
Deer Harbor Hamlet Plan



JUNE 2007

SAN JUAN COUNTY
WASHINGTON

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DEER HARBOR HAMLET PLAN,
JUNE 2007, SAN JUAN COUNTY

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1. Introduction and Summary

The Deer Harbor Hamlet Plan establishes San Juan County's policy for the future development of the Deer Harbor Hamlet. A boundary for Deer Harbor Hamlet was first established in the County's 1979 Comprehensive Plan and subsequently revised during more recent Activity Center Planning to meet the goals and requirements of the Growth Management Act (GMA).

The San Juan County Comprehensive Plan, Policies 2.3.B1-16 designated Deer Harbor as a Hamlet Activity Center and held that the "document entitled, 'Deer Harbor Comprehensive Plan' of June 1999 as the principal guidance document for the development of a Deer Harbor Hamlet official map."¹

The Deer Harbor Plan is intended to regulate development within the Hamlet after the current moratorium expires on June 30th, 2007. A twenty year planning horizon has been used as the architecture for the plans' projections.

Community Planning Effort

The Deer Harbor Hamlet Plan was developed following a substantial community effort to gather information and prepare policy recommendations. This community effort is reflected in the *1999 Deer Harbor Comprehensive Plan*, which was prepared by members of the greater Deer Harbor community and revised in a number of community meetings in 1998 and 1999. The final version of the Deer Harbor Comprehensive Plan used in preparing this Hamlet Plan was presented to the Board of County Commissioners in April, 1999, as input to the process of developing the Countywide Comprehensive Plan.

In addition to preparing that document, the community participated in a number of public meetings focused on the development of a Hamlet Plan in late 1998 and again in 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2005. In April 2006 a Planning committee of 9 members and 3 alternates was formed. This committee in accordance with a San Juan County public participation Plan conducted a series of 18 public meetings from April 18, 2006 to August 14, 2006. Numerous landowners have been active

¹ San Juan County Comprehensive Plan, Section B, Element 2, 2002. P. 11-15.

participants in the Deer Harbor Hamlet activity center planning process during this time.

The August 2006 plan failed to satisfy the desires of the community and the San Juan County Planning Commission recommended that the Community Development and Planning Department undertake a further round of public meetings. These meetings were intended to address the issues and areas which the Planning Commission found were wanting in the 2006 Hamlet Plan.

In Eastsound, a series of five 3-hour meetings were held on Saturdays in January and February 2007. These professionally facilitated meetings were well attended. The final meeting was held on the afternoon of March 10th during which the Deer Harbor Community voiced its concerns regarding the plan and planning process. This was followed by a public hearing in front of the San Juan County Planning Commission on the 15th of March and the San Juan County Council on the 14th of May 2007.

Relationship to Growth Management Act

The boundary of Deer Harbor Hamlet was modified in the Year 2000 amendments to the Comprehensive Plan (Ordinance No. 11-2000) under the provisions of the state Growth Management Act (GMA) for limited areas of more intensive rural development (RCW 36.70A.070 (5) (d)). In such areas, the Growth Management Act permits densities higher than the normal maximum rural density of one dwelling unit per five acres, but requires that such areas be established based on existing patterns of development, and that they be minimized and contained. The act also provides that such areas may have community water and sewer systems. Areas of more intensive rural development under the GMA, however, are not intended to be mini-Urban Growth Areas that can expand as needed when growth pressures encourage expansion. They are intended to remain pockets of more intensive rural development with limited boundaries, densities and uses.

RCW 36.70A.070 (5) (d) further details the process by which specific uses can be identified within an activity center, RCW 36.70A.070 (5) (d) v states "For the purposes of (d) of this subsection, an existing area or existing use is one that was in existence:

- (A) On July 1, 1990, in a county that was initially required to plan under this chapter;

- (B) On the date that the county adopted a resolution under RCW 36.70A.040 (2), in a county that is planning under all of the provisions of this chapter.”²

During 2000, the boundary of the Deer Harbor Hamlet was modified to exclude large parcels (or portions of large parcels) that were on the eastern side of the current Planning area. The former half-acre density was modified to reflect existing patterns of development and potential infill opportunities, as well as recognizing the existing limitations on traffic flow and water and sewage treatment in the area.

In September 2000, the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) made several changes to the proposed land use designations and development regulations for Deer Harbor in order to incorporate several recommendations from the Deer Harbor community, particularly:

- The variable density district was replaced by a “floating zone” which will allow additional density (up to a maximum residential density of 2 units per acre) in any of the 1 unit per 2 acre areas if affordable housing is provided. In the plan this bonus is limited to no more than 25% (44) of the total dwelling units in the hamlet. This diminishes the maximum number of potential affordable housing units by sixteen (16). **(Deer Harbor Development Regulations, Section 7.)**
- Some of the Deer Harbor Hamlet parcels border on Forest Resource land. To provide additional protection to the resource lands, a 50-foot buffer overlay was provided along the boundary of parcels adjoining the resource lands. No new structure that houses a residential occupancy or commercial occupancy, providing for lodging or food service to visitors, is allowed in this buffer. The Deer Harbor Hamlet Plan retains this buffer. **(Deer Harbor Development Regulations, Section 15.)**

² San Juan County chose to plan according to Growth Management Act in November 1990. c.f. San Juan County Comprehensive Plan, Introduction p. 4-5.

Relationship to SJC Unified Development Code and Shoreline Master Program

San Juan County adopted a Unified Development Code (UDC) in 1998. The Deer Harbor Hamlet was specified as an "Activity Center" with controls in place for the Hamlet Activity Center until such time as a Deer Harbor Hamlet Plan was adopted.

Following SJCC 18.10.050 (G), this plan supersedes the Unified Development Code with respect to items listed. The Shoreline Masterplan (SJ Comprehensive Plan Section B, Element 3, SJCC 18.50) controls all shoreline development and supersedes this plan in the appropriate areas.

Upon adoption of the Deer Harbor Hamlet Plan, the San Juan County Comprehensive Plan and the San Juan County Unified Development Code Title 18 shall be concurrently amended to be consistent with provisions of the Deer Harbor Hamlet Plan. All future amendments to this subarea plan will follow the legislative procedures detailed in SJCC 18.90.020.

Vision Statement

Purpose

The Deer Harbor Hamlet Plan has been produced by and for its citizens. The hamlet citizens are looking far into the future and trying to determine what the hamlet will look and feel like if certain decisions are made now. This Plan integrates their ideas, concerns, and expressions of preference into statements about how the hamlet should be developed, what development regulations should accomplish, what facilities and service levels are needed, and how publicly funded improvements should support these objectives. Although the Plan looks to 2020, the visions and values expressed in this Plan extend beyond the thirteen-year planning horizon to future generations. The Plan is intended to be reviewed regularly to consider changes in conditions or the vision of the hamlet's citizens.

Vision

The hamlet is quiet and predominantly residential. The dark rocky cliffs to the west overlook the boats jostling their moorings and the stippled waters of the bay. In the east there are rolling verdant fields and forests that sweep down towards the valley floor. The hillside, marked by graceful wood framed houses and cottages, well tended gardens and tightly manicured hedges, is a blaze of spring colors and scents.

Strolling along the hamlet's well appointed footpaths, residents make their way to and from the community hub, a collection of buildings surrounded by well screened parking spaces that houses the Post Office, one or two restaurants, the fire hall, a multi-purpose meeting room and some active retail.

No single building dominates the skyline, rather the hamlet is home to a variety of uses and activities that fall within a broad spectrum of context sensitive scales. In addition to people's houses, an assortment of businesses and institutions are at home in the hamlet. The overwhelming impression the visitor leaves with is of a kempt community that is careful to preserve its remarkable natural resources while maintaining a diverse economic base which enables residents to work, shop and play in place.

Goals of this Plan

- Preserve the views of the valley, the water, and the cliffs along the west side of the harbor from both land and marine perspectives;
- Preserve and protect environmentally sensitive resources such as watersheds, aquifers, and marine areas;
- Maintain the existing residential scale of structures;
- Maintain and expand existing open areas;
- Define the parameters for the potential future hamlet core community center/commercial area;
- Maintain a mix of commercial and institutional uses serving hamlet residents and visitors that are sympathetic to the pastoral and marine character of the milieu;
- Preserve public access to waterfront areas;
- Establish a plan for the development of footpaths linking various

areas of the hamlet;

- Identify and regulate residential, commercial and industrial land uses.

Existing and Potential Development

Under the County’s current Comprehensive Plan, Deer Harbor Hamlet is classified as an Activity Center and is limited to development within its established boundaries. **Table 1** describes the land use and development projections for Deer Harbor based on the existing number of parcels that have been developed, and the potential growth of the hamlet if all remaining developable parcels are developed at their current land use and zoning designations.

It should be noted that development of some of the largest undeveloped parcels in the Hamlet surrounding the estuary and directly west of the Deer Harbor Community Club are restricted by conservation easements that limit the location, type and number of units possible. These restrictions will remain in effect unless significantly changed by an agreement between land owner and San Juan County Land Bank.

At the County’s current projected growth rate of 2.2% per year, growth of approximately 43% is estimated for the next 20 years, which would mean approximately 34 additional dwelling units in the Hamlet over a 20-year period, or an average of approximately 2 new dwelling units per year.³

Table 1
Existing and Proposed Residential Land Use, Development Projections

Land Use Designation	Area (acres)	Number of Parcels	Existing Units	Potential New Units	Potential Growth (Existing and Potential)
Hamlet Residential 1 unit per 2 acres	216.08	46	30	63 41 excluding Easement	
Hamlet Residential 2 units per acre	44.37	78	45	34	
Total encumbered by	102.74	11	0	22	

³ If 2.16 is the average San Juan County household, then there are approximately 172 Deer Harbor Residents, $2.2\% = 3.7 \times 20 = 74 / 2.16 = 34$ units

Conservation Easement					
Total Residential	260.45	124*	75	97	177 221 ⁴
Hamlet Commercial	13.79	15	3		
Hamlet Industrial A&B	8.22	3	2		
Park	2.01	2			
Community Club	0.90	1			
Total Hamlet Plan	283.26	145	80	97 75 excluding Easement	177 or 221

* May not all be developed; 115 parcels may only be developed due to other constraints.

Plan Summary

The plan for Deer Harbor Hamlet establishes areas and policies for the land use districts, Hamlet Industrial (HI A&B), Hamlet Commercial (HC) and Hamlet Residential (HR).

The plan refers to a list of uses that are appropriate within the four Hamlet districts and to development standards for these designations to maintain the character of Deer Harbor as a rural hamlet. The Deer Harbor Hamlet Development Regulations **Ordinance ____-2007** contains the appropriate development standards and other regulations.

The plan details community goals and policies as well as issues and opportunities.

The plan also describes some of the characteristics of the natural and cultural environment and the sensitivity of the limited resources of the Hamlet area that define appropriate levels and types of human activities compatible with the local environment.

Implementation Program

A number of the goals and objectives of the plan are not implemented simply by adopting land use designations and planning objectives. They will require a series of steps, and may require expenditure of funds for acquisition of property by the County, community groups or other agencies. They may require the development of additional partnerships among community groups, landowners, government

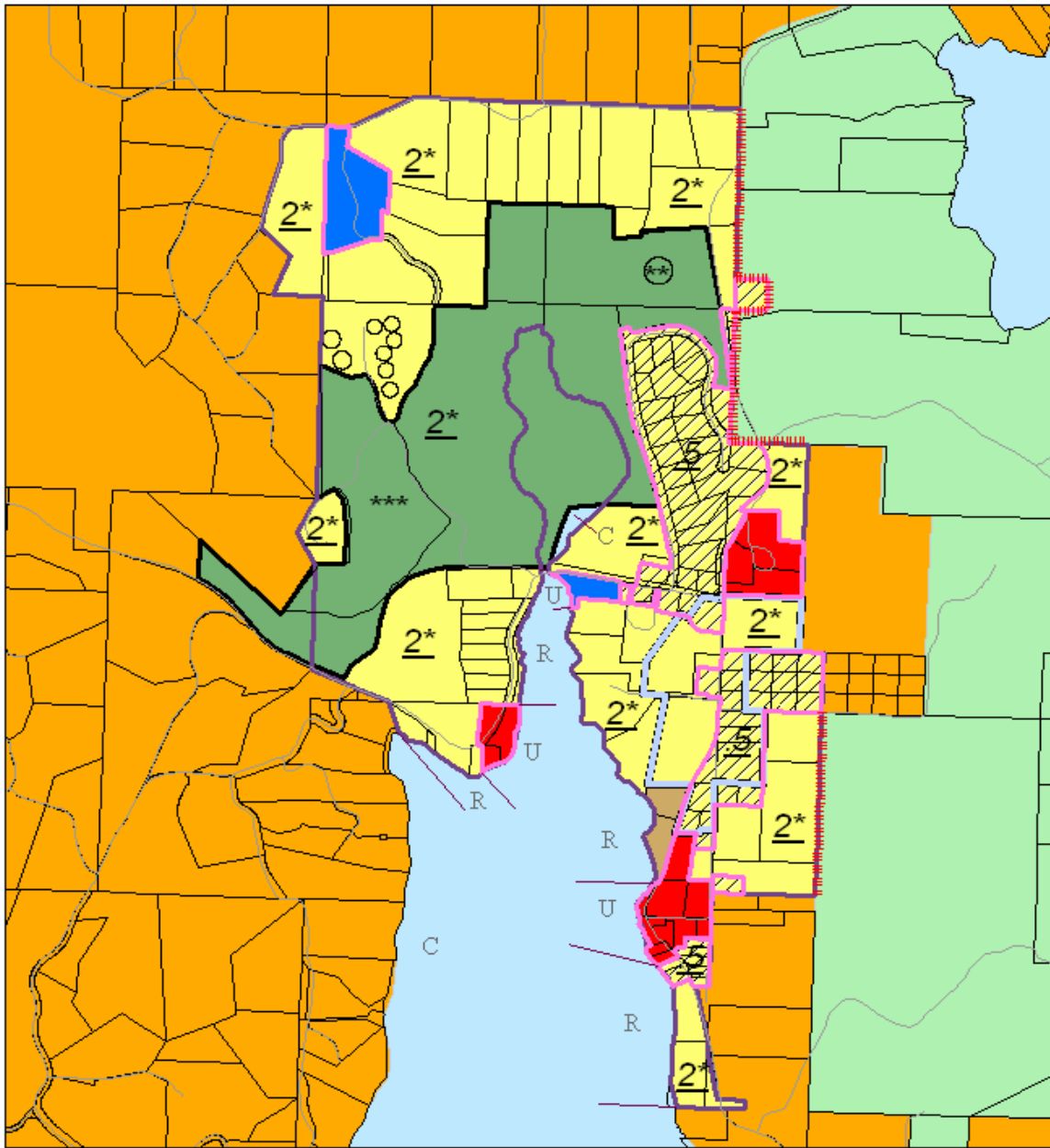
⁴ Includes 25% (44 Units) potential bonus density units available for affordable housing

agencies and existing business owners to further implement the actions outlined in the Plan.

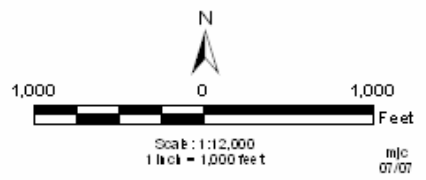
Among these plan components are the following:

- Designation of neighborhood walking paths.
- Facilitating the development of the community center district including public open space and a mix of uses appropriate as the core of Deer Harbor.
- Development of additional strategies to conserve and sustain the natural resources of the Deer Harbor Hamlet while providing for desired and appropriate types of development.
- The appointment of a Deer Harbor Plan Review Committee that will make recommendations to the Planning Commission regarding permit applications, study the both the appropriate methods by which to achieve the Community Center's implementation and its location. The Plan Review Committee mandate will also include the study of a wide variety of planning issues that are particularly important to the future Deer Harbor planning such as the development of Design standards, a context sensitive analysis of scope and scale and other subjects that require the Committee's input.

Figure 1
Deer Harbor Land Use Plan



- | | |
|--|---|
| Resource Land Buffer | Hamlet Commercial - See Ordinance 26-2007 |
| Community Center Overlay District | Hamlet Industrial - See Ordinance 26-2007 |
| Activity Center Boundary | Hamlet Residential - 2* ac. per unit |
| Density Boundary | 5 ac. per unit |
| DH Density District - .5 ac. per unit | 20 ac. per unit |
| Park | Residential Conservancy (LB Easement) |
| 2* Maximum residential density, acres per dwelling unit | Shoreline Designation |
| * Additional residential units will be permitted as a Planned Unit Development, up to a maximum density of one unit per half-acre, as a bonus for the provision of long term affordable housing as defined in SJCC 18.60.260 D | |
| ** Maximum one single family residential dwelling or one ten room inn | *** Allowed to build to legal density |



2. Greater Deer Harbor Area

Deer Harbor Hamlet and its area of influence are located on the southwestern portion of Orcas Island. The center of the hamlet is approximately four miles southwest of West Sound hamlet and 11 miles southwest of Eastsound.

Deer Harbor Bay encompasses an area of approximately 1.1 square miles. The area designated as Deer Harbor Hamlet has a total area of approximately 283 acres. The Deer Harbor area of influence (not including the Hamlet itself) covers an area slightly larger than five square miles. The Hamlet and its area of influence have more than 13 miles of shoreline. The Hamlet encompasses a large tidal marshland known as Deer Harbor slough. The land within the higher elevations of the Hamlet offers magnificent vistas, principally to the south. The hillsides are generally steep and wooded. The shoreline within the Hamlet is extensive with some sheer cliffs and the balance sandy or rock strewn beaches.

Deer Harbor Hamlet is located in a valley that is surrounded by hills on three sides, with Wasp Passage to the south. The Hamlet is located between two ridges which rise to 300 to 400 feet west of Deer Harbor Bay and to over 150 feet to the east.

Hamlet Character

Boundaries of the Deer Harbor Hamlet were first established in 1979 based on development patterns and local objectives. The permitted density within the hamlet was established at one dwelling unit per half acre, which would have permitted approximately 700 dwelling units, more than now exist in Eastsound. Very few parcels were divided to this density, and Deer Harbor has remained a low-density residential area with a few commercial uses since then.

Population and Housing

The 2000 census data for the greater Deer Harbor area shows that the median age of the population of the Deer Harbor area (46 years for males and 47 years for females) was 18 years higher than the median

for the state of Washington (28 years for males and 29 years for females), and that household size was smaller (2.16) than the State average (2.51). This pattern is similar to that of San Juan County as a whole, which has a high percentage of retirees and small percentage of families with children compared to the state and national averages.

There are 80 residential units in Deer Harbor at present and approximately 40% of those are considered second homes.

The Harbor

The harbor and the saltwater lagoon (the slough) running north and south divide Deer Harbor Hamlet and are its most prominent features. The harbor's current use, history, and environmental sensitivity should be a significant consideration as to any future uses.

The lagoon at the north end of the harbor is a major collection point for some of the surrounding watersheds. Portions of the area have been designated wetlands. The lagoon and nearby marsh areas serve as a habitat for oysters and wintering bird populations. Extending southerly from the lagoon, the shallow channel leading to the harbor is an eelgrass habitat. This shallow habitat configuration extends southward along the eastern shore and supports eelgrass, shellfish, sea urchin, crab and herring populations. Midway down this shore is one of the few sizable sand beaches in the San Juan Islands. Mixed sand-gravel beaches in this reach are likely spawning areas for important forage fish such as surf smelt and sand lance.

The section of the harbor south of the slough provides adequate depth for navigation as well as a good bottom for anchoring. Along the west shore of the harbor, there are a series of cliff formations which have been designated as bird habitat areas. At the north end of the harbor there is a submerged rock reef running in a north-south direction for several hundred feet.

The water-related businesses presently located in the Deer Harbor area include a fuel dock, a mail/freight boat serving Waldron Island, three inter-island freight barge services which use the boat ramp located at the Cayou Quay marina with a second ramp located at the Boat Works. Currently there is a mobile marine emergency service, two marinas which have in excess of 200 slips serving both transient and local boat owners, and a boat repair facility with space for 30 boats in dry storage located in the community. Over and on-water development of the harbor currently includes 28 mooring buoys and

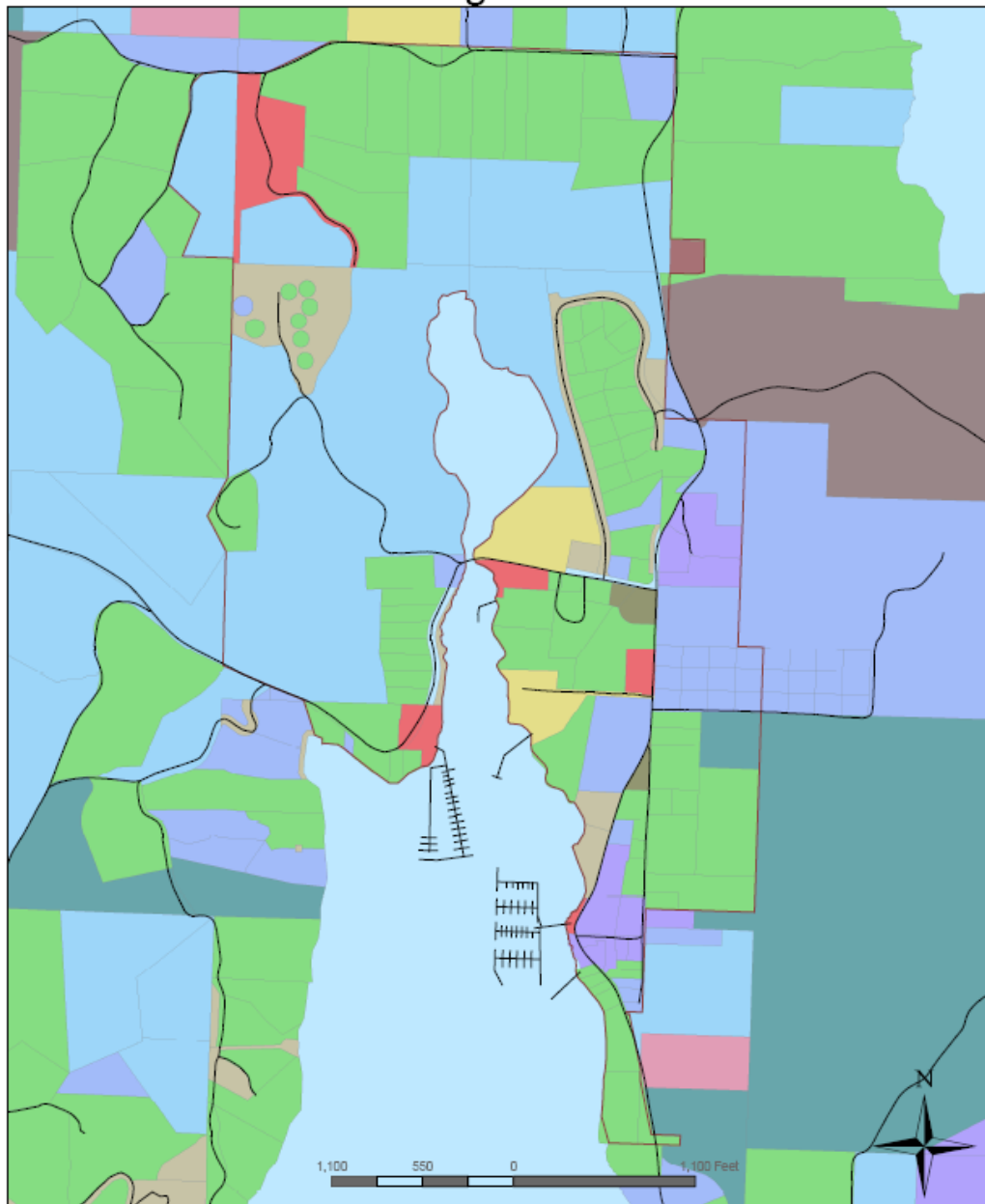
ten docks, three of which are in commercial use. The docks range in size from 6 feet by 30 feet to 600 feet by 250 feet for the total area covered by the largest marina. There is development potential for nearly tripling the mooring buoys, however an increase in the number of docks is limited by the Shoreline Master Plan and the Unified Development Code.

Existing Land Use

The generalized land cover map **Figure 2**, helps visualize the current variety and distribution of land uses. A large percentage of the study area remains forested, but some relatively large tracts of land have been clearcut or substantially thinned out in recent years. This, combined with the sizable areas of blowdown due to the major storms of the early 1990s, results in a continuing decline in the area of forested lands. In those areas that were cleared for agriculture in the past or on those lands with soil types and depths unsuitable or unable to support forest cover grasses predominate.

The generalized existing Land Use Map **Figure 2** clearly shows the present land use pattern in the study area. The map can be somewhat misleading since some large tracts of land are shown as having a predominately residential use, when in fact they are used primarily as seasonal dwellings scattered on agricultural lands that are no longer actively cultivated or commercially grazed. Particularly, this applies to some of the large estates located in the study area.

Figure 2.
Existing Land Use



- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Activity Center Boundary | Undeveloped | Resorts and Group Camps |
| Not spec. in Assessors database | Utility | Open Space/Undeveloped |
| Single Family Residential | Commercial - Indus. | Designated Forest Land |
| Multi-Family Residential | Public Assembly | Common Areas |
| B&B - Hotel | Recreational Activity | DeerHarborDocks |

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The Existing Landscape:

The Deer Harbor hamlet surrounds its harbor, slough, and lagoon. Two seasonal streams and one nearly year-round stream drain the three separate watershed areas of greater Deer Harbor. One of these watersheds is to the west and southwest, and the two other watersheds are to the north. The surrounding wetlands, meadows, fields, wildlife ponds, and small forests comprise the beautiful, vibrant, agriculturally rich, historically scenic Cayou Valley.

A wetlands-delineated, density-lowered, and vegetation-managed San Juan County Land Bank/Connor Family easement agreement exists throughout the northern and western areas of the hamlet. Parts of the easement are additionally covered by San Juan County Farm and Agriculture Open Space classification. Hundreds of young and mature wild fruit trees are scattered throughout approximately 60 acres of the fields around the lagoon. In addition, berries, nuts, medicinal plants, native landscape plants, and historic orchards continue to provide harvestable wild organic produce. From the west side of the Channel Road bridge, rolling up over the hill to the west, and ending at the Frank Richardson Marsh is an extension of the Land Bank/Connor Family easement that serves as a wildlife corridor. Within this area, intense cultivated agriculture and nursery production predominate. Educational classes, projects, and field trips by pre-school through post graduate groups use the entire easement areas. Environmental, agricultural, marine, forestry, aquacultural research and educational facilities are located in this area. Seasonal agricultural, permacultural and environmental educational seminars have been conducted with groups of up to 50 camping on the western side of the easement.

Expected Changes over the next 20 years:

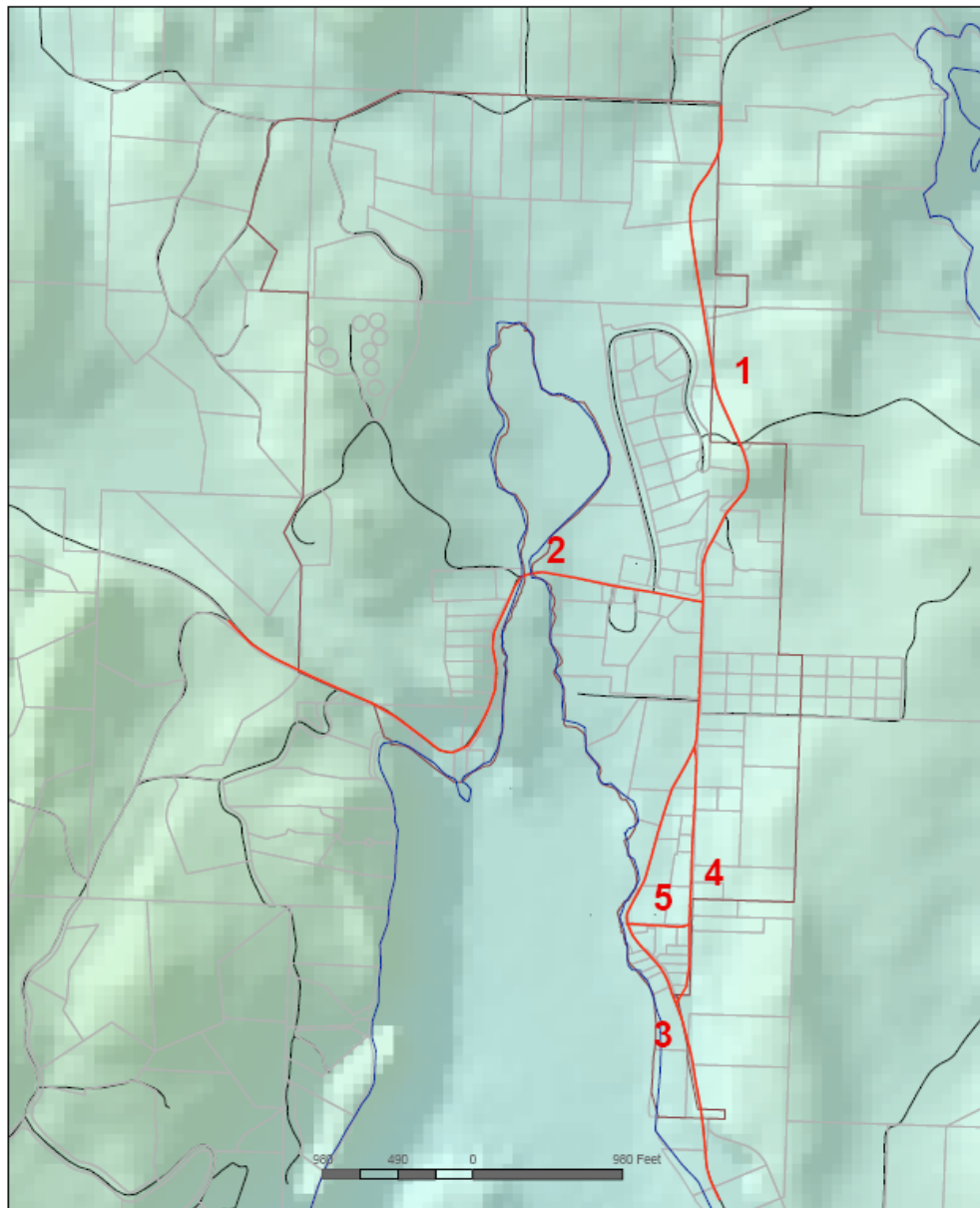
Over the next 20 years it is estimated that nearly 34 homes could be constructed which will impact the scenic beauty and rural character of the hamlet; there will be decreases in the availability of agricultural land and uses; and the loss of the historic orchards east of the Deer Harbor Road due to the subdivision which now exists is likely. It is therefore recommended that contiguous open space areas be encouraged in all future development. It is recommended that permanent agriculture and scenic use open space designations over 20




acres be granted open space incentives to encourage open space preservation.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation

Walking for recreation is a common activity for both the residents and visitors to Deer Harbor. Roadways are narrow, and the combination of vertical and horizontal curves and roadside vegetation make pedestrian and bicycle circulation hazardous in current conditions. There is a real need to improve the safety of non-motorized circulation in Deer Harbor. This need will increase as residential development fills in existing vacant parcels, and marina, resort and lodging uses intensify over time. Section 4 of the Plan identifies a list of priorities for the development of pedestrian and bicycle pathways. **Figure 3** displays proposed pedestrian and bicycling routes in the Hamlet.

Figure 3.
Deer Harbor Hamlet Pathway Priorities



-  Activity Center Boundary
-  Roads
-  New Pedestrian Routes

1. Deer Harbor Road from Cormorant Bay Road to Jack and Jill Place.
2. Channe Road from Deer Harbor Road to Spring Point Road.
3. Deer Harbor Road from Jack and Jill Place to the entrance of Four Winds Camp.
4. Upper Deer Harbor Road
5. Jack and Jill Place



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Water Supply

Under the County's current development regulations, any individual requesting a building permit is required to demonstrate that a satisfactory water supply exists for the development proposed to be constructed on any parcel.

The Deer Harbor Hamlet and adjacent areas are served water through a variety of sources, including groundwater, surface water, saltwater conversion and other alternative methods. Much of the domestic water in Deer Harbor is currently derived from local wells.

Ground Water

Groundwater is the principal source of water supply for the Hamlet and adjacent areas. In most cases, one well serves several homes or businesses. These wells are considered public systems and are regulated by San Juan County or the Washington State Department of Health.

Although the exact number of wells within the Hamlet is not known, it is believed that at least thirty individual or community wells serve the Hamlet area. The number of wells serving the Hamlet and adjacent areas will increase as new development occurs. Most wells are several hundred feet deep, but the depth to static water levels is usually less than fifty feet. However, the better producing wells appear to be located in or adjacent to the surface water drainages to Deer Harbor.

Water Quality and Quantity

Although the Hamlet relies predominately on groundwater as its current water source, very little is actually known about the existing aquifers or even the amount of water being withdrawn annually. What is known, however, is that several existing wells within the Hamlet have suffered saltwater intrusion and have been abandoned or had their use restricted: several wells have gone dry in recent years; several groundwater users have had to haul water to meet their needs; and at least one water user has had to rely on saltwater conversion to meet their demands.

It is highly likely that the central portion of the Hamlet is underlain by an alluvial aquifer while the east and west sides are comprised of bedrock aquifers. The connection between two types of aquifers is unknown and the source of recharge is also unknown. What is known is that several of the major wells exhibit large drawdown during summer months and rely on rainy months for their recharge. More information is needed on transmissivity, conductivity, and storativity in the Hamlet area.

Water quality of the aquifer is also essentially unknown, particularly as it relates to salinity. The water level in many wells is below sea level and is consequently subject to potential saltwater intrusion if not managed correctly or over pumped.

It is expected that the recently adopted rules and regulations of the San Juan Board of Health regarding wells and water systems will serve to protect the water sources of both current and future residents of Deer Harbor.

3. Issues, Problems and Opportunities

A number of community planning issues were identified in the development of the Deer Harbor Hamlet Plan. These issues helped focus the planning efforts on developing solutions to problems and taking advantage of opportunities. The following issues were particularly important in developing the Plan:

1. The Post Office is a vital component of the rural community culture of Deer Harbor. The Post Office helps sustain the identity of the greater Deer Harbor community, and is an important meeting point and center of information.

The community recently faced the potential loss of the Deer Harbor Post Office as a result of a regular program of elimination of small, rural post offices as a cost-cutting measure. A temporary reprieve from this threat was achieved with a new lease. However, the Post Office is always at risk because the facility is leased, so its location depends on the continuation of the lease, which is subject to control of the property owner and the competitive lease process of the Postal Service. As noted above, the lease has been extended until 2009 and the postal service has indicated a continuance of a post office in Deer Harbor in recognition of its continued presence in the area since 1893.

There is a need to identify, and secure, a more permanent location for the Post Office that is convenient to the Deer Harbor Community. The developer(s) of the future Community Center District should include this important community facility in the development. This would relieve parking, circulation and pedestrian safety problems at the current location.

2. Water supply is a significant potential development limitation in parts of Deer Harbor. The growth projections in the Plan indicate a 43% increase in housing units during the 20-year planning period. It is difficult to determine if this potential demand can be met by groundwater, due to the lack of adequate groundwater information. Since the projected growth is predominately for single family residences, it is likely that most new wells will be required to meet only domestic demand rates. If it becomes difficult to drill sufficient wells without encroaching on existing wells, then it is likely that

community well systems will be drilled with fewer wells but with higher demands on each well. Saltwater conversion may become utilized to meet water demands.

The highest density of wells in the Hamlet is in the vicinity of the Deer Harbor Resort where there are a number of existing wells that serve domestic users as well as the two wells that serve the Resort. The planned conversion of the Resort with renovated kitchens and utilities in each unit will increase groundwater demands in the area if the Resort's saltwater conversion unit is not the primary source of water for the renovated facility.

Additionally, more pressure will be placed on groundwater supplies of the Hamlet in the future as parcels are further subdivided and are able to utilize the bonus density provisions of the Plan for providing affordable housing. This also will increase future demand for water resources.

3. Maintaining the rural character of the Hamlet area is a high priority. If the rural character of the area is to be retained, the existing natural characteristics of the land should be protected as far as possible.
4. As more of the land in Deer Harbor is developed, the fact that there is little public access to the shoreline and little public open space in the Deer Harbor area becomes more evident and a more telling community deficiency. The importance of open space and water access is underscored by the fact that there is still a substantial amount of undeveloped or underdeveloped private land, and private land subject to conservation easements. If shoreline access and open space are to be available to the public at full development, land needs to be set aside in public ownership for these purposes. The number of suitable locations that are not already developed is small and declining. The acquisition of the 2 acre waterfront park site, north of the Bellport Marina, significantly increases the public shoreline and will accommodate walking paths to get pedestrians off the public road as well as providing a very limited number of regulated automobile parking spaces. Deer Harbor road is too narrow to allow for parallel parking.
5. The demand for additional commercial, industrial, public and institutional uses during the 20-year planning period is difficult to accurately predict. In order to prevent future random, unplanned and scattered mixed land uses in the Hamlet, and to preserve the

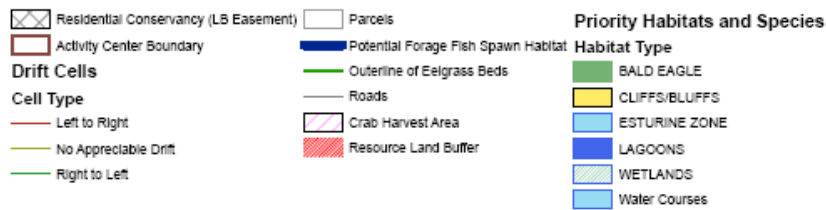
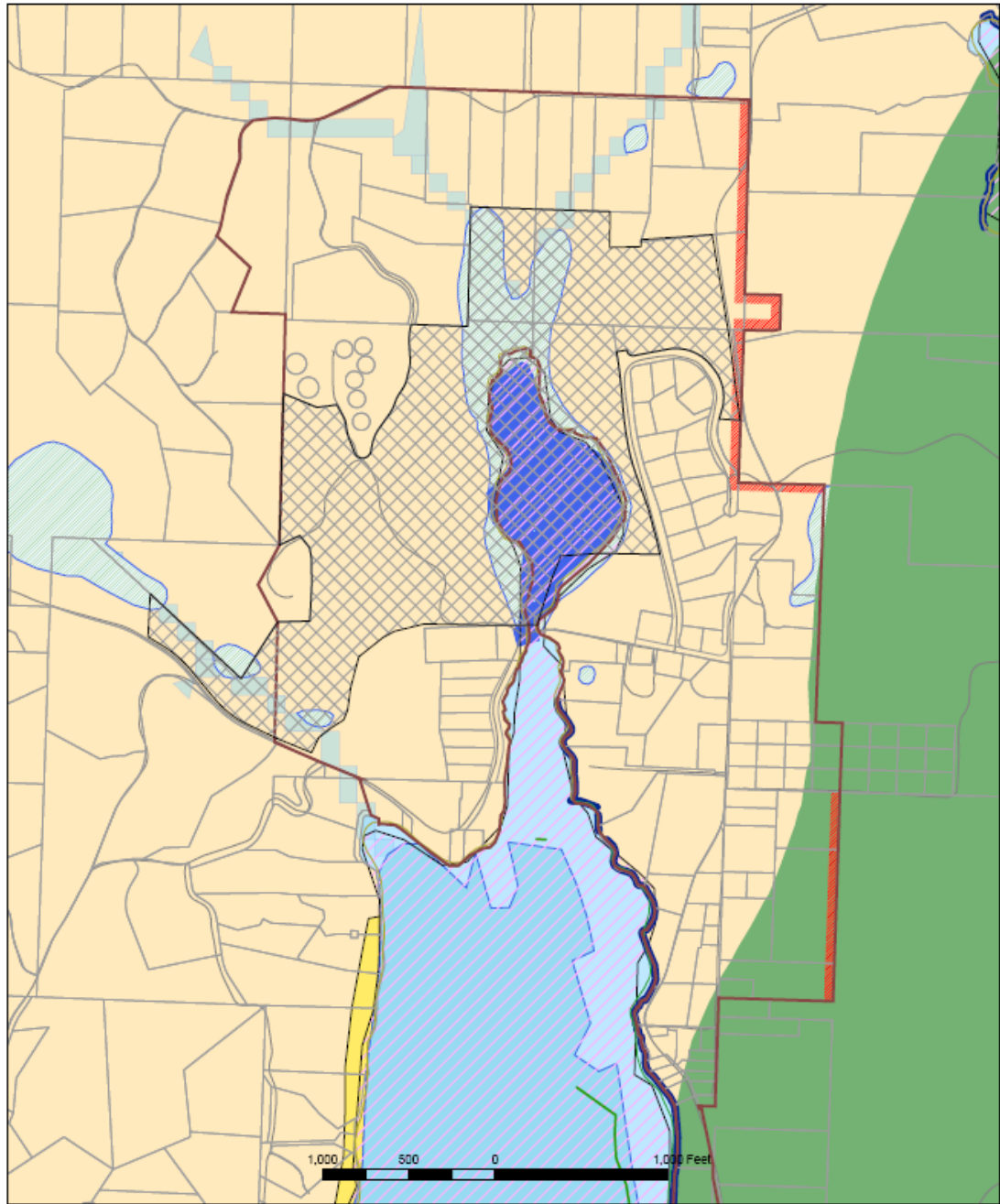
rural character while providing these services, all new non-residential land uses (not already located in a Hamlet Commercial and Industrial Districts) will be confined to an area to be designated as the Community Center Overlay District.

6. As the Deer Harbor Hamlet continues to grow over the 20-year planning period, available agricultural land will decrease and uses and other open space uses that contribute to the rural character of the Hamlet. The establishment of the Deer Harbor Community Center District will also decrease available open space. Additionally, high and rapidly increasing land prices in the Deer Harbor area make acquisition of land for public facilities or open space, particularly in waterfront or view locations, very expensive.
7. The current center of activity in Deer Harbor is located in the vicinity of the Deer Harbor Resort with its store, Post Office, and the Deer Harbor Marina. This is a fully and relatively densely developed part of Deer Harbor. This location generates a substantial percentage of the existing trips both to and within Deer Harbor. Road right-of-way and parking at this location are already at capacity in summer months.
8. The original Hamlet boundary was established in the 1979 San Juan County Comprehensive Plan. The boundary was modified by the year 2000 Comprehensive Plan Amendments to include the Community Club property and to comply with Growth Management Act (GMA) definitions. This boundary does not conform to the perceived boundary of what the residents consider to be Deer Harbor. A substantial percentage of the population that considers itself part of Deer Harbor and is concerned about Hamlet planning lives outside this Hamlet boundary. Orcas residents outside of the Deer Harbor Hamlet boundary share a common interest in the pressing issues of traffic circulation, public open space, community facilities, public facilities, the accessibility of the Post Office, fire protection and water supply protection.
9. The marinas in Deer Harbor are both commercial sites and transportation links to the nearby islands that lack ferry service. Residents of Crane Island have their own dedicated dock and parking area at Pole Pass. Residents of Waldron Island and the smaller islands that use Deer Harbor have no similar facility. People living on these islands often keep a car in Deer Harbor and use the County leased dock at the Bellport Deer Harbor Marina for access. This dock provides a crane for loading cargo on small boats. Many

of these outer island residents park on upper Deer Harbor Road above and south of the Deer Harbor Resort. This location does not provide a suitable permanent solution to meet this parking need and may interfere with planned pathways in the vicinity.

10. Pedestrian and bicycle circulation in the core of Deer Harbor is dangerous because of narrow roadways and limited sight distances resulting from curves, hills and vegetation. A pathways network program should be developed and implemented for Deer Harbor.
11. The County acknowledges earlier agreements to provide increased public parking in the Deer Harbor Hamlet and, to this end, will make a good faith effort to provide such parking as soon as possible.

Figure 4
Environmentally Sensitive Areas



Map prepared by the San Juan County Planning Department, June 2007

4. The Plan

The overall **goal** of this plan is to preserve intact such significant natural areas and features as are necessary to protect the watersheds and maintain the water table, to conserve the forests, to check erosion, and to preserve areas of notable landscape interest and value while providing for the identification and continuation of marine, residential, commercial, and light industrial uses.

Goals are general achievements that the community wishes to accomplish in the future. Goals provide overall guidance for developing Planning objectives.

Policies are specific and achievable projects in support of a goal.

Actions are task-oriented events that lead to implementation of the Plan goals and objectives.

4.1. Planning Goals, Policies and Actions

These objectives cannot be met within the boundaries of Deer Harbor Hamlet only. The Hamlet is located at a key point in its environment of watersheds and aquifers and marine areas and other ecosystems that extend well beyond its boundaries into the greater Deer Harbor area.

The character of the Deer Harbor Hamlet is defined in large part by its rural setting. For this reason, this Plan includes recommendations for actions within the greater Deer Harbor area.

1 • The first goal of the Deer Harbor Hamlet Plan is to **maintain the rural character and open space resources** of the Hamlet and its surrounding area. The rural character of the Deer Harbor area is defined as having a landscape dominated by pastoral, forested and natural areas interspersed with residences and farm structures.

Policy 1: Control the density, location and type of development in the Hamlet Commercial District, Hamlet Industrial Districts and the Hamlet Residential District.

Action a: Adopt the Plan designations and development standards in the Hamlet and then make any necessary changes to the San Juan County Comprehensive Plan and Unified Development Code.

Policy 2: Support the maintenance and development of rural small scale industry and agriculture in the greater Deer Harbor area.

Action a: Encourage landowner use of the public benefit rating system (PBRS) for scenic, agricultural and open space designations throughout the greater Deer Harbor area.

Action b: Encourage environmentally sensitive commercial ecotourism visitor services that place an emphasis on marine ecology, aquaculture, agriculture, forestry and ranching by including the activity as a permitted use within residential districts on parcels of 20 acres as part of the Institutional Land Use section, 'Environmental, Agricultural, Marine, Forestry, Aquacultural Research and Education Facilities. (**See Deer Harbor Development Regulations, Sections 10 and 14.**)

2. The second goal of the Deer Harbor Hamlet Plan is to **limit the locations of high density residential development** in the Deer Harbor Hamlet.

Policy 1: Maintain the Deer Harbor Hamlet Residential designations as shown on the adopted land use Plan to regulate location and density of residential uses.

Action a: Implement the adopted Hamlet Residential Development regulations for future residential development in the Hamlet.

Action b: Direct the Deer Harbor Plan Review Committee to develop a comprehensive design and architectural standards code that is acceptable to the Community for future adoption into the Hamlet Plan.

3. The third goal of the Deer Harbor Hamlet plan is to foster the creation of a Deer Harbor Plan Review Committee (**See Deer Harbor Development Regulations Section 4 for the constitution of the Deer Harbor Plan Review Committee**).

4. The fourth goal of the Deer Harbor Hamlet Plan is to **provide**

for adequate and safe circulation in the Hamlet, including pedestrian and bicycle circulation and a vehicular parking area within the community core for local and outer island residents' use.

Policy 1: Adopt a map (**Figure 3**) detailing potential routes for improved pedestrian and bicycle circulation

Action a: Adopt the following list as the priority for providing pedestrian and/or bicycle pathways:

1. Deer Harbor Road from Cormorant Bay Road to the public pathway loop created in the area of the new Deer Harbor Road bypass south of the Hamlet.
2. Channel Road from Deer Harbor Road to Spring Point Road.
3. Deer Harbor Road from Jack and Jill Place to the entrance of Four Winds Camp.
4. Upper Deer Harbor Road.
5. Jack and Jill Place
6. Other County roads where deemed necessary for public safety by the public works department.

Policy 2: The County recognizes the importance of walking trails and pathways and recommends that appropriate County Departments, Volunteer Citizen Groups assist in promoting and developing such pathways in the Deer Harbor Community.

5. The fifth goal of the Plan is to **ensure the limited water resources of the Deer Harbor area are sufficient to meet the goals for the area**. The water demands should be monitored and be met through the judicious use of surface and ground water, and other alternative means.

Policy 1: Maintain an adequate supply of water resources is necessary for the growth of the Hamlet.

Action a: Prepare an analysis of existing and future water systems capacity to provide potable water and fire flows.

Action b: A preliminary study of water as a critical resource in Deer Harbor by County health department officials, a consulting Hydro-geologist, Orcas Island water system professionals and local property owners is underway at this time. Continuing studies will be necessary to gather sufficient data to regulate substantial water use in the Hamlet.

6. Community Center District

Goal: A goal of the Deer Harbor Hamlet Plan is to **develop the necessary information to ensure the smooth creation of a community center district** of uses and facilities needed to serve as the social and economic hub of community life. The community center should be developed under a coordinated plan that incorporates a specific list of preferred commercial and public uses, shared facilities such as public restrooms and parking, and shared open space. It should provide a strong, positive physical image as the center of Deer Harbor. It should emphasize uses where people meet to work, play and interact (**See Deer Harbor Development Regulations Section 7**).

Community Need: The need for a community center was one of the key motivators for public interest in planning for the Deer Harbor Hamlet. To the extent that it is possible, the development of new commercial activities in the Harbor must address the Community Center concept in their applications and show how their application will fit into the Community Center concept.

The Community Center is intended to provide a community core, or "town square," for Deer Harbor. It is intended to provide for the future development of needed uses that can share parking, open space, and other common facilities. The Community Center is intended to incorporate limited retail uses, institutional uses, and a small park. Because of the small market area served by the Center, it is assumed that the Community Center would incorporate a primary commercial facility such as a store and/or lodge, and that this business might operate all or most of the commercial uses envisioned in the center.

The concept and need for a Community Center was an important component of the community-initiated *Deer Harbor Comprehensive Plan (1999)* which was submitted to the County by members of the community who had worked together to prepare it.

Action a: Establish a Community Center Overlay District that follows Deer Harbor road between the southern edge of the Deer Harbor Inn to the northern parcel of the Resort at Deer Harbor. (**See Deer Harbor Development Regulations, Sections 5 and 6.**)

4.2 Land Use Plan

Figure 1 of this Plan displays the land use designations established within the Deer Harbor Hamlet. **Table 2** on the following pages describes the allowed land uses within each of the four-land use districts established by the Plan –Hamlet Commercial (HC) Hamlet Industrial 1 (HI-A) and Hamlet Industrial 2 (HI-B) , Hamlet Residential (HR), (**See the Deer Harbor Development Regulations, Sections, 8, 9, 10 and 11.**)

Light Industrial Land Uses:

There two locations of light industrial land uses in the Hamlet. (1) The one acre Deer Harbor Boat Works site east of the slough bridge on Channel Road combines both industrial and some commercial activities and is designated HI-A; (2) The 6.6 acre Connor/Cookston light industrial use site south of Cormorant Road in the northwest corner of the Hamlet is designated HI-B.

Goal: Recognize and regulate the light industrial land uses occurring within the Hamlet and allow for limited expansion to provide services for the community and for employment opportunities. Expansion shall be limited to similar and compatible activities that do not significantly impact water, sewerage, surface water drainage and traffic, (**See Deer Harbor Development Standards, Sections 8, 9, 10, and 11 for development standards and uses in these districts**).

Commercial Land Uses:

There are three commercial establishments in the Hamlet, but they have a substantial impact visually, economically and culturally upon the community. (1) The Cayou Quay Marina; (2) The Deer Harbor Bellport Marina and Resort and (3) The Deer Harbor Inn. The impact of the two marinas upon this waterfront hamlet can not be overstated. They provide access to the water for all purposes. The Inn provides necessary accommodation and dining facilities for visitors, and the small gift shop fills a similar need. (**See Deer Harbor Development Standards, Sections 8, 9, 10, and 11 for development regulations and specific guidelines for existing commercial uses in Deer Harbor Hamlet.**)

Demand for these and additional commercial, industrial and public uses over the twenty year life of the Plan is impossible to predict. The Hamlet of Deer Harbor has seen a gradual shrinkage of most commercial and industrial uses over the past sixty years. Where there

were once two canneries there are now none. An automobile service station and at least two eating and/or drinking establishments have disappeared in the last ten years. In essence, the Hamlet is a residential community with tourist and water related commercial activities.

Goal: Allow the very limited expansion of existing commercial uses to provide for services needed by the community and its visitors.

Policy 1: Existing and established businesses, such as the Deer Harbor Resort and Deer Harbor Inn are permitted in the Hamlet Commercial District; however, an increase to the existing scale or scope of services is allowable only under the conditional review provisions of the UDC, (**See Deer Harbor Development Standards Sections 8**).

Residential Land Uses

The majority of the Deer Harbor Hamlet has an underlying land use designation of Deer Harbor Hamlet Residential (HR). Within the HR area, residential uses are permitted. Limited commercial (such as bed and breakfast inns) and institutional uses are permitted (**See Deer Harbor Development Standards Sections 8, 9, 10, and 11 for specific development standards and uses in these districts**).

Residential Density

Figure 1 delineates residential density permitted in the Deer Harbor Hamlet. Most of the Hamlet has a permitted density of one dwelling unit per two acres. In the core of the Hamlet, primarily in areas already developed or divided for higher density, areas are given a permitted density of one unit per one-half acre.

Residential Density Bonus

In all areas in the Deer Harbor Hamlet designated with a residential density of one unit per two acres, a density bonus is available for construction of affordable housing units, up to a maximum density of one dwelling unit per half acre, as provided for in the Planned Unit Development standards in the Unified Development Code (SJCC 18.60.220). A maximum of 25 percent of the dwelling, units or up to 44 units are permitted within the boundary of the Deer Harbor Hamlet.

Background

There are 145 lots in Deer Harbor Hamlet, of which 134 appear to be buildable. The remainders are either remnants or reserved for some other purpose (wells, septic, etc.).

There are 80 dwelling units in the Hamlet, not including a relatively small number of accessory dwellings such as guesthouses and non-permitted residences of various descriptions. Within the existing planned residential density, there is the potential for 97 additional residences. Further, the plan would allow construction of a total of 44 affordable houses using the density bonus. Thus, the possible buildout given current density limitations totals 221 dwellings. It should be noted that development of some of the largest unbuilt lots in the Hamlet are restricted by various easements (around the estuary and West of the DH Community Club) and could reduce the available housing units by about 19 units and approximately 6 affordable units.

A 2.2% per annum growth rate has been adopted by the County and will be maintained here to provide consistency. This rate applied to today's stock of 80 residences produces a total of 114 dwelling units in the year 2026. The land supply for the hamlet is sufficient for the planning period.

Goal: To manage the development of high density residential in the Deer Harbor Hamlet. Small areas of the Hamlet, primarily along Deer Harbor Road and in the subdivision between Deer Harbor Road and Cayou Valley Road, already have developed at a higher density of 2 units per acre. This area and the area close to the center of the Hamlet are designated with a residential density of up to two dwelling units per acre. The remainder of the Hamlet area is designated with a residential density of one dwelling unit per two acres, with a density bonus of up to a density of two units per acre for projects that incorporate affordable housing.

Policy 1: Maintain the adopted bonus density overlay district for affordable housing in the Hamlet. The bonus density of up to an additional 25 percent of the existing and future dwelling units up to a maximum of 44 units is applicable Hamlet-wide on those parcels with a 2* density designation.

Action a: Establish a Floating Zone with bonus density designations on the official map of Deer Harbor Hamlet for the Hamlet Residential

2* (See Deer Harbor Development Standards Section 9 for specific development standards).

Allowed Land Uses in Deer Harbor Hamlet
(See Deer Harbor Development Standards Section 10.)

4.3 Land Use District Development Standards

(See Deer Harbor Development Standards Section 11 for specific development standards and uses in the Hamlet.)

Parking Area Dimension Standards

(See Deer Harbor Development Standards Section 13 for specific development standards.)

5. Definitions
Purpose: These definitions are solely to be used when examining proposed developments within the Deer Harbor Hamlet. (See Deer Harbor Development Standards Section 14.)

Appendix A

Community Center (HCC)

The Community Center Development will require an approved Planned Unit Development application. The development standards below are advisory. When evaluating proposals for the Community Center Planned Unit Development, the administrator shall consider the complete application and the consistency of the proposal with intent and scope and scale of development standards for the Community Center Planned Unit Development.

(See Deer Harbor Development Standards Section 7.)

Appendix B

Existing Industrial and Commercial Land Uses

Expansion in the scale or scope of the existing allowable activities will be subject to a conditional review permit process. When evaluating proposals for the alteration, modification or expansion of an existing allowable use, the administrator shall consider the total impact of the use as well as the added impact of the incremental changes being proposed and the consistency of the changes being proposed with the applicable land use designation. Expansion of or changes to Non-Conforming activities is subject to the provisions of SJCC 18.40.310. Shoreline uses are subject to the provisions of the Shoreline Master Program SJCC 18.50 and San Juan County Comprehensive Plan Chapter 3. **(See Deer Harbor Development Standards Sections 8, 9, 10, and 11 for specific development standards and uses in these districts.)**

References

Many of the official documents and reports referenced in this Plan and below may be found on the San Juan County Community Development and Planning Department's web site at:

<http://www.co.san-juan.wa.us/Planning/index.html>.

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