

**From:** [Jeffrey Delapena](#)  
**To:** [Monica Zazueta](#); [Cnty 2025 Comp Plan](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Andrew Millison: "Geomorphology, Permaculture, and The Good Work" | The Great Simplification #64  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 4, 2025 8:19:03 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)

---

Good day, Monica,

Thank you for submitting comments about planning approaches related to the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update.

These will be entered into the Index of Record.

Best,



**Jeff Delapena**  
Program Assistant  
COMMUNITY PLANNING

564.397.4558



---

**From:** Monica Zazueta <zazuetamonica0813@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 3, 2025 8:39 PM  
**To:** Cnty 2025 Comp Plan <comp.plan@clark.wa.gov>  
**Subject:** Andrew Millison: "Geomorphology, Permaculture, and The Good Work" | The Great Simplification #64

**EXTERNAL:** This email originated from outside of Clark County. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

<https://youtu.be/52L4Ncs0jLk?si=59bEU52RyzcP7Ro2>

The video discusses the concept of "watershed democracy" - the idea of basing political and land management boundaries on natural watershed boundaries rather than arbitrary grids. This allows for more integrated, holistic management of land, water, and resources at the community level. The video contrasts this with the typical land use planning approach in the United States, where political boundaries often do not align with natural landscape features.

Key points:

- In many rural Indian villages, the boundaries of the village correspond to the ridges, hills, and drainage basins that define the watershed.
- This allows the community to manage the land, water, and resources within their watershed in an integrated way.
- In contrast, in the U.S., political boundaries like cities, counties, and states are often arbitrarily imposed on the landscape, disconnected from natural water flows and ecosystem boundaries.
- Aligning land use planning with watershed boundaries, rather than arbitrary political grids, could allow for more sustainable, holistic management of land, water, and resources at the community level.
- This "watershed democracy" approach was proposed by early American explorer John Wesley Powell, but was not widely adopted.

Steps a land use planner could take to implement the ideas of "watershed democracy" and align land use planning with natural watershed boundaries:

1. Conduct a detailed mapping and analysis of the watershed boundaries, drainage patterns, and natural landscape features within the city's jurisdiction.
2. Work with local community groups, environmental organizations, and indigenous knowledge holders to understand the historical and current uses, management practices, and significance of the watershed areas.
3. Evaluate the current political/administrative boundaries of the city, counties, neighborhoods, etc. and identify where they diverge from the natural watershed boundaries.
4. Propose re-drawing administrative boundaries to better align with watershed units, consulting with affected communities and government entities.

5. Develop new land use planning policies, zoning codes, and development guidelines that are tailored to the unique characteristics and needs of each watershed area, rather than applying a one-size-fits-all approach.

6. Incentivize or require integration of watershed-scale management practices into new developments, infrastructure projects, and municipal operations (e.g. stormwater management, groundwater recharge, habitat restoration).

7. Establish formal mechanisms for watershed-based community decision-making, resource management, and conflict resolution.

8. Partner with schools, universities, and extension services to provide education and training on watershed science, permaculture, and sustainable land/water stewardship for residents.

9. Advocate for changes to state and federal laws and programs to better support and enable watershed-based approaches to local and regional planning.

The key is to shift the fundamental unit of land use planning from arbitrary political boundaries to natural, hydrologically-defined watershed systems. This can help enable more holistic, community-driven management of shared natural resources.