

Adam Zack

From: Lynda Guernsey
Sent: Thursday, August 19, 2021 9:06 AM
To: Vacation Rental Comments
Subject: FW: Vacation Rental Cap

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From: Liz Scranton <cwf@rockisland.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 19, 2021 7:26 AM
To: Lynda Guernsey <LyndaG@sanjuanco.com>
Cc: Jamie Stephens <jamies@sanjuanco.com>
Subject: Vacation Rental Cap

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August 12, 2021

Members of the San Juan County Planning Commission
PO Box 947
Friday Harbor, WA 98250

Re: Proposed Use of “Caps” for Regulation of Vacation Rentals in San Juan County

Dear Members of the San Juan County Planning Commission,

Thank you for your prior support for a county-wide moratorium and the need to place limits on this commercial activity in mostly residential land use areas. Today we face a critical need to address the proliferation of vacation rental permits (VRs) in the County through the use of hard numerical caps.

The fundamental purpose of a VR Cap is to help protect and preserve the nature of our county’s residential neighborhoods, including our rural character, our fragile environment, and our cherished island culture.

I grew up on Block Island, New Shoreham, Rhode Island. As a child the island was a rural gem but has now become over developed and swarmed with tourist each summer. The town of New Shoreham had to build a “hotel” to house seasonal employees who bunk in tight quarters and have no connection to the island community. Water is now being shipped from the mainland and fire and rescue services are overburdened. The rural nature is gone. I feel we are seeing the beginning of this happening in our county.

I join others in proposing the following Cap structure.

The VR Cap should be simple and, above all, enforceable. Caps should be island-specific and equal to the number of *active and compliant* VR permits as of December 31, 2020. Definitions of the terms “Active” and “Compliant” are appended.

There may be permit holders who were not active and compliant on December 31, 2020. These permit holders could become active and compliant by December 31, 2021 and still continue operation. However, that would not change the number of the Cap. Instead, the number of VR permits would exceed the cap for a period of time until attrition brought the number back into line with the Cap requirement.

There will be no new vacation rental permits issued for a particular island until that island is below their island’s designated Cap. Any vacation rental permit holders who are not active and compliant by December 31, 2021 will surrender their permit until such time as they are eligible to reapply. Once each island is below their designated Cap, a permit may be granted to the next vacation rental on the waiting list on that specific island.

A current list of active and compliant vacation rental permit holders and a waiting list of individuals seeking to gain a vacation rental permit, including a total for each island, will be published on the San Juan County website. This website shall be active and available by January 15, 2022.

I urge the Planning Commission to act expediently on this matter.

Respectfully,

Liz Scranton
4559 Center Road
Lopez Island, WA 98261

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