



SAN JUAN COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

135 Rhone Street, PO Box 947, Friday Harbor, WA 98250  
(360) 378-2354 | (360) 378-2116 | FAX (360) 378-3922  
cdp@sanjuanco.com | www.sanjuanco.com

**MEMO**

**REPORT DATE:** February 17, 2022

**TO:** San Juan County Planning Commission

**FROM:** Sophia Cassam, Planner II

**SUBJECT:** Public Comments Regarding Vacation Rental Permit Caps

**HEARING:** February 18, 2022

**ATTACHMENTS:** A. Public Comments on Vacation Rentals

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**PURPOSE:** Transmittal of written public comments for the February 18, 2022, Planning Commission public hearing on findings regarding the October 15, 2021, recommendation on vacation rental permit caps.

## Sophia Cassam

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**From:** R. Brent Lyles <brent@sanjuans.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 14, 2022 11:16 AM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** Proposed "findings" for Planning Commissioners  
**Attachments:** Friends comments re vacation rental caps - 15sep2021.pdf

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Hello Planning Commissioners,

Given that the Planning Commission will be asked this Friday to provide "findings" for its recommendation for a proposed cap on vacation rental permits, I am hereby resubmitting our comment letter dated 15 September 2021. In this letter, on page 5, you'll find the recitals that we proposed to be used for this purpose, written by the attorney contracting with us, Kyle Loring. We tried to concisely touch on the various issues connected to the proliferation of vacation rentals. I hope you find this language helpful.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me.

Respectfully,

Brent

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**R. Brent Lyles** (he/him) | **Executive Director** | **Friends of the San Juans**  
PO Box 1344 | Friday Harbor, WA 98250 | Direct: 360-378-2324, Cell: 512-773-9789  
[www.sanjuans.org](http://www.sanjuans.org) | [donate](#) | [facebook](#) | [e-news](#)



By Email

September 15, 2021

San Juan County Planning Commission  
PO Box 947  
Friday Harbor, WA 98250  
VRComments@sanjuanco.com

Re: Vacation Rental Ordinance update

Dear Planning Commissioners,

I'm writing on behalf of Friends of the San Juans ("Friends") to support the proposal to cap the number of vacation rental permits that San Juan County ("County") issues at the number of permits that were active and compliant as of July 31, 2021. This number, tallied at 413 by Department of Community Development ("DCD") staff is reasonable for individual property owners looking to engage in short-term rentals, and would also help to address community concerns about housing affordability, environmental stewardship, and community cohesiveness. Thus, Friends recommends that the cap be added to San Juan County Code 18.40.275 per the proposed draft ordinance.

Friends appreciates that the tourist industry plays a significant role in the San Juan Islands, and that vacation rentals have grown into a significant player in that industry. Friends also appreciates the concerns that many community members have expressed in response to the substantial expansion of vacation rental properties. While vacation rentals can benefit individual property owners and tourism-oriented businesses, recent studies indicate that their costs may outweigh their benefits for the community at large. Consequently, Friends supports the Planning Commission's proposal to cap the total number of vacation rental permits at the number that were active and compliant as of July 31, 2021 for the County and for each individual island. Such a cap is consistent with efforts that other desirable vacation communities have made to address the impacts of vacation rentals.

This letter: (1) provides a brief summary of the results of studies investigating the costs and benefits of vacation rentals; (2) references a couple of caps that have been adopted; and (3) identifies several rationales for vacation rental caps that would serve as suitable recitals in the proposed ordinance.

## A. Vacation Rental Costs and Benefits.

Over the past few years, an increasing number of studies have evaluated the costs and benefits of vacation rentals by studying home-sharing platforms like Airbnb and have concluded that at the scale of the community, the costs of short-term rentals likely outweigh their benefits.<sup>1</sup> At the scale of the individual landlord, however, the financial incentives strongly encourage renting a property short-term rather than long-term in tourist locales – a study of Airbnb listings in lower eastside Manhattan found that average full-time Airbnb properties earned 2-3 times the median long-term rent.<sup>2</sup> As a vacation destination, San Juan County likely follows these trends. For the purposes of this letter, and because a recent search on Airbnb for “San Juan Islands” turned up 300+ stays, we rely on studies of Airbnb effects to apply to the county’s current vacation rental conversation.<sup>3</sup>

An increase in a community’s number of vacation rentals increases the long-term rents and sales prices for properties.<sup>4</sup> The authors of a 2019 article in the *Harvard Business Review* found that due to Airbnb, landlords were shifting properties from long-term rentals to short-term rentals.<sup>5</sup> While the authors acknowledged the difficulty in ascribing to Airbnb any impacts to housing markets affected by multiple factors, like gentrification and economic trends, they controlled for those other factors and found that a 1% increase in Airbnb listings caused a 0.018% increase in rental rates and a 0.026% increase in house prices. The article acknowledges that those numbers may seem small, but should be viewed against Airbnb’s substantial average annual growth of about 44%. In exploring the reason for these increases, the authors found that it was due to the reallocation of housing stock from long-term rental properties to those offered for short-term rental.<sup>6</sup> The authors concluded that one way to address these effects would be to limit the number of homes that can be used for vacation rentals and to continue to allow vacation rental of owner-occupied properties, as the Planning Commission has proposed.

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<sup>1</sup> J. Bivens, Economic Policy Institute, *The economic costs and benefits of Airbnb* (Jan. 30, 2019), available at <https://files.epi.org/pdf/157766.pdf> (last visited Sept. 13, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> D. Wachsmuth, A. Weisler, *Airbnb and the Rent Gap: Gentrification Through the Sharing Economy*, Environment and Planning A, 20 (Feb. 2018), available at [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318281320\\_Airbnb\\_and\\_the\\_Rent\\_Gap\\_Gentrification\\_Through\\_the\\_Sharing\\_Economy](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318281320_Airbnb_and_the_Rent_Gap_Gentrification_Through_the_Sharing_Economy) (last visited September 13, 2021).

<sup>3</sup> A similar search on [www.vrbo.com](http://www.vrbo.com) indicated that more than 400 properties in the San Juans are listed on the site.

<sup>4</sup> K. Barron, E. Kung, & D. Proserpio, *Research: When Airbnb Listings in a City Increase, So Do Rent Prices* (April 17, 2019), available at <https://hbr.org/2019/04/research-when-airbnb-listings-in-a-city-increase-so-do-rent-prices> (last visited September 13, 2021).

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> The study analyzed housing vacancies and determined that they were positively correlated with homes in the short-term rental market and negatively correlated with homes in the long-term rental market. *Id.*

Similarly, a study by the non-partisan Economic Policy Institute concluded that “[t]he economic costs Airbnb imposes likely outweigh the benefits. While the introduction and expansion of Airbnb into U.S. cities and cities around the world carries large potential economic benefits and costs, the costs to renters and local jurisdictions likely exceed the benefits to travelers and property owners.”<sup>7</sup> These costs include rising housing costs and the benefits include visitor spending, which may not increase significantly with vacation rentals because visitors might select other accommodations.

Consistent with these studies, San Juan County’s Comprehensive Plan acknowledges the role that vacation homes play in affecting real estate prices, noting that “Because of the relatively small total number of properties available for sale and development in the county at any one time, it takes only a small change in this specialized market to affect prices in the remainder of the housing market, which must meet the needs of those whose primary income is the wages they make from work in the County.”<sup>8</sup>

In addition to the financial costs of vacation rentals, communities have raised concerns about the impacts that they impose on their social fabric. A study of a small group of residents on Oahu found that they were most worried about damage to their sense of community.<sup>9</sup> These concerns were borne out by a study of Boston neighborhoods that determined that increases in Airbnb listings led to more violence in later years because the creation of transient properties undermined local social dynamics.<sup>10</sup>

## **B. Other Communities Have Adopted Vacation Rental Caps.**

While several methods exist for addressing vacation rental impacts, including an outright prohibition of their use, other communities have adopted caps on the number of vacation rentals that can be operated. For example, the City of Santa Cruz, which had 330 legal short-term rentals as of 2018, capped hosted short-term rentals at 250 and phased out non-hosted

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<sup>7</sup> J. Bivens, Economic Policy Institute, *The economic costs and benefits of Airbnb*.

<sup>8</sup> San Juan County Comprehensive Plan, Housing Element, § 5.1.B.

<sup>9</sup> Prof Daniel Guttentag, BBC, *What Airbnb really does to a neighborhood* (Aug. 30, 2018), available at <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-45083954> (last visited Sept. 13, 2021).

<sup>10</sup> Laiyang Ke, Daniel T. O’Brien, Babak Heydari, *Airbnb and neighborhood crime: The incursion of tourists or the erosion of local social dynamics?* (July 14, 2021), available at <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0253315> (last visited Sept. 14, 2021).

rentals.<sup>11</sup> Santa Cruz had 23,635 dwelling units<sup>12</sup> at that time, and 600 operating short-term rentals, with 71% qualifying as whole house rentals. Closer to home, Chelan County recently adopted a cap of 6% of its housing stock that could be used for short-term rentals, subject to some exceptions.<sup>13</sup>

**C. A Cap Set at the Number of Active and Compliant Vacation Rental Permits as of July 31, 2021 is Reasonable and Consistent with the County’s Comprehensive Plan.**

Friends supports the Planning Commission’s current recommendation to cap vacation rental permits in San Juan County at the number that was active and compliant as of July 31, 2021. While any date could serve as the cut-off for the total number of permits, that date reasonably offers property owners over three (3) years to have obtained a vacation rental permit, and 1-2 years longer since the vacation rental conversation began in San Juan County.

In addition, given the conversion of some portion of long-term rentals into vacation rentals, a cap is consistent with San Juan County Comprehensive Plan provisions that support making housing available to all residents, including:

- Vision – “the supply of affordable housing is adequate to meet the needs of our diverse population” (Basic Human Needs) and “there is housing for people of all incomes.” (Land use)
- Housing Element
  - A significant number of very-low to middle-income households have difficulty finding affordable housing in San Juan County. Comp Plan Housing Element § 5.1.B.
  - “Affordable housing for workers is critical if local businesses, professionals, schools, public agencies and other employers are to have a reliable source of experienced workers to provide the goods and services needed by island residents. Providing affordable housing is therefore important to meeting the county’s goals for a dependable and balanced local economy.” Comp Plan Housing Element § 5.1.B.

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<sup>11</sup> Jondi Gums, Santa Cruz Sentinel, *Santa Cruz vacation rental limits OK’d by Coastal Commission* (April 16, 2018), available at <https://maggiebarr.wordpress.com/2018/04/16/santa-cruz-vacation-rental-limits-okd-by-coastal-commission/> (last visited September 14, 2021).

<sup>12</sup> By comparison, San Juan County is projected to have 10,420 households by 2025. San Juan County Comprehensive Plan, Housing Element, § 5.1.B.

<sup>13</sup> Heidi Groover, Seattle Times, *Vacation hot spot Chelan County limits short-term rentals* (July 27, 2021) available at: <https://www.seattletimes.com/business/real-estate/vacation-hotspot-chelan-county-limits-short-term-rentals/> (last visited Sept. 14, 2021).

- Promote fair and equal access to housing opportunities for all persons. Comp Plan Housing Element § 5.2.C. (General Housing Policy No. 1)

**D. The Ordinance Should Include Background Recitals to Explain the Need for a Vacation Rental Limit.**

Friends proposes the following recitals for the proposed ordinance:

- **WHEREAS**, San Juan County first held a hearing about vacation rental regulations on April 21, 2017 and subsequently adopted Ordinance 2-2018 on March 13, 2018 to implement such regulations.
- **WHEREAS**, as of July 31, 2021, the County issued [number] of permits for vacation rentals and 413 properties were actively using their vacation rental permits;
- **WHEREAS**, the San Juan County Comprehensive Plan acknowledges the difficulty in finding local housing that is affordable for a variety of incomes and establishes a policy to promote fair and equal access to housing opportunities for all persons;
- **WHEREAS**, growth in the number of entire property vacation rentals leads to the conversion of long-term rentals to short-term rentals and an increase in rental and sales prices for properties;
- **WHEREAS**, the use of entire properties for vacation rentals can undermine local social dynamics;
- **WHEREAS**, the high cost of housing in San Juan County has been well documented;
- **WHEREAS**, as of July 31, 2021, a significant number of community members on San Juan Island, Orcas Island, and Lopez Island had already expressed concerns about negative impacts to neighborhood integrity, environmental vitality, and housing availability from vacation rentals that were active and compliant at that time;
- **WHEREAS**, San Juan County recognizes the financial benefits of vacation rentals to individual property owners and wishes to support the owners of all vacation rental properties that were active and compliant as of July 31, 2021;
- **WHEREAS**, this Ordinance strikes a necessary balance between the benefits and burdens associated with short-term rentals in San Juan County.

While these recitals do not comprehensively describe the entire vacation rental situation in the county, they offer a condensed summary of the more salient points.

Friends sincerely appreciates the attention that the Planning Commission has paid to vacation rentals and their effect on the availability of local housing. Friends supports the proposal to cap

the total number of vacation rentals. If you have any questions about this letter, I invite you to contact me at 360-622-8060 or Friends' Executive Director, Brent Lyles, at 360-378-2319.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kyle A. Loring", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Kyle A. Loring

Cc: Brent Lyles

## Sophia Cassam

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**From:** Michael Johnson <mdjishere@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 15, 2022 5:45 PM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** Vacation rental cap

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My name is Michael Johnson. I'm a 30 year county resident, and homeowner from Orcas Island.

I wholeheartedly support the 21 findings included within the Feb. 17, 2022 Vacation Rental Working Group's letter signed by Anne Marie Shanks. I support setting the cap on STVRs at the originally agreed to limit of 413.

I maintain that you cannot properly manage tourism while continuing to over promote the islands, and, at the same time, not limit lodging. Orcas, and San Juan Island has already reached overtourism during the peak months, and the visitors bureau is currently promoting for more low value, high volume, day-trippers from Seattle during our buffer seasons.

The road to overtourism is a "policy" that is already degrading both the tourists experience, as well as the quality of life for everybody- tourists, local businesses, as well as the local citizenry.

It's time to show real leadership and change the direction that we're going.

Respectfully, Michael "MJ" Johnson

Tourism and visitor management in the San Juan Released January 2020 | Part IV: Conclusions and recommendations

#### 4. Are the San Juan Islands approaching visitor capacity?

"Very few residents think the islands "can handle more tourists" (6%), and 94% report the islands are at capacity (52%) or over capacity (42%) during the peak summer months. Similarly, few businesses (20%) say the islands can handle more tourists, and 79% report the islands are at (54%) or over (25%) capacity."

"Researchers have described stages in a tourism life cycle to illustrate how increasing use and development may change a destination (Butler, 1980). Earlier stages of exploration, development, and consolidation often lead to later stages of stagnation and decline. Avoiding these later stages requires recognition that uncontrolled growth can "love a place to death," and making sure that use and development are in balance with infrastructure and the destination's intended types of experiences. The recipe for success is not necessarily more infrastructure to handle higher use (such as ever-growing accommodation or transportation systems), but rather defining quality and managing use and impacts so they do not exceed acceptable levels. The San Juan Islands have an opportunity to manage use before it substantially detracts from the quality of visitor experiences or quality of residents' life."

San Juan Islands National Monument  
Annual Manager's Report — Fiscal Year 2016

"Visitation in the San Juan Islands is estimated to be 1,000,000, occurring primarily in the months of May through September."

Conclusions from the 2000 Aspen/Nantucket Report--  
STAFF REPORT DATE: May 25, 2000 TO: San Juan County Board of Commissioners FROM: Pat Mann, Senior Planner RE: Study of Socioeconomic Impacts of Growth Pressure in Selected Seasonal/Resort Communities.

Conclusions - Staff's expectation from this analysis was that the consultant might find some characteristic of the San Juan Islands that differentiated it from the situations in these communities that have transitioned to a dual market in which long-term residents and local workers are squeezed into narrower choices and disrupted lives. The report does not provide such hope for the San Juans. On the contrary, the similarities in size, scale, access, environment, and trends make us look very much like these communities as they were 20 to 30 years ago. The San Juans appear to be headed the direction of Aspen and Nantucket.

## Sophia Cassam

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**From:** Lynda Guernsey  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2022 8:34 AM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** FW: Comment on Vacation Rental Findings for Feb. 18 meeting

Lynda Guernsey, Administrative Specialist II – Direct Line (360) 370-7579  
**SAN JUAN COUNTY**  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
(360) 378-2354 | 135 Rhone Street | PO Box 947 | Friday Harbor, WA 98250

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**From:** Lisa Byers <lisabyers50@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 15, 2022 7:52 PM  
**To:** Lynda Guernsey <LyndaG@sanjuanco.com>  
**Subject:** Comment on Vacation Rental Findings for Feb. 18 meeting

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Hello Sheila, Steve, Nick, Steven, David, Matthew and Peter,

I am joining with my neighbors to request that you honor the decision made in good faith by the Planning Commissioners on August 20, 2021, to freeze the number of vacation rental (VR) permits at the "Active and Compliant" number as of July 31, 2021, which was 413, along with the associated island-specific caps.

Because Vacation rentals are high-traffic, high-turnover, public-facing business operations that enter uninvited into our residential neighborhoods, and because they hold undeniable power to transform a community, today we urge you to certify that we need relief – meaningful guardrails – to protect our homes and neighborhoods from this power.

Thank you for your service,  
Lisa Byers

## Sophia Cassam

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**From:** Shawn Alexander <salexan701@aol.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2022 8:37 AM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** Vacation Rentals  
**Attachments:** 2022-01-17-VRWG comments Findings of Fact-AMES.pdf

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Greetings, as a resident and voter of San Juan County, I strongly request that you respect and hear our voices and honor the decision made in honest good faith by the Planning Commissioners on August 20th, 2021, to **freeze the number of vacation rental (VR) permits at the “Active and Compliant” number of 413** along with the associated island-specific caps.

Because Vacation rentals are high-traffic, high-turnover, public-facing business operations that enter uninvited into our residential neighborhoods, and because they hold undeniable power to transform a community forever, today we urge you to certify **that we need relief – meaningful guardrails – to protect our homes and neighborhoods from this power.** Granting these permits is presently a land use change that permanently impacts surrounding residents for profit.

There are resorts, hotels, and license B&B's that pay taxes and provide employment and that are properly zoned and allowing commercial use in residential area is unfair to the local business that follow the rules.

**Thank you for your service and hearing our voices.**

**Shawn Alexander  
Olga, Washington**

San Juan County Planning Commission  
Department of Community Development  
PO Box 947  
Friday Harbor, WA 98245  
January 17, 2022

Dear Planning Commissioners and Department of Community Development (DCD):

During the December 7, 2021 San Juan County Council (SJCC) Meeting, Council Members requested the Planning Commission create Findings of Fact and return those to them. DCD Planner Sophia Chassam's November 23, 2021 memorandum addressing renewal of the short term rental moratorium includes draft Findings of Fact. We have included a number of the DCD Findings of Fact in this document and provided additional Findings to assist your work.

## **Findings of Fact**

### **Impact of Short-term Vacation Rentals (STVRs) on the San Juan Islands**

- 1) Residents of San Juan County began expressing their pain from short term rentals before July 31, 2021, when active and compliant short term vacation rentals (STVRs) in San Juan County were at 413 permits.
- 2) San Juan County Code 18.04.275 regulates short term vacation rentals of residences but does not include regulations that address the impact of over-concentration of STVRs or the impacts of over-tourism on island neighborhoods.
- 3) The County needs to adequately address potential land use compatibility issues and adverse impacts to rural character, natural resources and the public welfare. A DCD map shows the majority of short-term vacation rentals are located on unpaved private roads with insufficient width to permit simultaneous ingress of emergency service vehicles.

4) Short term vacation rentals are the primary source of growth of transient accommodations in the County. Other sources of transient accommodations such as hotels, campgrounds and resorts are significantly limited by existing land use regulations.

5) Growth of transient accommodations is likely to result in additional tourist visits to the islands, which results in over-tourism if not properly regulated. Over-tourism (including the high turn-over of STRV occupants) can result in negative impacts including reducing the sense of community, damage to the environment, overload to infrastructure (including our fragile ferry system) and degraded tourist experience.

6) In 2021 the WA State Ferry system imploded. Currently, sailing schedules to the San Juan Islands are plagued by delays and cancellations due to shortages of available crew, mechanical problems, pandemic and over-tourism, leaving county residents without adequate transportation options. This problem would only be made worse by adding more tourist traffic due to an increase in short-term vacation rental permits.

7) Extreme weather conditions in recent months have exposed the vulnerable nature of our islands' infrastructure, particularly on Orcas Island, where flooding has resulted in mud slides and road cave-ins. Increasing the number of STRV permits would add to the stress on our local resources at the very time the focus should be on restoring and rebuilding our local infrastructure to ensure the safety of our residents.

8) A 2017 study from researchers at UCLA and USC collected data from Airbnb, Zillow, and the US Census between 2012-2016. Using zip codes from across the country, the study found that a 10% increase in Airbnb listings caused rental prices to increase by .4% and house sales to increase by .7%.

9) Homes with transient rental permits usually list and sell for more money than other homes, contributing to an accelerated rise in values and prices.

### **Washington State Response**

10) On June 28, 2019, HB1798, became law. This law requires short term rental operators to register with the Department of Revenue (DOR), collect and pay various taxes, fees and assessments to which an operator or owner of a hotel or B&B is subject, and

buy liability insurance: RCWs 64.37.020, 64.37.050, RCW 64.37.030. These requirements affirm short term rentals are businesses.

### **San Juan County Council Responses**

11) In 2018, the San County Council updated its short term rental regulations to require existing permit holders to annually certify compliance with their conditions of permit approval.

12) The legislative history of San Juan County Council 2021 actions related to Vacation Rental Moratorium is outlined in San Juan County Resolutions - 03, 05, 16, and on December 7, 2021.

13) At their May 12, 2021 meeting, the County Council provided guidance to the staff and the Planning Commission for development of additional short term rental regulations including an overall cap on the number of permits issued, caps on permits by island, measures to address emergency management, impacts to neighborhoods and impacts to community roads and water systems.

14) The County Council, at the May 12, 2021 meeting, reduced the scope of the moratorium to Eastsound, Lopez Village, Activity Centers and Hamlets, leaving the rest of the county open to additional STR permits. This induced a rush for permits. Some 52 short term rental permits were issued in the first six months of the moratorium.

15) On December 7, 2021, the moratorium on the issuance of short term rental permit processing in UGAs, Hamlets and Activity Centers was renewed for an additional six-month period beginning January 13, 2022 and shall expire on July 13, 2022 unless renewed as provided in RCW 36.70.795 and 36.70A.390.

### **San Juan County Planning Commission Responses**

16) In November, 2020 the Planning Commission unanimously recommended the County Council enact a county-wide moratorium and caps on the number of short term rentals in the county.

17) At the August 20, 2021 meeting, the Commission voted unanimously to support a cap of 413, based on the number of active and compliant short term rentals at that time. At that time county residents were already experiencing negative effects from short term vacation rentals.

18) On October 15, 2021, the Planning Commission voted to cap short term rentals at 650 compliant permits. The four-to-three vote limited the cap to five years.

### **San Juan County Resident Responses**

19) In 2019 the Eastsound Planning Review Committee recommended a moratorium on vacation rentals. The Deer Harbor Plan Review Committee submitted a 2020 docket request asking for a complete ban on vacation rentals in the hamlet.

20) Prior to the August 20, 2021 Planning Commission meeting, the Commission received: 178 comments supporting caps at or below the current level of active and compliant short term rentals and a petition from Lopez Island with 240 signatures asking for limits on short term rentals.

21) Some 700 San Juan County members have signed a petition calling for a freeze on the number of short term rental permits at the current active and compliant number of 413 along with island-specific caps.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

On behalf of the Vacation Rental Working Group,  
Anne Marie Shanks

## Sophia Cassam

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**From:** Gregory Oaksen <gregoaksen@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2022 8:38 AM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** Vacation Rental Cap  
**Attachments:** Planning Commission Feb. 18.pdf

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Dear Planning Commission,  
Attached is our letter supporting a vacation rental cap to be considered at the Feb. 18 Planning Commission meeting.  
Thank you,  
Gregory and Heather Oaksen  
Orcas Island

Dear Planning Commission

February 16, 2022

We live on Orcas Island and are dismayed to see vacation rentals, essentially a commercial enterprise, impacting our neighborhoods and sense of community. It is reasonable to place a cap on vacation rentals. We think active and compliant permits as originally proposed by the Planning Commission on August 20, 2022 is a reasonable limit.

We also favor extending the moratorium to cover the entire county. As it now stands the existing "moratorium" is not a meaningful moratorium having allowed a rush on new vacation rental permits and perhaps encouraging these new permits.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Greg and Heather Oaksen

## Sophia Cassam

---

**From:** Bill Cook <bctalisman@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2022 9:02 AM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Cc:** mdjishere@gmail.com  
**Subject:** vacation rental cap

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Dear Council,

Feb. 16, 2022

My name is William Cook. I have lived in San Juan County for eighty years. The cap on vacation rentals should be 413. It is time to take a hard look at the entire vacation rental and land use picture in San Juan County by asking all County residents if they want more rentals and more development, then implement what the majority wants.

William Cook

## Sophia Cassam

---

**From:** Lynda Guernsey  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2022 11:24 AM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** FW: Vacation rental caps

Lynda Guernsey, Administrative Specialist II – Direct Line (360) 370-7579 SAN JUAN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
(360) 378-2354 | 135 Rhone Street | PO Box 947 | Friday Harbor, WA 98250

-----Original Message-----

From: Artha F. Kass <akass@rockisland.com>  
Sent: Wednesday, February 16, 2022 11:09 AM  
To: Lynda Guernsey <LyndaG@sanjuanco.com>  
Subject: Vacation rental caps

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To the Commissioners:

I live on Orcas Island and am very concerned and disturbed to see the number of vacation rentals, especially commercial ones impacting our already challenged island.  
Please vote to place the cap at the July 31 limit of 413 active and compliant permits.

And I also ask you to vote to extend the moratorium to cover the entire county. There's been a rush on new rental permits and it encourages others to get permits too.

Hope you'll consider what so many of us feel.  
Thank you.

Artha Kass  
PO nBox 518  
Eastsound, WA 98245  
akass@rockisland.com  
Artha Kass  
akass@rockisland.com

## Sophia Cassam

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**From:** Sharon Abreu <sharmuse@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2022 11:38 AM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** Vacation Rental petition signed and shared

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Hello -

I signed the petition calling for a cap on vacation rentals, and I've shared and posted it to encourage all San Juan County residents concerned about the vacation rental situation and the lack of affordable housing in our county to sign it as well.

I wholeheartedly agree with what is expressed in this petition. We need neighborhoods of residents in order to have communities, and we need more long-term affordable rental housing. This is critical to the current and future health of our island communities.

But I still believe there needs to be a cap on vacation rentals.

Sharon Abreu  
20-year resident of Orcas Island  
Former year-round renter

--

Sharon Abreu  
POB 969, 1315 Vusario Lane, Eastsound, WA 98245  
(360) 376-5773

## Sophia Cassam

---

**From:** Barbara Wollman <birdwalker@interisland.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2022 12:33 PM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Cc:** davidturnoy@gmail.com; Barbara Wollman  
**Subject:** vacation rentals

[You don't often get email from birdwalker@interisland.net. Learn why this is important at <http://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>.]

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When I moved full time to San Juan Island twenty-four years ago, there was a quiet, slow-paced rural atmosphere on the roads and in town. There were very few B&Bs and, I think, nothing that could be called a hotel or motel.

All that has changed. For most of the day, trucks and cars speed along our main roads; parking spots in town during most of the year are hard to find. I didn't move here to drag my former city/suburban life with me.

Once you open the county to still more tourism and other short-term visiting, we will have lost one of the few remaining quiet places in the lower 48. Once gone, not much chance of recovery. Quiet places, like many animal species, are now endangered. Please don't take away our restful island way of life.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dr. Barbara Wollman

## Sophia Cassam

---

**From:** annie crane <annieboonecrane@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2022 1:00 PM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** Vacation Rental Permits

You don't often get email from annieboonecrane@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

**As a resident of San Juan County, I request that you respect and hear our voices and honor the decision made in good faith by the Planning Commissioners on August 20th, 2021, to freeze the number of vacation rental (VR) permits at the “Active and Compliant” number of 413 along with the associated island-specific caps.**

**Because Vacation rentals are high-traffic, high-turnover, public-facing business operations that enter uninvited into our residential neighborhoods, and because they hold undeniable power to transform a community forever, today we urge you to certify that we need relief – meaningful guardrails – to protect our homes and neighborhoods from this power.**

**Thank you for hearing our voices.**

**Annie B. Crane**



## Sophia Cassam

---

**From:** Eleanor Hoague <echoague@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2022 1:03 PM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** Vacation Rentals

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Simply put: please put a cap on vacation rentals, at least on Orcas Island, if not on the county as a whole.

I support a cap on vacation rentals in order to maintain a sense of community. All year long the neighboring house has temporary renters coming and going, every 2 or 3 days. We used to have actual permanent neighbors. How does a community maintain its cohesiveness when the neighborhood is merely a set of temporary rentals? The VC's must be capped.

Please.

Eleanor Hoague  
360-376-7101

## Sophia Cassam

---

**From:** kathi anderson <phweemps@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2022 3:10 PM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** VR Permits

You don't often get email from phweemps@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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**As a resident of San Juan County, I request that you respect and hear our voices and honor the decision made in good faith by the Planning Commissioners on August 20th, 2021, to freeze the number of vacation rental (VR) permits at the “Active and Compliant” number of 413 along with the associated island-specific caps.**

**Because Vacation rentals are high-traffic, high-turnover, public-facing business operations that enter uninvited into our residential neighborhoods, and because they hold undeniable power to transform a community forever, today we urge you to certify that we need relief – meaningful guardrails – to protect our homes and neighborhoods from this power.**

**Thank you for hearing our voices.**

Sincerely, Katherine Anderson

## Sophia Cassam

---

**From:** Eric Adelberger <eadelberger@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2022 3:46 PM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** vacation rental permit cap

You don't often get email from eadelberger@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

As a resident of San Juan County, I request that you honor the decision made in good faith by the Planning Commissioners on August 20th, 2021, to freeze the number of vacation rental (VR) permits at the “Active and Compliant” number of 413 along with the associated island-specific caps.

Because Vacation rentals are high-traffic, high-turnover, public-facing business operations that enter uninvited into our residential neighborhoods, and because they hold undeniable power to transform a community forever, today we urge you to certify that we need relief – meaningful guardrails – to protect our homes and neighborhoods from this power.

Thank you.

Eric Adelberger

## Sophia Cassam

---

**From:** Susan Hampel <islandhampel@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2022 6:08 PM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** Vacation Rental Permits

You don't often get email from islandhampel@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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**As a resident of San Juan County, I request that you respect and hear our voices and honor the decision made in good faith by the Planning Commissioners on August 20th, 2021, to freeze the number of vacation rental (VR) permits at the “Active and Compliant” number of 413 along with the associated island-specific caps.**

**Because Vacation rentals are high-traffic, high-turnover, public-facing business operations that enter uninvited into our residential neighborhoods, and because they hold undeniable power to transform a community forever, today we urge you to certify that we need relief – meaningful guardrails – to protect our homes and neighborhoods from this power.**

**Thank you,**  
Susan Hampel  
Eastsound, WA

## Sophia Cassam

---

**From:** Jan Alderton <janetmalderton@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2022 6:56 PM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** Findings of Fact for VRs  
**Attachments:** 2022-01-17-VRWG comments Findings of Fact-AMES.pdf

You don't often get email from janetmalderton@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Planning Commissioners,  
I support the Findings of Fact listed in Anne Marie Shanks' comment letter that I have attached to this email.  
Thank-you for your attention to this important issue.  
Janet Alderton  
Orcas Island  
510-520-1073

San Juan County Planning Commission  
Department of Community Development  
PO Box 947  
Friday Harbor, WA 98245  
January 17, 2022

Dear Planning Commissioners and Department of Community Development (DCD):

During the December 7, 2021 San Juan County Council (SJCC) Meeting, Council Members requested the Planning Commission create Findings of Fact and return those to them. DCD Planner Sophia Chassam's November 23, 2021 memorandum addressing renewal of the short term rental moratorium includes draft Findings of Fact. We have included a number of the DCD Findings of Fact in this document and provided additional Findings to assist your work.

## **Findings of Fact**

### **Impact of Short-term Vacation Rentals (STVRs) on the San Juan Islands**

- 1) Residents of San Juan County began expressing their pain from short term rentals before July 31, 2021, when active and compliant short term vacation rentals (STVRs) in San Juan County were at 413 permits.
- 2) San Juan County Code 18.04.275 regulates short term vacation rentals of residences but does not include regulations that address the impact of over-concentration of STVRs or the impacts of over-tourism on island neighborhoods.
- 3) The County needs to adequately address potential land use compatibility issues and adverse impacts to rural character, natural resources and the public welfare. A DCD map shows the majority of short-term vacation rentals are located on unpaved private roads with insufficient width to permit simultaneous ingress of emergency service vehicles.

4) Short term vacation rentals are the primary source of growth of transient accommodations in the County. Other sources of transient accommodations such as hotels, campgrounds and resorts are significantly limited by existing land use regulations.

5) Growth of transient accommodations is likely to result in additional tourist visits to the islands, which results in over-tourism if not properly regulated. Over-tourism (including the high turn-over of STRV occupants) can result in negative impacts including reducing the sense of community, damage to the environment, overload to infrastructure (including our fragile ferry system) and degraded tourist experience.

6) In 2021 the WA State Ferry system imploded. Currently, sailing schedules to the San Juan Islands are plagued by delays and cancellations due to shortages of available crew, mechanical problems, pandemic and over-tourism, leaving county residents without adequate transportation options. This problem would only be made worse by adding more tourist traffic due to an increase in short-term vacation rental permits.

7) Extreme weather conditions in recent months have exposed the vulnerable nature of our islands' infrastructure, particularly on Orcas Island, where flooding has resulted in mud slides and road cave-ins. Increasing the number of STRV permits would add to the stress on our local resources at the very time the focus should be on restoring and rebuilding our local infrastructure to ensure the safety of our residents.

8) A 2017 study from researchers at UCLA and USC collected data from Airbnb, Zillow, and the US Census between 2012-2016. Using zip codes from across the country, the study found that a 10% increase in Airbnb listings caused rental prices to increase by .4% and house sales to increase by .7%.

9) Homes with transient rental permits usually list and sell for more money than other homes, contributing to an accelerated rise in values and prices.

### **Washington State Response**

10) On June 28, 2019, HB1798, became law. This law requires short term rental operators to register with the Department of Revenue (DOR), collect and pay various taxes, fees and assessments to which an operator or owner of a hotel or B&B is subject, and

buy liability insurance: RCWs 64.37.020, 64.37.050, RCW 64.37.030. These requirements affirm short term rentals are businesses.

### **San Juan County Council Responses**

11) In 2018, the San County Council updated its short term rental regulations to require existing permit holders to annually certify compliance with their conditions of permit approval.

12) The legislative history of San Juan County Council 2021 actions related to Vacation Rental Moratorium is outlined in San Juan County Resolutions - 03, 05, 16, and on December 7, 2021.

13) At their May 12, 2021 meeting, the County Council provided guidance to the staff and the Planning Commission for development of additional short term rental regulations including an overall cap on the number of permits issued, caps on permits by island, measures to address emergency management, impacts to neighborhoods and impacts to community roads and water systems.

14) The County Council, at the May 12, 2021 meeting, reduced the scope of the moratorium to Eastsound, Lopez Village, Activity Centers and Hamlets, leaving the rest of the county open to additional STR permits. This induced a rush for permits. Some 52 short term rental permits were issued in the first six months of the moratorium.

15) On December 7, 2021, the moratorium on the issuance of short term rental permit processing in UGAs, Hamlets and Activity Centers was renewed for an additional six-month period beginning January 13, 2022 and shall expire on July 13, 2022 unless renewed as provided in RCW 36.70.795 and 36.70A.390.

### **San Juan County Planning Commission Responses**

16) In November, 2020 the Planning Commission unanimously recommended the County Council enact a county-wide moratorium and caps on the number of short term rentals in the county.

17) At the August 20, 2021 meeting, the Commission voted unanimously to support a cap of 413, based on the number of active and compliant short term rentals at that time. At that time county residents were already experiencing negative effects from short term vacation rentals.

18) On October 15, 2021, the Planning Commission voted to cap short term rentals at 650 compliant permits. The four-to-three vote limited the cap to five years.

### **San Juan County Resident Responses**

19) In 2019 the Eastsound Planning Review Committee recommended a moratorium on vacation rentals. The Deer Harbor Plan Review Committee submitted a 2020 docket request asking for a complete ban on vacation rentals in the hamlet.

20) Prior to the August 20, 2021 Planning Commission meeting, the Commission received: 178 comments supporting caps at or below the current level of active and compliant short term rentals and a petition from Lopez Island with 240 signatures asking for limits on short term rentals.

21) Some 700 San Juan County members have signed a petition calling for a freeze on the number of short term rental permits at the current active and compliant number of 413 along with island-specific caps.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

On behalf of the Vacation Rental Working Group,  
Anne Marie Shanks

## Sophia Cassam

---

**From:** Mary Campanella <marycampanella@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2022 7:09 PM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** Because Vacation rentals are high-traffic

You don't often get email from marycampanella@icloud.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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**As a resident of San Juan County, I request that you respect and hear our voices and honor the decision made in good faith by the Planning Commissioners on August 20th, 2021, to freeze the number of vacation rental (VR) permits at the “Active and Compliant” number of 413 along with the associated island-specific caps.**

**Because Vacation rentals are high-traffic, high-turnover, public-facing business operations that enter uninvited into our residential neighborhoods, and because they hold undeniable power to transform a community forever, today we urge you to certify that we need relief – meaningful guardrails – to protect our homes and neighborhoods from this power.**

**Thank you for hearing our voices.**

Mary Campanella

## Sophia Cassam

---

**From:** MARK MAYER <tmarkmayer@mac.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2022 8:17 PM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** VR'S have to GO!

You don't often get email from tmarkmayer@mac.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To Whom It May Concern,

I moved my home and business to Orcas Island in 2010. Since then, I have seen a steady decline in the quality of life that my wife and I came here to experience. I know for a fact that it is a result of over-tourism. This transient population only takes from us, giving nothing of value in return. In my perfect world, I would scale back vacation rentals altogether and simply rely on the established hospitality businesses to tend to the needs of visitors. Vacation rentals have gotten out of hand and need to be regulated out of business. Unfettered capitalism only benefits a few investors to the detriment of the rest of us. It never works out well.

As a resident of San Juan County, I request that you respect and hear our voices and honor the decision made in good faith by the Planning Commissioners on August 20th, 2021, to freeze the number of vacation rental (VR) permits at the "Active and Compliant" number of 413 along with the associated island-specific caps.

Because Vacation rentals are high-traffic, high-turnover, public-facing business operations that enter uninvited into our residential neighborhoods, and because they hold undeniable power to transform a community forever, today we urge you to certify that we need relief – meaningful guardrails – to protect our homes and neighborhoods from this power.

Thank you for hearing our voices.

Thanks,  
Mark

MARK MAYER  
57 Twin Maples Lane  
P.O. Box 23  
Olga, WA 98279  
(206) 547-7723  
[tmarkmayer@mac.com](mailto:tmarkmayer@mac.com)

## Sophia Cassam

---

**From:** JAN EHRLICHMAN <janeln@mac.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2022 8:28 PM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Cc:** Jan Ehrlichman  
**Subject:** Vacation Rentals

You don't often get email from janeln@mac.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I am a long time resident of San Juan County. I have followed closely the controversy about vacation rentals, and I was in support of the Planning Commissioners decision of August 20th, 2021 to freeze the number of vacation rental permits at the 'Active and Compliant' number of 413.

Vacation rentals have changed the character of entire neighborhoods. Investors from off island have bought up properties to use as vacation rentals. These investors don't care about our island communities. It is the Planning Commissioners' job to protect our community, and one of the ways you can do this is to continue the freeze at the number of 413 vacation rental permits. This is absolutely essential, and I urge you to listen to the many community members who feel strongly about this issue. I am one of them.

Thank you for all that you are doing to protect our beautiful and peaceful islands that we call home.

Jan Ehrlichman

## Sophia Cassam

---

**From:** Marc Cohen <smarcster@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2022 8:41 PM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** Please cap vacation rentals

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**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Simply put: please put a cap on vacation rentals, at least on Orcas Island, if not in the entire county.

I support a cap on vacation rentals in order to maintain a sense of community. All year long the house next door to us has had temporary renters coming and going, every 2 or 3 days. We used to have actual permanent neighbors, but now we have what is in effect a motel.

How does a community maintain its cohesiveness when the neighborhood is merely a set of temporary rentals? The vacation rentals must be capped.

Please.

S. Marc Cohen  
360-376-7101

## Sophia Cassam

---

**From:** David Turnoy <davidgeri@rockisland.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 16, 2022 9:47 PM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** Comment re: vacation rentals

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Dear Planning Commissioners,

As a resident of San Juan County, I request that you respect and hear our voices and honor the decision made in good faith by the Planning Commissioners on August 20th, 2021, to **freeze the number of vacation rental (VR) permits at the “Active and Compliant” number of 413** along with the associated island-specific caps.

Because Vacation rentals are high-traffic, high-turnover, public-facing business operations that enter uninvited into our residential neighborhoods, and because they hold undeniable power to transform a community forever, today we urge you to certify **that we need relief – meaningful guardrails – to protect our homes and neighborhoods from this power.**

**Thank you for hearing our voices.**

I would like to request that you adopt the following findings of fact:

### **Findings of Fact**

#### **Impact of Short-term Vacation Rentals (STVRs) on the San Juan Islands**

- 1) Residents of San Juan County began expressing their pain from short term rentals before July 31, 2021, when active and compliant short term vacation rentals (STVRs) in San Juan County were at 413 permits.
- 2) San Juan County Code 18.04.275 regulates short term vacation rentals of residences but does not include regulations that address the impact of over-concentration of STVRs or the impacts of over-tourism on island neighborhoods.
- 3) The County needs to adequately address potential land use compatibility issues and adverse impacts to rural character, natural resources and the public welfare. A DCD map shows the majority of short-term

vacation rentals are located on unpaved private roads with insufficient width to permit simultaneous ingress of emergency service vehicles.

4) Short term vacation rentals are the primary source of growth of transient accommodations in the County. Other sources of transient accommodations such as hotels, campgrounds and resorts are significantly limited by existing land use regulations.

5) Growth of transient accommodations is likely to result in additional tourist visits to the islands, which results in over-tourism if not properly regulated. Over-tourism (including the high turn-over of STVR occupants) can result in negative impacts including reducing the sense of community, damage to the environment, overload to infrastructure (including our fragile ferry system) and degraded tourist experience.

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7) Extreme weather conditions in recent months have exposed the vulnerable nature of our islands' infrastructure, particularly on Orcas Island, where flooding has resulted in mud slides and road cave-ins. Increasing the number of STRV permits would add to the stress on our local resources at the very time the focus should be on restoring and rebuilding our local infrastructure to ensure the safety of our residents.

8) A 2017 study from researchers at UCLA and USC collected data from Airbnb, Zillow, and the US Census between 2012-2016. Using zip codes from across the country, the study found that a 10% increase in Airbnb listings caused rental prices to increase by .4% and house sales to increase by .7%.

9) Homes with transient rental permits usually list and sell for more money than other homes, contributing to an accelerated rise in values and prices.

### **Washington State Response**

10) On June 28, 2019, HB1798, became law. This law requires short term rental operators to register with the Department of Revenue (DOR), collect and pay various taxes, fees and assessments to which an operator or owner of a hotel or B&B is subject, and buy liability insurance: RCWs 64.37.020, 64.37.050, RCW 64.37.030. These requirements affirm short term rentals are businesses.

### **San Juan County Council Responses**

11) In 2018, the San County Council updated its short term rental regulations to require existing permit holders to annually certify compliance with their conditions of permit approval.

12) The legislative history of San Juan County Council 2021 actions related to Vacation Rental Moratorium is outlined in San Juan County Resolutions - 03, 05, 16, and on December 7, 2021.

13) At their May 12, 2021 meeting, the County Council provided guidance to the staff and the Planning Commission for development of additional short term rental regulations including an overall cap on the number of permits issued, caps on permits by island, measures to address emergency management, impacts to neighborhoods and impacts to community roads and water systems.

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15) On December 7, 2021, the moratorium on the issuance of short term rental permit processing in UGAs, Hamlets and Activity Centers was renewed for an additional six-month period beginning January 13, 2022 and shall expire on July 13, 2022 unless renewed as provided in RCW 36.70.795 and 36.70A.390.

#### **San Juan County Planning Commission Responses**

16) In November, 2020 the Planning Commission unanimously recommended the County Council enact a county-wide moratorium and caps on the number of short term rentals in the county.

17) At the August 20, 2021 meeting, the Commission voted unanimously to support a cap of 413, based on the number of active and compliant short term rentals at that time. At that time county residents were already experiencing negative effects from short term vacation rentals.

18) On October 15, 2021, the Planning Commission voted to cap short term rentals at 650 compliant permits. The four-to-three vote limited the cap to five years.

#### **San Juan County Resident Responses**

19) In 2019 the Eastsound Planning Review Committee recommended a moratorium on vacation rentals. The Deer Harbor Plan Review Committee submitted a 2020 docket request asking for a complete ban on vacation rentals in the hamlet.

20) Prior to the August 20, 2021 Planning Commission meeting, the Commission received: 178 comments supporting caps at or below the current level of active and compliant short term rentals and a petition from Lopez Island with 240 signatures asking for limits on short term rentals.

21) Some 700 San Juan County members have signed a petition calling for a freeze on the number of short term rental permits at the current active and compliant number of 413 along with island-specific caps.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Geri Turnoy

Orcas Island

## Sophia Cassam

---

**From:** Lee Hope Betcher <leehopeb@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 17, 2022 7:40 AM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** Vacation Rental letter for the planning meeting on Feb. 18th

You don't often get email from leehopeb@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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**As a resident of San Juan County, I request that you respect and hear our voices and honor the decision made in good faith by the Planning Commissioners on August 20th, 2021, to freeze the number of vacation rental (VR) permits at the “Active and Compliant” number of 413 along with the associated island-specific caps.**

**Because Vacation rentals are high-traffic, high-turnover, public-facing business operations that enter uninvited into our residential neighborhoods, and because they hold undeniable power to transform a community forever, today we urge you to certify that we need relief – meaningful guardrails – to protect our homes and neighborhoods from this power.**

**Thank you for hearing our voices.**

## Sophia Cassam

---

**From:** Jan Scilipoti <hostingontherock@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 17, 2022 12:12 PM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** Hosting on the Rock-Finding of Facts Feb 16, 2022  
**Attachments:** HOTR PC letter VR Caps 10-13-21 FINALpages-2.pages

You don't often get email from hostingontherock@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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February 16, 2022

Members of the San Juan County Planning Commission  
PO Box 947  
Friday Harbor, WA 98250

**Re: Proposed Findings regarding Vacation Rentals in San Juan County** Dear

Members of the San Juan County Planning Commission,

As part of the Hosting on the Rock (HOTR) vacation rental owners group, I continue to be dismayed at the lack of quantitative data being used to guide county Findings and recommendations.

Having just reviewed the VRWG's recommendations for "Findings of Fact" regarding VRs in SJC, I would like to suggest a few as well.

### **Findings of Fact Impact of Short-term Vacation Rentals (STVRs) in the San Juan Islands**

1. Residents on Orcas Island - and specifically in Eastsound, Deer Harbor and the Highlands - began "expressing their pain" regarding STVRs before July 31, 2021. Vacation rental permit holders began to represent their opinions when the Hosting on the Rock owners' group formed in November of 2021. *ALL evidence of referenced "pain" has been anecdotal only. Actual factual data must be gathered and evaluated.*
2. In 2018 SJC initiated strict regulations regarding VR permits and compliance, developed in response to neighborhood concerns. According to DCD staff members, the positive effects from these regulations are only now beginning to be observed. *Factual evidence is needed to observe and document the effects of the regulations. Facts must be gathered and evaluated before further restrictions are considered and/or enacted.*
3. Furthermore, it has become apparent that many SJC residents and even members of county governance are not aware of the strict regulations that were enacted in 2018. *Education increasing awareness of the regulations already in place must occur.* For instance, each permit currently has a 24-hour phone number to call regarding any issues. These numbers should be made easily accessible, and residents should know that they exist.

4. Over-tourism is a real concern. However, vacation rentals are only one aspect of a complex situation. For example, we do not yet know how many people moved to the islands full time since the 2020 Pandemic began. This greatly affects housing availability and costs, customer load on local businesses and services, resource use and ferry ridership. We think it reduced the number of housing units being used as STVRs and also as year-round rentals. *Before STVRs are further limited, we must understand and address over-tourism issues on a broader scale.*

5. Wealth disparity is a real and growing problem in SJC. Working residents find it increasingly difficult to find affordable long term rental housing and/or affordable homes to purchase. This is a nationwide problem and it is not caused only by STVRs, but rather by a complex cocktail of factors. Leading among these is that cities with high income jobs are located within driving distance of SJC, making it possible for people to purchase second homes on the islands, which they leave empty throughout the year.

These 'vacant' homes account for around 40% of the housing stock in our county. *Incentives to convert these vacant homes into year-round housing for working people should be developed. Limiting STVR permits limits the ability of local residents to support themselves in our high-cost county, thereby increasing wealth disparity.*

**Attached is a letter dated October 14, 2021 with 369 signatures of SJC residents who hold VR permits.**

Sincerely,

Hosting on the Rock Steering Committee

Jan Scilipoti  
Karen Key Speck  
Vicki Leimback  
Linda Bannerman

**Hosting on the Rock**, Vacation Rental Owner/Host Group  
Jan Scilipoti, Representative of 369 signatories, listed below  
214 Military Road  
Lopez Island, WA 98261

October 14, 2021

San Juan County Planning Commission (PC)

Cc: San Juan County Council, Adam Zack

**RE: Vacation Rental (VR) Moratorium & Caps**

Dear Planning Commission Members,

**A Brief Review:**

In 2018, after an 18 month process, San Juan County put strict regulations in place for VR permits, including an annual fee and compliance reporting, a 24-hour contact number on the same island, and a rigorous list of items, such as quiet hours and occupancy restrictions meant to address neighborhood concerns.

At the end of 2019, the Vacation Rental Work Group (VRWG) formed on Orcas to combat VRs, only a year after the restrictions were enacted. The positive effects of the revisions could not possibly have been felt at that time. Among the list of their requests were a Moratorium, caps, and required water metering and reporting. (<https://www.dropbox.com/s/mn6f8amcpbt8jv1/2019-12-18-VRWG%20letter%20to%20Council.pdf?dl=0>.)

County Council Member Cindy Wolf initiated the Moratorium motion (not on the agenda), which passed unanimously. This island-wide Moratorium caught the attention of VR owners, who organized under the name of Hosting on the Rock (HOTR), and began to follow Council and PC meetings, listening to the public testimonies of dozens of community members.

We dug into the data available from the SJC Department of Community Development, and found that by 2021, the 2018 regulations had indeed begun to work, as evidenced by the drop in new permit applications from 2018 through 2020 and the \$100,000 collected in fees from non-compliant permits. *It is abundantly clear that very few island residents know about the strict requirements that VR owners must currently follow.*

We noticed the disruption that the Pandemic brought to the islands, increasing the popularity of our rentals as drive-to destinations became the focus of vacations, the price of housing, and the influx of remote workers and of second homeowners. We did NOT notice any adjustment by VR detractors because of these pandemic-related factors that continue to affect tourism and housing in our county.

We participated in a VR panel organized by the SJICN, during which we were deeply impressed by the work of Doug Whittaker (with Confluence Research and Consulting firm, Doug studies tourism and visitor capacity, and conducted a 3-year study of our islands), who related that SJC residents are superlative in our sweeping agreement that we live in a special place. He also warned us to follow anecdotal stories with quantitative studies in order to solve problems effectively.

Dozens of VR supporters have given testimony at Council and PC meetings, citing personal examples of how their rentals have allowed them to continue to live on the islands by providing additional income, often during times of financial stress caused by unpredicted life events. The story that corporations are buying homes here to run as VRs has not surfaced: this is a myth with no legs. The vast majority of owners are merely your neighbors, who desire safe, quiet communities as much as anyone.

### **What Hosting on the Rock VR owners have offered:**

Revenue derived from the 2% Lodging Tax has infused over 4 million dollars into our community and services since 2017.

Significant revenue from application fees (\$1,000 or \$2300 per permit, depending on type), from annual compliance fees (\$145 or \$160 per permit), and from fines for renting without a permit (over \$100,000 collected since 2018) are available to fund enforcement. We consider the accurate and timely enforcement of non-permitted rentals and of non-compliant permitted rentals to be top priority.

On 2/19/21, the Council received a letter from HOTR voicing opinions regarding the Moratorium and Caps. *This one letter alone had 306 signatories.* VR owners are participating in the conversation and have offered many forward-thinking suggestions and solutions.

VR supporters have called in to make public testimony:

- August 20, 2021 - 11 yes for CAPS, 12 No, 5 unknowns
- July 12, 2021 - 24 yes for CAPS, 20 No
- March 9, 2021 - 28 Yes for CAPS, 30 No 3 unknowns
- February 23, 2021 - this was about the Moratorium (not Caps) and 90 were for Moratorium, 56 Against.

To explore assumptions about the impact of VRs on rental housing, HOTR initiated an informal housing survey of VR owners. Top take-aways from the results are:

- The question “If you could no longer use your property as a VR, what would you do with it?” had a 68% response rate for “Leave it empty except when my family or friends were visiting”. Only 17% said that they would “Turn it into a year-round rental”.
- The question “If you turned your VR into a year-round rental, approximately how much rent per month would you charge?” showed 70% would charge “\$2500/month or more”, well above the affordable amount for workforce housing. 22% showed “\$1501-\$2500/month” which leaves a paltry 7% of the homes that would actually be affordable for workforce housing.
- The top two reasons for buying their second homes were “Retirement Property” (19%) and “So that I could afford to live here” (19%). A close third was “Second home for vacationing” (13%). The answer “To run as a vacation rental” garnered only 9% of the responses.
- 86% of the owners have never rented their homes year-round, and the comments were clear that this was not desirable due to potential damage from bad tenants.

HOTR has explored legal precedents locally and in other jurisdictions ([Click here](#)). Top take-aways from this research:

- Two San Juan County rulings establish that:
  - VR permits cannot be denied because neighbors are dissatisfied with vacation rentals
  - Conditions of VR permits provide powerful tools to deal with neighborhood disruptions and any adverse impacts on human or natural environments

- Property owners have a federal constitutionally protected right to rent property for profit
- Lotteries cannot be used to grant short term rental permits
- Governments must reimburse land owners when regulations cause a decrease in property value
- Vacation rentals are no more commercial than long term rentals and regulations must apply equally to both

We note the revised Eastsound Water Users Association (EWUA) water study, which confirms that VR guests in Eastsound on Orcas do not use more water than year-round residents. ([Click here](#)). Another study of similar integrity could be conducted county-wide.

Most recently, HOTR has begun to develop a “Good Neighbor Pledge”, a voluntary agreement to further address neighborhood concerns and express our good will to our island communities. In addition to educating SJC residents about the strict 2018 regulations, these are ideas under consideration:

- Notify our neighbors once a year of our 24-hour contact number
- Set up a HOTR call service to respond to disturbances
- Give Back with voluntary gifting to local housing non-profits
- Build incentives to convert VRs and second homes to year-round housing. Click below for Winter Park, Colorado's innovative example <https://www.playwinterpark.com/short-term-fix>

Given that the VRWG had a 2 1/2 year headstart in their campaign to disseminate negative information about VRs, we feel that HOTR has brought constructive data, opinions and potential solutions to the discussion.

### **Our requests**

1. *Caps as a means to limit permits seems to be the current direction. This may seem to be a simple solution, but there are legal precedents that deny the constitutionality of both caps and lotteries to distribute permits.* This could make SJC vulnerable to costly legal litigation.
  - Strict caps handicap the middle class - the working island residents. Wealthy homeowners do not need to rent their second homes, as evidenced by the nearly 40% vacant homes in the county. People who need income must be allowed to rent their homes when needed.
  - Strict island-wide caps will do nothing to improve specific neighborhoods that are experiencing high concentrations of VRs.
  - Strict caps will increase piracy (renting without permits). Enforcement must be timely and effective.
  - VRs are not the only contributor to tourism, and should not be singled out for zero growth. Strict restrictions should include hotel lodging, camping, boating and friends and family members who are visiting. ALL of these visitors use the ferries, water, sewers, parking spaces and services. Tourism supports a vast amount of jobs and

businesses on the islands. Stop vilifying VRs and address over-tourism more broadly, using data to set policy.

*If caps must be used, set them with some room for growth.*

2. *Limit the growth of VRs by other means. Some suggestions are:*
  - Provide financial subsidies so that local homeowners can choose to provide year-round workforce housing. Once again we cite Winter Park, Colorado's innovative example: <https://www.playwinterpark.com/short-term-fix>
  - Provide education about screening tenants, WA landlord/tenant laws and management of year-round rentals.
  - Enact a luxury tax on homes above a certain value that is then used to subsidize rentals, making this a viable financial option.
3. *Allow the 2018 regulations to take effect.*

Continue enforcement so that unpermitted rentals are no longer hosting guests, and all remaining permits are in compliance. Only then can the actual effect on neighborhoods be evaluated.
4. *Ban the timeshare or fractional home ownership model in SJC.*

Acknowledge that vacation rentals are not the sole cause of our lack of affordable rental housing, of why our businesses don't have workers, of why we have a high volume of tourists, or why our housing prices are high. These are complex national issues, and VRs should not be scapegoated based on anecdotal stories.

We appreciate your consideration,

Jan Scilipoti

Vicki Leimback

Linda Bannerman

Karen Key Speck

**The following islanders have asked that their names be included in support of the opinions we've outlined above.**

Shiela Aas, San Juan

David Aas, San Juan

Nancy Abe, San Juan

Brent Abe, San Juan

Jeri Ahrenius, San Juan  
Erin Ancich, San Juan  
Pete Ancich, San Juan  
Tony Ancich, San Juan  
Mary Ancich, San Juan  
Kirk Ancich, San Juan  
Jenny Ancich, San Juan  
Kelby Anderson, San Juan  
Theresa Anderson, San Juan  
Kerry Andrews, San Juan  
Neal Anderson, Lopez  
Linnea Arntson, Lopez  
Kacie Ayres, San Juan  
Melinda Baird, San Juan  
Stu Baker, Orcas  
Brian Barnesky, San Juan  
Barry Barr, San Juan  
Sofia Barr, San Juan  
Matt Basta, San Juan  
Larry Bearg, Orcas  
Kim Seiler-Bell, San Juan  
Scott Bell, San Juan  
Bruce Brackett, Orcas  
Julia Brackett, Orcas  
Anne Burton, Lopez  
Henry Borys, San Juan Island  
Jeffrey Bozanic, San Juan  
Leslie Brennan, San Juan  
Scott Brennan, San Juan

Archie Brooks, San Juan  
Carrie Brooks, San Juan  
Brad Brown, Orcas  
Terria Browning, San Juan  
Ryan Burke, San Juan  
Hanna Burke, San Juan  
Robert Callegari, San Juan  
Anita Callegari, San Juan  
Jim Cardinell, Orcas  
Bette Cantrell, San Juan  
Christian Carlson, Orcas  
Trina Carlson, Orcas  
Bev Carleton, San Juan  
Steve Carleton, San Juan  
Cindy Cary-Cullen, Orcas  
James M. Carroll, San Juan  
Pippin Christiansen, Lopez  
Dan Christopherson, Orcas  
Geri Chutuk - San Juan Island  
Bev Coco, San Juan  
Patrice Coffman, San Juan  
Meg Conner, Orcas  
Bob Conner, Orcas  
Kim Contreras, San Juan  
Pam Cope, San Juan  
Paul Cope, San Juan  
Libby Cope, San Juan  
Dennis Corkery, Orcas  
Tim Cullen, Orcas

Geoff Cunard, Orcas  
Adrian Cunard, Orcas  
John Curlett, Orcas  
Katie Curlett, Orcas  
Kimberly Dalgarno, Orcas  
Rick Dalgarno, Orcas  
Barbara Defalco, San Juan  
Andrew Derksema, San Juan  
Nisha DeSilva, San Juan  
Sue DeSilva, San Juan  
Debbie Dickenson, San Juan  
Lewis Dickenson, San Juan  
Brad Dolsen - San Juan  
Gary Dolson, San Juan  
BJ Dollahite, San Juan  
Wes Edholm, San Juan  
May Edholm, San Juan  
Rivka Eisner, Orcas  
Jerry Eisner, Orcas  
Marilyn Eisner, Orcas  
Mary Jane Elgin, Orcas  
Audrey Espinoza, San Juan  
Kim Fackrell, Orcas  
Enos Farnsworth - San Juan  
Kathy Farnsworth - San Juan  
Debbie Fincher, San Juan  
Cathy Ferran, Orcas  
Andrew Fleming, San Juan  
Peggy Fong, San Juan

John Fowler, Orcas  
Kris Francis, San Juan  
Berry Francis, San Juan  
Bob Frangooles, San Juan  
Gary Franklin, San Juan  
Lisa Fravel, Orcas  
Jeff Friedman, San Juan  
Deb Fritz, San Juan  
Michael Galligan, San Juan  
Lauren Gardiner, San Juan  
Micheal Gardiner, San Juan  
Teri Gentry, San Juan  
Theresa Gerrish, San Juan  
Steve Gerrish, San Juan  
Lindsay Gomez, San Juan  
Anders Goranson, Orcas  
Lori Goranson, Orcas  
Tina Grace, Orcas  
Ladell Grandsaert, San Juan  
Jack Grandsaert, San Juan  
Chris Grifo, San Juan  
Crysta Griffith, San Juan  
Sean Griffith, San Juan  
Peter Grisel, San Juan  
George Grisel, San Juan  
Nash Gubelman, San Juan  
Wally Gudgell, Orcas  
Susan Gudgell, Orcas  
Paula Gustafson, Orcas

Diego Gomez-Hall, San Juan  
Brian Goodremont, San Juan  
Rachel Goodremont, San Juan  
Rebekah Halpern, San Juan  
Lynna Hamel, Orcas  
Dennis Hamel, Orcas  
Caitlin Hardy, San Juan  
Josh Hardy, San Juan  
Nick Harvey, San Juan  
Stephanie Harvey, San Juan  
Kathy Harvey, San Juan  
Tom Harvey, San Juan  
John Harvey, San Juan  
Tim Harvey, San Juan  
Joseph Harvey, San Juan  
Timothy Healy, San Juan  
Katie Heckeke, San Juan  
Mark Heckeke, San Juan  
Jim Helminski, Orcas  
Lauren Hentschell, San Juan  
Heidi Hernandez, Lopez  
Amity Hewitt, Orcas Island  
Ed Hilton, San Juan  
Winnie Hoepfner, San Juan  
George Holland, San Juan  
Teresa Holland, San Juan  
Kenneth Hunter, San Juan  
Ray Jackson, San Juan  
Ann-Margaret Johnson, San Juan

Anita Johnson, San Juan  
Logan Johnson, San Juan  
Lance Johnson, San Juan  
Roenah Johnson, San Juan  
Alyssa Crawford-Johnson, San Juan  
Boyd Judd, San Juan  
Mary Ann Judd, San Juan  
Nanette Judd, San Juan  
Wayne Judd, San Juan  
Maureen Karl, San Juan  
John Karl, San Juan  
Warren Kelly, Orcas  
Tracy Kelly, Orcas  
Sean Kelly, San Juan  
Allison Kelly, San Juan  
Robert Kleven, San Juan  
Karin Roemers-Kleven, San Juan  
Dana Knutson, San Juan  
Blake Knutson, San Juan  
Megan Korb - San Juan  
Johannes Krieger, San Juan  
Angie Krieger, San Juan  
Wolf Krieger, San Juan  
Wolfram Krieger, San Juan  
Luz Krieger, San Juan  
Eric Krieger, San Juan  
Laura Krieger, San Juan  
Kristie Kucur, San Juan  
Emre Kucur, San Juan

Leigh LaLonde - San Juan  
Marc Lampe, San Juan  
Kelsey Larrabee, San Juan  
Julie Roy Larsen, San Juan  
Kathy Larson, San Juan  
Melinda Larson - San Juan  
Tim Larson - San Juan  
Mark Lurnen, San Juan  
Kathy Lurnen, San Juan  
Barb Peakes Leeming, San Juan  
Scott Leeming, San Juan  
Trini Leslie, San Juan  
Mark Lever, Orcas  
Dom Liberatore, San Juan  
Lisa Lindsay, Orcas  
Cheryl Loder, San Juan  
Juan Lopez, San Juan  
Heidi Lopez, San Juan  
Max Lyons, Orcas  
Carol Lyons, Orcas  
Richard MacDonald, San Juan  
Jennifer MacDonald, San Juan  
Sybil Mager, San Juan  
Travis Mager, San Juan  
Peg Manning, Orcas  
Jane Marshall, Lopez  
Daniel Marty, Orcas  
Tawny Martel - San Juan  
Sandra May, San Juan

Michelle Mayer, San Juan  
Christine Mayron, San Juan  
Joe McArthur, San Juan  
Mike McGillivray, San Juan  
Maggie McGillivray, San Juan  
Michael McGillivray, San Juan  
Heather McVay - San Juan  
Toni Michele, San Juan  
Lydia Miller, Orcas  
John Miller, Orcas  
Cynthia Moffitt, Lopez  
Suzanne Morrissey, Orcas  
Mervyn Murk, Orcas  
Bobbette Murk, Orcas  
Matthew T. Murray, Lopez  
Erik S. Nelson, San Juan  
Greyson F. Nelson, San Juan  
Tamara A. Nelson, San Juan  
Andi A. Nelson, San Juan  
Jim Nelson, Orcas  
Betsy Nelson, Orcas  
Stanley Nelson, San Juan  
Hilaree Nelson, San Juan  
Carrie Newbury, San Juan  
Tessa Nichols, San Juan  
Don Niemann, San Juan  
Kristen Nimmo, Orcas  
Courtney Oldwyn, San Juan  
Trina Olson, Orcas

Clayton Olson, Orcas  
Suzanne Olson, Orcas  
Peggy Olver - San Juan  
Nige Oswald, San Juan  
Ann Pace, San Juan  
Stella Padbury, Orcas  
Mark Padbury, Orcas  
Myles Paige, Orcas  
Norris Palmer, San Juan  
Karen Palmer, San Juan  
Pat Perkins, San Juan  
Katie Perkins, San Juan  
Michaela Peterson, Lopez  
Hal Peterson, Lopez  
Robert Peterson, San Juan  
Carolina Peterson, San Juan  
Bob Phalen, Orcas  
Stephanie Picconi, San Juan  
Sherri Pierson. Orcas  
Amy Pierson, San Juan  
Peter Pinkington, San Juan  
Barbara Pinkington, San Juan  
Michael Poindexter, Orcas  
Lisa Poitras, Orcas Island  
Timothy Pold, San Juan  
Rene Pold, San Juan  
Larry Pollack, San Juan  
Liz Pollack, San Juan  
Chris Raichlen, San Juan

Miguel Ramirez, San Juan  
Vijay Rathore, San Juan  
Archna Rathore, San Juan  
Judith Reynolds, San Juan  
Wayne Richardson, Orcas  
Judith Richardson, Orcas  
Lila Richardson, Orcas  
Ezra Richardson, Orcas  
Mona Dayton-Ricks, San Juan  
Debbie Rishel, San Juan  
Gayland Rogers, Lopez Island  
Patricia Roma, San Juan  
Christine Rose, Orcas  
Marie Rothlisberger - San Juan  
Mindy Rowse, Orcas  
Marlis Sandwith, San Juan  
Roger Sandwith, San Juan  
Victoria Sare, Orcas Island  
George Schaller, Orcas  
Ryan Schiess, San Juan  
Katie Schmidt, San Juan  
Jayson Schmidt, San Juan  
Brenda Schmidt, San Juan  
Peter Schmidt, San Juan  
Jennifer Schmidt, San Juan  
Hollie Schoppman, San Juan  
Kari Schuh, Orcas  
Jim Schuh, Orcas  
Cameron Schuh, Orcas

Annalies Schuh, Orcas  
Damien Scott, San Juan  
Michelle Seidelman, San Juan  
Cady Seiler, San Juan  
Kathryn Sellers, Orcas  
Annette Shaffer, San Juan  
Mike Sharadin, San Juan  
Jean Shearer, San Juan  
Jenny Shih, San Juan  
Wendy Shinstine, Orcas  
Scott Simpson, Orcas  
Jeanne Sleeper, San Juan  
Wendell Smith - San Juan  
Lisa Spader, San Juan  
Matt Spaer, San Juan  
Ken Speck, Orcas  
Jodi Spitalli, Orcas  
Chad Stevens, San Juan  
Cindy Stewart, San Juan  
Ed Stewart, San Juan  
Stacie Tagney, San Juan  
Stacie Tagney, San Juan  
Emily Tidball, Orcas  
Rick Tidball, Orcas  
Laura Tisdale, Orcas  
Jamey Tisdale, Orcas  
Rob Thesman, Lopez  
Joe Thoron, Orcas  
Burke Thomas, Orcas

Barbara Thomas, Orcas  
Charles Thomas, San Juan  
Edith Thomsen, Orcas  
Lisl Thomsen, Orcas  
Cheryl Thornton, San Juan  
Tom Thornton, San Juan  
Debra Tonachel, Orcas  
Jeff Toolson, San Juan  
Suzanne Toolson, San Juan  
Melanie Tucker, Orcas  
Thomas Tucker, Orcas  
Marcus Tunison, San Juan  
Jon Tunison, San Juan  
Roxy Tunison, San Juan  
Pamela Van Vleet, Lopez  
Kimberly Vowell, San Juan  
Mathew Waite, San Juan  
Dawn Waite, San Juan  
Chris Walsh, Orcas  
Jennifer Walsh, Orcas  
Susan Waters, Lopez  
Merriss Waters, San Juan  
Gary Waters, Lopez  
Judi Westlund, Lopez  
Kim Wickman, San Juan  
Teri Williams, Orcas  
Toni Willis, Orcas  
Bruce Wilson, Orcas  
Jennifer Whalen, San Juan

Corry White, Lopez

Lorry White, Lopez

Patricia Wood, San Juan

Gordon Wood, San Juan

Ken Wood, Orcas

Kate Wood, Orcas

Stanley Wong, San Juan

Susan York, San Juan

Don York, San Juan

Hong Zhao, Lopez

Wei Zhang, San Juan

## Sophia Cassam

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**From:** Ande Finley <andefinley@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 17, 2022 1:54 PM  
**To:** Vacation Rental Comments  
**Subject:** Place meaningful guardrails around VRs!

You don't often get email from andefinley@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

As a resident of San Juan County, I request that you respect and hear our voices and honor the decision made in good faith by the Planning Commissioners on August 20th, 2021, to freeze the number of vacation rental (VR) permits at the “Active and Compliant” number of 413 along with the associated island-specific caps.

Because Vacation rentals are high-traffic, high-turnover, public-facing business operations that enter uninvited into our residential neighborhoods, and because they hold undeniable power to transform a community forever, today we urge you to certify that we need relief – meaningful guardrails – to protect our homes and neighborhoods from this power.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter,  
Ande Finley  
Lopez Island