

From: Roger Mitchell
To: [PDS comments](#)
Subject: Permitting of Non-Motorized Trails in the Industrial Forest - Natural Resource Lands
Date: Tuesday, August 01, 2017 1:35:08 PM

Permitting of Non-Motorized Trails in the Industrial Forest – Natural Resource Lands (IF-NRL) Zoning Designation

Written Comment – submitted 1 August 2017 via pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us

Roger Mitchell, Bow WA

I **strongly oppose** the proposal to modify Skagit County Code (SCC) Chapter 14.16.410: Industrial Forest – Natural Resource Lands (IF-NRL) to allow the construction of non-motorized trails to be an outright permitted use (no County permit required).

My opinions and reasons for my opposition:

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->**Use the Special Use Permit process instead.**

Why isn't the procedure already in place, the use of a Special Use Permit, sufficient to handle individual trail proposals ? Changing SCC is way too excessive a means to deal with this unique proposal.

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->**Skagit County first.** I understand that this proposal is, in part, to help the City of Darrington. It's inappropriate to modify SCC to help a city that is not even in Skagit County. We need to do what is best for Skagit County property owners before we consider what may benefit the City of Darrington.

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->**Terrible “optics” of an apparent rush to judgment.** The optics and lack of transparency of the apparent, sudden rush to get this proposal passed are terrible.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->0 <!--[endif]-->This is not a new proposal; it's been around since 2015

<!--[if !supportLists]-->0 <!--[endif]-->Why was the public comment period closed before the 1 Aug public hearing ? Customarily, public hearings have been on Tuesdays and public comment closes on the following Thursday.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->0 <!--[endif]-->With public comment closed before the public hearing, no one can submit written comments based on anything that is brought to light at the public hearing.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->0 <!--[endif]-->It's “curious” that the public comment period and the public hearing are taking place before the Skagit County Forest Advisory Board's (FAB's) next regularly scheduled meeting, just 13 hours later, therefore without the FAB's expert opinions on the matter.

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->**“Nose under the tent”**. This appears to be the proverbial “nose under the tent” precedent that will lead to non-motorized trails being constructed on other rural forest and, eventually, agricultural zoning designations. Are small forest landowners, like me, next ? Is Ag NRL next?

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->**Hard to repeal**. Legislation, even bad or faulty legislation, is far more difficult to modify or repeal than it is to enact. The proposal under consideration is bad legislation.

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->**Unintended consequences**. Skagit County government has a history of failing to consider the unintended consequences in land use Code changes. There are many potential unintended consequences in rushing to judgment on this proposal.

Please, do not rush to judgment. There are better ways to deal with this proposal that do not require modifying Skagit County Code.

Thank you for your time and consideration.