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From: Clark County <webmaster@clark.wa.gov>
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Subject: Council Hearing Public Comment

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Clark County

Submitted on Sat, 11/25/2023 - 10:46 PM

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Subject

Clark County Climate Stakeholder Assessment Summary and Recommendations Report

Date of Hearing

Tue, 11/28/2023

Comment

FOR THE PUBLIC RECORD November 25, 2023

Dear Councilors,

Clark County Citizens United, Inc. sees the perfect opportunity for the councilors to do something good for all of the citizens of the county, while being compliant to the new climate mandates. By utilizing the Chelaltchie Prairie Railroad, for what it is designed for, is long overdue. CCCU envisions the railroad providing economic opportunity for commercial and industrial jobs, as well as commuter travel. The line runs diagonally through the county. Serving the whole county was what it was historically used for in the past. The county needs to bring the railroad back to life again.

No one in the rural areas or urban areas, should have to commute more than ten minutes to work. The planning we have today creates long commuter trips to work, often up to two hours. Regardless whether one uses an electric vehicle or a gas one, they all travel on roads. Those roads are deteriorating from the excess use and depend on carbon products for their construction and maintenance. Railroads are more efficient, move more people, and produce much less

pollution.

The fear of fires, because of perceived global warming, can easily be managed, if the forests and vegetation are managed. Currently, environmental ordinances go far beyond the need for revegetation, in the name of mitigation. Routinely, people are required to plant vegetation right up to the buildings, with little or no fire safe zone or regard for the safety of the people. Our forests have grown exponentially, and are now a safety hazard. All land that is growing trees needs to be periodically harvested and managed, to reduce the fire potential of dense forests. There should be only a "no net loss of function and value" required, whenever it deems necessary to mitigate for development that has actually caused harm to the environment. But, most of what landowners do, is generally quite harmless. Yet county staff wants to clam otherwise and then uses hundreds of feet of mitigation to fix it, when it doesn't need fixing.

What does need fixing is reducing the potential of catastrophic forest or vegetation fires, by assuring safe zones around any place where people live. The recommended fire safe zones are 30 feet, 60 feet and 100 feet. In some circumstances there needs to be 200 feet of cleared area to provide a safe environment. Safety must come first.

All of this environmental preservation is doing more harm than good. The "hands off" concept, doesn't work. Just as a gardener knows when to transplant, prune, and plant, to enhance the garden, the same thing is true for our vegetated environment around all of us. Too many trees is not healthy for the trees or the humans. There has to be a balance, and that balance has been lost.

It is really quite simple. Allow people to live throughout the county in the culture and environment they choose. By doing so the farmers will till and enhance the fields, the foresters will harvest and manage the forests and the rural folks will manage their land as they raise their children to be good stewards of that land. Urban people will strive to better their communities, knowing there is opportunity for something different in the future. Put the jobs where the people are located. Open the entire county to a full complement of economic vitality in a safe and productive environment.

Sincerely,

Carol Levanen, Exec. Secretary, for and in behalf of the membership

Clark County Citizens United, Inc.
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