INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE AND INTENT OF THIS CHAPTER

This Chapter is intended to satisfy the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) for the 1997 Benton County Comprehensive Plan, except for the Hanford Sub-Area Plan, which will undergo "joint" environmental review under the combined provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and SEPA. At the conclusion of the "joint" NEPA/SEPA review the Hanford Subarea Plan will be amended into the Benton County Comprehensive Plan.

SEPA Requirements

The State Environmental Policy Act or SEPA (RCW 43.21C) requires government officials to consider the environmental consequences of actions they are about to take, and seek better or less damaging ways to accomplish those proposed actions. Officials must consider whether the proposed action will have a significant, adverse environmental impact on the following elements of the natural and built environment: earth, air, water, plants and animals, energy and natural resources, environmental health, land and shoreline use, transportation, and public services and utilities.

SEPA empowers local government to protect environmental quality, and it requires state and local officials to make decisions consistent with the policy set forth in the act. When necessary, SEPA can be used to supplement agencies' authority to address gaps in laws affecting environmental quality. Under SEPA, policies, plans and regulations adopted per GMA are considered "non-project" actions subject to SEPA review.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION PROPOSED

An Addenda To A Previous EIS

Per the State Environmental Policy Act (WACs 197-11-625 and 706), this Chapter is an Addenda to the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) dated March 1981, for the 1985 Benton County Comprehensive Plan. The FEIS is incorporated by reference in the Appendix, Item 12-0.

The substance of the analysis herein adds to the Final EIS for the 1985 Benton County Comprehensive Plan. It does this in part by identifying provisions of the proposed Plan that respond directly to, and implement mitigations identified in the Final EIS as appropriate to mitigate the impacts of the 1985 Plan.

Table 12.1 shows how the proposed plan addresses the impacts and accomplishes the mitigations identified in the Final EIS for the 1985 Plan. Not all the impacts/mitigations identified in the Final EIS are addressed by the proposed plan.
Where they are not addressed, a brief indication of the reasons is included in the Table.

**Proposal For Which This Addenda is Written**
This Addendum is for the draft Comprehensive Plan (1997), proposed for compliance with the requirements of RCW 36.70A (aka the Growth Management Act, or GMA).

The proposal was developed with extended public participation including citizen advisory committees for Critical Resources, and Agriculture and Minerals, and a Rural Citizen Planning Advisory Committee for each of the county’s five Rural Planning Areas.

**Integration of Processes:**
An iterative dialogue over issues, data, goals, and maps

**Integration of SEPA and GMA in the Benton County Planning Process**
Preparation of the Comprehensive Plan requires compliance with both SEPA and GMA requirements. Since they are similar in many ways, integration of SEPA with GMA eliminates duplication of effort and assures consistency between them. The procedural and substantive requirements of SEPA and GMA have been integrated at several points in the County’s planning process:

**Public Participation** Both SEPA and GMA recognize public participation and agency coordination as fundamental to the planning process.

The public participation process for the County’s Plan began in 1992, extending to 1997 where this Chapter containing the SEPA analysis for the draft is an integral part of the public draft of the Plan Document; the initial SEPA scoping meeting for the Plan was held in July, 1994; as a continuation of scoping, the Rural Citizen’s Planning Committees drafted Alternative Land Use Maps directed at achieving identified visions and goals, and compared the gross impacts of each map prior to selecting the Preferred Alternative analyzed here-in.

**Visioning and Scoping** Visioning (for the Plan) and scoping (for the EIS) are the fundamental beginning points of each process. Visioning and scoping have been combined over an extended period in the Benton County process. The County initiated the formal EIS scoping process for the GMA Comprehensive Plan preparation beginning in July 1994. Prior to that, the 1992 Rural Survey, followed during 1993 by a “visioning” and planning process with citizen planning committees in each of the rural planning areas of the county identified the land use issues of concern for county rural residents. Visions and scoping issues have been combined in the planning process and translated by each rural planning committee into text and land use maps. This chapter describes how each of the Alternative Maps addresses the planning issues raised by the committees.
**Existing Conditions** Both SEPA and GMA require collection and analysis of information regarding existing conditions. The draft plan document contains a description of existing conditions for the various planning issues/resources.

**Goals and Policies** Goals and policies play an important role in the development of the GMA comprehensive plan, and the SEPA evaluation of plan alternatives. The policies and goals in the 1985 County Plan, as minimally amended to reflect GMA requirements for critical areas, urban growth areas, rural lands, transportation and capital facilities, are drivers for the draft plan, along with the general goals of GMA, and the Countywide Goals adopted by the cities and the county.

**Impact Analysis** GMA requires collection and analysis of data for natural resource lands, critical areas, the mandatory plan elements (i.e., land use, rural, housing, transportation, utilities, capital facilities elements), urban growth areas, and the siting of essential public facilities. SEPA requires the analysis of the Plan’s significant adverse impacts on elements of the natural and built environment. The county draft plan contains the data inventories and descriptions of resources to which the required SEPA analysis is applied in this chapter.

**Mitigation** GMA requires plan and ordinance provisions to reduce the impacts of growth on the natural and built environment (e.g., designate and protect by regulation critical areas, and protect water quality). Accordingly, the Plan map, text, goals and policies along with its implementation mechanisms naturally incorporate SEPA required mitigation.

**Documents** Both SEPA and GMA require preparation of documents for the public participation and decision-making processes, but each has specific guidelines on the information and analysis that must or should be included. This chapter contains the requirements of SEPA; this chapter is an integrated portion of the draft Plan document, which has been prepared to satisfy GMA requirements. After certification of the EIS and adoption of the Plan, this chapter (Chapter 12) could be separated from the Plan to become a stand-alone document.

**INTEGRATION OF PRODUCT:**
**PLANS, ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS, AND PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

**Making Projects "Plan Actions"** A fundamental objective of the state legislature is to make more efficient and timely the process of project review. This could be accomplished by integrating comprehensive planning and environmental review so that review and approval of individual development projects becomes, to the extent practical, simply a logical next step in the implementation of the Plan; projects would become in effect "plan actions."
Recent expressions of this legislative objective is ESHB 1724 (RCW 36.70C) enacted in 1995, and ESB 6094, enacted as amended by the Governor in 1997. These are intended to help implement the recommendations of the governor’s Task Force on Regulatory Reform through the integration of growth management and environmental review. A principal motivation for the legislative actions is to streamline land use regulatory processes in order to reduce long delay times (years in some cases) for project review and approval in western Washington counties and cities. Such delays are extremely cost inefficient and impede effective management and accommodation of growth pressures.

For planning jurisdictions fortunate enough to not yet have the problems of western Washington, planning in response to the recent legislation is a proactive mechanism to minimize such problems in the future by getting out ahead of them, i.e., address or avoid them during the planning phase of land use, rather than being confronted by them at the project phase.

Ideally the adoption process for a plan should include environmental review of its land use designations and provisions in sufficient detail and rigor that questions relating to the specific adequacy of, and impacts to essential services, air quality, natural systems etc., are answered upon plan adoption. When this is done, only site specific issues need be addressed for individual project proposals. The principal intended benefit of such a refined process is to make any specific development proposal that is consistent with the adopted Plan, and within the “bounds” of the Plan’s environmental analysis, merely an action to implement the Plan, (rather than a challenge to the Plan).

**Limitations Of This EIS Analysis**
The degree of “bounding” that an EIS on a Comprehensive Plan accomplishes is a function of the
breadth and rigor of its analysis, which is a function of dollars committed to the effort.

Unfortunately, the legislature has not provided funds to accomplish the ideal (i.e., to make project approvals simply actions to implement the plan), at the local level. For the county, at this point in time, the desire to achieve the ideal is constrained by the lack of funding. Therefore, the environmental analysis herein is not expansively bounding; it accomplishes only the conventional objectives of a non-project EIS, i.e., it undertakes a comparative analysis of Alternative Plan Maps and provisions in order to:

i) address the issues raised by the public during "scoping"
ii) identify the least environmentally damaging alternative;
iii) meet the requirements of state planning law and SEPA;
iv) forward the county's planning purposes, e.g., economic growth, and quality of life objectives;

However, this Chapter does attempt to reach beyond its funding limitations by identifying specific geographic areas where "bounding" analyses would be useful as future addendum. These geographic areas are described below.

**Locations Suitable For Additional "Area-specific" EIS Analysis To Enable Project Approvals As "Plan Actions"**

Once the county plan is adopted, future supplements and addendums of the EIS with information rigorous enough to make projects "planned actions" should be pursued if the objective is to aggressively facilitate plan implementation in order to accomplish economic or other objectives. This effort should be focused on specific geographic areas that in the near and medium term will experience development pressure as either a matter of Plan policy, or obvious trend. Such areas include:

- The industrial designations in the Finley Rural Planning Area;
- The Plymouth Rural Planning Area relative to water and sewer service needs and the emerging interest in commercial land uses associated with the I82 and S.R.14 travel corridors;
- The industrial designation at the I82 Badger Rd. interchange in the Richland/West Richland Rural Planning Area;
- The Southern Plain, and the Vernita Terrace Planning Areas of the Hanford Region;

**ALTERNATIVE LAND USE PLANS ANALYZED Selecting Alternative Land Use Maps For this Analysis**

As part of this planning process, each Rural Citizen Planning Committee initially reviewed five (5) Alternative land use maps for its Rural Planning Area. The maps were as follows:

- the adopted 1985 Comprehensive Plan Map;
- the 1985 Plan Map with lower Rural Residential densities adopted in 1994 by the Board of County
Commissioners along with Interim Urban Growth Areas per RCW 36.70A.110.

- three new maps (for each rural Planning Area) drafted by the Rural Planning Committees over a series of meetings. These maps were entirely new, i.e., they were not derived from any existing map(s):

Each Rural Planning Committee then selected just one of its three new maps for further review, thus discarding two of its map creations. The map selected by each committee became its "preferred" map.

The Rural Committees then reviewed the gross demand numbers for housing, school, and parks resulting from population build out of the three (3) remaining Alternative maps. Each committee reviewed the alternatives for consistency with the "vision" goals and objectives earlier identified for its rural community. Each committee then undertook a final round of review, analysis, and changes to its preferred map.

The basis of the Alternative Maps analyzed herein are described briefly below:

Alternative #1 in this analysis is the proposed Land Use Map. It is the aggregate of the new "preferred" land use maps prepared by the Rural Planning Committees for each of the Rural Planning Areas, along with the interim Agricultural lands and Urban Growth Areas designations adopted in 1994 by the County.

**Alternative #1** represents the Rural Committees' modifications and refinements to Alternative 2 i.e., it alters both the land use designations and the densities approved by the County as "Interim" actions (per GMA) in 1994.

**Alternative #2** in this analysis is the "Interim Rural" map. This map has the rural densities adopted by the Board of Commissioners, along with the Agricultural lands designation and the Interim Urban Growth Areas adopted in 1994. It is one of the Alternative Maps reviewed by the Rural Planning Committees.

**Alternative #3** in this analysis is the "No Action" alternative. It is the adopted 1985 Plan map. It was reviewed as an Alternative by the Rural Committees.

**SUMMARY OF LEVEL OF IMPACT OF ALTERNATIVE PLANS**

**Similarities and Differences Between The Alternative Land Use Maps**

**Land Use Designations**

**Agricultural and Rural Residential Lands** Relative to the configuration and size of land use designations, the Alternative maps are more similar than different. Only minor differences occur in the overall acreage for Rural Residential and Agricultural designations, which are the largest designations in terms of acreage.

**Industrial and Commercial Lands** The differences are more pronounced for
the Commercial and Industrial designations.

Alternative 1 (the proposed Plan) has 907 more acres of Industrial designated lands than the other Alternatives; this represents a 25 percent increase in this land use category over Alternative 3 (the 1985 Plan).

Alternative 1 has approximately 200 acres less of Commercially designated lands than the 1985 Plan. The loss is mainly within and around the UGAs of Richland, West Richland and Kennewick; the proposed plan increases commercially designated land in the Plymouth and Prosser areas.

Change in the amount of acreage designated to commercial and industrial uses are not a direct response to GMA, but rather to an update of the map to accommodate emerging local and regional trends which favor Industrial uses and focus development interest in commercial areas near Prosser in west county, and Plymouth in south county.

The significant differences in the Alternatives for the Commercial and industrial designations is not found on the maps, rather it is the way proposed Plan policy and the new Economic Element work proactively to facilitate development of these designations, and the way in which the Plan integrates recreational uses with commercial e.g., the Tapteal Greenway with Columbia Point and Benton City commercial areas.

Build-out of the Industrial designations within the proposed plan will have potential adverse impacts to the natural and built environment, and demands on services and infrastructure greater than either of the other Alternatives. These impacts will be addressed in project specific SEPA analysis, or in “area specific” analysis as described above on page 12-5.

Rural Densities
The significant differences between the Alternatives relate to rural residential densities. Alternative 3 (the 1985 Plan Map) has overall densities approaching urban or suburban over much of the unincorporated county. These densities are several magnitudes higher than either of the other Alternatives. Alternative 2, (the “Interim” Action) adopted by the County in 1994, has the lowest densities. Alternative 1, (the proposed plan) is in between Alternatives 2 and 3, with densities similar to Alternative 3 in specific geographic areas, but most like Alternative 2 overall.

The residential densities within the Agricultural Designations of Alternatives 1 and 2 are twice those allowed in Alternative 3.

The reductions in rural residential densities in Alternatives 1 and 2 are in response to GMA requirements directly. However a parallel and
current influence is the need to update the 1985 Plan in response to: i) rural residents' desire for lower "rural" densities and protection from urban encroachment; and ii) recognition of the likely inability of the county to cost effectively provide services to, and manage the resource issues resulting from the higher densities allowed in Alternative 3 (the 1985 Plan).

A good example of the latter is the Finley area where the 1985 Plan has densities enabling a population of 48,000 persons. This would essentially be an "urban" concentration with a population eight hundred percent larger than currently resides in the area. Such density ignores significant land use constraints in the Finley area related to hydrology, water and sewer service, road capacity, and rail and trucking activity associated with a growing heavy industrial complex centered upon potentially hazardous agricultural chemicals.

Levels of Impact
Generally, the more intense the land use designation and the higher the residential densities allowed, the more adverse the impacts to all systems, i.e., water resources, air shed, capital facilities and infrastructure, public services, indigenous biology, ecology, residential living environments etc.

Table 12.0 shows the relative level of potential impacts for the Alternatives based upon each Alternative's total acreages of high intensity uses (i.e., Commercial and Industrial Designations) and its Rural Residential densities. The impacts would occur generally, i.e., across the spectrum of natural and man made resources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Level of Impact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alt #1 (Proposed Plan)</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alt #2 (&quot;Interim&quot; Actions)</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alt #3 (1985 Plan)</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Charts showing the number of acres designated for specific land uses within the Preferred Land Use Map for each Rural Planning Area, as well as the residential densities and population build-outs and demands on some essential services, e.g., schools, fire, are shown as item 12-2 in the Appendix.

Additionally the charts used by each of the Rural Committees to compare the land uses and build-out implications of all the Alternative Maps initially considered are included as Appendix 12-3.

ISSUES IDENTIFIED
The "scoping" issues addressed in the planning process are listed below. They are the very "local" planning issues identified by the participants in the planning process.

Locally Identified Issues
UGAs, Rural Character and Density: Control urbanization and urban encroachment
Concentrate new development in
defined growth areas
Maintain low rural densities (1du/2.5 to 5 acres)
Ability to keep livestock and animals
Protect property rights and freedom
Preserve farmlands
Maintain open space and farming

Public Services
Adequate road capacity
Available Water and sewer systems
Clean up trash and enforce related ordinances
Protection of Natural Environment:
Protection of the natural environment, specifically fish and wildlife habitat with an emphasis on riverine and wetland habitats

Table 12.2 provides a comparative summary of how the Alternative plans analyzed herein respond to the above scoping issues. The Proposed Plan (Alternative 1) responds most directly and fully.

**SIGNIFICANT CHANGES OR IMPACTS PER EACH ALTERNATIVE**

**Proposed Plan Provisions Which Constitute Significant Changes To the 1985 Plan**

At a fundamental level, changes to comprehensive plans required by GMA fall into two categories:
1. changed land use determinants (land use, density, and other map designations with relevant text policy);
2. new or changed operational or implementation requirements (transportation and capital facilities elements with "Level of Service", monitoring, and "concurrency requirements) and ordinances.

Of the two, the first have the principal and direct effect to lands and resources. To the extent that the second category of changes is impactive, it is because it serves the first.

The substantive changes to the 1985 Plan were primarily the "Interim" land use actions already taken by the Board of Commissioners in 1994 after public hearings per the requirements of RCW36.70A (see Table 12.3).

"Interim" actions are components of the Plan that GMA requires to be adopted early in the planning process and revisited for "finalization" when the full Plan is adopted. The re-visititation is to assure that the interim action, upon finalization, is consistent with the full Plan as it has been developed through the public process.

Within this Chapter, the "interim" actions affecting land use designations and density are as follows:

**Urban Growth Areas And Rural Densities**
The Interim UGAs with the concomitant designation of rural densities outside of them (adopted in 1994).

**Designation of Critical Resources**
The critical areas data base maps referenced in the adopted interim critical areas protection ordinance
(adopted in 1994);

Designation and Conservation of Natural Resources Lands (Agricultural and Mineral lands)
The agricultural lands designation and its interim implementation ordinance (adopted in 1995).

Each of the alternative plans received herein incorporates the above “interim” action as follows:

**Alternative 1** the Proposed Plan, incorporates the "Interim" actions, but with modifications made to the interim land use designations and densities by each Rural Committee, and subsequently by the Board of Commissioners, for each Planning Area.

**Alternative 2** incorporates the "Interim" actions as enacted by the Board of Commissioners i.e., these “interim” actions have not been modified by the Rural Committees.

**Alternative 3** is the Plan Map which is part of the adopted 1985 Comprehensive Plan, it does not incorporate "Interim" actions or modifications by the Rural Committees.

**Proposed Amendments To The 1985 Plan Which Have Potential Significant Impacts**
Table 12.3 contains a description of the adverse and beneficial impacts of the proposed Plan Amendments which represent substantive change to the current (1985) Plan. Note that not all the changes shown in the table are “Map” changes, specifically, the Rural Element is shown, and the Economic Element. The table shows the following:

1) Whether the change is already in effect i.e., as an “interim” action already taken per GMA;
2) Whether SEPA review has occurred for the action or issue either as part of this planning process, or for the adoption of the 1985 Plan;
3) Whether the “interim” actions in the proposed Plan (in combination with citizen planning input and text revisions) changes the 1985 Plan significantly enough to result in the potential for significant impacts, either adverse or beneficial;
4) Mitigations for adverse impacts where they are identified.

The information in Table 12.3 indicates that the significant changes of the proposed plan to the 1985 plan are primarily beneficial. There are some mitigable adverse impacts.
|---|---|---|
| Reduced ground-water supplies from over-withdrawal and deep aquifer mining | 1. Identify & map aquifers and recharge areas to determine extent of use, draw-down and expected life | Partial Mitigation: lower rural densities will reduce demand closer to supply  
Partial Mitigation: known upper level aquifers protected, direction to characterize groundwater resources, integration of Yakima Valley Watershed Management Plan |
|  | 2. Develop guidelines for the physical development of aquifer recharge areas; | Partial Mitigation: by Critical Resources provisions where the resource is known |
| Loss of agricultural lands to development | 3. Develop a Farmland Protection Program whereby important farmlands would be identified and guidelines for the development of such areas would be adopted. | Mitigated: Agricultural lands designated, uses generally limited to agriculture, with the exception that major recreational or ag-industry uses can occur, limited non-farm residential in clusters "site planned" to avoid liabilities to agriculture |
| From physical developments: slipping, sliding and slumping | 4. Develop and adopt an ordinance that would specify building and landscape design standards for the purpose of preventing hillside disasters. | Mitigated: plan policy and critical resources ord. provisions require design and engineering to site conditions. Design Manual to be prepared. |
| Increased dust, noise, smoke, nuisances and traffic in industrial areas | 5. Develop and adopt performance standards for development to control air quality, odor, noise, light and glare, hazards, smoke, gases, traffic and other potential nuisances | Partial Mitigation: air quality issues are the province of the Air Quality Maintenance District, odor controlled by the Health District. The plan does address traffic and site planning issues. |
| People relocating as a result of unhappiness with new development | 6. Establish agreements with each city to coordinate land use planning and decision-making within urban growth boundaries | Mitigated: generally, the county Plan adopts city land use designations within UGAs, state law now requires cities and counties adopt "joint development" standards within UGAs. |
| Potential contamination of groundwater supplies from surface activities | 7. Designate important aquifer recharge areas as environmentally sensitive | Partial Mitigation: done to the limits of current knowledge, plan direction to complete an inventory and characterization of groundwater resources |
## Table 12.1 PROPOSED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROVISIONS WHICH ADDRESS IMPACTS Identified in the Final EIS For the 1985 Comprehensive Plan

<table>
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<tr>
<td>From physical development: slipping, sliding, slumping and soil erosion</td>
<td>8. Identify and map areas subject to subbing, and designate such areas as environmentally sensitive</td>
<td>Mitigated: areas of high groundwater and subbing addressed by plan policy and critical resources ord. &quot;subbing&quot; in Benton County can be a &quot;transient&quot; condition, &quot;overlay&quot; map addresses the condition wherever it occurs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destruction of habitat and creation of barriers to wildlife movement</td>
<td>9. Identify and map critical fish and wildlife habitat, and designate such areas as environmentally sensitive</td>
<td>Partial Mitigation: Plan policy, data base and ordinance protect such resources from new development activities, except for agriculture on historically farmed lands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irreversible losses of natural resources, loss of agricultural soils to development</td>
<td>10. Develop and adopt zoning and other legislative controls in such a manner that conversion of agricultural land takes place in conjunction with orderly contiguous expansion of urban and rural residential activities</td>
<td>Mitigated: As required by planning law, &quot;Urban, Rural Residential, and Agricultural&quot; land uses are separate designations on the plan map, with plan procedures and policy directing the expansion of urban and residential use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impacts to wildlife, endangerment or extinction of unique species</td>
<td>11. Identify and map locations of unique plant and animal species threatened with endangerment or extinction of their populations and designate such areas as environmentally sensitive.</td>
<td>Partial Mitigation: rivers and creeks, wetlands and their buffers, and other primary habitats such as basalt formations are identified and protected from the impacts of new developments, except for agriculture on historically farmed lands. &quot;Primary habitats&quot; of Individual &quot;listed&quot; faunal species are protected where such species are identified within the context of a development proposal; floral species receive less emphasis with public landholders being left principally responsible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic congestion in industrial and commercial areas</td>
<td>12. Develop and adopt parking standards for commercial, residential, industrial, and public areas</td>
<td>Not Directly Applicable: to plan provisions, these are ordinance issues currently addressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of agricultural lands and soils to development</td>
<td>13. Limit the amount of productive agricultural lands encompassed within rural areas designations</td>
<td>Mitigated: see #s 3&amp;10 above</td>
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<tr>
<td>Over withdrawal of groundwater</td>
<td>14. Identify and map areas of short groundwater supply</td>
<td>Not Mitigated: County has neither the expertise of the funds. Plan policy directs working with the state as part of the Yakima Watershed Management Plan to characterize groundwater resources. Groundwater withdrawals are the province of the State.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irreversible loss of natural resources, agricultural soils, neighborhood character,</td>
<td>15. Make provision for the location of planned unit developments in both urban and rural areas.</td>
<td>Mitigated: Under GMA, &quot;urban&quot; areas are the province of the cities. Outside of UGAs, county plan policy and ordinance provisions encourage clustering as a means to conserve rural open space and agriculture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(cannot find a stated impact in the EIS)</td>
<td>16. Develop and adopt an ordinance wherein procedures and standards for both urban and rural planned units would be specified</td>
<td>Mitigated: see # 15 above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depletion of aggregate supplies from mining</td>
<td>17. Define in appropriate county ordinances the length of time that non-conforming uses can be discontinued before they will be permitted.</td>
<td>Not Directly Applicable: County position is that this is a private sector role, or a task which the State Department of Natural Resources should pursue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased congestion (on rural roads)</td>
<td>18. Undertake a study to determine quantities, qualities and locations of aggregate resources.</td>
<td>Not Directly Applicable: County position is that this is a private sector role, or a task which the State Department of Natural Resources should pursue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decreased availability of energy due to growth</td>
<td>19. Designate important aggregate deposits on plan maps.</td>
<td>Partial Mitigation: In so far as they are known, they are designated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degradation of the beautiful aspect of the county</td>
<td>20. Establish formulas whereby the number of access points allowed on major, secondary and collector arterials could be determined and implement such.</td>
<td>Mitigated: to limit access points and maintain LOS, Plan policy calls for use of frontage roads on major arterials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21. Encourage innovative techniques in building design to maximize energy conservation and to incorporate new technologies of energy generation as they may evolve</td>
<td>Not Directly Applicable: Plan does not discourage innovation, building codes will accommodate it, State U.B.C. is the major player here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22. Develop and adopt landscape standards</td>
<td>Not Mitigated: But Plan policy encourages natural landscape materials as a means of water conservation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23. Develop and adopt a nuisance ordinance to prevent the proliferation of weed patches, junked auto bodies, etc.</td>
<td>Mitigated: Plan calls enforcement of current county code, and consideration of additional waste disposal sites or transfer stations to make disposal easier.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Table 12.1 PROPOSED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROVISIONS WHICH ADDRESS IMPACTS Identified in the Final EIS For the 1985 Comprehensive Plan

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(cannot find a stated impact in the EIS)</td>
<td>24. Develop and adopt an ordinance for the dedication of parkland and fees in lieu of land.</td>
<td>Not Directly Applicable: Plan approach is to develop publicly owned sites as parks. Current PUD ordinance requires open space in Planned Unit Developments; preference is for private associations to maintain such space.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(cannot find a stated impact in the EIS)</td>
<td>25. Provide an adequate level of funding for the policing and maintenance of regional park system.</td>
<td>Partial Mitigation: Plan policy and actions direct the development of county park lands for use, subject to the county’s annual allocation of capital funds, and the availability of other funds e.g., grants, loans, donations in kind services etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>Identified Issues</td>
<td>Does the Alternative Address The Issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alternative 3, &quot;No Action&quot; (1985 Plan)</strong></td>
<td>UGAs, Rural Character and Density -Control urbanization &amp; urban encroachment -Concentrate new development in defined growth areas -Maintain low rural densities (1du/2.5 to 5 acres) -Ability to keep livestock and animals -Maintain open space and farming -Protect property rights and freedom</td>
<td>Not Addressed: No formal distinction is made between the urban and rural areas and development. Urban densities and uses can be placed anywhere within rural areas. No concentration of development. Freedom to keep livestock and farm diminishes with the urban encroachment and smaller parcel sizes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public Services - Adequate road capacity</td>
<td>Not Addressed: Prevalent density outside of the Agri. designation is 1Du/ac., approximating large lot urban/suburban use. Areas built-out to these densities will exceed designated Levels of Service for roads, demand would exceed existing road capacity. &quot;Adequate road capacity&quot; (in the rural sense) would not be achievable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Available Water and sewer systems -Clean up trash and enforce</td>
<td>Not Addressed: sources of water and sewer supply/capacity to serve density allowed is unknown, &quot;Availability&quot; means adequate supply achievable at low or reasonable cost. Areas built-out to 1 acre densities would place demands in excess of supply on groundwater and septic waste disposal capabilities. This would necessitate more sophisticated and costly waste disposal systems and deeper potable wells. &quot;Availability&quot; would diminish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture - Preserve farmlands and farming</td>
<td>Issue addressed: Density in Agri. District limited to 1Du/20 acre, all uses ag. related.</td>
<td>Beneficial Outcome: provides a high level of ag. protection than all other Alternatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative</td>
<td>Identified Issues</td>
<td>Does the Alternative Address The Issues</td>
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</table>
| **Alt#3 (cont)** | Wildlife  
- Protection of fish and Wildlife and habitat | **Issue not addressed:** Map designations and policy to protect fish and wildlife but without identifying what specifically is to be protected | **Adverse outcome:** ability to protect not equal to Plan Policy intent or requirement, resulting in loss of resources and potential liabilities re enforcement with vague requirements. |
| **Alternative 2 "Interim" Action** | UGAs, Rural Character and Density  
- Control urbanization & urban encroachment  
- Concentrate new development in defined growth areas  
- Maintain low rural densities (1du/2.5 to 5 acres)  
- Ability to keep livestock and animals  
- Maintain open space and farming | **Issue Addressed:** UGAs makes distinction between Urban and rural development, densities of 1 Du/2.5 and 5 acres in rural areas provides rural densities. Concentration of new development in defined areas accomplished. Larger acreages provide freedom to keep large animals and practice rural lifestyle. Open space and farming continue. | **Beneficial Outcome:** Issues addressed, GMA and citizen objectives met, except for:  
**Residual Concern:** Unlike Alt. 3, this Map does not incorporate the refinements made to densities by the Rural Advisory Committees for their specific Planning Areas. The Committees altered densities created by the BOCC's interim action re: area characteristics, constraints and opportunities e.g., lower densities (1Du/5ac) in floodplains, steep sloping terrain, and irrigated agriculture, higher 1Du/2.5ac.) out of floodplains and on more level terrain, higher still (1Du/ac.) on terrain absent constraints, with urban areas and services close by, and adequate service capacity.  
**Mitigation of Residual:** Alt #1 rural densities |
| Public Services  
- Adequate road capacity | **Issue Addressed:** lower densities enable realization of designated rural Levels of Service, adequate farm & non-farm road capacity; | **Beneficial Outcome:** rural densities translate to lower traffic volumes, higher levels of service, lower O & M costs ; | |
| - Available Water and sewer systems | **Issue Addressed:** "Availability" is a function of the supply of potable groundwater and soil/groundwater capacity (for waste) relative to the demand on those resources. Availability is higher at lower rural densities. Higher availability translates into lower costs i.e., less expensive and less sophisticated water and sewer systems with less regulatory oversight. | **Beneficial Outcome:** lower densities translate to less demand on natural systems meaning a manageable relationship between supply and demand, lower system construction/design costs, improved water quality, less regulation for the property owner, less regulatory costs for government. | |
| - Clean up trash and enforce | **Issue Not Addressed** no discussion of this issue, no policy direction | **Adverse Outcome:** continued degredation of visual quality, health hazards, illegal dumping. | |
## Table 12.2  
**Comparison of the Alternative Plans' Response To Issues Raised (i.e., Scoping Issues)**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Alternative</th>
<th>Identified Issues</th>
<th>Does the Alternative Address The Issues</th>
<th>Issue Outcome and Residual Concerns</th>
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</table>
| Alt#2(cont) | Agriculture       | Issue partially addressed with an agricultural designation requiring a 20 acre minimum parcel size and land uses within designation limited to uses that are dependent, related, ancillary to or not incompatible with farming operations., A residential Density 11 DU/10 acre is allowed where the units are clustered on 10 % of the acreage. | Beneficial Outcome: Issues addressed, GMA and citizen objectives met;  
Residual Concern: more incompatible with comm. Agriculture that Alt #1 which requires lower non-farm residential densities.  
Mitigation of Residual require densities greater than 1du/20 acre to be clustered on small acreages with adequate buffers from agriculture. |
|             | Wildlife          | Same as Alternative # 1                 | Same as Alternative # 3             |
|             | Protection of fish and Wildlife and habitat |                                |                                    |

| Alternative 1 Proposed Plan | UGAs, Rural Character and Density | Issue Addressed: UGAs distinguish Urban from Rural areas. Rural densities of 1 Du/2.5 & 5 acre predominate with clusters of 1Du/acre adjacent to UGAs where natural and physical constraints are few, and where adjacency of the MPO enables security, and daily services, available road access/capacity  
- Concentration of new development in defined areas accomplished. Larger acreages enable freedom to have large animals and ranchettes.  
Residual Concern: Areas of 1Du/acre density will constrain and eliminate adjacent agriculture, and some large animal uses carried out in the 2.5 and 5 acre designations. One acre lots are not tolerant of the rural characteristics listed and identified in column 1.  
Mitigation of Residual: locate one acre densities next to UGAs, in areas of urban level road capacity and existing smaller lots, off of floodplains etc. |
| Public Services | Adequate road capacity | Issue Addressed: lower densities enable the maintenance of designated rural Levels of Service; road capacity is adequate for both farm and non-farm demands; | Beneficial: rural densities result in lower traffic volume, higher levels of service, lower O&M costs.  
Residual Concerns: roads serving 1Du/a c. areas will have lower service, higher capital/O&M costs.  
Mitigation of Residual: Areas designated for higher densities are limited in extent and located adjacent to UGAs where road capacities are augmented by adjacent urban service levels as well as transit and non-motorized transportation options. |
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<th>Alternative</th>
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<th>Does the Alternative Address The Issues</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Alt #1 (cont) Proposed Plan | - Available Water and sewer systems  
- Cleanup trash and enforce | **Issue Addressed:** "Availability" is a function of the supply of potable groundwater and soil/groundwater capacity (for waste) relative to demands on those resources. Availability is higher at lower rural densities. Higher availability means lower costs i.e., less expensive and less sophisticated water and sewer systems with less regulatory oversight. However, availability of water and waste disposal capacity in designated 1Du/acre areas presents the same capacity issues identified in Alternative #1 above.  
**Issue partially Addressed:** Policy language in plan directs that the issue be looked at for solution, Transfer stations in rural areas are suggested. “Enforcement” of Code is not a Plan issue | Beneficial: lower densities mean less demand on natural systems, means a manageable relationship between supply and demand, lower individual system construction/design costs, improved water quality, less regulation of property, less regulatory costs for government.  
Residual Concern: Adequate potable water and waste disposal capacity is questionable in areas of 1Du/ac. Potential public health/liability problems.  
Mitigation of Residual: Limits extent of areas designated for higher densities. Locates them next to UGAs where municipal water and sewer can be extended upon annexation in emergency.  
Beneficial: Pending findings to the contrary, provision of transfer stations in rural areas should decrease illegal dumping on public and private property, thereby reducing the public cost associated with cleaning public lands and nuisance costs to farmers and property owners. |
| Agriculture | - Preserve farmlands and farming  
   - - | **Issue Addressed:** With exceptions, Agri. designation requires a 20 acre min. parcel size, land uses limited to those dependent, related, ancillary to or not incompatible with farming. A residential Density 1Du/10 ac. is allowed when clustered on 10% of the acreage. | Beneficial: Issues addressed, objectives met;  
Residual Concern: Higher non-farm residential densities than Alt #1 will create greater incompatibility problems.  
Mitigation of Residual: Require densities >than 1Du/20 acre be clustered on small acreages with buffers from agriculture. |
| Wildlife | - Protection of fish and Wildlife and habitat  
   - - | **Issue Partially Addressed:** Fish and Wildlife map designations of Alt # 3 same are those in Alts 1 & 2 but augmented by plan policy and text discussion defining "functions and values" of resources. Identification of functions and values defines "what is essential to protect" and enables rational and effective application of protection measures. | Beneficial: Issues addressed, GMA and citizen's objectives met. Resources protected.  
Residual Concern: Because of its intensity and coverage, Agri. production significantly impacts critical resources, but for previously unfarmed uplands (i.e. shrub steppe outside of Hanford) local protection measures await state and federal initiative.  
Mitigation of Residual: pending implementation of actions per Policy B, under Goal 33. |
1. **Beneficial Impact:** The map designations on the proposed plan are substantively the same as the adopted 85 Plan. There are changes to the specificity of Plan Policy e.g., proposed Plan policy generally exempts historically farmed land from protection requirements, whereas the 85 Plan is silent on the issue; proposed Plan policy focuses on the protection of the "functions and values" of resources while the 85 Plan requires protection of the resources but does not identify functions and values thereby leaving what is to be protected and why uncertain. The significant change is that the proposed plan’s policy and identification of functions and values, and the adopted Critical Areas Ord. combine to provide a minimum level of protection, whereas the 85 Plan does not. Even with the plan policy generally exempting historically farmed from protective provisions this is a beneficial impact on the environment.

2. **Adverse Impact:** The map designation for agricultural lands in both the 85 Plan and the proposed plan are substantively the same. Policies in both plans protect agriculture from the encroachment of incompatible uses. Non-farm residential densities in the proposed plan are higher than those allowed in the 1985 Plan, giving rise to the potential for land use incompatibility problems and additional constraints on agricultural practices. Therefore, the proposed plan is less protective of agriculture than the 1985 Plan. This is a significant change and adverse impact, which should be mitigable through standards in the Subdivision and Planned Unit Development Ordinance which enable clustering and setback measures designed to minimize constraints and liabilities to agriculture from the placement of non-farm residential uses within its operational areas.

3. **Beneficial Impact:** UGAs in the proposed plan are marginally smaller than the 85 Plan, but unlike the 85 Plan, are based upon quantitative data, and must be observed, i.e., annexations and extension of municipal infrastructure outside of them is not allowed. There is more than sufficient vacant land for growth within the UGAs, with the exception of Benton City and Prosser, all are greatly in excess of what is projected as the 20 year need. Because UGAs are a regulatory device in the proposed plan, as opposed to the meaningless line on a map in the 85 plan, the proposed plan will enable local governments, special districts, service providers and the private sector to plan, acquire land and easements, arrange financing and capitalize infrastructure improvements with greater certainty and cost effectiveness. For rural residents and agricultural interests it will provide a higher level of order and predictability to the process of urban expansion and encroachment, thereby enabling some enlightened decision making on their part. These are significant beneficial impacts.

4. **Beneficial Impact:** Rural densities prevail on the proposed plan, in contrast to urban and suburban density being prevalent in the Rural designations on the 85 Plan map. Densities in the 85 Plan map did not reflect either natural or infrastructure constraints, or the preferences of rural residents for lower densities overall. Policy in both of the Plans is similar in intent, though in the proposed plan the map densities are consistent with the policy as well as with identified objectives of citizen planning committees. The change to rural densities in rural areas is significant, its effect is to reduce cumulative demands on resources and essential services to a level in closer alignment with available supplies and the service capabilities of the county as a regional provider. The requirement for a Rural Element in the plan also gives rural resident’s land use preferences and issues, as they may appear in the proposed plan, a standing equal to other mandatory planning considerations such as transportation, capital facilities and urban expansion, this standing did not previously exist. These are beneficial impacts.

5. **Beneficial Impact:** The Economic Element in the 1985 Plan consisted mainly of a recognition of the importance of agriculture as the "second leg" of the local economy, and pages and tables of quantitative information "intended to provide background information ..." The Economic Element in the proposed plan has more specific development oriented policies and identifies actions which the county should take in specific geographic areas of the county with the intent to capitalize on those areas' potential for economic development. In some instances these actions appear again as projects in the Capital Facilities Plan. This represents an important change between the two plans. The impact on the local economy and employment base should be beneficial, potential adverse impacts on the localized areas targeted for action will have to be mitigated per SEPA review.