

Comprehensive Plan Text/SJC Code* Amendment Request

*San Juan County Code Titles 15, 16 & 18
(Annual Docket)

APPLICANT INFORMATION:

Name of Applicant:	<u>Friends of the San Juans</u>	Name of Agent:	<u>D. James McCubbin</u>
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This request is for a text amendment to the Comprehensive Plan or development regulations, not a comprehensive plan map amendment. I understand that this request will be reviewed according to the County's annual docket process.

Eva Schulte, by D. James McCubbin

Signature



Signature

Eva Schulte

Printed Name

D. James McCubbin

Printed Name

Date

Date

Please Describe the Proposed Amendments (attach additional pages if you need more space):

1. Comprehensive Plan – Describe proposed amendment and/or attach proposed text changes. List Comprehensive plan section, page numbers, title and policies proposed for amendment.

Supplement Section B, Element 8, 8.5.B Utility-Specific Goals and Policies, Electricity, Policy #2, to promote location of solar projects on existing impervious surfaces. Add a second sentence to this Policy, stating "Encourage location of solar generation facilities on or over existing impervious surfaces when feasible."

2. Work with the San Juan County Conservation District and OPALCO to promote community solar projects and provide technical assistance and incentives to increase individual home solar installations. Encourage location of solar generation facilities on or over existing impervious surfaces when feasible.

2. San Juan County Code Title 15, Title 16 or Title 18. Describe proposed amendment and/or attach proposed text changes. List code sections proposed for amendment.

This proposal is to allow conditional use permitting for commercial power-generation facilities in Rural Farm Forest areas, and to add special conditions for any such use proposed on Resource Lands.

The specific amendments would be to 18.30.040 Land use table – Rural, resource, and special land use designations; under "Utility Uses", provisions for "Commercial power-generation facilities".

This line of the table is proposed to be amended:

- A) under RFF: change from "N" to "C"; and
- B) under Resource Lands AG and FOR: add a reference to special condition language, requiring that a Conditional Use Permit may only be granted for projects designed to coordinate with agriculture or

forest use and minimize adverse impacts upon current and potential future agriculture or forest use of the resource lands.

Land Uses	Rural Designations					Resource Lands		Special Lands	
	RGU	RR	RFF	RI	RC	AG	FOR	C	N
Utilities Uses									
Commercial power-generation facilities	C	N	NC	P/C	P/C	C*	C*	N	N

* Conditional Use Permit may only be granted for projects designed to coordinate with agriculture or forest use and minimize adverse impacts upon current and potential future agriculture or forest use of the resource lands.

3. Why is the amendment being proposed?

The current Code language prohibits development of commercial power-generation facilities in Rural Farm Forest areas, while allowing it as a conditional use on Resource Lands. When none of the very limited Rural Industrial and Rural Commercial lands are available for a power-generation facility, the current Code language inappropriately forces the development onto Resource Lands. OPALCO is working on establishing more renewable energy generation facilities throughout the islands, particularly through establishment of solar generation facilities. The proposed Code amendment will open up more appropriate land for this type of use, while also helping to preserve Resource Lands. At the same time, the County should promote location of solar generation facilities on existing impervious surfaces, so this docket request also proposes to adopt a policy change in the Comprehensive Plan to that effect.

4. How is the proposed amendment consistent with the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A), Comprehensive Plan and development regulations?

Growth Management Act: This proposal will facilitate increased local production of renewable energy while reducing impacts upon resource lands. The proposal is consistent with the Planning Goals of the Growth Management Act, particularly for natural resource industries (RCW §36.70A.020(8)), the environment (RCW §36.70A.020(10)), public facilities and services (RCW §36.70A.020(12)), and climate change and resiliency (RCW §36.70A.020(14)).

Comprehensive Plan: This proposal will facilitate increased local production of renewable energy while reducing impacts upon resource lands. The proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, including in particular the following sections:

- 2036 VISION
 - 2036 VISION, NATURAL ENVIRONMENT: “As careful stewards of these islands and waters, we conserve resources, preserve open space, and take appropriate action to assure healthy land and marine environments. We recognize the integral role that forests play in the stewardship of our air, soils and water resources.”
 - 2036 VISION, ENERGY AND RESOURCES: “Our community strives for energy independence and zero waste. We use renewable energy, materials, and natural resources on a sustainable basis.”

2036 VISION, AGRICULTURE: “The San Juan Islands have a rich agricultural heritage that remains culturally and economically significant. We invest resources to ensure that agricultural lands are preserved and to maintain and enhance agricultural viability. We recognize the integral role that agriculture plays in the stewardship of our soils and water resources. Diverse agricultural activities are essential to the health and well-being of our community, contributing to the social, economic and environmental fabric of our islands.”

- ELEMENT 2. LAND USE AND RURAL

- 2.2.C Energy, Policy 2: “Provide opportunities for the development and use of alternative energy resources which are compatible with the natural environment.”
- 2.2.F Natural Resource Conservation, Policy 1: “Conserve soils capable of supporting long-term agricultural production identified by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).”
- 2.2.F Natural Resource Conservation, Policy 2: “Conserve forest lands in the Washington Department of Natural Resources’ forest grades 1-5 classification for long-term timber production.”
- 2.2.N Agriculture, Policy 2: “Protect farmland and encourage productivity by designation and zoning, including innovative zoning techniques and accessory uses listed in RCW 36.70A.177.”

- ELEMENT 8. UTILITIES

- 8.5.A General Goals and Policies, Goal 5: “Protect and preserve natural habitats and environments while also providing for the location and extension of necessary utility facilities.”
- 8.5.A General Goals and Policies, Policy 5.1: “Locate new utility facilities away from, or construct them in a manner compatible with, critical areas, resource lands, and shorelines.”
- 8.5.B Utility-Specific Goals and Policies, Electricity Goal 6: “Minimize the environmental impacts of electricity production and use while promoting energy independence.”
- 8.5.B Utility-Specific Goals and Policies, Electricity Policy 6.7: “Ensure that solar installations are sited and designed in a manner that minimizes impacts on agricultural land, allows for flexibility in future agricultural activity and maximizes potential for multiple benefits from ‘agrivoltaics’.”

Unified Development Code: The proposal is to change the Code, but is consistent with the overall policy goals of the Code in accordance with the Growth Management Act and Comprehensive Plan as described above.

5. Does this proposal impact an Urban Growth Area (UGA)? Lopez Village, Eastsound and the Town of Friday Harbor are the only UGAs in the County.

- Yes, indicate UGA _____
- No

6. Does this proposal increase population or employment capacity?

No