

Bumbalov, Stoyan (DES)

From: Lisa Nezwazky <lisa.nez@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 20, 2023 3:31 PM
To: Curb, Dustin (DES)
Subject: The newly updated WA Wildlife Urban Interface Code

External Email

To: The WA State Building Code Commission
Re: The newly updated WA Wildlife Urban Interface Code
Date: 8/20/2023

Dear Dustin,

I am writing to let you know that we were completely unaware of the sweeping changes this code version represents, or we would have raised the below concerns before its passage. We would like its effective date delayed until possible unintended and unacceptable consequences are addressed by the council and corrected.

While we agree that forest fires are a serious matter, and that buildings and towns built too close to wildfire areas can be destroyed by forest fires, we feel this code goes way beyond the reasonable danger zone and applies to any treed area outside an urban core. We feel the effect of the large 30' to 100' defensible space (read treeless space) will be to denude the Evergreen state of its trees.

Trees, vegetation, plants, are the only things on the planet drawing down all of the carbon we are producing. Our policies and procedures should be to protect them, care for them, and to plant more of them. In this way we will prevent fires and floods. Because trees draw water into the soil they are protective against droughts. This proposal to incentivize cutting trees over the use of protective fire materials ironically puts us all at higher drought and fire risk. We need many more trees, not less. We all know this. Every time we cut down a tree we release more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

Instead of going after the trees, let's incentivize:
Not building in fire zones and building with fire resistant materials
Upgrading existing buildings
Spacing around trees in forested areas

The real problem is housing and development next to forests. Let's upgrade and take care of those communities without destroying the forests. We ask the code to require fire protective building materials in forested areas. Do not change the flora and fauna of our whole state based on just the problematic wildfire areas.

We will never get ahead of climate disasters in our state if we implement codes that contribute to climate change. Hasn't it been overwhelmingly hot all week, followed by a day of smoke? Cutting down more trees will only make this worse.

Thank you,
Lisa Nezwazky
Olympia, WA

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