

Nicole Mardell

From: Matt Cyrus <matt@aspenlakes.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 31, 2024 3:47 PM
To: Nicole Mardell
Subject: Comp Plan Comments

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Natural Resources Goal 5

Page 61.

Edit to read:

A continued challenge to wildlife resources is **predation and recreational** impacts on habitat. Mule deer are seeing steady declines, approximately 10% each year per Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife biologists. These declines in population are due **primarily to predation, poaching, legal hunting, and road strikes.**

Page 62.

Edit to read:

A 2021 report by the Oregon Department of Water Resources found that **shallow (less than 600 feet)** groundwater levels through Deschutes County are declining, by as much as 50 feet of total decline in the central part of the basin. **These shallow groundwater sources are directly impacted by rainfall, surface water recharge from flood irrigation, leaky ditches and canals, and an increase in Juniper tree populations.** This decline is considered “excessively declined” per state statute and is attributed toward a shift in overall drier conditions since the late 1990s, a warming trend in the basin, **increased Juniper forests**, and decreased snowpack. Ongoing development and piping of canals (which limits artificial groundwater recharge while conserving canal water) also exacerbate the issue.

Page 65.

Comments about snowpack into the next century should be deleted as unsubstantiated. Thoughts drop in mid-sentence.

Page 68.

Remove 5.1.1.b. This is contrary to support of agriculture and will exacerbate on-farm water shortages.

Page 69.

Edit to read:

5.2.1.c. Encourage and educate the community about the relative impacts of thinning or reduction of plant species, **such as Juniper**, that adversely impact forest health, water availability, and soil quality.

Page 72.

Edit to read:

Policy 5.6.1. Work with stakeholders to create and maintain a system of connected open spaces while **recognizing** private property rights.

Edit to read:

Policy 5.7.4. Incentivize and/or encourage clustering of development in inventoried wildlife areas to reduce impacts to wildlife populations.

Edit to read:

Policy 5.8.2. Coordinate with stakeholders to **balance** access to appropriate recreational opportunities within significant wildlife and riparian habitat through public or non-profit ownership. **Restrict access to public lands were appropriate to preserve wildlife habitat and limit negative impacts to wildlife.**

Page 73.

Edit to read:

Policy 5.10.2. Implement a dark skies **program, utilizing** education, incentives, **and/or regulations** and periodically update the Dark Skies ordinance to reduce the impacts of light pollution and **minimize** lighting impacts on adjacent properties.

Natural Hazards Goal 7

Pages 80 and 81.

Climate forecasts are unsubstantiated, but are stated as fact.

Recreation Goal 8

There is a glaring absence of discussion regarding private recreational opportunities such as skiing, golf, horseback riding, hunting, fishing, agri-tourism, etc. These activities should be recognized and promoted as important recreational opportunities for both residents and as tourist attractions. Further development of trails must address and minimize their impacts to wildlife and their habitat.

Page 90.

Edit to read:

Policy 8.1.1. Reduce barriers to regional parks and recreation projects in Deschutes County, including acknowledgement or adoption of federal, state and local parks and facility plans.

Policy 8.1.2. Collaborate with partners to develop a regional system of open spaces **on public lands**, prioritizing recommendations from local parks districts, County, state, and federal recreational plans and studies.

Policy 8.1.3. Encourage coordination between the U.S. Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management and recreational use interest groups to minimize environmental degradation, **transient camping**, and user conflicts on public land.

Economic Development Goal 9

Page 95.

This section recognizes tourism as one of the major drivers of the Central Oregon economy, but doesn't recognize the importance of Goal 11 Destination Resorts in this section.

Edit to read:

Connections to Other Comprehensive Plan Chapters

Much of the County's economic development activity is directly related to farmland (Chapter 3), forest land (Chapter 3), mineral and aggregate resources (Chapter 4), natural resources (Chapter 5), and **Destination Resorts (Chapter 11)**. Additional information can be found in these sections.

Page 96.

Edit to read:

Goal 9.1: Maintain a stable, sustainable, and thriving rural economy, compatible with rural lifestyles and a healthy environment.

Add:

Policy 9.1.11. Support development of private recreational opportunities, including, but not limited to additional Destination Resorts.

Housing Goal 10

Page 105.

Delete:

Policy 10.4.4. Utilize County owned land in city limits for affordable and workforce housing, where appropriate.

Unincorporated Communities and Destination Resorts Goal 11

Page 107.

Edit to read:

In addition to these unincorporated communities, Destination Resorts are another form of development outside of urban areas. Destination Resorts are a unique rural development, in that they blend housing, recreation, limited commercial, and lodging with open space areas and wildlife preservation to create a livable community and destination for residents and tourists alike. Destination Resorts create a sizable tax base for the county, while utilizing few services and represent a large portion of Central Oregon’s tourist draw, with amenities such as golf, water parks, horseback riding, and wedding venues.

While Destination Resorts are significant employers and pose an opportunity for recreation, economic development, and housing in the rural County, some residents have expressed opposition to additional development of this type.

Page 108.

This language needs to be updated to reflect that Thornburgh is currently under construction.

In 2010, Deschutes County completed an amendment to its destination resort mapping process, adding “clear and objective” requirements for eligible and ineligible sites, and the process for amending the destination resort map based on changes in state law. Since that time, Pronghorn, Caldera Springs, and Tetherow resorts have gone through the siting process. Resorts existing prior to the legislative change, such as Black Butte, Sunriver, and the Inn of the Seventh Mountain have also expanded and been rezoned to Urban Unincorporated Community and Resort Community, respectively. Thornburgh Resort has received preliminary approvals, but has not yet broken ground.

Page 109.

Edit to read:

Destination Resort development continues to be a contentious issue. Community members have expressed concern regarding the water use of large-scale development – specifically the effects to groundwater for neighboring property owners. Many community members have expressed a desire to further limit destination resorts, golf courses, and visitor accommodations in order to preserve water access and availability for year-round residents. Conversely, it has been pointed out that Destination Resorts use less water per acre than irrigated agriculture, while preserving open space and wildlife habitat.

Page 112.

Edit to read:

Policy 11.7.1. Destination resorts shall only be allowed within areas shown on the “Deschutes County Destination Resort Map” and when the resort complies with the requirements of applicable state statutes and county code. Once on the map, any additional limitations or restrictions imposed on the property will be subject to Measure 49 compensation.

Delete:

Policy 11.7.2. Create and implement additional limitations on the siting and development of destination resorts that go beyond current state regulations to ensure protection of water quality, recreational resources, and other County resources and values.

Edit to Read:

Policy 11.7.3. **Encourage** destination resort developments **to** support and implement strategies to provide workers with affordable housing options within or in close proximity to the resorts.

Edit to Read:

Policy 11.7.4. Mapping for destination resort siting shall **comply with state statutes**.