

I've been to all but one of the planning meetings on the Teanaway area at the Grange and wanted to email you with my personal feelings about this.

I've heard the opinion that property owners should be allowed to do with their property what they will. It's been said that in the meetings no one has said what they would like to happen with this 46,000 acres, just what they don't want to happen or what they like about the area. I disagree.

What I've heard is that the vast majority of the speakers would like this area to stay in forest land – its current zoning and use. They don't want to see development that would change the character of the area, that would strain our county's budget with snow removal, road maintenance, etc. That is what I would like to see as well – ongoing forest land.

Why is it assumed that forest land is no longer a viable use of the land? The majority of homes are still built with wooden studs, there is a need for pulp wood products, there even be an increased need for biofuel production from timber products. Yes, the forest needs some time to re-grow. But once this land is taken out of forest production, it'll never return.

And what is this perceived pressure for growth? I see empty storefronts throughout the county, I see lots of land that has been designated residential on the market for many months. I would think the cost of fuel would deter these far flung sorts of developments. I would think the water moratorium would deter the idea of development in areas that would require additional wells.

The testimony I've heard at these evening meetings has been so eloquent, so heartfelt, it has really touched me. I'm not a long time resident of this area (we've lived in Hidden Valley since 2003), I was once a 206'er, but my family has come up the Teanaway to camp for over 30 years and we love the place. We love the open range, the independence of the people we've come to know from this area, the freedom to drive the roads up the valley, hike the trails, snowmobile in winter. I don't want to add more roads, residential high density clusters, businesses. The future of this land should not be decided by an investor wanting to make money and then move on.

I appreciate you and the county moderating these evenings. I truly hope you are hearing what the people who love this place are saying. We'll be there again tonight.

Claire Lucke