

October 10, 2012

Thurston County Board of Commissioners
2000 Lake Ridge Drive SW
Olympia, WA 98502

Olympia City Council
P.O. Box 1967
Olympia, WA 98507

Subject: Joint Public Hearing - Thurston County and Olympia Planning Commissions - Land Use Plan Amendments - French Road -Study Area - Chambers Basin Study Area- Medela

Dear Commissioners:

My name is Laurie Meeker and I live at 3025 French Rd NW, Olympia, Washington 98502.

It is clear from the study conducted by Thurston County Planning Department staff that the French Road/French Loop area is not suitable for an Urban Growth Area due to critical areas and environmental constraints. The area is not suitable for Urban Growth development densities and should be kept rural in character. We have been arguing this for many years, and are hopeful that now is the time to act to protect this area from denser development.

I respectfully request that the French Road/French Loop area be removed from the UGA, and that development be restricted to 1/5 residential (1 dwelling per 5 acres). If that is not possible, a low-density designation should be applied, 2 dwellings per acre at the most.

Furthermore, since the new development at French Gardens went in, traffic continues to increase, making it dangerous to walk in our neighborhood. I would like to formally request that traffic calming devices be installed to make the area safer for its residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Laurie M. Meeker
3025 French Rd. NW
Olympia, WA 98508
360-259-8139

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Dear Commissioners:

I live at 3025 French Rd North West, Olympia, Washington 98502

Every six months I respectfully request that the French Loop/Butler Cove moratorium study area outside the City of Olympia limits and within the Urban Growth Area boundary continue to be held in moratorium.

Now that we have an opportunity to be removed I say yes remove us from the UGA

The study on this area is a beefy document; it states almost everything we have said before, from run off across French Rd, high water on people's property adjacent to high-density development. This French Rd is delicate and complicated. I am requesting lower density 2-4 and to be taken out of UGA so we don't have to go through this again. I can hope.

In addition this area cannot support the high traffic flow and high-speed drivers that many of us addressed when opposing the current development on French Road. It also appears French Rd is a bypass for some getting, to Cooper Point Rd. The near misses when walking anytime of day and the increased road kill are a harbinger of what is to come if we don't request traffic calming measures.

Unless there is an environmental miracle we continue to require the moratorium. The critical needs have not changed for the better but continue to be impacted by irresponsible development that was questionably approved.

The entire area lies within 2800 feet of Budd Inlet, is characterized by steep slopes with landslide hazard potential, multiple small drainages leading to Puget Sound's southernmost embayment, poor surface drainage, and aquifer recharge areas. We believe these attributes make the area unsuitable for the maximum zoning density of eight residences per acre, and that capping the current zoning

(R4-8) at the lower density of four residences per acre (R-4) would help minimize environmental impacts to upland, freshwater, and estuarine areas.

The physical and environmental characteristics that constrain development in the subject area are briefly described below.

Landslide Hazard Areas

According to the County's critical areas inventory map for *Geologic Hazard Areas in the Cooper Point Area*, approximately 25% of the subject area is mapped as a landslide hazard area. These areas appear to be subject to shallow rapid landslides that may be exacerbated by improperly routed surface water drainage. Additional water to these areas can result in both increasing the frequency of landslides that occur, as well as lengthening the time period over which landslides can occur.

Development should not occur in these areas, and any new development would need to be set back from these hazard areas. Runoff/drainage from new development would have to be carefully routed to avoid contributing both surface water as well as ground water to these areas, which typically lie between areas likely to be developed and the receiving waters of Budd Inlet. A lower level of development throughout the requested rezone area would allow more opportunities to direct and manage runoff/drainage effectively in new developments, and this in turn would decrease the risk of increasing shallow rapid landslides.

Aquifer Recharge Areas

According to the County's critical areas inventory map for *Geologic Hazard Areas in the Cooper Point Area*, virtually all of the subject area lies within an aquifer recharge area. (Areas not characterized as an aquifer recharge area lie within the landslide hazard zone). Approximately half of the area is mapped as "high", and about 15% of the area is mapped as "moderate" for its contribution to recharging the underlying Qva aquifer.

These zones of high and moderate recharge have been designated as such due to several factors: the presence of the Qva aquifer lying at approximately 100' elevation above sea level; the permeability and thinness of the overlying strata (soil and glacial till); the low relief of the ground's surface and the low density of draining channels; and the high rainfall in this part of the county, relative to the rest of the county. Groundwater recharge in the subject area is estimated at nearly 24 inches per year and up to 32 inches per year for the large surface water body and its adjacent wetlands (*Conceptual Model and Numerical Simulation of the Ground-Water-Flow System in the Unconsolidated Sediments of Thurston County, Washington, USGS 1999*).

As a result, development in the subject area would impact the quantity and quality of water entering, or recharging the underlying Qva aquifer. Increased impervious surfaces resulting from development would interfere with the entry of water into the aquifer through the soil surface. This would result in decreasing the amount of water recharging the aquifer. Water coming off impervious surfaces associated with development would carry more pollutants (from roadways, septic systems, lawn treatments, etc.) and thus degrade the quality of water in the aquifer as that runoff permeated the soil and made its way to the aquifer. This would not only affect West Olympia residents, but potentially any entity in the county relying on water withdrawal from this extensive aquifer.

Since quite a number of residences in the subject area use well water, or some combination of city and well water, we are concerned about the contamination of the aquifer from which we draw water. While the Department of Ecology's website (<http://apps.ecy.wa.gov/wellog/scripts/>) for well logs maps eight wells in the area, we are aware of additional wells (see signature pages for landowners with onsite wells).

Wetlands

According to the County's critical areas inventory map for *Geologic Hazard Areas in the Cooper Point Area*, wetlands appear to comprise about 5% or more of the subject area. These wetlands perform an important role in helping to store surface water during periods of high precipitation, and may contribute to aquifer recharge through percolation over time into the aquifer, or by direct interception of the aquifer.

Storage of surface water is particularly of concern to us, as a number of properties in the area have been adversely impacted by excessive surface water that is either unmanaged or improperly managed. New development will result in increasing the "total impervious area" (TIA) of the subject area, and could overload the capacity of existing wetlands to hold water during rainy periods, thereby reducing their effectiveness as well as their habitat values. Additionally, development can also be expected to increase the pollutants entering these wetlands, with likely adverse effects to habitat and possibly to groundwater.

Decreasing the level of new development in the subject area would result in a lower TIA, result in less storm water runoff that needs to be managed, result in fewer pollutants in runoff, and reduce surface flows entering wetlands and their buffers.

Fish-bearing Stream and Budd Inlet

According to the County's critical areas inventory map for *Geologic Hazard and Species of Concern Areas in the Cooper Point Area*, Butler Creek is mapped as an anadromous stream.

Roughly 55% of the subject area lies within the Butler Creek Basin, a sub-drainage of the West Bay drainage basin, and is mostly undeveloped. According to the County's April 1993 *Budd Inlet/Deschutes River Watershed Characterization, Part II, Water Quality Study*, the Butler Creek Basin already suffers from degraded water quality, and this water directly enters Budd Inlet. Significant increases in fecal coliform loading and increasing nutrient levels resulting in exceedances of water quality standards, were associated with on-site sewage systems and yard fertilizers from residential lots.

Additional development within the Butler Creek Basin could well be expected to exacerbate fecal coliform loading and nutrient levels, even if new homes were hooked up to city sewer. Stormwater runoff typically contributes pulses of fecal coliform bacteria contamination from septic systems, pet waste, livestock, and wildlife to surface water drainages. In the Butler Creek Basin, as well as the rest of the subject area, these drainages ultimately end up in Budd Inlet, further degrading water quality.

Habitat and Species Use

The subject area and its adjacent estuarine waters provide habitat that supports a variety of resident wildlife, migratory birds, seasonal waterfowl, fish, and marine mammals. Deer, raccoon, and songbirds are commonly seen throughout the area. River otters forage along the shoreline and den in the banks along Budd Inlet. Bald eagles, peregrine falcons, sharp-shinned hawks, Cooper's hawks, a variety of owls, at least four species of woodpeckers, two species of heron, gulls, and kingfishers are routinely observed perching, foraging, and hunting within the area and along the shoreline. The west side of Budd Inlet is also utilized by waterfowl including grebes, pigeon guillemots, American wigeon, mallards, surf scoters, common and Barrow's golden-eyes, and bufflehead. Chinook and coho salmon feed, rear, and migrate along the shoreline, along with forage fish such as sand lance. Surf smelt spawn on intertidal beaches receiving surface water from the subject area. Several species of clams and crabs inhabit the intertidal and subtidal zones. Harbor seals feed, bear young, and haul out on logs, in the waters of Budd Inlet adjacent to the subject area.

Each of these species will be negatively impacted by development that degrades surface water quality, reduces vegetative cover, fragments open space, and interrupts habitat corridors. The requested moratorium would help reduce impacts to these species and their habitats.

In summary, given the geology, topography, and location of the subject area, I respectfully request a lower density 2-4 designation and to be taken out of UGA so we don't have to go through this again.



Maria A. Trevizo, BA, CSAC II
Wellness Education Specialist

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cc: Thurston County Development Services

10/10/12

Re: French Rd Study Area

Please, please, please remove us from the VGA +
make it as loosely dense (?) as possible. We do not
want any more developments down the street; the
traffic is horrific + the wild life is going away.

Also, if my house / French Rd does "have" to stay in
the VGA, please consider ^{the} special nature of the
road + keep the skies dark + the street rural.

Thank you.

Carol Hunter

2613 French Rd

10/10/12

French Loop Road

Please remove the area from the UGA
and keep it Residential Low Impact 2-4.

Thank You

