

**FERRY COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
August 05, 2009**

Chairwoman Tamra Stevens called the special, August 05, 2009 meeting of the Planning Commission to order. Commissioners Virginia Sweetland, Gary Howden, Bob Kirkham, Carmen Peterson and John Hamilton were also present. Commissioner Bond was present. Irene Whipple and Carolyn Dabney were present from the Planning Department.

**Comment on Draft Development Regulations and Draft Critical Areas Ordinance:**  
The Planning Commission decided to begin on comments #5 & #7 from Bruce Hunt, DOC (formerly CTED), as they had already addressed comment #1-#4.

❖ **Comment # 5 & #7 from Bruce Hunt, DOC regarding draft Development Regulations:**

Commissioner Brad Miller thought the Planning Commission might add a statement to the draft ordinance that we don't have information on private grazing. Also, he thought we might add that we could not find any requirement for using 640 acres as a blocking size.

Rancher Gordon Strandberg, was at a meeting where he had information on allotments and leases, or head of cattle on leases. He got this information from the Forest Service. The numbers showed a decline of acres leased by the Forest Service since 1990. The Planning Department will call the Forest Service for information and Gary Howden will talk to Mr. Strandberg to clarify his information and the source.

The Planning Commission wants to clearly state that the acres defined as grazing land in Ferry County by the Census of Agriculture, are for more than the total acres in private lands in the county.

There was discussion about whether we could put together a map showing any big farms and forest allotments.

There was discussion about the impossibility of winter grazing in Ferry County, as well as the requirement that cattle must be off the Forest Capital grazing leases by October 1<sup>st</sup> each year. The Forest Service also has a deadline by which the cattle must be off the leased land.

A statement could be added that since Ferry County is open range, there is no need for other private leases. Why pay when it is already available, open range?

Forest Capital has cut back on leases and often sells the land after logging. Bob Kirkham said that when Boise Cascade had the land near him, he ran 55 pairs. He can now only run 18, under Forest Capital.

There was discussion about asking Bruce Hunt to request an extension so we could conform to his requests and have the Department of Commerce support our efforts.

Commissioner Bond said he would like to go with what we have, rather than ask for an extension.

Appendix A 2. F., Proximity to Market, was discussed. It was agreed by consensus to leave the proximity to market in the document. Our reasoning will be included in response letters to commenters. It was further decided to delete the end of the last sentence, “with the closest cattle market being davenport, Lincoln County, WA.” In place of that will be added “Proximity to market also affects the farmer’s/rancher’s ability to have ready, easy access to the necessary support services needed to operate. These support services are scarce in Ferry County but are available around the market areas.”

Appendix A 3, A., Frost Free Days was discussed. The Planning Commission wants to show that their assignment of “0” for 121-150 frost free days was done logically. Add the sentence, “The neutral point of “0” was assigned to the average growing season as defined by our agricultural advisor.\*” Then have a footnote with Dan Fagerlie’s credentials.

Appendix A, Land in Farms: After the first paragraph, add a new paragraph, “The census shows a total of 749,452 farm acres while the total acres of private land in the whole of Ferry County is only 258,500. This means that 490,952 non-private acres have been included in the farm acres. There are only three possibilities that make up the difference:

- A large portion of the reservation was included;
- A large portion of the Colville National Forest was included; or
- A combination of both.

Ferry County does not know which of the possibilities goes into the reported total acreage. Census confidentiality rules prevent us from having that visibility.

Appendix A, Land in Farms: After the 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph, add a new paragraph, “According to the Forest Service, there are 470,151 acres in Forest Service leasing allotments in Ferry County.

Appendix A, Commercial Significance in Farms: After the last paragraph add a new paragraph, “Although cattle is Ferry County’s major industrial product, the County ranks 25<sup>th</sup> out of 39 counties in the number of cows/calves sold. Numbers were withheld by the Census of Agriculture for Clark, Stevens, Walla Walla, and Whitman Counties to avoid disclosing data for individual farms, however they were included with the other 39 counties. If those numbers had been included, Ferry County probably would have ranked 29<sup>th</sup>. Grant County sells 251, 191 and Yakima County 147,635 compared to Ferry County’s 2,461.”

In the beginning “WHEREAS” section, add, “WHEREAS, grazing land is essential to the agricultural industry in Ferry County. WHEREAS, 491,000 acres of non-private land are utilized as grazing land. These grazing lands comprise almost twice as much land as all the private land in the entire county. The Colville National Forest comprises 96 percent of this grazing land. These grazing lands are utilized for the summer months, as grazing leases specify a pull out date in the fall.”

Appendix A, 5. Blocking: After paragraph 1, add “There was no required block size found in any legislation concerning Agricultural Lands of Long-Term Commercial Significance.”

Section 11.02 1) a) vi) Inchelium: After “volunteer fire department,” add, “ambulance service,” and delete “, and includes a tribal post and pole manufacturing plant.”

Section 11.02 1) vii) Keller: Change “community scale businesses” to, “community small scale businesses”.

❖ **Comment # 9, Karin Divens, WDFWL, regarding draft Critical Areas Ordinance:**

Section 10.04 9): Add a new paragraph after 9) that says, “In reviewing applications for a development permit, Ferry County will review and consider the following ‘mitigation sequencing’:

- 1) Avoid the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or part of an action;
- 2) Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation, by using appropriate technology, or by taking affirmative steps to avoid or reduce impacts;
- 3) Rectifying the impact by rehabilitating or restoring the affected environment;
- 4) Reducing or eliminating the impacts over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action;
- 5) Compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments; and
- 6) Monitoring the impact and the compensation project and taking appropriate corrective measures. Mitigation may include a combination of the above measures.”

Section 9.03 2) 11): Insert the word “private” to read, “Private pedestrian trail, less than 4 feet in width, unpaved and with no bark or fill;”.

Section 9.03 2) 15): Delete, “be the minimum to afford views” and insert “not exceed a width of 25 feet”.

Section 9.03 3): No change.

Section 9.03 4): No change.

Steve Graham sent an email to Irene Whipple for the Planning Commission saying that they should probably accept emails as legal communications. He pointed out that there was no way to confirm the identity of someone who writes a letter any more than you can do so for emails. He agrees that we should not accept telephone calls.

At 8:30 p.m. Bob Kirkham made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Carmen Peterson seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.