

Spokane County will use this policy to assist with development of any amendments to the Spokane County Critical Areas Ordinance.

Policy: It will be the responsibility of the Division of Long Range Planning to identify "best available science" and provide a recommendation to decision makers for use in designating and protecting Critical Areas pursuant to RCW 36.70A.172.

At the discretion of the Division of Long Range Planning, the Division may recommend to the Board of County Commissioners or the Board of County Commissioners may direct, for any issue under consideration, that a science team be formed to assist in this task. The science team will be appointed by the Board of County Commissioners at a public meeting and shall consist of 3 to 5 scientists of appropriate background. The Division of Long Range Planning will assist in providing or gathering available scientific information on the issue under consideration to the science team. Supplemental information may be provided by the science team or other interested party. The science team will make a recommendation of "best available science". The Division of Long Range Planning will forward the science team's recommendation together with supporting documentation to the appropriate decision making body for their consideration and use.

It should be noted that "best available science" will generally provide a range of options or choices, each of which has advantages and disadvantages. The science team's purpose is to assess the science used to develop the choices or options and perhaps to develop or assist in developing the options or choices. Their purpose is not to select one option or choice and defend it. It shall be up to decision makers, ultimately elected officials, to use the "best available science" identified by the science team to select the options or choices that they believe best serves the people of Spokane County."

The Board found the final paragraph of the Best Available Science Policy unnecessary and damaging to the stated purpose of the amendment.

On March 3, 1998, the Board of Spokane County Commissioners adopted Resolution No. 98-0161 deleting the last paragraph of the Administrative Policy to Identify Best Available Science.

The Board believes the Policy is now in compliance with the Act. The Board issued a letter to the parties noting it intended to issue an order of compliance unless either party requested a hearing. Neither petitioners nor the respondent requested a hearing.

Now, therefore, **IT IS HEREBY ORDERED** Spokane County is in compliance with the Growth Management Act with respect to Issue No. 4 regarding its administrative policy to Identify Best Available Science.

DATED this 10th day of April, 1998.

EASTERN WASHINGTON GROWTH PLANNING HEARINGS BOARD

Judy Wall, Presiding Officer

Dennis A. Dellwo, Board Member

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