- g) Physical availability of irrigation water

Agricultural Lands Goals and Policies:

Goals:

Agricultural lands will be preserved to the greatest extent possible for the extensive contribution to the economic viability of Okanogan County.

Policies:

- Okanogan County will protect agriculture from the impact of incompatible uses by utilizing appropriate land use designations and effective review processes
- Encourage the retention of agricultural lands and prevent haphazard growth into these areas.
- Encourage the maintenance and viability of agricultural land
- Encourage the use of agricultural value assessment, open space designations, and/or other tax benefits that help retain the economic viability of farming practices.
- Encourage farm-based businesses as accessory uses in agricultural areas that supplement farm income.
- Encourage home based occupations providing on farm income.
- Encourage agri-tourism accessory uses.
- Allow recreational activities and other commercial and/or industrial uses that can be conducted in a manner that results in no negative impacts to agricultural operations.
- Clustering of residential development may be carefully allowed in areas designated for agriculture, promoting a balance between future non-farm developments and protecting agricultural activities from incompatible uses.
- Encourage preservation of ag land during land acquisition and conservation easements by keeping all or a portion in ag production.

Commented [AH30]: How?

- Encourage enrollment in the Voluntary Stewardship Program.

Forest Lands:

Purpose

The intent of Okanogan County's Forest Resource land use category is to implement the Growth Management Act planning goal related to maintaining and enhancing natural resource-based industries, which includes productive timber industries. This category is intended to preserve, stabilize, and enhance the primary forest land base which is being used for, or offers the greatest potential for, continued production of forest products and harvesting. The Forest Resource Land Use Designation accomplishes this goal by establishing a productive minimum lot size (20 acres), and ensuring that residential use is secondary to commercial forestry. The category also protects productive forest lands from incompatible uses by limiting the variety of uses permitted under current zoning and encouraging parcel reconfiguration where appropriate.

The following description and the related criteria are designed to conserve productive forest lands and reduce conflicts between the forest industry and incompatible uses.

General Description

Forest Resource Lands are those areas primarily useful for growing trees for commercial purposes, including Christmas trees subject to the excise tax imposed under state law. In addition, stock grazing, farming, recreation and limited housing and commercial activities are accommodated as compatible uses. Forest Resource lands also provide important fish and wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, and watershed and aquifer recharge areas.

Mapping Criteria:

WAC 365-190-060 states that in classifying and designating forest resource lands, counties must approach the effort as a county-wide or regional process. Counties should not review forest resource lands designations solely on a parcel-by-parcel basis. The WAC further states that lands should be designated as forest resource lands of long-term commercial significance based on three factors: 1) the land is not already characterized by urban growth, 2) the land is used or capable of being used for forestry production and 3) the land has long-term commercial significance. Those three factors are the basis for the Forest Resource Areas Mapping Criteria listed below.

- 1) Lands assessed as open space timber or forest land.
- 2) Lands located in an area where there is a predominance of the higher private forest land grades, as defined by the state Department of Revenue based on growing capacity, productivity, and soil composition.
- 3) Lands historically designated Forest Watershed.

4) Lands not located in or near the urban and suburban areas and rural settlements.

5) Lands with predominantly large (40 acres or greater) parcel sizes in the area.

6) Adjacent and nearby land use and settlement patterns and intensities are generally compatible with forest lands of long-term commercial significance.

7) Lands where public services and facilities conducive to the conversion of forest land are not available.

8) Lands that are not developing rapidly, as evidenced by few recent land development permits in the vicinity.

De-designation Criteria

1) Proximity to population areas and the possibility of more intense uses of the land as indicated by the availability of public facilities, tax status, the availability of public services, relationship or proximity to urban growth areas, predominant parcel size, land use settlement patterns and their compatibility with forest practices, intensity of nearby land uses, and the history of land development permits issued nearby.

2) Incompatibility of surrounding land uses with timber harvest activities

3) Error was made in designation

4) Due to changing climate or soil conditions the land no longer holds long term commercial significance for timber production

5) Due to changing markets and growing requirements the land can no longer be devoted primarily to ~~agriculture forest production~~ hence no longer holds long term commercial significance for timber production

Forest Lands Goals and Policies:

Goal: Maintain and enhance natural resource based industries including timber industries.

Policies:

- Land use activities within designated forest resource lands should minimize conflicts with forestry practices.
- Support the maintenance of forest lands in timber and current use property tax classifications consistent with RCW 84.33 and 84.34.
- Ensure forestry and related activities regulated by Okanogan County are conducted in a manner that will minimize their adverse impacts on water quality, habitat, and other environmentally sensitive areas pursuant to county and state regulations.

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- Provide for resource use, particularly agricultural and timber uses, in rural, smallholding and remote areas.
- Encourage local and regional infrastructure and/or manufacturing facilities that use or support forest products in proximity to Forest Resource Lands.
- Encourage innovative tools, such as limited subdivision of clustered small lots and conservation easements that enable families to plan for succession of their resource-based business.

Goal: Recognize the public benefits of forest resource lands including environmental, recreational, scenic beauty, habitat protection, and quality of life.

- Accept multiple-use management of forestland to promote the primary use and provide for other compatible uses including but not limited to tourism, recreation, grazing, and preservation of open space.
- Work with state and federal agencies to improve recreational access on public lands.
- Consider impacts to the timber industry when reviewing proposed recreation facilities near Forest Resource Lands.
- Okanogan County will promote the responsible harvest of forest products and the protection of these lands from incompatible uses. Okanogan County will require coordination from the public land managers (USFS, BLM, DNR, etc) to create appropriate land use designations and effective management practices to further these goals.

Mineral Resource Lands

Purpose

The intent of Okanogan County's Mineral Resource Overlay land use category is to implement the Growth Management Act planning goal related to maintaining and enhancing natural resource-based industries, which includes commercially viable mineral resource industries. This category is intended to identify, preserve and protect the mineral resource land base which is intended to be used for, or offers the greatest potential for, the continued production of aggregate products such as concrete or asphalt, while allowing the underlying land use to provide interim land use direction until such time that mineral extraction is permitted. The Mineral Resource Overlay land use category carries out this goal by establishing a Mining zone, which identifies review criteria, allowed uses, lot sizes, standards of operations and provisions for revisions.

Okanogan County's economic well-being depends upon the availability of mineral resource products specifically sand, gravel and bedrock materials. To keep pace with the market demand it is important for the residents and the economy of Okanogan County that at least a twenty-

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year supply of mineral resource areas be identified and protected with the Mineral Resource Overlay designation.

General Description

Mineral resource lands are those lands primarily devoted to or important for the long-term commercial production of mineral products. Areas designated as mineral resource lands comprise the Mineral Resource Overlay. The Mineral Resource Overlay is a land use designation that overlays an existing land use designation. The overlay designation provides protection from the encroachment of competing land uses by applying a buffer that places restrictions on adjacent properties. The existing or underlying land use designation is intended to remain in effect until such time that the area is rezoned to Mining in anticipation of pending mining operations

Mapping Criteria:

The actual location (area of deposition) of the mineral resource is the primary factor in determining the future location of a mining site. Other factors that influence the location of a mineral resource area include: quality of the resource, volume of the resource, access suitability, the compatibility with existing or planned land uses, and the proximity to existing or planned market areas. The following designation/mapping criteria are based on Chapter 365-190-070 of the Washington Administrative Code – *Minimum Guidelines to Classify Agriculture, Forest and Mineral Resource Lands*.

1) Quality of the Mineral Resource

The quality and type of mineral resource at the potential site shall meet any of the following requirements.

- a) The quality and type of the mineral resource must meet current and/or future project and/or project specifications.
- b) The quality and type of mineral resource must satisfy the market's current and/or future demands.
- c) The potential site must be within the DNR identified mineral resource lands.

2) Volume of the Resource

The volume of available mineral resource at the potential site shall meet the following requirements.

- a) The volume of available mineral resource at the potential site, on single or contiguous parcels, should be feasibly marketable by a mining operation to supply the surrounding market demands.

3) Access Suitability

The potential mineral resource site must have access or potential access to public and/or private roads that are suitable for truck traffic and/or are capable of supporting the level of expected traffic.

Intent Statement – It is very important that there is access to adequate public and/or private roads to potentially lower the traffic related impacts to both the surrounding neighbors and the environment.

4) Compatibility with Present or Planned Land Use Patterns in the Area

General land use issues in the resource area to consider;

- a) Surrounding parcel sizes and surrounding uses;
- b) Subdivision or zoning for urban or small lots;
 - i) Designated mineral lands should not be located adjacent to any zoning district boundary that has a minimum lot size greater than 1 dwelling units per 5 acres, where doing so would create a non-conforming setback distance.
 - ii) Designated mineral resource lands should not be located in any zoning district that has a minimum lot size of 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres.
- c) Sites located in or adjacent to City Expansion boundaries;
 - i) Mineral resource lands should not be designated in existing City Expansion Areas.
- d) Proximity to essential public facilities (i.e. dams, bridges, etc.);
- e) Sites located within inconsistent zoning districts;
- f) Sites located within publicly owned lands;
- g) Sites located within other natural resource designated areas.

The potential site must be able to mitigate impacts on and/or to adjacent existing land uses.

Intent Statement – It is very important that Okanogan County maintain a sufficient amount of designated mineral resource sites close to existing and planned market areas to ensure low cost and available supplies of construction aggregate.

Mineral Resource Areas De-designation Process

The de-designation of an area previously established as a mineral resource of long-term commercial significance should be considered when the resource has been exhausted and reclaimed in accordance with the reclamation plan approved by the State Department of Natural Resources; or in those limited situations where the County has obtained substantial evidence that the designated site is unsuitable for the mineral resource overlay designation. The re-classification of a land use designation underlying the Mineral Resource Overlay should be approved after it has been determined that the proposed new land use designation is compatible with and will not preclude the availability of the mineral resource.

Mapping

The Okanogan County Comprehensive Land Use Map identifies those areas designated as Resource Lands. The map designations are directed by the chosen criteria but have been reconciled to parcel boundary lines.

Mineral Lands Goals and Policies:

Goal: Support local mineral lands as an important component of the County's economy.

Policies:

- Keep ordinances and plans relating to natural resources up to date.

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Critical Area Goals and Policies:

Goal: Promote public health, safety and welfare, economic and environmental well being in the County for present and future citizens by identifying and protecting critical areas.

Policies:

- In designating and protecting critical areas, include the best available science in developing policies and development regulations to protect the functions and values of critical areas.
- Provide technical assistance and education to applicants and interested parties on critical areas and applicable regulations.

- 798 • Prepare materials which enable citizens to clearly understand the location of critical
799 areas on and adjacent to their property, what obligations, rights, and opportunities they
800 have regarding those critical areas and how those critical areas affect future land use
801 management practices and options.
- 802 • Provide methods to avoid , minimize, and mitigate, when addressing critical areas,
803 including innovative techniques such as wetland banking, vegetation management,
804 clustered development, planned unit development, replacement ratios, density
805 limitations, and enhancement option.
- 806 • Reference WDFW Priority Habitat and Species data and maps for information on
807 location of fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas.

808 **Goal:** Recognize the importance of fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas while at the
809 same time working towards a balance between preservation of those lands and the
810 continuation of agriculture, forestry, mining and managed growth.

811 Policies:

- 812 • Balance the regulation of fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas with the needs
813 of existing resource activities (agriculture, grazing, forestry, and mining).
- 814 • Support continued participation in the Voluntary Stewardship Program for
815 protection and enhancement of critical areas and maintenance and promotion of
816 agricultural viability
- 817 • Give special consideration to conservation or protection measures necessary to
818 preserve or enhance anadromous fisheries.
- 819 • Support the purchase of conservation easements or fee simple purchase of land by
820 private or public agencies where critical areas regulation has significantly reduced
821 the value of the property and/or the ability of the landowner to lawfully use the
822 property.

823

824 **Goal:** Utilize floodplain planning to protect human life and health as well as the riparian
825 ecosystem in order to minimize public and private economic losses and expenditures related to
826 flood control and to protect and preserve wildlife habitat.

- 827 • Reference Federal Emergency Management Agency's Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the
828 100 year floodplain and manage these areas through the National Flood Insurance
829 Program (NFIP).
- 830 • Utilize historical knowledge of areas outside Flood Insurance Rate Maps that have
831 flooded in the past when designating frequently flooded areas.
- 832 • Reference the most current Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan as amended.

833 **Goal:** Reduce the threat posed to the health and safety of citizens that could occur when
834 development is sited in areas of significant geologic hazard.

- 835 • Implement development regulations that minimize risk to the public health safety, and
836 welfare in areas of significant geologic hazard.

837 **Goal:** Ensure an adequate, safe water supply through the protection of both the quantity and
838 quality of ground and surface water for a variety of beneficial uses such as public consumption,
839 agriculture, industry, and habitat protection.

- 840 • Implement development regulations to manage stormwater to protect water and
841 habitat resources, protect private and public property and infrastructure, and protect
842 public safety, health, and welfare.

- 843 • Okanogan County will support and when feasible sponsor water quality education
844 programs which inform local citizens and visitors about water quality issues, and
845 ramifications.

846 **Goal:** Protect aquifer recharge areas.

- 847 • Implement development regulations to include siting requirements for land use which
848 assist in the protection of groundwater aquifer recharge and protection of existing and
849 future groundwater supplies.

- 850 • Limit impervious surfaces on lands that are classified as having a high or moderate
851 potential recharge and identify these areas in zoning overlay maps.

852

853 ~~Critical Area Goals and Policies: Land Use Element: This section will change based on which~~
854 ~~alternative the Planning commission chooses~~

855 Introduction:

856 The landuse element provides a framework for future development in Okanogan County.

857 Land Use and Growth

858 This plan in part develops strategies on how orderly new growth should occur to accommodate
859 population growth and protect the resources in Okanogan County.

860 Landuse Goals & Policies:

861 **Goal:** Direct and manage development that is orderly and fiscally responsible.

862 **Policies:**

- 863 • Guide future growth and development by defining appropriate land uses and densities.

Commented [AH32]: I feel like you as a Board need to have more conversation about this section. This section could have many different outcomes based on the alternative or mix of alternatives you decide to move forward with.

I started with a framework that needs to be expanded upon. For instance Alternative 2 has a large area devoted to Rural land category. The question may arise based on the comments you received should part of this be Rural Agriculture due to existing uses or just Rural. You might decide the areas close to infrastructure deserve a Rural Residential category which would need to be explained how that will happen. Or you could decide to just keep it broad and leave it as Rural. You could also decide to have density descriptions as well.

My thought is after you discuss the resource lands we can have some in depth conversations as to how the whole board wants to proceed regarding this section.

- 864 • Land use designations within rural lands must provide sufficient land for housing and
865 business activities suitable to the rural areas. These designations must be compatible
866 with available water supplies, capacity of the area for on-site septic, and the ability to
867 provide adequate levels of public services.
868 •

869 Goal: Support continuance of farming and ranching for the production of food, fiber and
870 minerals in rural areas.

- 871 • Encourage enrollment in the Voluntary Stewardship program.
872 • Perform an inventory of affordable housing to address the need for farmworker housing
873 and allow farmworker housing as a permitted use in Agricultural and other appropriate
874 zones.
875 • Okanogan County will protect agriculture from the impact of incompatible uses by
876 utilizing appropriate land use designations and effective review processes.

877 Rural Lands:

878 History

879 Lands in the rural designation will contain the greatest mix of existing and potential uses
880 because of the tremendous diversity of these lands. A wide range of compatible uses should be
881 considered with reliance on the underlying zoning to ensure compatibility of proposed activities
882 in regards to existing uses and historical characteristics of the neighboring area. Comprehensive
883 review of land use proposals to identify probable impacts and to ensure compatibility with
884 existing and/or planned activities will be necessary to prevent conflicts. The objective of zoning
885 in the rural designation is to provide an effective mix of land uses such as residential,
886 commercial, industrial, agricultural, tourist, and recreational opportunities.

887 Purpose

888 In the course of comprehensive planning, the County specifically identifies and designates city
889 expansion areas and resource lands. Incorporated city limits are established by law and fall
890 under the jurisdiction of the legislative bodies of those cities and towns. All other lands are
891 designated rural.

892 The objective of the rural designation is to provide an adequate inventory of land for residential
893 and other uses while avoiding unnecessary conflicts. Neighborhood commercial centers, in the
894 form of unincorporated villages, exist throughout the county and will become more important
895 as population increases. The existing mix of agricultural and resource based activities,
896 recreation, and tourism should be recognized for the diversity it provides to the economic base.
897 A mix of residential densities should be allowed to provide an adequate inventory of housing
898 sites for those seeking a rural lifestyle and to provide worker housing in proximity to
899 employment providers.

Okanogan County is large in size and varied in topography and climate. For these reasons, lands in the rural designation will exhibit great differences in terms of its ability to support residential density and other land use activities. Underlying zoning and/or the review processes that support and implement this Plan must be established with consideration for the ability of the land to support the proposed land use activity.

The ability of lands in the rural designation to support density and permitted/conditional uses will be affected by other bodies of required regulation such as Critical Areas Ordinance and Shoreline Master Program. This must be taken into account when the adequacy of land in the rural designation is reviewed.

Density

Residential uses are consistent with the rural designation. Lot sizes, setbacks, height restrictions, and other considerations will be specifically addressed in the underlying zone, subdivision regulation, and other regulation as appropriate. The lot sizes and overall density allowed in underlying zoning should consider the following criteria:

- Proximity to transportation system
- Proximity to city centers
- Availability of potable water supplies and water delivery systems
- Availability of fire protection, police, and other emergency services

Minimum lots should be sufficient in size to allow compliance with on-site sewage disposal and the protection of potable water sources. Lots in areas served by a sanitary sewer system, and so designated by the Board of County Commissioners, will be required to be served by the sewer system.

Compatible Uses

The rural designation is consistent with a wide array of permitted and conditional uses. The specific mix of permitted uses will be determined by the underlying zone.

The rural designation is suitable for agricultural activities until such time as increased urbanization creates conflict between what can be incompatible land uses.

Unincorporated Towns and Neighborhood Commercial Centers Land Use

Purpose

Unincorporated towns are residential and commercial centers located in Okanogan County that are not incorporated cities. The County recognizes the important role they play as service centers and focal points for the surrounding neighborhoods. The area within the designation should provide sufficient land to provide needed local goods and services. Future expansion of the unincorporated towns and neighborhood commercial centers will be based upon the needs of the residents and the ability of the area to provide services.

This Comprehensive Plan for Okanogan County recognizes the following unincorporated towns and neighborhood commercial centers and establishes these policies for future planning and development of them.

- Methow
- Carlton
- Malott
- Loomis
- Wauconda
- Chesaw
- Molson
- Ellisforde
- Mazama
- Monse
- Nighthawk
- Havillah

Designation Criteria

Unincorporated towns and neighborhood commercial centers will be designation and developed based on the following criteria:

- 959 • Existence of services such as neighborhood retail, tourist retail, and government
960 services.
- 961 • Existence of more intense residential development than the surrounding areas.
- 962 • Historical value as past settlement with existing tourist activities.
- 963 • Ability to support more intense development.

964 **Future Neighborhood Commercial Centers**

965 Due to the vast size of Okanogan County, it is important to locate necessary services in proximity
966 to the residents. Settlement patterns will be driven by expansion of agriculture, forestry, and
967 mining in rural areas in addition to expansion of tourism. New service centers should be
968 considered to minimize impacts to the transportation system brought about by longer trips to
969 obtain basic services.

970 The unincorporated towns and neighborhood commercial centers also serve as focal points for
971 area residents providing for a sense of community. The demand for new neighborhood
972 commercial centers will be created by the needs of the area residents and landowners.

973 Proposals for new neighborhood commercial centers should be reviewed in accordance with the
974 designation criteria and general planning objectives found previously stated in this section.

975

976

City Expansion Areas

History

Okanogan County and the cities and towns therein, recognize that a cooperative effort between local governments is needed to effectively and efficiently serve the needs of the citizens. The City Expansion Area designation is used to identify those lands into which the city or town intends to grow through a twenty year planning window. The policies and procedures contained in this Comprehensive Plan, supplemented by intergovernmental agreements as needed, are designed to give clear direction for the process to designate, review, and amend City Expansion Areas. Subsequent project review and land use decisions, while under the sole authority of the County until such times as the lands annex, are carried out in accordance with the agreed upon processes.

Purpose

As stated above, a clear and cooperative approach to land use planning and decision making between the County and its cities and towns, is necessary to successfully conduct the business of the people. The adoption of agreed upon City Expansion Areas into the County Comprehensive Plan accomplishes two specific goals. Cities and towns have the ability to plan infrastructure and service requirements for a specific growth area. The city or town can propose pre-annexation designations to promote a predictable growth pattern, efficient extension of infrastructure, and to ensure sufficient inventory of land for residential, commercial, and other development. The County can incorporate into their Plan the city or town proposed use of the CEA. This allows the County to accurately analyze the inventory of land available for uses best suited to densely populated areas and to coordinate uses in the rural areas accordingly.

Designation Criteria

Requests for specific City Expansion Areas, and any amendments thereto, will be processed by the Planning Commission as amendments to this Plan. Only the municipalities shall propose CEA boundaries. In reviewing proposals for CEA designation, the municipality should consider the following factors in considering a proposed map change:

- Current inventory of developable land in the incorporated boundaries.

- 1010 • Inventory of land necessary to provide for projected growth including affordable
1011 housing.
- 1012 • Analysis of ability to provide sewer, water, and other public services to designated CEA.
- 1013 • Benefits and impacts to existing resource and recreational activities.

1014 **Amendment**

1015 Only the affected municipality may propose amendments to the designated City Expansion Area.
1016 Landowners in or adjoining the City Expansion Area must petition the affected municipality to
1017 present their request for amendment. Review of proposed amendments shall consider the
1018 criteria used in designating City Expansion Areas.

1019 **Zoning and Project Review**

1020 The County has the sole authority for land use and project review on lands within the CEA but
1021 outside the incorporated boundary. The County, in considering an application for land
1022 use/project in the CEA, shall consider the following:

- 1023 • Compatibility with any sub-designations by the municipality within the CEA.
- 1024 • Impact of the project or proposal on municipal services.
- 1025 • Compatibility with surrounding uses.
- 1026 • Impact of the project or proposal on the municipal transportation system.

1027
1028

1029 **Chapter Eight: More Completely Planned Areas**

1030

1031 **Purpose and Intent**

1032

1033 It is the intent of the County to ensure the updated Comprehensive Plan remains responsive to
1034 the wide range of landscapes and demographics within the County's borders. To reflect these
1035 differences, the County may create and adopt

1036 More Completely Planned Areas ("MCPA") to help inform development regulations such as
1037 Zoning and Subdivision Codes.

1038

1039 Since 1971, Okanogan County has utilized MCPA Plans to provide for land use planning at a sub-
1040 area scale, including the Methow Valley. It is the intent of the County to continue to utilize
1041 these MCPA Plans for the Methow Valley, and to consider the creation of new MCPAs in the
1042 future as deemed appropriate and necessary to most effectively reflect the desires of the
1043 communities which comprise Okanogan County.

1044

1045 The goals and policies developed within a MCPA Plan adopted by the County shall apply **only** to
1046 the geographic area of the MCPA as the Board of County Commissioners has defined its
1047 geographic boundaries at the time of MCPA Plan adoption. The content of MCPA Plans shall not
1048 be applied outside of the area for which it has been created and adopted.

1049

1050 Two existing MCPA's have been reviewed and revised along with the Comprehensive Plan. They
1051 are the Methow Valley More Completely Planned Area and the Methow Valley More Completely
1052 Planned Area Mazama Community Master Plan Sub Unit A. These MCPA's will be adopted
1053 following adoption of the comprehensive plan. Any modifications to planning or land use
1054 designations within the Methow Valley More completely Planned Area and the Methow Valley
1055 More completely Planned Area Mazama Community Master Plan Sub Unit A shall be compatible
1056 with the goals and policies of these plans.

1057

1058 **Designation Criteria**

1059

1060 The geographic boundaries of a MCPA shall be determined by the Board of

1061 County Commissioners after consideration of the following:

1062

1063 • Logical natural and physical boundaries (highways, other MCPA planning area
1064 boundaries, watersheds, etc.);

1065 • Landowner interest;

1066 • Community identification within the MCPA;

1067 • Other factors as may be identified by the County and deemed important in providing for
1068 logical land use planning areas;

1069

1070 **Establishing Future More Completely Planned Areas**

1071

1072 Future MCPAs may be established by the County Commissioners.

1073 A diverse Advisory Committee of individuals owning property within the proposed MCPA shall
1074 lead MCPA planning efforts. The County Commissioners shall appoint Advisory Committee
1075 members after a publicly advertised recruitment period.

1076

1077 All future MCPA Plan development processes shall provide for properly advertised public
1078 meetings to be hosted by the Advisory Committee, in coordination with the Okanogan County
1079 Planning Department, to provide opportunities for general public participation.

1080

1081 Draft MCPA Plans shall be forwarded to the Planning Commission with a recommendation from
1082 the MCPA Advisory Committee and shall be processed in accordance with the County's process
1083 for Comprehensive Plan amendments. At a minimum, MCPA Plans shall include the elements
1084 required for Comprehensive Plans under RCW 36.70.330 but not exceed the requirements of the
1085 Planning Enabling Act or those portions of the Growth Management Act applicable to non-GMA
1086 counties.

1087

1088 **Transportation Element**

1089 **Introduction**

1090 Okanogan County has experienced modest growth activity in the past which is expected to
1091 continue in coming years. To effectively and efficiently accommodate this growth in an orderly
1092 fashion, Okanogan County, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, and the cities
1093 and towns in the county have recognized the need for a transportation plan that describes the
1094 transportation system as it exists today and addresses the transportation needs for the next 20
1095 years. This Transportation Element is the first to be prepared for Okanogan County and is an
1096 important milestone in achieving a coordinated transportation system which integrates the
1097 needs of each of the County's jurisdictions and the unincorporated rural areas, within the
1098 context of the larger North Central Washington Region.

1099 **Purpose of the Transportation Element**

1100 As the first countywide transportation element, this document serves several purposes. It serves
1101 as an investigation into how the County's transportation system and transportation usage is
1102 structured, and is an important resource for the County, its jurisdictions, its citizens, and the
1103 Okanogan Council of Governments acting as the Regional Transportation Planning Organization
1104 (RTPO). It examines the need to provide for different types and levels of transportation services,
1105 particularly in regard to the needs of urban versus rural areas.

1106 The countywide Transportation Element is a critical component of the County's overall
1107 Comprehensive Plan. The Transportation Element is intended to guide an ongoing planning and
1108 decision making process that shapes the transportation system and ensures that needs are
1109 addressed within the available resources between the public and private sectors.

1110 **The Planning Process**

1111 The process of developing the Okanogan County Transportation Element took place over a
1112 period of approximately 12 months and involved numerous citizens, staff from each of the cities
1113 within the County, County Staff, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, and
1114 Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) representation. The transportation
1115 planning process began with an assessment of existing conditions. This was followed by a
1116 discussion of future conditions through goal setting and forecasting. Anticipated future
1117 transportation system needs were analyzed and organized into an implementation plan.
1118 Outlined below are the steps that were taken in the development of the Transportation
1119 Element.

- 1120 • **Early and Continuous Public Participation-** Public participation was central to
1121 development of the Transportation Element. Opportunities for community involvement
1122 were provided in the form of Regional Transportation Advisory Group (RTAG) meetings
1123 that were open to the public, in addition to formal public hearings.

- **Determine the Characteristics of the Current Transportation System**-An inventory and description of the current transportation system was prepared to serve as the foundation of the element. This information was supplemented with an inventory of the existing demographic and land use conditions as well as recent development patterns.
- **Identify Issues: Constraints and Opportunities**- A series of community workshops were held throughout Okanogan County to identify both real and perceived constraints affecting the transportation system and opportunities for improvements.
- **Establish Countywide Level Of Service Standards**- The Transportation Element established countywide Level of Service standards, and also energy conservation and air quality guidelines.
- **Establish Transportation Goals, Objectives and Policies**- The Element contains transportation goals, objectives, and policies resulting from discussions with representation from each city, planning region, and planning department in the County.
- **Forecast Future Transportation/Travel Demand**- Six-year and 20-year traffic forecasts were completed based upon forecasted growth. Anticipated land use patterns were also provided in this effort.
- **Identify Future Deficiencies**- Based upon the forecasted travel demand, potential system deficiencies were analyzed and alternative methods were identified.
- **Identify Environmental Impacts**- The Transportation Element considered the environmental impacts of proposed system improvements, in addition to appropriate mitigation measures.
- **Establish a Six-Year Financial Plan and Implementation Program**- The Transportation Element references the county's six year Transportation Improvement Plan, which identifies the necessary tasks, priorities, and identifies the agency(s) responsible for implementation with consideration to the County's funding capacity.

Transportation Planning In Washington

In 1990, the Washington State Legislature enacted the Growth Management Act (GMA) which set a new course for the development of transportation plans. Traditionally, Washington communities have planned for land use and transportation independent of one another. Most transportation system improvements were planned for in reaction to congestion or safety concerns. The GMA asserts that land use and transportation system planning must be coordinated to better provide for safe use. Furthermore, GMA requires that land use planning and development approvals be linked with the provision of available transportation facilities through the concurrency requirement.

1159 Although Okanogan County is not currently subject to the requirements of the GMA, these
1160 requirements have served as basic guidelines in the preparation of the Transportation Element.

1161 As part of the Growth Management Program, State Legislature authorized the formation of
1162 Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) whose purpose is to plan for the
1163 development and use of regional transportation facilities and services. Okanogan, Douglas, and
1164 Chelan Counties are the three counties located within the North Central RTPO. The North
1165 Central RTPO is a newer organization to be designated in Washington State (June of 1993) and
1166 has not yet completed its Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which is a key function of the
1167 RTPO.

1168 This Transportation Element, along with those prepared/being prepared by Chelan and Douglas
1169 Counties, together will serve as important groundwork for the development of the North
1170 Central RTP.

1171 **The Transportation Element**

1172 The Okanogan County Transportation Element will be incorporated within the County
1173 Comprehensive Plan. Although the County is not subject to the requirements of GMA, and is
1174 preparing its Transportation Element independent of its Land Use Element, land use
1175 characteristics, both current and projected, have been carefully considered in the preparation of
1176 this document.

1177 **Land Use and Transportation**

1178 The Transportation Element establishes a vital link between land use and the transportation
1179 facilities and services needed to meet current system deficiencies and to support current
1180 growth. The anticipated types, intensity, and timing of land development in the County will
1181 largely determine the mode of transportation, provided its effectiveness in moving people, and
1182 the travel behavior of people using the land. In addition, land use decisions outside of the
1183 County impact the transportation system and as a result, attention must be given to the
1184 anticipated trends in these peripheral areas.

1185 The County's resources are limited; therefore the County must achieve a balance among the
1186 needs within each of the four regions, accommodate both rural and urban areas, and various
1187 modes of transportation to maximize person carrying capacity instead of vehicle-moving
1188 capacity. With large expanses of sparsely populated land, most travel in Okanogan County
1189 tends to be by private vehicle. However, even in a largely rural county, there are opportunities
1190 to accommodate transportation alternatives other than the single occupant vehicle. A clear
1191 understanding of land use development patterns will enable the County to effectively provide
1192 for these alternatives.

1193 In the preparation of this Element, the available existing land use information and future land
1194 use plans for cities and towns, the County, and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville

1195 Reservation have been examined. Based on this information, modes of transportation
1196 alternatives have been developed and analyzed in terms of implications to meet future
1197 transportation needs.

1198 **Okanogan County Planning Regions**

1199 Okanogan County is divided into four (4) planning regions: North, Central, South, and Methow.
1200 By dividing the County into these four regions, the specific needs of each local jurisdictions and
1201 surrounding development in rural areas can be better addressed. Figure 1-1 identifies the
1202 boundaries of the planning regions. The transportation study for the Central Region was
1203 completed in May of 1994. The results of that study are incorporated into the Transportation
1204 Element.

1205 **Functional Classification System**

1206 Classification of streets and highways in the State of Washington is based upon guidelines
1207 prepared by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Streets are classified based upon the
1208 degree to which they provide travel movement and land access functions. Specific criteria
1209 defining streets includes the following:

- 1210 • Character and relative length of trips.
- 1211 • Anticipated or projected traffic volume.
- 1212 • The relationship of a street to the land use it serves.

1213 Each local jurisdiction is responsible for defining its transportation system into the following
1214 functional classifications:

1215 **Principal Arterial: (01 Rural/Interstate)-** Streets and highways which contain the greatest
1216 portion of movement or long-distance travel. Such facilities serve high-volume travel corridors
1217 that connect major generators of traffic. The selected routes provide an integrated system for
1218 complete circulation of traffic, including ties to the major rural highways entering urban area.
1219 Generally, principal arterials include high traffic volume streets.

1220 **Minor Arterial: (06 Rural/ Minor)-** Streets and highways which connect with remaining arterial
1221 and collector roads that extend into the urban area. Minor arterial streets and highways serve
1222 less concentrated traffic-generating areas such as neighborhood shopping centers and schools.
1223 Minor arterial streets serve as boundaries to neighborhoods and collect traffic from collector
1224 streets. Although the predominant function of minor arterial streets is the movement of traffic,
1225 they also provide for considerable local traffic that originates or is destined to points along the
1226 corridor.

1227 **Major Collector: (07 Rural Major Collector -** These routes should provide service to the county
1228 seat if not on an arterial route, to larger towns not directly served by the higher systems, and to

1229 other traffic generators of equivalent inter-county importance, such as consolidated schools,
1230 shipping points, county parks, important agricultural areas, etc. In addition, these routes should
1231 link larger towns and/or cities with routes of higher classification and should serve the more
1232 important inter-county travel corridors.

1233 **Minor Collector: (08 Rural Minor Collector)**- These routes should be spaced at intervals
1234 consistent with population density, collect traffic from local roads, and bring all developed areas
1235 within a reasonable distance of a collector road. In addition, these routes should provide service
1236 to the remaining smaller communities and link the locally important traffic generators with their
1237 rural counterparts.

1238 **Local Access: (09 Rural Unclassified)**- Streets not selected for inclusion in the arterial or
1239 collector classes. They allow access to individual homes, shops, and similar destinations. Direct
1240 access to abutting land is essential for all traffic originating from, or is destined to, abutting land.
1241 Through traffic should be discouraged by appropriate geometric design and/or traffic control
1242 devices.

1243 Functional classification of major roads and State Routes in Okanogan County are shown on
1244 Figure 1-2, and detailed in Appendix A-1 and A-2.

Essential Public Facilities

Airport Safety

The general aviation, non-general aviation, and private airstrips in Okanogan County provide a vital transportation link and are tangible assets to the economic base of the County. Air transportation provides important support to emergency services by enabling the rapid importation of vital supplies and the transportation of injured or ill people to larger or specialized medical facilities. The airports provide the opportunity to capitalize infrastructure for the siting of compatible industrial and commercial businesses.

The Comprehensive Plan creates policy designed to guide zoning and other development regulation to protect airports from incompatible land uses both on-site and on adjacent lands as required by the Revised Code of Washington and Federal Regulation.

Aviation facilities are mapped as terminals on the Transportation and Essential Public Facilities Map, Map 3, and may be adjusted as the size, shape, or number of facilities is modified.

Capital Facilities

The Okanogan County Capital Facilities Plan identifies the need for new capital facilities and major enhancements to existing facilities through a twenty year planning window. Proposed or anticipated funding and the critical timeline for implementation is identified for the first six years of the plan. The Capital Facilities Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Coordination

Federal Agencies

Local government has the responsibility to protect the local tax base, value of private property, economic stability, and in general, the well-being of the local community. These critical functions are closely entangled with federal and state management decisions.

Congress has long recognized the importance of local governance to the effective management of the nation's resources. It has provided for the involvement of local authority in every federal land use statute passed in the past 35 years. In many of these statutes, Congress has mandated that the federal land use agencies "coordinate" their policies and management activities with local government.

Coordination means the federal agencies shall give prior notice to the local government of agency plans and management activities and also, among other criteria, requires agencies to make their policies and management activities consistent with local plans. Congress has directed federal agencies to coordinate with local government because they recognize local authority must be consulted and involved in the decision making process before the public input process.

The federal agencies, primarily the United States Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management manage a total of 1,571,208 acres in Okanogan County. This land is critical to the customs, culture, and economy of Okanogan County. The Federal Agencies claim a pre-emption of land use permitting authority on federal land. As such the comprehensive plan designates federal land by the agency that manages it and the resources located on the property. Forest land of long term commercial significance, agricultural land, and mineral lands are identified in an overlay on the comprehensive plan map. The federal agencies must try to make their land management decisions consistent with local plans and policies.

The land management decisions made by the federal agencies controls the economic activity on federal land. Their decisions have a direct impact on local revenue collected from timber harvest taxes and indirectly impacts other revenue sources generated through other natural resource jobs.

Because of the large amount of land in Okanogan County that is managed by the federal agencies payment in lieu of taxes and the secure rural schools and communities payments are important revenue sources for the county. Okanogan County believes the annual PILT and SRSC payments must be guaranteed by law at a fixed amount with an identified CPI index for annual increases.

Okanogan County will require the federal agencies to comply with federal law by notifying the Board of County Commissioners as early as possible in the formative stages of the formation of a proposed change in any land management policy or regulation or immediate upon receipt of an application or

proposal from any non-governmental organization or other agency. Notification shall take place prior to the issuance of any notice to the public.

Okanogan County expects the federal agencies to maximize the use of federal land for agricultural and tourist/recreation activities in absence of a compelling need to curtail such activities for protection of the sustainability of the resource.

State Agencies

The State Environmental Policy Act RCW 43.21C sets forth a consistent process for review of probable, significant, and adverse impacts brought about by land use decisions, both project specific and on a program level basis. The actions of State Agencies, with few specifically enumerated exemptions, are subject to review under SEPA. It is clear the intent of the Legislature was for State Agencies to coordinate closely with local government to ensure Agency decisions are consistent with local plans. As local government is charged with the responsibility for delivery of a wide array of critical services it is critical that State Agencies interact with counties in an effective and open manner. Okanogan County adopted OCC Section 18 Coordination, to identify clear protocols to inform Federal and State.

State agencies are required to comply with local zoning and other land use permits on the lands they manage. Land managed by the state agencies is not identified by ownership and bears the same land use designations, consistent with the applicable criteria, as privately owned land in Okanogan County.

Several state agencies own land in Okanogan County including Fish and Wildlife, State Parks, Department of Transportation, and Department of Natural Resources. It is the policy position of Okanogan County that state agencies should consolidate their land holdings by divesting land that contributes to a checkerboard ownership and the commensurate increase in land management difficulties. Conversely state agencies should obtain additional land only when doing so creates an ownership pattern conducive to more efficient management.