Letter 19

784 Olympus Blvd.
Port Ludlow, Wash 98365
March 21, 2002

Doug Sutherland
Comm. Public Lands
Olympia, Wash.

RECEIVED
MAR 25 2002
OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS

Dear Mr. Sutherland:

Enclosed is an editorial from the Bremerton Sun.. dated March 21. I agree with their views.

The final two small paragraphs really caught my attention. It is more easy to avoid environmental problems than to correct them.

The same pointed conclusion applies to Mats Mats Quarry. Problems will happen if they are allowed to mine <u>below sea level</u>.

The prudent decision by DNR will avoid future environmental problems.

Sincerely,
Ann Dunham.

See the last two small paragraphs.

The Bremerton Sun.

SCRIPPS HOWARD

"Give light and the people will find their own way."

OPINION

THE SUN ■ SERVING WEST SOUND ■ THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 2002 ■

BAINBRIDGE IS

Rotary

OURVIEWS

Environmental issues deserve a closer look in Brinnon

Longtime hearing examiner Irv Berteig made a good call in putting the brakes on approval of the Brinnon subarea plan.

The plan proposes 378 acres of mixed-use zoning in Brinnon and supports development of a 260-acre resort with restaurant, 18-hole golf course, 290-room hotel, conference center and health club.

The plan previously had been approved 5-2 by the county planning commission, and was headed to county commissioners for final consideration and possible adoption.

But last week, Berteig upheld an appeal against the plan filed by the Better Brinnon Coalition. Berteig agreed with the group's contention that environmental issues hadn't been adequately considered.

"There has not been an analysis of likely adverse environmental impacts," Berteig wrote. "The department's actions were to circumvent all environmental analysis at the subarea plan state ..."

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state ...."

Al Scalf, director of the Department of Community Development, said the county felt environmental issues had been adequately covered in a 1998 environmental impact statement for the comprehensive plan.

Berteig didn't agree.

"In spite of the volume (of the EIS), there's a great deal of repetition, long on descriptions and short on analysis," he wrote.

The subarea plan and resort it would allow have been — putting it mildly — controversial in Brinnon.

Supporters say that Brinnon, like most of Jefferson County, could use an economic boost like the resort would provide. Developer Chuck Finnila says the facility would employ about 200 people, about one-tenth of the Brinnon area's population.

Opponents note that the entire Brinnon-Quilcene region has a water shortage, and say a golf course only would make things worse. They also are concerned about environmental impacts in a fairly pristine section of Hood Canal that is home to several oyster farms.

Complicating the controversy is the fact that the subarea planning group's members include Finnila and Realtor Linda Tudor, both of whom own property they could develop if the plan is approved.

Opponents feel that's a conflict of interest. Finnila and Tudor don't.

Because of that potential conflict, and a relatively passive look at environmental issues, it's easy to see why opponents felt the subarea plan was being railroaded to passage.

We don't know that was the case. In general, it's a good idea to have stakeholders represented in community planning groups. Facing an $800,000 budget deficit, it's also understandable why county officials wouldn't be eager to pick up an environmental review costing $30,000 or more.

But local politics aside, the core issue here is that environmental problems are more easily avoided than corrected.

And $30,000 — or even 200 jobs — is a price worth paying to protect a treasure like Hood Canal.

Letter 19 (cont'd)

Response to Letter 19

DUNHAM, GWINN (March 21, 2002)

1. Comment acknowledged.