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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BPIA	Business and Parking Improvement Area
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
DEIS	Draft Environmental Impact Statement
DNR	Department of Natural Resources
du	dwelling unit
EPA-RCAP	Environmental Protection Agency Rural Community Assistance Program
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
GCAB	Gateway Community Advisory Board
GMA	Growth Management Act
GPM	gallons per minute
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
ORV	Off-Road Vehicle
PALS	Planning and Land Services

PUD	Public Utility District
RNC	Rural Neighborhood Center
R10	Rural 10
R20	Rural 20
SEIS	Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement
TC	Tourist Commercial
UNAC	Upper Nisqually Advisory Commission
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFS	United States Forest Service
VC	Village Center
VR	Village Residential
WDOE	Washington Department of Ecology
WDFW	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
WaDOT	Washington Department of Transportation

INTRODUCTION

THE UPPER NISQUALLY VALLEY

Overview of the Plan Area

The Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan area is located in southeast Pierce County, Washington. The plan area is approximately 18 miles in length beginning slightly north of Alder Dam and extending eastward along the State Road 706 highway corridor through the communities of Alder, Elbe, and Ashford, terminating at the Nisqually entrance to Mt. Rainier National Park. The southern border of the plan area is the Nisqually River and Lewis County. The northern border follows the northern boundary of the Upper Nisqually River Watershed. Major highways within the plan area are SR-7 and SR-706. The plan area consists of approximately 27,000 acres. Roughly 50 percent of this area is public lands held by the Federal, State, or local government. The majority of the public lands are designated forests which provide significant recreational opportunities and conservation of wildlife habitat. Population in the plan area is approximately between 1,100 - 1,200 persons. Population density is approximately 28.1 persons per square mile.

The Upper Nisqually

The community of Alder, at an elevation of 1,220 feet, is characterized by a series of homes, the Alder General Store, Alder Church and Alder Community Club, and a Washington State Department of Transportation maintenance facility. Alder is located on a gently sloping hillside above Alder Lake at the entrance to Alder Lake Park. The first vista of Mount Rainier from within the plan area for east-bound travelers is visible as one leaves Alder heading east. The west end of the valley consists of rolling foothills with a combination of open pasture and hardwood and coniferous forests. The Cascade foothills occupy the northern edge of the plan area and begin just east of Alder Hill. The central valley contains large pasture areas which provide beautiful views of Mount Rainier. The highway corridor throughout the central valley is characterized by tall evergreen trees that align the roadway. The east end of the valley is a combination of forests, pastures, and commercial nodes. The entrance to Mount Rainier National Park borders the easternmost end of the plan area. The south side of the plan area is bounded by the Nisqually River which divides Pierce and Lewis Counties.

Alder, Alder Lake and La Grande Reservoir

The west end of the plan area is dominated by two man-made bodies of water, Alder Lake and La Grande Reservoir, which were formed by the Alder



Alder Church

and La Grande Dams, respectively. The dams were built for hydroelectric generation and include powerhouses at Alder Dam and at La Grande, downstream from La Grande Dam. The dams are owned and the reservoirs managed by Tacoma Power under license from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Elbe

The Elbe area is distinct because the Cascade foothills fall steeply to the shore of Alder Lake, allowing only enough room for SR-7. The community of Elbe, at an elevation of 1,210 feet, serves as the western terminus of the main portion of the Nisqually River Valley floor. The unincorporated community of Elbe lies between the steep hillside of the Cascade foothills to the north and east and Alder Lake and the Nisqually River to the south and west. Elbe is comprised of a platted townsite with small residential home sites along streets off SR-7 and primarily tourist-oriented commercial development along the SR-7 corridor through the community. The community is dominated by the train-oriented facilities located between SR-7 and Alder Lake. The train facilities include lodging, a restaurant, and the terminus for an excursion train that runs approximately six miles south to Mineral in Lewis County. There is a dinner train operating from Elbe. The historic Elbe General Store and the Elbe Evangelical Lutheran Church provide two more unique sites in the community. Several other commercial businesses, a second church and a fire hall are also located in Elbe. Elbe sits at the junction of SR-7, which runs west to Tacoma and south to Morton, and SR-706 which runs east to Mount Rainier National Park. The southern highway entrance to the plan area is by way of the SR-7 bridge over the Nisqually River at Elbe.

The hills above Elbe to the north and east are part of the DNR's Elbe Hills State Forest, an area of recreational trails for hikers, horseback riders, and cross-country skiers, in addition to being an active commercial forest. The Elbe Hills State Forest contains two identified trail systems: the Sahara Creek/Nicholson Horse Trail System for horseback riders and hikers, running along lower slopes of the Elbe Hills from Elbe east approximately six miles to the Sahara Creek Campground; and the Elbe Hills Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Trail System for jeeps, motorcycles, and mountain bikes, located higher up in the Elbe Hills.

Ashford and National

The Ashford community is located in along SR-706 at an elevation of 1,769 feet. It is characterized by a mix of homes, restaurants, stores, lodging, a post office, fire hall, small to medium sized residential lots, and vacant, wooded lots. The hillside above the west end of Ashford, to the north, has a large recent clearcut. The area between the highway and the Nisqually River contains homesites with pastures and a large clearcut.

The community of National has not existed for decades but, at one time was the site of a large timber mill. The area currently consists of large, vacant tracks of land which are mostly owned by the Washington Department of Natural Resources. The water district also has some facilities in the area. The road system within National is currently comprised of dirt and gravel logging roads.

The east part of Ashford is characterized by two motels, one of which includes several cabins and a restaurant. A large subdivision composed of 305 small lots (Echo Valley) is located on the southeast side of Ashford. Over half of the lots within Echo Valley are vacant. Along Mount

Tacoma Canyon Road is a moderate-size subdivision of 55 small lots (High Echo), the majority of which are vacant.

Park Entrance

For about one mile from Goat Creek to the entrance to Mount Rainier National Park, at an elevation of 2,000 feet, there are visitor-oriented commercial activities and small residential home sites. The commercial development is characterized by restaurants, an inn, a motel, commercial cabins, RV park and camping facilities, and a few retail businesses. Near the entrance to the Park is a large subdivision of 145 small lots (Nisqually Park), which is only about half developed. The eastern entrance to the plan area is at the gate to Mount Rainier National Park.

Mount Rainier National Park

The campaign to establish a national park emerged in the 1880s when several influencing factors converged to give the park movement momentum. Among those who played important roles were the local commercial interests in Tacoma and Seattle that aggressively promoted tourism to the future park area, especially through the operations of the grand Northern Pacific Railroad hotel, *The Tacoma*, which opened its doors in 1884. No less significant were the string of small hotels and inns stretching between Tacoma and Longmire Springs, and the discovery of Paradise Valley as a popular destination point.

Organized political pressure to create the national park came from various individuals and groups. Mountaineering clubs, local newspapers, commercial clubs, and national scientific and geographic interests lent their weight. Notable individuals, particularly prominent European visitors to Mount Rainier, and John Muir who climbed the mountain in 1888, gave the park movement strong support through newspapers and other publications. With the creation of the State of Washington in 1889 and the Pacific Forest Reserve in 1893, the proposal to create the nation's fifth national park moved a step closer to reality. Conservation was, for the first time in American history, a priority of the federal government in the 1890's, and local congressmen joined Interior Department officials in pushing for the establishment of a park area surrounding Mount Rainier within the larger Pacific Forest Reserve. Throughout the 1890s the park proposal in Congress was introduced six different times and finally passed on March 2, 1899.

Mount Rainier National Park is predominantly a one-day visitor park, and the overwhelming majority of visitors enter at the Nisqually Entrance on the southwest corner of the park. Along the 19-mile road between the entrance and Paradise Valley there are hotels, campgrounds, overlooks, and trailheads. At Paradise, 5400 feet in elevation, is the park's major visitor center and the 126-room historic Paradise Inn which opened in 1917. The Stevens Canyon Road, a paved highway, connects Paradise Valley with the east side at State 123. In the northeast section of the park a highway off State 410 climbs to Yakima Park, elevation 6400 feet, with limited services during summer months.

Gifford Pinchot National Forest

The USDA Forest Service (USFS) manages an area along the eastern edge of the plan. The National Forest lands are technically part of the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, but are administered by the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. Congressional action would be necessary to formally transfer the lands between the two forests. The Gifford Pinchot National

Forest runs from Mount Rainier south to the Columbia River Gorge and from Mount Saint Helens east to Mount Adams and the crest of the Cascade Mountains. The Gifford Pinchot National Forest is responsible for administering 1,371,720 acres, including the portion of the forest within the plan area.

The forest is managed through the Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (hereafter referred to as the "forest plan") of 1990 as amended by the Northwest Forest Plan of 1994 which guides all natural resource management activities and establishes management standards for the forest. The forest plan establishes multiple use goals, management direction for future activities, the allowable sale quantity for timber, and the identity of lands suitable for timber management. The forest plan was revised by Amendment 11 in February 1995 to institute changes resulting from the development of President Clinton's 1994 plan for managing habitat for species found in late-successional and old-growth forests in the range of the northern spotted owl.

The forest contributes to the quality of life for the people of the Upper Nisqually Valley and the greater Puget Sound region. Outdoor recreation opportunities, including backpacking, hiking, and mountain-biking, are readily available. Old-growth trees provide aesthetic and recreational value. Scenery includes snow-capped mountains, glaciers, lakes, streams, waterfalls, and rock outcrops. The forest has a diverse population of plant and wildlife species.

Washington State Department of Natural Resources Elbe Hills State Forest

The Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages approximately 23,000 acres of land as the Elbe Hills State Forest which is located within the plan area. Elbe Hills State Forest is part of an original 1889 land grant from the Federal government. The DNR manages the State forest for both timber production and recreational use.

In January of 1997, the Federal government signed agreements allowing for implementation of the DNR's Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for managing lands containing northern spotted owl habitat. The HCP is a way for the State to obtain relief from the prohibition on removing habitat of species covered under the Endangered Species Act, including the northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet. An HCP is a plan generated by a landowner, in this case the DNR, that provides long-term conservation measures for a listed species in exchange for the right to take a portion of its habitat. The HCP offsets the harm to individually listed animals with a plan that promotes conservation of the species as a whole. The DNR's approved HCP provides mitigation for removal of habitat through timber harvest by providing habitat areas for the northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet.

The HCP manages land to minimize the harm done to the habitats of seven other listed species within the range of the spotted owl. The HCP conserves habitats for numerous unlisted species west of the crest of the Cascade Range, including western Washington runs of salmonids. In addition to the protection of northern spotted owl, marbled murrelet, and aquatic habitat, the HCP identifies and protects cliffs, caves and cave passages, oak woodlands, and talus fields that provide habitat for various other species.

History of the Upper Nisqually Valley

Native American groups inhabited the Upper Nisqually Valley for thousands of years. The Nisquallys were the primary group that occupied the area and had many permanent villages along the Nisqually River. Other groups, from both the west and east sides of the Cascades, used the mountain as a hunting ground and considered it sacred. After the Indian War of 1855-1856, the Nisquallys were not allowed to return to their villages.

European settlement of the Pacific Northwest did not occur until the early part the nineteenth century. The original impetus for settlement was the desire to control areas for fur trapping. The Native Americans showed the early settlers where to find and how to utilize wild plants that provided food such as potatoes, onion, carrots, water lily roots, and skunk cabbage roots.

In the latter half of the 1890's through the early 20th century, the Klondike gold rush in Alaska created a boom in the Seattle area as a center for outfitting and supplying prospectors on their way to the mines. Although gold and silver mining in the Cascades was fairly limited, coal was extracted from mines near Mount Rainier including Wilkeson, Carbonado, Mineral, and just north of Ashford. Numerous mine claims in and around Mt. Rainier were established beginning in 1898. Coal mining declined when hydropower generated electricity and oil replaced coal as energy resource in the 1920's.

Prior to the establishment of a national park in 1899, residents in the Puget Sound area traveled to Mount Rainier during the summer to recreate. Although mountain climbing expeditions were most notable, many groups also traveled to the Mountain to horseback ride, fish, and camp. The railroad companies and local residents recognized the potential for tourism and invested in various endeavors to accommodate visitors from the Puget Sound region.

German immigrants and homesteaders settled at the Elbe town site in the late 1800's. A plat for the town of Elbe was filed in 1903. In the early days, the town functioned as a market center where loggers, Native Americans, and farmers came to exchange goods and produce. The town hall, completed in the 1890's, functioned as a gathering place for the surrounding communities and drew people from Longmire to Tanwax when there were special events such as elections, dances, or holiday celebrations.

The first logging and milling operation in Elbe started in the early 1900's. Many mills were in operation by the time Tacoma Eastern Railroad reached Elbe in 1904. In 1936, the passenger railroad service stopped with the completion of the Mountain Highway. During the depression of the 1930's, youths came from all parts of the country to work on the construction of trails, roads, and buildings within Mount Rainier National Park. One of the compounds erected to house the workers was located near Elbe.

Mining prospects initially attracted settlers to the Ashford area. Although some coal mining occurred, the logging and milling industry soon became the economic focus. The town became an important log-shipping center. In 1904, anticipating growth in the valley, Walter and Cora Ashford platted the townsite in their name. In the same year, the Tacoma Eastern Railroad



The Ashford and the Hershey family c. 1915

Company extended its railroad line to Ashford. By the early 1940's, with the decline of the logging industry, the town's economy relied on recreation and tourism.

The Pacific National Lumber Company established the town of National in 1905. This company-owned town rented housing to its employees in addition to operating a general store. The employees of the company either worked as loggers or as part of its milling operation. The company holdings were sold and eventually bought by the Weyerhaeuser Company in the 1950's. By this time the town began to decline. Homes were bought by individuals and moved off the site. The Washington State Department of Natural Resources now owns

the properties.

Farm settlement began in the Alder area in the early 1890's. After the Tacoma Eastern Railway lines reached La Grande and became available to transport milling equipment and logs, a shingle and saw mill located at the north fork of Alder Creek. Shortly after railroad spurs were built to reach the new mills, a hotel and store were built by the Alder Mill Company.

The Alder Dam was completed in 1940's to supply electric power to the City of Tacoma. The Alder Lake (reservoir) covered more than 200 acres of farm land and the original town of Alder.

PLANNING HISTORY

County Planning

1962 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan and Zoning

The first Pierce County Comprehensive Land Use Plan was adopted on April 2, 1962. The Pierce County Zoning Code, which implemented the Comprehensive Plan, was adopted on October 8, 1962. The 1962 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan designated the Upper Nisqually Valley, along with the rest of southern and eastern Pierce County, as "rural residential." The purpose of the rural residential designation was to "...identify an area which lies outside the path of immediate urban expansion, and to delineate a boundary of suburban residential development which is consistent with adequate public service being provided." Low density residential use was recommended in rural residential areas to: "...avoid premature and uneconomic extension of public facilities and services; reserve potential residential land in sufficiently large ownership

parcels to permit proper subdivision at a future date; and provide areas within reasonable commuting distance of major employment centers where rural living can be enjoyed with a minimum of use restrictions.”

From 1962 until 1990, the plan area was zoned General Use, which allowed a wide range of commercial, industrial, residential, and resource uses. In July and November of 1990, the General Use Zone was amended to require multi-family residential and most commercial and industrial uses to go through the conditional use public hearing process. Also in 1990, per Ordinance No. 90-178S, the Pierce County Council approved an area-wide rezone of forest lands of long-term significance to a Forest Land zone, which primarily allowed the growing, harvesting, and processing of forest products. With regard to the plan area, the Forest Land zone encompassed most of the foothills and mountains north and east of Elbe. In 1993, per Ordinance No. 93-84S2, most of the remaining plan area was rezoned from the General Use to General Rural zone. The General Rural zone required a minimum lot size for residential subdivision of land of 10 acres, as was the minimum lot size for non-residential uses. There were three areas of the Upper Nisqually Valley which remained zoned General Use: the Elbe area; the Ashford area, west of Mount Tahoma Canyon Road; and the Park entrance area, between Kernahan Road and Mount Rainier National Park.

1994 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations-Zoning

In 1990, the Washington State Legislature passed legislation referred to as the Growth Management Act (GMA). GMA required Pierce County to develop and adopt a comprehensive plan which would control residential, commercial, and industrial growth. Thirteen goals are listed in GMA to guide policy development in nine required elements. The required elements include land use, housing, capital facilities, utilities, rural, and transportation. Pierce County also elected to include four additional elements: environment and critical areas, economic development, community plans, and essential public facilities. Each of the nine GMA required elements must conform to specific standards set in the legislation. The rural element requirements in the originally adopted GMA contained very general standards. It stated that “...Counties shall include a rural element including lands that are not designated for urban growth, agriculture, forest, or mineral resources. The rural element shall permit land uses that are compatible with the rural character of such lands and provide for a variety of rural densities...”

In 1997, the Growth Management Act was amended to provide more flexibility and detail in the type of development allowed in the rural areas of counties. The new provisions recognize that rural characteristics and land use patterns are different between counties across the State. Counties are now allowed to consider local circumstances in the development of policies and regulations for a designated rural area. As a consequence, limited areas of more intensive uses may be planned. The new requirements specifically addresses infill development, recreational and tourist uses, and cottage industries.

In 1994, per the requirements of the Washington State Growth Management Act, Pierce County adopted a new Comprehensive Plan. The 1994 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan replaced the 1962 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan in its entirety. The 1994 Comprehensive Plan identified the entire Upper Nisqually plan area as “rural.” The new plan contained the following land use designations for the valley: Rural 10, which encompasses the floor and western end of the Upper

Nisqually Valley; Rural Neighborhood Centers, in Ashford and Elbe; Designated Forest Land, in the hills and mountains north and east of Elbe; and Rural 20, which encompasses a narrow buffer along the western edge of the Designated Forest Land--east of the Eatonville Cut-off Road. These land use designations are further described within the Land Use element of this plan.

In July 1995, per Ordinance No. 95-79S, the Pierce County Council adopted the Pierce County Development Regulations-Zoning which implemented the 1994 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan. The Development Regulations-Zoning created zoning districts which mirrored the names and locations of the Comprehensive Plan designations.

Projects received by Pierce County Planning and Land Services are vested under the rules and regulations that apply at the time the development application is submitted. There are several projects in the Upper Nisqually Valley that are presently undergoing County review that were received before the community planning process had even begun. The community plan policies and regulations do not directly apply to these projects and cannot be used to influence the types of uses allowed.

Community Planning

Pierce County Comprehensive Plan policies found in the Community Plans Element address community autonomy, community character, new community plans, consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, consistency with the Development Regulations-Zoning, transition strategies, and joint planning agreements.

The Community Plans element of the 1994 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan envisions a local voice in how the Comprehensive Plan and its Development Regulations will be carried out in communities. Community plans exemplify how the objectives and policies of the Comprehensive Plan play out when applied to detailed and specific conditions. They indicate specific land use designations, appropriate densities, and the design standards that should apply in community planning areas. Preserving and building community character while ensuring an efficient and predictable development approval process is a central theme. Community plans are a unifying force for communities. They identify local characteristics. They survey population, employment, transportation, building, and social attributes. Community plans help citizens decide what they want to nurture and what they want to change at the local level, where citizens live and interact.

Although the Growth Management Act (GMA) does not require comprehensive plans to provide for community plans, Pierce County Ordinance 90-47S directs County officials to prepare a Community Plans element of the Comprehensive Plan. The majority of unincorporated County population resides in community plan areas. The Community Plans element spells out how to coordinate consistency between community plans and the Comprehensive Plan. Community plans must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the GMA. Flexibility exists only in the interpretation of how Comprehensive Plan policies apply in a given community or in areas where the Comprehensive Plan is silent on an issue or does not provide detailed guidance. Ensuring such consistency requires comparing proposed community plan policy and land use designations against each policy of the Comprehensive Plan. If a community plan policy would mean that a

Comprehensive Plan policy could not be met in the community planning area, the policies would be incompatible and therefore inconsistent.

If a community plan vision or policy can be determined to have County-wide value, then the Comprehensive Plan policy may be altered. Otherwise, modifications to any inconsistent community plan policy will be necessary until it meets the consistency test. Changes to any community plan will be developed collaboratively by citizens with County staff and adjacent jurisdiction's staff for adoption by the County Council. To avoid unnecessary and undesired inconsistencies between a community plan and the Comprehensive Plan, the unique values and community desires reflected in individual community plans should be reflected, built upon, and incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.

Upper Nisqually Valley Community Planning Efforts

In the summer of 1996, Pierce County Planning and Land Services Department began to develop an integrated community plan and environmental analysis for the Ashford/Elbe community. This effort was the first sub-area plan to be initiated since the adoption of the County's GMA comprehensive plan. But prior to Pierce County's involvement, the community had already begun outlining visions for the future. These visions, articulated in the 1992 Upper Nisqually Community Report and the 1994 Upper Nisqually Community Workshop Report, became the basis for the visions and policies of the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan.

1992 Upper Nisqually Community Report

In the spring of 1992, students from The Evergreen State College conducted a community survey and in person interviews with the Upper Nisqually community. The students' efforts resulted in the Upper Nisqually Community Report, also known as the "Evergreen Study." The students mailed approximately 1,100 surveys out to the community and received back 226 completed survey forms, a 20.08 percent return rate. In addition to the analysis of the survey results, the Community Report includes anecdotal history and opinions from valley residents. Three proposed visions for the future were identified by the students: no change, bedroom community, and tourist service community. The survey showed the community would like to see future growth directed into towns or centers.

1994 Upper Nisqually Community Workshop Report

In the winter and spring of 1994, the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program of the National Park Service, along with a non-profit facilitation organization known as the Sonoran Institute, worked with the Upper Nisqually community to develop two community visioning workshops. The workshops were held in June 1994. The residents attending the workshops identified and prioritized values the community held, visions the community had for the future, and actions to implement the top priority visions and values of the community. This effort also led to the formation of the Upper Nisqually Community Forum. This group of community representatives was responsible for carrying out the actions identified in the visioning process. As the County's planning efforts materialized, this group eventually disbanded.

SCOPE OF THE COMMUNITY PLAN

Legislative Authority to Develop the Plan

In the Community Plans element of the 1994 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan, the Upper Nisqually Valley, i.e., Ashford-Elbe area, was identified as a community for which a future community plan would be developed.

Pierce County Resolution R96-68S, passed June 11, 1996, directed the Pierce County Planning and Land Services Department to develop an integrated community plan and environmental analysis for the Upper Nisqually Valley, i.e. Ashford-Elbe community. The resolution establishes that the community plan should seek to: maintain the rural character and natural beauty of the area which draws both residents and visitors and to encourage appropriate tourism and provide economic opportunities for community residents.

In March 1996, Pierce County Planning and Land Services was awarded a grant which partially funded the community planning effort for the Upper Nisqually Valley area. The state legislature made the grant monies available through its Planning and Environmental Review Fund. The Washington Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development administers the grant program. The intent of the grant funding was to assist communities that are attempting to integrate environmental analysis into growth management planning efforts. The State hoped that the communities using these grant monies would develop plans that could serve as models for other communities in Washington State.

Purpose and Use of the Community Plan

The Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan will give residents, property owners, business people, and Pierce County government a clearer, more detailed sense of how the community wants to develop in the future and what standards could be utilized to create and maintain the look and feel identified in the community plan through goals, objectives, principles, and standards. The Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan develops a vision for the entire Upper Nisqually Valley region of Pierce County; develops a vision unique to each community within the valley; refines the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan to more closely reflect the needs, concerns, and desires of those in the valley while making sure that what the valley community desires will still fit well with the big picture for all of Pierce County in terms of County-wide policies; and identifies

actions necessary to implement the community plan, including: adopting or revising land use regulations; identifying priorities for use of public funds to develop physical improvements such as sidewalks, street landscaping, street lights, water-related improvements, and park development; social programs; and economic programs.

The community plan has been prepared with the expectation that growth can occur within the Upper Nisqually Valley and can bring vitality to Ashford and Elbe while continuing to retain rural character throughout the area. This growth may occur at the rate which is accommodated in the plan or may occur more slowly than anticipated in the plan. Growth, and the rate at which it occurs, will largely depend upon the actions of the local community such as marketing of services and coordination of activities with public land managers.

The policies contained in the plan are distinguished as goals, objectives, principles and standards.

Goals are a general vision statement by the community.

Objectives are statements of what is desired to be achieved in the future or statements of what conditions should exist in the community.

Principles set a particular course of action to accomplish objectives. **Standards**, quantitative or qualitative, are specific benchmarks or targets to be accomplished in the ongoing development of the County.

All of the policy statements were developed through citizen comment and represent the will of the people translated into decision oriented statements. When applying the policy statements, each should be afforded equal weight and consideration.

Consistency with the 1994 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan

The goals, objectives, policies, and standards in the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan are consistent with the provisions in the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan. Although the community plan proposes to change land use designations within the valley, the proposed designations are already defined and policy direction included in the County Comprehensive Plan. The plan does propose new zoning districts to implement the existing land use designations. The regulations associated with the zoning districts conform with the general provisions of the existing land use designations.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The Gateway Community Advisory Board

The development of the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan could not have been accomplished without the Gateway Community Advisory Board (GCAB). The GCAB, appointed in June of 1996, consisted of a nineteen member group representing a variety of interests and geographic locations of the community. Representatives included: Tacoma Power; National Park Service; U.S. Forest Service; Department of Natural Resources; Nisqually Indian Tribe; Visitor Convention Bureau; the local service providers; environmentalists; development interests;

recreationalists; business interests; forestry; and local residents from both Pierce and Lewis Counties.

The GCAB was charged with three main responsibilities: 1) serving as a sounding board for the community; 2) guiding the development of policies and map changes that address community concerns while remaining consistent with the Comprehensive Plan; and 3) identifying regulations to implement the policies of the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan.

The efforts of the GCAB were exemplary and cannot be understated. Members attended over 45 meetings, 2 open houses and workshops, and donated over 135 hours of their personal time to see the visions of the community brought to fruition through this document.

Visioning

Visioning is the process of defining the hope and dream of what the community could be in the future. Visioning is typically completed through a series of public meetings or workshops structured to allow the community to articulate hopes for the future. Statements, thoughts, and ideas brought forth in the visioning process become the basis for the visions, goals, objectives, and principles of the community plan.

Many of the visions and policies found in the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan were developed in the workshops and surveys of the 1992 Upper Nisqually Community Report conducted by Evergreen State College and the 1994 Upper Nisqually Community Workshop Report conducted by the National Park Service.

To add to the information provided by Evergreen State College and the National Park Service, Pierce County Planning and Land Services and the Gateway Citizen Advisory Board sponsored a community open house and workshop in October 1996. The main purpose of the open house was to provide information to the community about the planning process and to get feedback from the community on the results of the 1992 Evergreen Study and 1994 Community Visioning Workshops. The public was asked to provide written comments about the planning process and their community. A week after the open house, a workshop was held to gain specific feedback from the community on certain land use issues and to survey the community's attitude toward different types of development. At the workshop, participants discussed various issues in small groups and participated in a visual preference survey.

Throughout the first part of 1997, the Gateway Community Advisory Board (GCAB) utilized the information from the 1992, 1994, and 1996 visioning processes to formulate an overall vision statement for the community plan and five individual vision statements for each of the plan elements. These six vision statements echo the desires articulated by the community throughout the years by emphasizing the importance of: the natural environment and resources; a small, close-knit community composed of unique and creative individuals; the rich history and heritage of the valley; locally owned and operated businesses that are the strength of the economy; the value in being situated close to the National Park, National, and State forests; and the rural lifestyle that provides a valuable haven to residents and visitors.

Open Houses and Workshops

The National Park Service held two workshops in June of 1994 which resulted in the Upper Nisqually Community Workshop Report. One hundred one participants attended on June 5, and 82 participants attended on June 6. The workshops laid the groundwork for the visions and policies articulated in the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan. In October 1996, an open house and a workshop were held to inform the public about the County planning process and receive feedback on how the community envisioned the future of the valley. On March 5, 1998, over 150 people attended an open house that was held to present the GCAB's preferred alternative to the public and receive feedback on the proposal.

Surveys

In addition to the visioning process, the community was asked to complete surveys on several occasions. Surveys are a useful tool for canvassing more of the community. Many people are uncomfortable with speaking publicly but if allowed to comment privately will do so. Surveys were used as part of the study completed by The Evergreen State College, the 1996 workshop, the Draft Environmental Impact Statement of the Preferred Alternative, and at the March 1998 open house. The residents of the Upper Nisqually Valley respond well to surveys and usually have a 20-30 percent return rate.

SUMMARY OF THE UPPER NISQUALLY VALLEY COMMUNITY PLAN

The proposed Draft Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan contains policies and implementing regulations for five subject areas or elements: Land Use Element, Community Character and Cultural Element, Natural Environment Element, Economic Element, and the Infrastructure and Services Element.

The Land Use Element addresses what and where land uses and intensity of land uses would be allowed. It includes zoning and regulations that govern land uses. The community plan directs residential and commercial growth into three centers and maintains the rest of the community in large tracts of land that may be used for homes or natural resources activities such as farming or forestry.

The Land Use Element establishes three commercial centers and designates each of these centers as a Gateway Community. These three centers are Elbe, Ashford, and the Park Entrance. Commercial and residential uses are allowed through the application of three new zoning classifications:

1. Village Center Zone:
Allows a mix of activities including civic, lodging, all services. Encourages pedestrian orientation. Residential allowed at 3 units per acre, employee housing also allowed. All of Elbe and a portion of Ashford are zoned Village Center.
2. Village Residential Zone:

Allows residential at 1 unit per 10 acres, senior housing, and group homes. Education facilities and day-care also allowed. A portion of Ashford, including Echo Valley and High Echo subdivisions, are zoned Village Residential.

3. Tourist Commercial Zone:

Allows restaurants, lodging, and sales of general merchandise and rental of recreational equipment up to 5,000 square feet. Residential allowed at the same density of the surrounding rural residential zone. The Park Entrance and a portion of Ashford (Hewitt Field properties) are zoned Tourist Commercial.

The majority of the plan area remains as zoned in the 1994 Comprehensive Plan which promotes a rural land character of large tracts of land containing single family homes or resource-based activities. The existing rural zones contained within the plan area are: Rural 10, Rural 20, Forest Lands, and Rural 40. The Rural 40 zone is new to the Upper Nisqually Valley plan area and allows only one unit per 40 acres with no bonus density provisions. The Rural 40 zone is located immediately adjacent to the Nisqually River and encompasses all of the Case II Volcanic Hazard Areas.

The Community Character and Cultural Element addresses community character, heritage, and social interaction. The policies contained within the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan promote and enhance historic preservation through education and restoration of historic properties, encourage views and viewsheds are maintained throughout the Valley, and establish design standards and guidelines for buildings, site design, signs, and landscaping.

Design standards contained within the community plan are intended to improve the overall appearance of the community through quality design in architecture and site layout. The standards promote a rustic mountain-oriented appearance such as log cabins or a turn-of-the-century look with false fronts or board-and-baton siding. The residents of the Upper Nisqually Valley are committed to retaining local ownership and do not want to be controlled by outside wealth. Reliance on or use of standardized *corporate or franchise* styles is prohibited. The design standards are required for all commercial and multi-family development within the three centers. All signs throughout the plan area are required to meet the standards. Standards address Site Design, Building Design, Signs, Planting Design, Lighting, and Street Furniture.

The Natural Environment Element includes consideration of the natural resources found in the Upper Nisqually Valley. Natural resources such as wildlife, clean water, forests, and open spaces are an integral and valued part of the community. The policies contained within the Natural Environment Element of the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan promote protection of critical areas, encourage preservation of natural vegetation, and address special topics such as waste disposal, air quality, and pesticides.

The Economic Environment looks at the economy of the Valley and considers a myriad of opportunities to diversify the economic base and capture more tourism dollars. The policies contained in the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan promote tourism, mountaineering, and sustainable forestry, and encourage coordination and marketing of recreational lands and resources.

Infrastructure and Services addresses the basic facilities needed to keep the whole system functioning. Infrastructure includes capital facilities such as roads, trails, sewage disposal, parks, and utility lines. The policies within the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan identify the capital improvements that are necessary to support the community plan (septic, water, rest area, sidewalks, etc.) and discuss potential partnerships and sources for funding opportunities.

The proposed Draft Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan also contains amendments to the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan and Pierce County Development Regulations-Zoning so that the plan may be implemented upon adoption. Finally, the community plan contains a monitoring program that addresses how to measure the effectiveness and impacts of the plan over time.

VISION STATEMENT
for the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan

Manage growth in the Upper Nisqually Valley, focussing on a rustic, mountain-oriented appearance in keeping with the historic and rural character of the area, while respecting private property rights.

LAND USE ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Land Use Element is to articulate a direction for future growth and development within the Upper Nisqually Valley. The adoption of policy statements forms the basis of land use regulations for the community and provides direction to residents, the business community, and investors. The Land Use Element also serves as a guide to decisions by the planners, Planning Commission, Hearing Examiner, and elected officials over private development proposals and the location of public facilities.

The visions, goals, objectives, and policies of the Land Use Element of the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan direct growth into three centers. Two centers, Ashford and Elbe, are intended to serve the needs of local residents and tourists, while the Park Entrance is intended to cater to tourists. Directing commercial activity and higher density residential uses into centers allows the rest of the valley to retain its rural character and natural resources. Opportunities for home occupations, cottage industries and resource-based activities continue to be encouraged throughout the valley.



Summit Haus (The old Ashford Tavern)

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

As we approach the millennium, the Upper Nisqually Valley is a place where a rural way of life still prevails. Commercial business are small and locally owned, open space and expansive views are plentiful, and the population is not burgeoning. The following information provides background information on the existing land development patterns, population, and housing within the valley. Additional detailed information is available in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement, Community Growth Alternatives, Ashford/Elbe (Upper Nisqually) Gateway Community Plan, May 1997*.

Current Comprehensive Plan Designations and Zoning Classifications

The plan area currently has four zoning classifications: Rural Neighborhood Center, Rural 10, Rural 20, and Designated Forest Land. In the 1994 Comprehensive Plan, the zoning for the County was the same as the Comprehensive Plan designations. Table 1 shows how many acres are found in each zoning classification. The Current Comprehensive Plan Designations and Zoning map illustrates the locations of these designations/zoning.

Under the 1994 Pierce County Comprehensive Plan, Ashford and Elbe were designated Rural Neighborhood Centers (RNC). This designation is intended for small scale and light intensity commercial uses. RNCs are intended to provide limited convenience shopping and services which meet the daily needs of the residents of the surrounding area. All new development within this designation should retain a scale and intensity appropriate for maintaining rural character. Commercial uses are limited only to those which serve the surrounding local community. High density housing is not allowed.

Table 1. Current Zoning Classifications and Acreage	
Zoning	Acres
Rural Neighborhood Center	144
Rural 10	14,139
Rural 20	511
Designated Forest Land	11,900

The Rural 10 (R10) designation is found throughout many areas of Pierce County. The designation is intended to maintain rural character and open space. It allows opportunities for resource-based industries such as agriculture, forestry, or mining provided these uses do not require urban-level services. Gas stations, stores, and retail shops are not allowed in the R10 designation. Residential densities allow a basic density of one dwelling unit per 10 acres. However, if at least 50 percent of the property is designated as open space, a density of two dwelling units per 10 acres is allowed. If at least 75 percent is designated as open space, a density of 2.5 dwelling units per 10 acres is allowed. The minimum lot size for any newly created lot cannot be less than one acre. Existing parcels that are less than 10 acres and are zoned R10 can be built upon as long as the other criteria such as septic, water, critical areas and other county requirements are met.

The Rural 20 (R20) designation is a fairly small portion of the plan area. It is located adjacent to Forest Lands and is intended to function as a transition zone between the R10 and Forest Land designations. The R20 designation, similar to R10, is intended to maintain rural character and open space. It allows the same opportunities for resource-based industries and the same bonus density incentives as the R10 designation. Existing parcels that are less than 20 acres and are zoned R20 can be built upon as long as the other criteria such as septic, water, critical areas and other county requirements are met.

The Forest Land designation is found on both public and privately owned land used for timber production. The designation is intended to preserve lands which are utilized for long-term timber production and minimize potential conflicts with other land uses. Uses are largely limited to resource-based industries and recreational activities, although residential homes and lodging are also allowed. The allowable residential density in the Forest Land designation is one unit per 80 acres, no bonus densities are allowed.

Current Land Uses

A land use inventory was conducted for the Upper Nisqually Valley in early 1997 and updated in the summer of 1998. Using the Pierce County Assessor-Treasurer's data for each tax parcel, information was gathered on current uses, acreage, and ownership. Table 2 summarizes current land uses within the valley, and the Existing Land Use map illustrates these land uses. Review of this information shows that most land development has occurred along SR706. Commercial uses tend to be concentrated in Alder, Elbe, Ashford, or the Park Entrance; however, there are a limited number of commercial activities between these centers.

The vast majority of the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan area is undeveloped; however, not all of these lands are available for development. Of the undeveloped lands, 58 percent of them are owned by either the State of Washington or the U.S. Forest Service. This land is managed strictly for timber harvest or recreational uses such as hiking, mountain biking, and cross-country skiing. Although the locations of these lands are primarily in the northern portions of the plan area, there are lands along SR-7 which are under State and Federal government ownership.

The Forestry category accounts for the privately owned lands which are in the County's open space - timberland taxation program, are commercially harvested, or which are associated with forestry activities and services. Although there are numerous private individuals who own these lands, a little more than 50 percent are owned by either the Plum Creek Timber Company (roughly 950 acres) or the Champion Pacific Timber Company (roughly 1,500 acres). Champion provides recreational opportunities through cross-country ski trails and a fee access program.

The lands in the Forestry/Recreation category are owned by either the State of Washington (Department of Natural Resources) or the U.S. Forest Service. While much of this land is managed as productive timber land, the two agencies do provide various recreational opportunities such as hiking, mountain biking, and cross-country skiing.

Table 2. Summary of Land Use in the Plan Area		
Category	Acreage	Percent of Total Area
Built Environment		
Single-Family Residential	2,298 acres	9%
Mobile Home Parks	3 acres	0%
Commercial/Retail	114 acres	.4%
Transportation, Communication, and Utilities	801 acres	3%
Education	14 acres	0%
Public Assembly/Quasi-Public	9 acres	0%
Outbuildings	451 acres	1.7%
Government Services	2 acres	0 %

Table 2. Summary of Land Use in the Plan Area		
Category	Acreage	Percent of Total Area
Unbuilt Environment		
Vacant	2,955 acres	11.6%
Open Space*	244 acres	.9%
Agriculture	987 acres	3.8%
Forestry (Private Commercial)*	4,895 acres	19.3%
Forestry/Recreation (state/federal govt)*	12,575 acres	49.6%
TOTAL	25,348 acres	99.3%

Source: Pierce County Assessor/Treasurer's Office data

*Because the northern plan area boundary is a ridge line and does not follow parcel lines, the acreages for the Forestry, Forestry/Recreational, and Open Space categories should be viewed as general estimates.

Vacant land makes up the second highest type of land use within the area. The Vacant category accounts for unimproved parcels and includes properties which have had dwellings removed or have abandoned activities such as farming.

Single-family residential development represents the majority of the developed environment. The single-family developments range from homes on large lots (five+ acres) to cabins on small lots in recreational subdivisions. The single family category, which includes both stick-built and mobile homes, is the primary type of residential land use.

The Agriculture category accounts for lands which are either in the County's agriculture open space tax program, operating as farms or ranches, or grassland pasture. Although these lands are scattered throughout the plan area, the majority are located in the western portion and comprise the fourth highest type of land use.

The Transportation, Communication, Utilities land use category includes parcels which are primarily used for railroad right-of-way, highway and street right-of-way, automobile parking, telephone communication facilities, utility right-of-way, electrical substations or water utilities. The Alder Dam is the primary activity associated with these lands and is the reason this category results in the fifth most common type of land use.

A mix of other land uses are presently found within the plan area including education, public assembly, and open space (such as parks). It is important to recognize that commercial land uses presently occupy only 114 acres of the plan area. Commercial activities operated from a residence are not accounted for in this category. Most commercial activities are located near Alder, Elbe, Ashford, or the Park Entrance, with the exception of bed and breakfast facilities. A couple of commercial businesses are located between Ashford and the Park Entrance, including Guest Services Incorporated which is the concessionaire for the National Park and one of the largest employers in the valley.

Commercial Businesses

In 1995, an inventory was conducted of existing commercial businesses within the plan area. Table 3 identifies each business and associated parcel size, floor area ratio, and square footage. Home occupations and cottage industries are not included in this inventory.

As Table 3 shows, there are approximately 87,000 square feet of commercial space in existence within the plan area. The majority of commercial businesses are in the lodging industry which caters to tourists and visitors to the National Park and surrounding Cascade amenities. The largest commercial building is the Nisqually Lodge at 12,788 square feet. The lodge occupies less than 1/3 of an acre, and is almost 50 percent bigger than the next largest building which is the Gateway. The average size of a commercial building is approximately 3,200 square feet which is reflective of the rural character of the plan area.

Table 3. Commercial Square Footage in Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan Area		
Business	Type	Square Feet
Lodging		
Eagles Nest Motel	Lodging	4,144
Zeke's Log Cabin Inn & Motel	Lodging	960
Whittaker's Bunkhouse	Lodging	5,818
Nisqually Lodge	Lodging	12,788
The Rainier Overland Lodge and Restaurant	Lodging	2,476
Copper Creek	Lodging	2,800
Growley Bear Bed & Breakfast	Lodging	1,000
Alexander's Country Inn	Lodging	10,000
Mount Haven	Lodging	2,304
Rainier Country Cabins	Lodging	2,700
Gateway Rest./Lounge/Motel/RV Park/Cabins/Grocery	Service/Lodging/Retail	7,988
Well Spring Spa at Mt. Rainier	Lodging/ Service (spa)	4,600
Mt. Meadows Inn (Bed & Breakfast)	Lodging	3,439
The Lodge	Lodging	Not Available
Hobo Inn	Lodging	Not Available
Sub-Total		61,017
Retail		
Alder Lake Store	Retail	1,320
Elbe Grocery	Retail	2,800

Table 3. Commercial Square Footage in Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan Area		
Business	Type	Square Feet
Antiques Shop & Apt.	Retail	2,521
BP - Ashford Valley Grocery	Retail/Service	3,233
Suver's Country Store	Retail	5,546
Growley Bear Bakery	Service/Retail	1,232
Painters Gallery	Retail	1,400
Sub-Total		18,052
Service		
Elbe Auto Repair & Parts	Service	2,944
Chevron Mini-Mart & Store	Service	3,920
Elbe Tavern	Service	1,906
Highlander Tavern and Vacant Laundry	Service	3,780
Shop	Service	864
Wild Berry Restaurant	Service	1,608
Office for Rent	Service	1,517
Weight Station-Drive Inn	Service	Not Available
Mt Rainier Dining Co.	Service	Not Available
OLD SS	Not available	Not Available
Sub-Total		16,539
Total		95,608

Source: Pierce County Assessor's Office/Treasurer Data

Housing

Inventory

The Pierce County Assessor-Treasurer's records, as of November 1996, identified 613 homes in the plan area. Of the total, 570 homes are considered the primary use of the parcel. Of the remaining, 37 homes are associated with resource lands, such as farms and timber lands, and six homes are accessory to commercial uses. Sixteen properties contain two or more dwellings on one parcel. All of the homes are single family, with approximately 80 percent being stick-built and 20 percent being either single-wide or double-wide mobile homes.

The majority of the homes are located in the southern section of the plan area within the highway corridor. Thirty-seven percent of the homes are within eight subdivisions: Alpine Meadows, 30; Ashford, 25; Echo Valley, 57; Elbe, 9; High Echo, 7; Holiday Hill, 18; Lutkens 1st, 12; and

Nisqually Park, 69. Paradise Estates, a subdivision in Lewis County, contributes another 150 homes to the area. Even though they reside in Lewis County, the Paradise Estates residents work, go to school, receive mail, and 911 protection from Pierce County.

A substantial number of homes are owned by individuals who live outside the plan area and use them for summer and weekend recreation. In the past few years, more of the recreational homes are being rented on a nightly basis to visitors. Although there is not a lot of documented information available, it appears to be very difficult to find year-round or even long-term seasonal rental housing.

Compared to the urban portions of Pierce County, housing in the plan area is affordable for the average Pierce County resident. However, because of unavailable information about the annual incomes of the local residents, homes which are not available for year-round occupancy, and rental figures, it cannot be determined if the housing is affordable to the local community. Approximately 85 percent of the housing is valued at less than \$100,000 and 10 percent is valued less than \$25,000.

Vacancy

The nature of the housing market makes it difficult to determine the current housing vacancy rate. Rental homes in the plan area are not typically managed through a professional property management company. Instead, private individuals manage their own homes or have an informal agreement with a private party to manage them. Information gathered from personal conversations with private parties indicates there are very few vacant homes available for year-round occupancy. In past years, a trend has emerged to rent homes on a nightly or weekly basis to tourists and visitors, rather than renting the homes for year-round occupancy.

According to census data, in 1990 the number of homes in the plan area totaled 469. A high percentage of residents owned their homes. Of the total 391 occupied homes, approximately 74 percent were occupied by owners and 26 percent by renters. The vacancy rate is 16.6 percent. However a large portion (41 percent) of those vacant homes was used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. The vacancy rate without subtracting seasonal and recreational housing is 6.9 percent.

Demographics of the Upper Nisqually¹

Population Characteristics

Who are the people of the Upper Nisqually Valley? A certain amount of information can be derived from the 1990 census information which shows the population in the plan area as 1,036 persons. Table 4 illustrates a range of population estimates for 1996. The estimates in Table 4

¹This information is based on census tract, census block, or census block group information. (Because existing census tracts and block groups include areas greater than the Plan Area, the information and trends described may not precisely reflect current conditions.) Approximately 27 percent of the population and households in Census Tract 732.00 live in the plan area. As a result, specific information for the plan area cannot be provided for 1970 and 1980. However, a comparison of the census tract does provide important information about the changes occurring in southern Pierce County, many of which are reflective of the plan area.

differ because of a varying year-round vacancy rate. Each of the estimates assumes: a total of 613 residential units; 26 percent of the residential units are used for seasonal use reflecting the total number of absentee homeowners; and 2.68 persons per household. The low estimate assumes a 6.9 percent vacancy rate for units available year-round. This assumption coincides with the conditions identified in the 1990 census. The medium estimate assumes a 2.0 percent vacancy rate for units available year-round. This assumption reflects the community's perception of available year-round rental units based on discussions with local residents and rental unit owners. The high estimate assumes there are no additional vacant year-round residential units available for rent or sale. This assumption also incorporates the community's perception based on discussions with local residents, but to the extreme limits. During the summer months when the seasonal/recreational homes are likely occupied, the residential population in the plan area may increase by more than 400 people.

Table 4. 1996 Year-Round Population Estimates			
	Low	Medium	High
Total Population	1,136	1,184	1,208
Additional Population (1990-1996)	100	148	172
Population Increase (1990-1996)	9.6 %	14.2 %	16. 6%
Annual Population Growth Rate	1.5 %	2.2 %	2.6 %

Source: Pierce County Planning & Land Services

The 1,036 people living in the plan area in 1990 reflect a very sparsely populated community. The gender ratio was split with males accounting for 52 percent of the population and females accounting for 48 percent. The dominant race category was white with 96 percent of the population. The American Indian category had the next highest portion with 1.8 percent, and the remaining race categories (black, Asian, other) each accounted for less than 1 percent.

The Upper Nisqually community has experienced a moderate amount of growth in the past 20 years. Between 1970 and 1990, the population of the census tract increased by a higher annual growth rate (2.5 percent) than the rest of Pierce County (1.7 percent) during the same time period. The population growth that has been occurring seems to be a result of in-migration, rather than new births and the "baby boomer" population is increasing at a faster rate than the younger population.

The 1990 census information shows that approximately 43.6% of local residents of the Upper Nisqually have a 30+ minute commute to work. This may be due to the limited employment opportunities in the Valley or it may be because housing is more affordable.

Household Characteristics

Households are grouped into two categories; family and non-family. A family consists of a individual who is head of the household and is related by birth, marriage, or adoption to one or more other persons living in the same household. Not all households contain families since a

household may comprise a group of unrelated persons or one person living alone. Seventy-four percent of the households in 1990 were categorized family households. The plan area contains an average of 2.64 persons per household which closely reflects Pierce County's average.

DESCRIPTION OF DESIRED CONDITIONS

Proposed Designations and Zoning Classifications

The community plan proposes five land use designations in the Upper Nisqually Valley to achieve the community's goals: Rural 10, Rural 20, Rural 40, Forest Lands, and Gateway Communities. The Proposed Comprehensive Plan Designations map illustrates the proposed designations for the valley. The Rural 10 designation applies to the majority of the plan area and is not a new designation for the valley. The Rural 20 designation applies to land uses adjacent to designated Forest Land. The Rural 40 designation applies to an area in the southeastern portion of valley along the Nisqually River and is a new designation for the valley. The Forest Lands designation applies to timber lands owned by either the Washington State Department of Natural Resources or a major timber company. Most of the Forest Lands are located in the northeastern portion of the plan area. The Forest Lands are currently designated under the 1994 Comprehensive Plan and no changes to this designation are recommended. The Gateway Communities designation applies to three proposed commercial centers: Elbe, Ashford, and the Park Entrance. Each of these three centers have a new zoning classification. The Proposed Zoning map illustrates the zoning for the valley. The zones found in the Upper Nisqually are: Rural 10, Rural 20, Rural 40, Forest Lands, Village Center, Village Residential, and Tourist Commercial. The Rural 10, Rural 20, Rural 40, and Forest Lands zones are the same as the comprehensive plan designation. The Village Center, Village Residential, and Tourist Commercial zones implement the Gateway Community designation and represent the first time the zone differs from the designation under the 1994 Comprehensive Plan.

Land use designations provide the boundaries for generally defined land use activities, such as commercial or residential. The zoning classifications that implement the designations provide the detail as to the type or scale of activity which is permitted. For example, within the Gateway Community designation, several zoning classifications may be established for different types of uses such as housing, commercial business, or industrial activities.

The Rural 10 Designation and Zone

The Rural 10 designation primarily accommodates low density single family residences. One zoning classification implements this designation--Rural 10. The Rural 10 is presently in existence throughout most of the plan area. There are no proposed changes to the allowed uses within this designation; however, there is less area zoned Rural 10 in the community plan. The Rural 10 designation identified on the Proposed Zoning map encompasses approximately 11,360 acres as compared to the existing Rural 10 at 14,139 acres. Farming, ranching, and timber harvesting are allowed in this zone. The policies and associated regulations for Rural 10 encourage accessory commercial or manufacturing activities if the operations do not negatively impact the character of the rural community. Although many small parcels exist within this area, the base density for new land subdivisions is 1 unit per 10 acres. Up to 2.5 units per 10 acres may be reached if specific

open space provisions are met. Existing parcels that are less than 10 acres and are zoned R10 can be built upon as long as the other criteria such as septic, water, critical areas and other county requirements are met.

The Rural 20 Designation and Zone

The Rural 20 designation primarily accommodates low density single family residences. One zone implements this designation--Rural 20. The properties within Rural 20 are adjacent to Forest Lands. There are presently 510 acres of Rural 20 in existence in the plan area; this would not change under the community plan. There are no proposed changes to the allowed uses which are the same as the Rural 10 zone. The density for new subdivisions is 1 unit per 20 acres. Up to 5 units per 20 acres may be reached if specific open space provisions are met. Existing parcels that are less than 20 acres and are zoned R20 can be built upon as long as the other criteria such as septic, water, critical areas and other county requirements are met.

The Rural 40 Designation and Zone

The Rural 40 designation primarily accommodates low density single family residences. One zone implements this designation--Rural 40. This is a new designation within the plan area. The density for new land subdivisions is 1 unit per 40 acres. The properties subject to the Rural 40 designation/zoning are within Case II Volcanic Hazard Areas. The types of uses and activities allowed on properties are the same as Rural 10. The Rural 40 designation identified on the Proposed Zoning map encompasses approximately 2,450 acres in the valley. The designation begins south of the highway at Elbe and continues to the entrance of Mount Rainier National Park. A few of the properties are on the north side of the highway. Although 95 percent of the existing parcels are already less than 40 acres in size, the parcels which may be further subdivided account for approximately 53 percent of the total acreage within this designation. Existing parcels that are less than 40 acres and are zoned R40 can be built upon as long as the other criteria such as septic, water, critical areas and other county requirements are met.

The Forest Land Designation and Zone

The Forest Lands designation applies to areas that have long-term significance for the commercial production of timber. These lands are regulated for the long-term production of timber and to ensure that the use of adjacent lands does not interfere with the continued use of timber harvesting. One zone implements this designation--Forest Lands. The density for new subdivisions is 1 unit per 80 acres. The types of uses and activities allowed on properties are related to commercial timber harvest operations and wood products.

The Forest Land designation identified on the Proposed Zoning map encompasses approximately 11,900 acres in the valley. The designation begins northwest of Elbe and continues east to the boundaries of Mount Rainier National Park. Roughly 67 percent of the parcels within this designation are 80 acres or greater in size.

The Rural Gateway Community Designation

The Rural Gateway Communities designation provides for a mix of commercial and higher density residential housing.

The types of uses and activities allowed within the designation varies depending on the implementing zone. This designation applies to three historical commercial nodes in the valley which include Elbe, Ashford (including National), and the Park Entrance. Combined, these areas encompass approximately 847 acres within the valley.

Design standards for signs, building architecture, site design, landscaping, and street furniture would apply within each of the Rural Gateway Community centers. The standards would ensure the present character and uniqueness of the Upper Nisqually Valley is carried into the future. Design standards seek to bring forth the turn-of-the-century character, historic significance, or the rustic mountain log cabin character. They also ensure sites are developed with the least amount of environmental impacts as possible. Huge parking lots are prohibited through the standards, and buildings within the village centers would be located closer to the road with sidewalks connecting businesses. Signs throughout the valley are required to meet design standards.

Three zoning districts implement this land use designation as illustrated on the Proposed Zoning map. The implementing zones are: Village Center, Tourist Commercial, and Village Residential. The types of uses and activities allowed within each district vary. Table 5 shows the zoning of each of the Gateway Community centers and how many acres are contained within each zone.



Mountain Meadows Inn Sign

Table 5. Zoning within Designated Gateway Communities						
	Village Center	Village Residential	Tourist Commercial	Rural 10	Rural 40	Total Acreage
Elbe	32			15		47
Ashford	106	161	16	213	179	675
Park Entrance			100			100
Total						822

Village Center Zone

All of Elbe and portions of Ashford are zoned Village Center. The Village Center zone is intended to serve both residents and visitors to the valley. The Village Center zone provides for a mix of commercial and residential uses and activities. The commercial uses allowed within this zone are intended to provide an opportunity to property owners to establish businesses which encourage residents and visiting tourists to buy products within the Upper Nisqually Valley. Commercial uses include but are not limited to: grocery stores; building materials and garden supplies; bulk fuel dealers; business services; eating and drinking establishments; lodging; motor vehicles and related equipment sales, rental, repair and service; personal services; pet sales and services; rental and repair services; and sales of general merchandise.

The Village Center zone also allows for civic uses such as libraries, post offices, and medical offices which are not allowed within other zones. Locating civic activities within the same area as the commercial and residential uses is a mechanism to encourage residents to come in contact with each other more often to socialize and discuss community issues. The types of civic uses permitted include but are not limited to: administrative government services; day-care centers; community and cultural services; education facilities; health services; religious assembly; public safety services; transportation; and utility and public maintenance facilities.

The Village Center zone is contained within a limited area. It is intended to be a compact mix of businesses and residential uses within an area connected by pedestrian facilities. Drive-through fast food restaurants are not allowed in this zone; customers would be required to get out of their vehicles to order and purchase products and services.

The Village Center zone allows the highest residential density within the Upper Nisqually Valley--up to three units per acre. The absence of minimum lot sizes permits housing developers to cluster units together on smaller lots and create affordable housing opportunities within walking distance of shopping and employment opportunities. Dormitory-style employee housing is allowed to provide for long-term and short-term affordable housing for valley employees.

The plan proposes to rezone approximately 164 acres (144 parcels) to the Village Center zone in Elbe and Ashford. Ashford accounts for roughly 85 percent (approximately 184 acres) of the land

in this district. Table 6 shows the current land uses located within the Village Center zone and the number of parcels found in each type of use. The table demonstrates that in both Ashford and Elbe at the present time the majority of land is used for residential housing. Under the proposed Village Center zone, these lands may be developed as commercial or residential. Although the residential uses in Elbe are already on small lots, in Ashford 27 percent of the residential parcels are greater than 1 acre in size and account for 90 percent of the total residential land.

Table 6. Village Centers - Major Existing Land Uses							
Zoning District		Acreage			Parcels		
Village Center	Existing Use	Elbe	Ashford	Total	Elbe	Ashford	Total
	Residential	14.4	54.5	108.9	28	41	69
	Commercial	3.1	31.6	34.7	9	5	14
	Vacant*	10.5	17.7	28.2	24	37	61
	Total Village Center	28	103.8		61	83	

*Vacant includes any lands that may be developed to commercial or residential uses under the community plan although these lands may presently be listed with the Assessor-Treasurer as a different use such as forestry or open space.

Tourist Commercial

The Tourist Commercial zone primarily provides commercial uses and activities oriented toward tourism. Although residents of the valley would also purchase goods and services from businesses within this zone, the uses are typically the types of businesses that would not survive without tourist shoppers. The types of commercial uses and activities allowed within the Tourist Commercial zone include eating and drinking establishments, lodging; rental of recreational equipment, and sales of general merchandise. Rental of recreational equipment and sales of general merchandise are limited to 5,000 square foot shops. Employee housing is also allowed within the Tourist Commercial zone.

The Tourist Commercial zone applies to six parcels within the Ashford Gateway Community. The zone begins at the area known as Hewitt Airfield extending to the Overland Restaurant along the northside of SR-706.

The Tourist Commercial zone also applies to 31 parcels located at the Park Entrance. The zone begins just east of Goat Creek at the Growley Bear Bed and Breakfast and continues on the northside of SR706 for approximately 1/4 mile, then continues on both sides of SR-706 to the entrance of Mount Rainier National Park.

The Tourist Commercial zone allows for residential uses, however, the density within the zone is the same as the surrounding rural residential zone. The Tourist Commercial zone at Ashford has a base density of 1 unit per 10 acres, reflecting the Rural 10 zone. The Tourist Commercial zone at the Park Entrance has a base density of 1 unit per 40 acres, reflecting the Rural 40 zone.

The plan proposes to rezone approximately 116 acres (37 parcels) to the Tourist Commercial Zoning district in Ashford and at the Park Entrance as illustrated on the Proposed Zoning map. The Park Entrance accounts for approximately 88 percent of the lands in this zone. Table 7 shows the current land uses located within the Tourist Commercial zone and the number of parcels found in each type of use. The table demonstrates that, at the present time, in both Ashford and at the Park Entrance the majority of land is commercial.

Table 7. Tourist Commercial - Major Existing Land Uses							
Zoning District		Acreage			Parcels		
Tourist Commercial	Existing Use	Ashford	Park Entrance	Total	Ashford	Park Entrance	Total
	Residential	3	14	18	1	6	7
	Commercial	7	47	54	3	9	12
	Vacant*	6	39	44	2	16	18
	Total Tourist Commercial	16	100		6	31	

*Vacant includes any lands that may be developed to commercial or residential uses under the community plan although these lands may presently be listed with the Assessor-Treasurer as a different use such as forestry or open space.

Village Residential

The Village Residential zone primarily allows for low density residential uses. Limited civic and commercial uses such as day-care facilities, and home-based businesses are also permitted. The base residential density is 1 unit per 10 acres. Up to 2.5 units per 10 acres may be reached if specific open space provisions are met. Table 9 shows the current land uses located within the Village Residential zone and the number of parcels found in each type of use.

Table 9. Village Residential - Major Existing Land Uses			
Zoning District	Existing Use	Acreage	Parcels
Village Residential (Ashford)	Residential	57	77
	Vacant*	91	279
	Total Village Residential	148	356

*Vacant includes any lands that may be developed to commercial or residential uses under the community plan although these lands may presently be listed with the Assessor-Treasurer as a different use such as forestry or open space.

The Village Residential zone would apply to 356 parcels and 148 acres within the Ashford Gateway Community designation. Approximately 75 percent of the parcels within this zoning district are vacant. Only 13 existing parcels are greater than one acre and of the 13, only one parcel is greater than 10 acres. The table reflects the large number of vacant lots found in Echo Valley subdivision.

Future Land Uses in the Upper Nisqually Valley

Overview

The pattern of land use in the Upper Nisqually Valley under the designations and zoning classifications would continue to reflect a rural development pattern with open space, natural areas, and large tracts of land. The most noticeable change would be the concentration of commercial businesses within the three rural commercial centers of Elbe, Ashford, and the Park Entrance. Because commercial uses are restricted to centers, there would be no new commercial businesses locating between the centers along the highway; therefore, strip development would not occur along SR-706. Existing commercial uses that are currently located along the highway, such as Copper Creek, would be allowed to expand as nonconforming uses in accordance with the Pierce County Code.

The most noticeable changes would be the growth of the Village Centers in Ashford and Elbe. These centers are intended to be the focal point of activity; pedestrian-friendly places where the community and visitors congregate, shop, and relax. A mix of commercial and residential uses would be allowed and could be combined on a single parcel. No minimum lot size would be required. Residential uses would be allowed a gross maximum density of three homes per acre and could include multi-family housing. Employee housing would be allowed with no density limit. Residential housing would be allowed as an accessory to commercial uses. A community septic system would be considered for wastewater treatment in Ashford. In order to help create a community atmosphere and attract people to the centers, Tahoma Woods and the concessionaire would consider relocating employee housing to the village centers.

Over time, commercial businesses would become the major land use within the Village Centers. Residential uses would likely follow close behind. Infrastructure and services such as sidewalks and crosswalks would support and encourage pedestrian use of the village centers. Design standards would ensure the present architectural character of the valley would be represented in the future.

Outside of centers, the Upper Nisqually Valley would not be expected to experience significant change. Homes, some with accessory commercial businesses, would continue to exist on large lots. The residential land use pattern in the Upper Nisqually Valley will continue to reflect a low density rural landscape. Some of the existing subdivisions will experience new home construction. Resource-based activities such as farming and forestry would continue throughout the rural zones.

Other significant changes to the valley would occur along the Hewitt Airfield strip and at the Park Entrance. The area known as Hewitt Airfield, extending to the Overland on the north side of SR-706, would be developed as tourist-related businesses. It is anticipated the existing residential homes and vacant properties will be redeveloped as restaurants, lodging accommodations, or other tourist-related commercial services. The existing businesses may be expanded to incorporate accessory tourist services. This business district is not required to have a pedestrian orientation.

The uses currently located at the Park Entrance are not anticipated to experience much change. However, some vacant land exists within this zone and would likely be developed with tourist-related businesses over time. Uses are restricted in this area to lodging, restaurants, sales of general merchandise, and rental of recreational equipment.

Residential

The proposed residential densities would maintain an overall density throughout the valley of one unit per seven acres. This overall density allows the community to retain a rural character while recognizing the demands and responsibilities of being a community that, simply by location, is a gateway to the National Park and numerous recreational public lands.

There will be more mixed residential/commercial uses on properties within centers. Within the centers, living areas could be an accessory use to commercial uses such as an apartment over a restaurant. More people are expected to reside within the village centers than currently reside in these areas; however, the rest of the valley will experience residential growth. In the rural zones of the valley, commercial activity would be an accessory use to residential homes as is presently the case.

The existing small lot subdivisions throughout the valley will slowly transform from seasonal recreational properties to year-round residences. More lots within these subdivisions will be developed with homes. Through the next 20 years as property owners retire, it is expected that a segment of them will relocate to the Nisqually Valley as permanent community members. In addition, as the employment opportunities increase in the valley and the Eatonville area, the existing vacant lots in these subdivisions would be available to accommodate the associated growth at a lower cost than the larger lots. It is also acknowledged there will always will be seasonal recreational property in the valley.

An increase in employment opportunities in the valley and Eatonville area may encourage property owners to subdivide existing agricultural and forest lands for residential purposes. The large residential lots (15 acres and greater) may also be further subdivided into smaller parcels, eight to ten acres. The majority of homes built on these lots will be year-round residences with a few built as recreational homes. As a result of the open space density incentive provisions, homes associated with these properties may be clustered together to retain open space.



Jasmers Inn (Mrs. Day Butler's House)

Commercial Businesses

New commercial development will be limited to the historical commercial nodes; Elbe, Ashford, and the Park Entrance. The type of commercial businesses in each of these centers would differ for each center. The Park Entrance would

provide associated tourist lodging and other related services. Elbe and Ashford, located in the heart of the valley, would provide for a range of commercial services for both the local residents and tourists.

Commercial businesses are expected to become the dominant land use within each of the centers. Each of the centers contains a significant amount of vacant land and this change to the dominant use could happen quickly or slowly over time. New commercial businesses could be larger in scale than is commonly found in the valley at the present time. The square footage of individual buildings is expected to increase over the current building sizes. Size of new commercial buildings has generally not been limited in the community plan, except by that which is presently allowed throughout the rural area. These sizes generally allow up to 30,000 square foot store sizes. There are a few size limitations contained in the plan including sales of general merchandise and rental of recreational equipment in the Tourist Commercial zone is limited to 5,000 square feet.

New development would also influence the look of the valley because design standards would be required. These standards help the valley coordinate a cohesive character that reflects the historic pattern of the area--porches, board-and-baton siding, log cabins, and use of natural materials such as timber, stone, and wood products.

Public Facilities

Public facilities may include roads, community centers, parks, and utilities. These facilities will be constructed on existing vacant properties or through redevelopment of existing structures. The majority of this change will occur within Ashford.

Housing

Overview

The number of single-family residential homes within the Upper Nisqually Valley is expected to increase over the next 20 years. The majority of new homes are expected to locate within the eight existing subdivisions or within the Village Center zone. The subdividing of property within the Rural 10 and Rural 20 zones is expected to continue at the current rate. Accessory dwelling units would be allowed throughout the plan area but would not significantly increase the number of homes within the valley. Employee housing, which is suited for seasonal, intermittent, or temporary employees may be constructed at a handful of locations.

The policies of the community plan allow and encourage housing that is affordable to valley residents. The community wants to ensure that with some new growth, local citizens will not be taxed out of their homes. Furthermore, the community would like to keep average housing prices within a reasonable range. As noted in the Existing Conditions text, presently approximately 85 percent of the housing in the valley is valued at less than \$100,000. Housing prices and housing values are not anticipated to soar over the next 20 years.

New housing will occur throughout the plan area. Village Centers will accommodate some of the new housing, but existing subdivisions are expected to experience more development. In

addition, lands zoned Rural 10, Rural 20, and Rural 40 are expected, in some instances, to be further subdivided and sold for single family homes. Residential housing is allowed throughout the plan area and all types of housing, whether located in a center or existing subdivision, are needed to meet growth projections.

The residential areas outside of the village core, including Echo Valley and High Echo, are not expected to change in character although are expected to see more buildout. The existing properties will not be further subdivided. There is the possibility of residents establishing home-based businesses, however, the limitations associated with operating a home occupation preserves the character of the single-family properties.

Employee Housing

The policies of the community plan and implementing regulations allow for employee housing. This type of housing is intended to provide an affordable means of housing for seasonal or temporary employees. There are restrictions placed on this type of housing so that it does not result in a low-cost permanent housing type. An applicant proposing to construct employee housing must demonstrate and document the need for the housing and have a mechanism to ensure the units are occupied by employees in the valley. Employee housing is distinguished by shared kitchen/dining areas as well as shared restroom/shower facilities. No more than 20 individual sleeping units per building shall be allowed with each unit requiring internal building access. Any provision for cooking facilities within an individual sleeping unit is prohibited.

Projected Demographics

Many variables make predicting the number of future residents in the Upper Nisqually Valley difficult. As in any type of projections, the smaller the geographical area and existing population base, the higher the margin of error will be over 20 years. Compounding the difficulty of completing projections is the existence of a large number of absentee homeowners and the proposed Mount Rainier Resort at Park Junction development. As a consequence, these projections should be evaluated every five years to review the assumptions and incorporate any new trends.

The projected year-round population for the Upper Nisqually Valley in 2018 is between 2,280 and 2,675 residents. This range of projections reflects a annual growth rate between 2.6 and 3.0 percent. The growth rate assumes increased year-round employment and a high percentage of homes being converted from recreational homes to year-round homes.

LAND USE POLICIES

The Land Use Element is divided into five sections which support the overall land use vision: Gateway Communities, Rural Lands, Nonconforming Uses, Affordable Housing, and Implementing Actions. Each section contains a goal and one or more objectives with policies designed to achieve the goal. The purpose of dividing the element into five sections is merely to provide structure to the reader, but is not intended to draw distinctions between policy types.

Goal: We envision a coordinated land use pattern which recognizes the constraints of the physical environment and directs growth into community-planned centers. We envision development that is scaled to a size and density that maintains the rural character of the valley.

OBJECTIVES, PRINCIPLES, AND STANDARDS

Gateway Communities

Gateway Communities, and the zones that implement the designation, are intended to be the focal point of commercial activity in the Upper Nisqually. Any growth that occurs is intended to be directed to and contained within the three designated gateway communities. Rural Gateway Communities are not intended to sprawl in a linear fashion along a major arterial or highway but be contained within a defined node. The three Rural Gateway Communities within the Upper Nisqually serve different and distinct purposes and therefore are implemented through three rural zones: Village Center, Village Residential, and Tourist Commercial. Each of the Rural Gateway Communities is required to comply with the adopted design standards.

Village Center: The intent of the Village Center zone is to provide for a compact mix of commercial, civic, and higher density residential uses connected by pedestrian facilities. The zone serves both residents and visitors and is intended to function as a major attraction or main focus of the Valley in which a hub of activities may be found.

Tourist Commercial: The intent of the Tourist Commercial zone is to provide limited commercial opportunities that are oriented to tourism such as restaurants, lodging, and rental of recreational equipment. The zone is not intended to provide civic activities or meet the daily shopping needs of residents.

Village Residential: The intent of the Village Residential zone is to recognize the existing subdivisions and land use patterns and to allow for residential uses to locate within a reasonable walking distance of commercial amenities such as shopping and services needed for everyday living. Limited civic activities such as day-cares and home-based businesses are allowed.

LU-GC Objective 1. Provide a coordinated land use pattern by directing growth and concentrated commercial activities into community planned, pedestrian-oriented centers and allowing the rest of the Upper Nisqually Valley to maintain a rural character.

Principle 1. Designate a limited number of compact areas as Gateway Communities to accommodate the service and housing needs of residents, employees, and tourists.

Standards - Locational Criteria

- 1.1.1 A Gateway Community designation shall:
 - 1.1.1.1 Have established commercial and other businesses catering to tourists and/or the local surrounding community; and
 - 1.1.1.2 Have access onto a state route or major arterial but not be developed in a linear pattern.
- 1.1.2 Respect the natural environmental constraints when designating Rural Gateway Communities and direct growth away from sensitive areas.
- 1.1.3 The Rural Gateway Communities should provide sufficient vacant and redevelopable land to allow new opportunities for growth and the market to determine sizes and uses consistent with the rural policies of the Comprehensive Plan.
- 1.1.4 A Rural Gateway Community shall be a compact and well-defined node.
- 1.1.5 Individual Rural Gateway Communities should be designated and sized to discourage the proliferation of commercial activity along the highway.
- 1.1.6 Rural Gateway Communities shall not allow for continuous linear strip development.
- 1.1.7 Rural Gateway Communities shall be separated by a minimum of 3½ miles.
- 1.1.8 Community goals shall be held above an individual's interest when designating Rural Gateway Communities.
- 1.1.9 Elbe, Ashford, and the Park Entrance shall be designated as Rural Gateway Communities.
- 1.1.10 New Rural Gateway Communities within the Upper Nisqually Valley should not be designated within the 20 year planning period.
- 1.1.11 Within the existing Rural Gateway Community designations, properties that are currently zoned with a Rural Residential

Classification, may be rezoned to a Rural Center Classification when:

- 1.1.11.1 Environmental review is complete;
 - 1.1.11.2 It is an update to the community plan;
 - 1.1.11.3 The expansion area is contiguous with the existing center;
 - 1.1.11.4 The need to provide more land to reasonably accommodate development has been demonstrated;
 - 1.1.11.5 Infrastructure and services can be provided in the expansion area; and,
 - 1.1.11.6 The size of the center will not negatively impact other areas in the community.
- 1.1.12 Rural Gateway Communities should not be expanded within the 20 year planning period to encourage infill development and redevelopment.
 - 1.1.13 Rural Gateway Communities shall not have more than one Village Center to focus development at the core and create a central place.

Principle 2. Identify the types of uses allowed within a Rural Gateway Community.

Standards - Uses

- 1.2.1 The primary purpose of the Rural Gateway Community is to provide commercial services to accommodate the needs of residents, employees, and tourists in the Valley.
- 1.2.2 Rural Gateway Communities should accommodate the most intensive commercial and residential activities in the Upper Nisqually Valley.
- 1.2.3 Land uses within a Rural Gateway Community shall be limited in the intensity, size, and scale of use in order to be compatible with the rural character.
- 1.2.4 Allow commercial uses on the same parcel as residential uses within Rural Gateway Communities.

- 1.2.5 Uses allowed in commercial areas should encourage visitors to stop and get out of their personal vehicles.
- 1.2.6 Drive-through facilities should be discouraged.
- 1.2.7 Uses and activities which are land intensive and do not directly serve the community or tourists, such as agriculture or dairy farming, shall be prohibited in Rural Gateway Communities.

Principle 3. Develop zoning classifications which reflect the unique characteristics of the designated Rural Gateway Community.

Standards

- 1.3.1 The Rural Gateway Community designation shall be implemented through various zoning classifications.
- 1.3.2 The uses allowed in each zone should closely reflect the businesses and uses presently existing.
- 1.3.3 The Gateway Community designation shall be implemented through three types of zoning classifications: Village Center Zone (VC); Tourist Commercial Zone (TC); and Village Residential (VR).
- 1.3.3.4 The Upper Nisqually Advisory Commission shall with community input, determine the optimum preferred alternative for National and revise the community plan to reflect the preferred alternative at the first update of the plan.

Village Center

Locational Criteria:

- 1.3.3.1 The Village Center zone (VC) shall be located where the community has historically gathered, shopped, and resided.
- 1.3.3.2 The Village Center should be the focus of activity and create a central place.
- 1.3.3.3 Village Centers should be sized to encourage pedestrian usage.

Character:

- 1.3.3.4 Village Centers should be the focal point of commercial, civic, and human activities.

- 1.3.3.5 Development within a Village Center shall be compact and concentrated to encourage pedestrian use.
- 1.3.3.6 Village Center zones should be designed for pedestrian usage.
- 1.3.3.7 When a total site expansion or building expansion within a center reaches 50 percent sidewalks shall be provided along street frontages.
- 1.3.3.8 Residential housing should be allowed in the Village Center zone at densities higher than the surrounding rural designations.
- 1.3.3.9 Maximum residential lot sizes within the Village Center zone shall be established to ensure compact development.
- 1.3.3.10 Curb cuts shall be limited along SR 706, businesses should share access and parking. Access off side streets is preferable to direct access off SR 706.
- Uses:
- 1.3.3.11 The Village Center zone should provide the most concentrated commercial uses, highest residential densities, and a variety of tourist attractions and services.
- 1.3.3.12 Public facilities such as a rest area, park, museum, or information center should be located in or immediately adjacent to Village Centers.
- 1.3.3.13 The preferred location for a passenger rail station is in the Village Center.
- 1.3.3.14 Encourage the National Park and concessionaire to relocate employee housing to the Village Centers.
- 1.3.3.15 Development located within the Village Center zone should be served by a community septic system and a an authorized water purveyor such as a water district.
- 1.3.3.16 Commercial, multi-family, subdivisions, and employee housing shall be required to provide

pedestrian facilities such as crosswalks, boardwalks and sidewalks.

1.3.3.17 Maximum residential densities within the Village Center zone shall be 3 units per acre.

1.3.3.18 Employee housing shall be allowed in the Village Center zone.

1.3.3.19 Zone the Elbe Rural Gateway Community as a Village Center.

1.3.3.20 Zone a portion of the Ashford Rural Gateway Community as Village Center.

Tourist Commercial

Locational Criteria:

1.3.3.21 A Tourist Commercial zone shall be a small, clearly defined area that should not be allowed to expand within the 20 year planning period of this community plan.

Character:

1.3.3.22 The Tourist Commercial zone (TC) shall be oriented to serve the needs of tourists with a focus on restaurants, general merchandise sales, rental of recreational equipment, restrooms, and lodging.

Uses:

1.3.3.23 Civic, industrial, recreational, office, business, and other such uses that do not directly serve a tourist population shall not be allowed in the Tourist Commercial zone.

1.3.3.24 Residential densities in the Tourist Commercial zone shall be the same as the surrounding rural zone.

1.3.3.25 Zone the Park Entrance Rural Gateway Community as Tourist Commercial. Maximum residential density at the Park Entrance shall be 1 unit per 40 acres due to the Case II Volcanic Hazard Areas. No bonus densities shall be allowed.

1.3.3.26 Zone a portion of the Ashford Rural Gateway Community as Tourist Commercial. Maximum residential density within the Tourist Commercial

zone shall be 1 unit per 10 acres consistent with the surrounding Rural 10 designation.

Village Residential

Locational Criteria:

- 1.3.3.27 Village Residential shall be located where there is a predominance of existing residential uses in close proximity to a Village Center.

Character:

- 1.3.3.28 Village Residential (VR) shall be a low density residential zone which provides open space within the Rural Gateway Community designation.

Uses:

- 1.3.3.29 The residential density in the Village Residential is one unit per 10 acres consistent with the surrounding Rural 10 designation.
- 1.3.3.30 Zone a portion of the Ashford Rural Gateway Community as Village Residential.

Residential and Resource Lands

Outside of the designated Rural Gateway Community, the Upper Nisqually Valley is not expected to experience much change. The Valley is intended to remain as a mix of residential uses and resource-based uses. Residential uses would remain in large tracts of land, home-based businesses and cottage industries would continue to be allowed. Resource based industries such as timber harvesting or agriculture would continue. The intent zoning the Valley, outside of Rural Gateway Communities, as Rural 10, Rural 20, Rural 40 or Forest Lands is to allow for the rural character and large tracts of open space to continue and be carried into the future.

LU-RL Objective 2. Maintain the rural character of the Upper Nisqually Valley.

Principle 1. Designate and zone areas outside of the Gateway Communities as Rural 10, Rural 20, or Rural 40 to encourage low density residential opportunities and maintain the rural character of the valley.

Standards

- 2.1.1 The Rural designations are intended to provide low density housing opportunities for residents of the Upper Nisqually Valley.
- 2.1.2 Land uses in the Rural designations should maintain the rural character.
- 2.1.3 High densities and intensive commercial uses shall not be allowed in the Rural designations.
- 2.1.4 Encourage rural business character by allowing home-based businesses and cottage industries.
- 2.1.5 Encourage tourism by allowing bed and breakfast operations throughout the Valley.
- 2.1.6 Master Planned Resorts shall not be allowed within the Rural designations within the first five years of the community plan in

order to allow for new development and redevelopment to occur within the designated Rural Gateway Communities.

Rural 10 and Rural 20

- 2.1.7 Areas outside of any designated Rural Gateway Community and Case II Volcanic Hazard Areas shall be designated and zoned Rural 10 or Rural 20.
- 2.1.8 The base density of the Rural 10 lands should be 1 unit per 10 acres consistent with the Comprehensive Plan policies.
- 2.1.9 The base density of the Rural 20 lands should be 1 unit per 20 acres consistent with the Comprehensive Plan policies.

Rural 40

- 2.1.10 Areas outside of any designated Rural Gateway Community and within a Case II Volcanic Hazard Areas shall be designated and zoned Rural 40.
- 2.1.11 The base density should be 1 unit per 40 acres.
- 2.1.12 Bonus densities shall not be allowed within Case II Volcanic Hazard Areas.

Nonconforming Uses

The intent of the Nonconforming Use policies is to recognize that the Upper Nisqually Valley contains a number of legally existing nonconforming uses that are allowed to continue operations.

LU-NC Objective 3. Recognize the importance of nonconforming uses consistent with the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan.

Principle 1. Allow for continued operation and expansion of existing legal nonconforming uses.

Standards

- 3.1.1 Recognize Pierce County Development Regulations-Zoning allow for nonconforming rights that allow: a 10% expansion outright, up to 25% expansion with Administrative Review, and unlimited expansion with Hearing Examiner approval.
- 3.1.2 Inventory and document existing legal nonconforming uses to expedite expansions.

- 3.1.3 Expansions of nonconforming uses greater than 10% shall be required to meet design standards.
- 3.1.4 Strive to bring illegally constructed businesses and buildings to code.

Principle 2. Attempts should not be made to make all legally existing non-conforming businesses conforming.

Affordable Housing

The intent of the Affordable Housing policies are to ensure housing remains within the means of the local citizens and the local wage scale. As growth occurs, residents do not want to be priced out of their homes and properties. The policies also recognize the need for special housing for seasonal, temporary employees.

LU-AH Objective 4. Encourage housing which meets the needs of the community and maintains community identity.

Principle 1. Encourage housing that is affordable and attainable to all in the Upper Nisqually Valley.

Standards

- 4.1.1 Higher density housing is to be located within Village Centers in order to maintain the rural character throughout the Upper Nisqually Valley.
- 4.1.2 Allow for a density of 3 dwelling units per acre within Village Centers to provide opportunities for housing.
- 4.1.3 Encourage housing as an accessory to commercial uses where commercial is located at the street front with residential above.
- 4.1.4 Allow one accessory dwelling unit per single family residential unit throughout the valley.
- 4.1.5 Develop procedures and regulations to allow employee housing within designated areas of the community :
 - 4.1.5.1 The intent of employee housing is to allow a low-cost alternative for temporary employees and is particularly suited for a community that has seasonal employment housing needs;

- 4.1.5.2 Employee housing shall not be implemented as multi-family housing, individual independent living quarters shall not be created but common cooking and bathing areas shall be shared;
- 4.1.5.3 Employee housing shall not be occupied by individuals who do not work in the Upper Nisqually Valley;
- 4.1.5.4 Employee housing shall not be allowed in Case II Volcanic Hazard Areas;
- 4.1.5.5 An applicant proposing to construct employee housing must demonstrate and document the need for the housing and have a mechanism to ensure the units are occupied by individuals who work in the Upper Nisqually Valley.
- 4.1.5.6 Employee housing shall be required to be constructed and held in ownership by the company employing the workers or a cooperative of employers.
- 4.1.5.7 Allow employee housing in the Village Centers and Tourist Commercial:
- 4.1.5.8 Employee housing must be accessed through the inside of the building, cooking facilities and living spaces must be commonly shared by all with no provisions for cooking in any individual sleeping unit.
- 4.1.5.9 Employee housing shall not exceed more than 20 individual sleeping units per building.
- 4.1.5.10 Employee housing shall meet design standards.
- 4.1.5.11 Employee housing is encouraged to have commercial square footage on the first floor.
- 4.1.5.12 Monitor enforcement provisions for employee housing to ensure it is not used as rental units for tourists or other non-company employees living in the community.

Plan Implementation and Amendments

The intent of the Plan Implementation and Amendments policies is to provide a framework for implementing the plan and allowing a process for amendments.

LU-IMP Objective 5. Develop procedures for implementing the visions, goals, objectives and policies of the community plan.

Principle 1. Provide predictability of land development to property owners, residents, and business owners through implementation of the policies of the community plan.

Standards

- 5.1.1 Recognize that the adoption of the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan is accompanied by implementing regulations including changes to the Development Regulations-Zoning, Design Standards, and a monitoring program.
- 5.1.2 Amendments to the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan or any of the implementing regulations shall involve public review by local residents and property owners.
- 5.1.3 Development should receive review and public input in accordance with the impact the development has on the environment, community and neighboring properties.
- 5.1.4 Land use designations and zoning shall not split parcels.
- 5.1.5 The community plan may be amended every two years in conjunction with the amendment process for the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan.

IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS FOR THE LAND USE ELEMENT

The following is a list of actions that should be completed in order to implement the policies contained within this plan. They are arranged according to the timeframe within which each should be completed; short, medium, or long term. Short term actions should occur immediately or within one year of plan adoption. Mid-term actions should be completed within 2-5 years. Long term actions should be completed within 5-20 years of plan adoption. The party or parties responsible for leading the effort to complete the action item is listed in parenthesis following the action. Actions are assigned to the Gateway Community

Advisory Board (GCAB), the Upper Nisqually Advisory Commission (UNAC), or Pierce County Planning and Land Services (PALS). Those actions assigned to the GCAB are completed as part of the adoption and implementation of this plan.

Short Term Actions

Develop regulations to meet the intent of the goals, objectives, and policies of the community plan. (GCAB, PALS)

Amend the Pierce County Code to incorporate the regulations and zoning classifications for the Upper Nisqually Valley. (GCAB, PALS)

Amend the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan to designate and map Elbe, Ashford and the Park Entrance as Rural Gateway Communities. (GCAB, PALS)

Identify and map appropriate areas appropriate for expansion of zones within Rural Gateway Communities. (GCAB, PALS)

Designate and zone areas outside of any designated Rural Gateway Community and Case II Volcanic Hazard Areas as Rural 10. (GCAB, PALS)

Designate and zone areas outside of any designated Rural Gateway Community and within a Case II Volcanic Hazard Areas as Rural 40. (GCAB, PALS)

Establish a maximum residential lot size of 14,570 square feet in the Village Center zone to ensure compact development. (GCAB, PALS)

Develop regulations for employee housing. (GCAB, PALS)

The UNAC should consider whether to allow new Master Planned Resorts at the first update of the plan. (UNAC)

Mid-Term Actions

Develop procedures for amending the community plan. (UNAC, PALS)

Develop an official “Nonconforming Map” for those legally existing properties that are made nonconforming as a result of this plan. (PALS)

Develop a process which allows an allotted time period in which illegally constructed buildings and uses can be brought to the standards of the Uniform Building Code and Comprehensive Plan. (PALS)

Long Term Actions

At each plan update, evaluate the provisions for employee housing to ensure the intent is met.
(UNAC, PALS)

COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND CULTURAL ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The communities within the plan area have developed over the years in close association with the abundant natural resources and natural beauty present in the Upper Nisqually Valley. This relationship is expressed in the development patterns, architectural styles, historic sites, commerce, and industry. These features create a unique environment for community identity and pride. Residents have determined a high priority should be given to recognizing and preserving the history and character of the area. The Community Character and Cultural Element addresses community character, heritage, and social interaction.

The Community Character and Cultural Element emphasizes the community's vision by setting forth goals and objectives related to the preservation of the historic, cultural, and natural characteristics of the area. It promotes the historic resources and seeks to renovate and preserve more historical sites in the valley. The element also outlines policies for design standards that will help bring out the unique architectural character of the valley. Social interaction is addressed to attempt to maintain the close-knit, stable community that is found in the Upper Nisqually Valley today.



Elbe Church

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

The Upper Nisqually Valley has a rich and colorful history that begins with Native American settlement and pioneer homesteading. In the 1880's, timber workers, miners, trappers, and farmers were attracted to the area. Because of the abundant forest resources, timber production became the primary economy and supplied the National Mill which was the nation's largest mill west of the Mississippi. The virgin forests a century ago supplied the local mills with some of the largest trees on earth. Through the years, resource-based industries have continued to be a major component of the economy, however, tourism has also emerged as a significant economic component.

Residents of the Upper Nisqually Valley are independent, free spirited, creative, and respect the rights of individuals. Many businesses are independently owned and operated. The majority of business owners live in the Upper Nisqually Valley. The community is opposed to outside wealth invading their community and destroying their uniqueness with businesses and services as found throughout the rest of the United States. The community still works together and supports one another in any time of need. Residents are willing to volunteer on community projects and

support community events. The citizens of the Upper Nisqually know the valley is a special place and want to ensure it continues to remain a special place in the future.

Historic Resources

Many historic sites exist within the Upper Nisqually Valley. Several historic properties in the community planning area are listed in the National or Pierce County Register of Historic Places. Historic properties are designated to historic registers only after determination is made that a property meets evaluation criteria concerning the property's historic significance and possession of integrity. However, even if properties are not eligible for the federal or county register, they may have local community significance.



The Ashford Mansion

In addition to individual historic significance, historic properties contribute to the overall character of the community. Each of the historic properties, including historic buildings and archeological sites, serves as physical evidence of the community's historical developmental pattern and the pride the citizens take in their past. The community's historic character provides linkages and continuity with the past and can also provide unifying themes for the community's future physical and economic development. The 20 properties described in Table 10 are listed in the community plan to recognize local historically significant structures in the Upper Nisqually Valley. Four of the properties are either on the Pierce County or National Register of Historic Places.

These 20 properties were identified in an October 1996 workshop as having historical importance to the community. The top 20 properties were identified because they have the greatest potential of being placed on a historical register. Of the historic properties identified, ten were located in the Ashford vicinity, four in the Elbe vicinity, two in the vicinity of Alder, and three near the Nisqually entrance to Mt. Rainier National Park.

Table 10. Twenty Sites of Historical Importance	
Alder	Alder Presbyterian Church, 50124 School Road, Alder. Built in 1920 and moved to the present location in 1947 as a result of construction of Alder Dam.
	Alder Schoolhouse (Alder Community Hall), South side on Highway 7, east of School Road, Alder. The four room schoolhouse was built in 1909 and a gymnasium was constructed four years later. Both were moved to the present site by the City of Tacoma due to the construction of Alder Dam. The schoolhouse is listed in the Pierce County Register of Historic Places.
Elbe	Elbe Department of Natural Resources Garage (Elbe Firehouse), 53927 Mountain Highway East, Elbe. Built before 1920's. The garage was used to store equipment to put out fires on timberlands.
	Elbe Odd Fellows Hall (Elbe Grocery), 54209 Mountain Highway East, Elbe. Built in the early 1900's after arrival of the Tacoma Eastern Railway in 1904. The building was purchased by Mr. Christensen and moved to the present location in 1935.
	Elbe Evangelical Lutheran Church, 54206 Mountain Highway East, Elbe. Built in 1906 to serve German settlers. The church is on both the National and Pierce County Registers of Historic Places.
	Elbe Presbyterian Church (Elbe Christ's Church), 54005 180th Ave. Ct. East, Elbe. The Elbe Presbyterian Church was established in 1906. The church building was moved in 1940 after the construction of the pastor's home.
	In the vicinity of Elbe - a confidential archaeological site. One of two Nisqually Indians permanent villages in the vicinity of Mt. Rainier.
Ashford	Mount Rainier Lions Hall, 27726 Mountain Highway East, the Ashford vicinity. The hall is located where the town of National used to be. The building was built by the National mill workers as the union hall. Built before 1930's.
	Lovejoy's cabin, 54710 278th Ave. East, the Ashford vicinity. The cabin was the local speakeasy during the Prohibition Era of 1916 to 1933. Built date unknown.
	The National Mill Superintendent's House (Mountain Meadows Bed and Breakfast), 28912 Mountain Highway East, the Ashford Vicinity. Built in the early 1900's.
	Rexroth's House, 29805 Mountain Highway East, the Ashford vicinity. Built by the Rexroth Family in the 1920's. Mr. Rexroth was a local store owner in partnership with Mr. Butler.
	Mrs. Day Butler's House (Jasmer's), 30005 Mountain Highway East, Ashford. Built before 1920's.
	Butler's House, 30110 Mountain Highway East, the Ashford vicinity. Built by the Butler family in the 1920's.
	Ashford Tavern (Antique Store), 30027 Mountain Highway East, Ashford. The building was the local tavern, built in the late 1920's after the first tavern burned down.
	Von's General Store/Suvers's General Store (Ashford Country Store), 30402 Mountain Highway East, Ashford. The store was built by Suvers in 1905 to serve Ashford.

Table 10. Twenty Sites of Historical Importance	
	The Masonic Lodge, 30406 Mountain Highway East, Ashford. Built in the early 1920's. The lodge continues to be used by the local chapter of the Masons and a preschool.
	The Ashford Mansion, 30715 Mt. Tahoma Canyon Road, Ashford. Built in 1903 by pioneers Walter and Cora Ashford. The mansion is listed in both the National and Pierce County Registers of Historic Places.
	The Hershey Homestead, 33514 Mt. Tahoma Canyon Road, Ashford. The cabin was built in 1888 by homesteaders Peter and Emma Hershey. The cabin is the oldest structure still standing on its original site in the Upper Nisqually Valley. The homestead is listed in the Pierce County Register of Historic Places.
Park Entrance	Copper Creek Restaurant, 35707 Mountain Highway East, in the vicinity of the Nisqually entrance to the Park. The restaurant was converted from a 1935 gas station in 1946 by Rasalea Triggs and Hank Cauty.
	Mesler's Inn (Alexander's Country Inn), 37515 Mountain Highway East, in the vicinity of the Nisqually entrance to the Park. The Inn was built in 1912 by Alexander Mesler Junior. The Inn was one of the last road houses once located on the highway to Mount Rainier.
	The Lodge, 38605 Mountain Highway East, near the Nisqually entrance to the Park. The lodge was built in the 1920's by Tom Elliott.

Design

Many of the commercial buildings and old homesteads in the Upper Nisqually Valley have a distinctive design and character that is representative of the different eras of development and economic dependence in the area. Although the architectural styles have changed decade by decade, the principles of historic design from the valley can be identified and applied to future development.

Several distinctive styles of design can be observed in the Upper Nisqually Valley. One of the most noticeable styles is that of pre-1900's. Examples of such buildings are the Alder Presbyterian Church, Elbe Grocery, Elbe Lutheran Church, and the Ashford Country Store. Another style is that of a mountain-oriented and rustic building character as is found in Whittaker's Bunkhouse, Nisqually Lodge, Overland Inn, various rental cabin operations near Park Entrance, Gateway Inn, National Park Inn at Longmire, Paradise Inn, and Sunrise Lodge. Finally, the Ashford Mansion and Alexander's Country Inn are examples that represent a turn-of-the century flavor. All of these styles contribute to the uniqueness of the area.

There are several elements of design that are incorporated into many of the buildings, regardless of style, that serve to provide a sense of community. One of the common elements of good design present in the Upper Nisqually is the human component of many buildings and developments. These components make the building and property inviting rather than overwhelming or intimidating. Human components appeal to each of us and make us feel welcome. Soft lighting, covered porches, benches, and storefront windows invite people to shop,

relax, and explore. Many buildings in the urban area are constructed of cement or cinder block and decorated with bright florescent lights. These colder elements are not inviting to people.

Parking lot design can be another element that can attract or deter people. Huge parking lots can be intimidating as cars dart around. Parking lots that are smaller with landscaping and marked pedestrian pathways are more inviting to customers. Locating parking lots to the side or rear of a building can be helpful because a sea of parking does not have to be crossed to get to the destination. Very few buildings in the valley have large, intimidating parking lots.

The mass of a building also serves as an important design element. Large blank walls and massive buildings can make a person feel small and overwhelmed. Smaller buildings or walls that are detailed with dormers or windows can be more attractive to people. Most of the buildings in the Upper Nisqually are of a small scale (12,000 square feet or less) and have some kind of detail that encompasses the person rather than overwhelms.

The final design element that is unique to the Upper Nisqually is the signs. Most of the signs are handcrafted of natural materials such as timber logs or wood. Many signs are carved. Very few signs are internally lit or backlit.

Whittaker's Bunkhouse is an excellent example of a building which has incorporated many of the elements of good design. The building has soft, indirect lighting. There is a covered porch with benches that invites people to relax and spend some time. The building mass is broken up by the 'L' shape of the building that draws people in. The parking is located to the side. The sign is beautifully hand carved and is uniquely representative of Whittaker's and the valley.

Viewsheds and Aesthetics

Scenic views are almost constantly encountered as one passes through the plan area. Key scenic resources identified by the citizens of the area include Mt. Rainier, Cascade Mountains, Nisqually River, Alder Lake, Alder Dam, Nisqually River Canyon, heavily forested areas, pastoral settings, and open valley views. The State highways SR-7 and SR-706 provide the main travel routes for both residents and visitors in the plan area. Scenic views are part of what makes the valley special and set it apart from other areas in Pierce County.

Alder

The Alder community has the appearance of a naturally evolved rural residential neighborhood with a small neighborhood store. The buildings are rustic and have a sense of a history. The first vista of Mount Rainier can be seen from just east of Alder Community Club and Alder General Store. When entering Alder, Alder Lake and the Nisqually River canyon can be seen from SR-7. North of SR-7 between the Eatonville Cutoff Road and the motel/RV park, pastoral settings characterize the landscape. East of Eatonville Cutoff Road going toward Holiday Hills, pastoral valley settings can be seen.

Elbe

The Elbe community has the appearance of a compact rural business district that serves the surrounding rural residents. The compact development pattern provides for a sense of place. Although there are a few modern looking buildings, the train creates a historic character for the Elbe community. From the SR-7 bridge, views of the Alder Lake inlet and the Nisqually River are seen. Views west of town showcase Alder Lake and mountains in Lewis County.

Ashford

With the absence of a centralized business district, the Ashford community has the appearance of a string of tourist businesses along a strip of highway. The vacant land, pastures, and rural residential housing patterns scattered among the businesses create a sense of unplanned development. Various locations in Ashford have views of the Cascade Mountains and their foothills. From the eastern area of Ashford, high Cascade peaks in Mt. Rainier National Park can be seen.

Park Entrance

Prior to entering Mount Rainier National Park at the Nisqually entrance, the roadway creates the illusion of a tunnel through a primarily undisturbed forested area. Although there is a string of tourist businesses along the roadway, the majority are situated away from the road in the trees and have a rustic appearance. The view west of the Park entrance from SR-706 looks upon the Cascade Mountains and Glacier View Wilderness area.

Other Areas

Throughout the rest of the plan area, there is a mix of rolling foothills, open pasture, and hardwood and coniferous forests. Homes are scattered along the highway, many of which have a small business. One of the most beautiful views of Mount Rainier can be seen from the central valley in the area historically known as Park Junction.

Culture and Community Relations

Like the pioneers that settled the Upper Nisqually, people of the valley today tend to be very private and individualistic people. Made up of mountaineers, entrepreneurs, and artisans, the citizens are creative and strong. People of the valley support one another and function as a cohesive community particularly in relation to outsiders such as tourists and other communities. The community tends to be close-knit and generally people know one another. Sometimes the small, close-knit nature of the community amplifies disagreements among neighbors and has the potential to fracture the community if the issue is important enough.

The Upper Nisqually has very few community gathering places. Those that are available, the Alder Community Hall, the Lions Hall, the Masonic Lodge, the elementary school, and the fire halls, are too small to host a sizeable community function. The absence of a central gathering place, such as a community park or community center, is a concern to local residents.

There is not one particular group that speaks for the community, although there are several public interest groups in the area such as the Mount Rainier Business Association, Friends of the Ashford Park, Mount Rainier Lions Club, and Columbia Crest Parents and Teachers

Organization. The community is divided on some of the more significant issues which creates difficulties for outside groups such as the County, the National Park, or the Forest Service to be of service.

DESCRIPTION OF DESIRED CONDITIONS

The citizens of the Upper Nisqually Valley want to preserve and build upon the assets that make the community unique: its rich and colorful history; its turn-of-the-century buildings, log cabins, and timber-built structures; its expansive views of the Cascade range, Nisqually River, and Alder Lake; and its ability to function and grow as a rural community. These are the elements that are addressed in the policies and regulations to ensure they are carried into the future.



Alexander's Country Inn

Historic Resources

A rich and diverse history has shaped the Upper Nisqually Valley and contributes to the sense of community belonging found among the residents today. The people of the Upper Nisqually Valley want to ensure the history is preserved and conveyed to future residents and visitors through educating and promoting the history of events, people, traditions, unique structures, and artifacts.

The community plan supports the preservation of historic properties as well as finding ways to promote and teach that history to others. The policies and actions of the community plan call for emphasizing the importance of community history by developing a historic tour of properties, encouraging local businesses to have historic pictures or plaques, and increasing the number of properties listed on the historic register. The community also wants to educate visitors and citizens through the development of a museum or information center that contains historical context.

Design

The community has numerous buildings that were built at the turn of the century or have a unique mountain-oriented character such as timber-built structures or log cabins. Examples of these unique buildings are discussed in the Description of Existing Conditions section of this chapter. The community would like to have future buildings and development be constructed with the same styles and materials in order to enhance the existing character of the valley. The desired condition is to improve the overall appearance of the community, help provide a cohesive sense of

community, and contribute to improving the economy by developing properties into more remarkable and inviting presentations.

Design standards contained within the community plan are intended to improve the overall appearance of the community through quality design in architecture and site layout. They will influence the architecture and site design in the valley and are intended to reflect the heritage and existing historic character by utilizing rural, rustic, alpine, and/or Pacific Northwest/ Cascadian design elements. The emphasis will be on craftsmanship, materials detailing, proportion, and mass of structural elements.

The goals of design standards are:

- to preserve, restore, and enhance the mountain-oriented, rustic, and rural qualities found in the Upper Nisqually Valley;
- to implement the goals and policies articulated in the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan;
- to encourage the enhancement and preservation of land or buildings of unique or outstanding scenic or historical significance;
- to encourage well designed buildings and sites;
- to size new buildings to the human scale;
- to provide a menu of design standards that allows a builder to choose from a variety of styles that fit the overall character of the valley; and
- to communicate to land use applicants the goals of the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan and the role that design review takes in implementing the plan.

The residents of the Upper Nisqually Valley are committed to retaining local ownership and do not want to be controlled by outside wealth. They value the locally owned, small businesses and cottage industries that are part of life and help to retain community bonds. The design standards discourage modern architectural styles such as big, box-type buildings with bright lights and large parking lots. Corporate or franchise style buildings that typically use tenant-specific motifs to promote a particular theme or to identify a specific tenant are prohibited within the Upper Nisqually Valley. Franchise businesses are welcome within the community plan area, but buildings must be designed to fit the unique historic character of the valley.

Viewsheds

The Upper Nisqually Community is surrounded by beautiful views of the Cascade mountains and foothills and the Nisqually River Valley. The picturesque views found in the Upper Nisqually Valley provide a desirable transition between the urban areas of Puget Sound and Mount Rainier National Park. The visual corridor invokes pride in local residents. The desired condition is to maintain a natural and scenic environment that appeals to residents and visitors by protecting and enhancing views from SR-7 and SR-706. The community plan calls for consideration to develop viewshed guidelines to: retain or enhance positive characteristics; improve, remove, or screen negative characteristics; take advantage of opportunities to create positive visual diversity; and create vistas of attractive features where none exists. In order to achieve viewshed enhancement

and protection, coordination with private timber companies, the DNR, and the forest service will need to be organized and pursued.

The community plan also contains policies to pursue abatement of illegally operating junkyards that detract from the natural aesthetics of the area. The residents of the Upper Nisqually Valley believe these business operations detract from the visual experience and, at a minimum, would like to investigate opportunities to screen junkyards from the roadways.

Preservation and protection of key open spaces and forest lands is another component of the Community Character and Cultural Element policies. The citizens would like to pursue opportunities to preserve and protect key open spaces such as those that provide habitat for wildlife, are historically important sites, or offer pleasing views of the Cascade range or the Nisqually River.

Culture and Community Relations

The citizens of the Upper Nisqually Valley would like to improve opportunities for social interaction, cooperation, and information sharing within the community. In order to achieve this, the community plan calls for infrastructure projects that promote community interaction such as a community park, museum, and a community center facility. The citizens would also like to develop ongoing community events or periodic community forums which offer opportunities for dialogue.

The community plan also establishes an Upper Nisqually Advisory Commission (UNAC) that will be responsible for implementing the policies of the community plan and reviewing current development proposals for consistency with adopted policies, regulations, and design review. The Upper Nisqually Advisory Commission would be appointed by the Pierce County Council and would be comprised of a diverse group of individuals that represent the arts, business, environment, residents, forestry, and public lands. The UNAC should implement the community plan by working with citizens, local interest groups, the local business community, representatives of public lands, Pierce County, and other groups that may be necessary to aid with implementation steps. The UNAC would also work toward community education regarding the policies of the community plan.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND CULTURAL POLICIES

The Community Character and Cultural Element is divided into four sections which support the overall land use vision: Design, Viewsheds, Historic Resources, and Community Relations. Each section contains a goal and objective, principles, standards, and implementing actions to achieve the goal. The purpose of dividing the element into four sections is merely to provide structure to the reader, but is not intended to draw distinctions between policy types.

Goal: **We envision a valley whose unique mountain-oriented, rural and rustic qualities are preserved and enhanced by using design to influence the character of the environment and by preserving places which are historically**

important to the community. We envision a close-knit, stable community that respects and values the individual while encouraging dialogue with one another.

OBJECTIVES, PRINCIPLES, AND STANDARDS

Design

The intent of the Design policies are to ensure that new development enhances the visual quality and historic identity of the Upper Nisqually Valley while providing residents and visitors with a sense of place.

CC-DES Objective 6. Preserve and enhance the unique characteristics of the valley through the influence of design

Principle 1. Implement design standards and design guidelines to preserve the character of the community

Standards

Principle 2. Improve the overall appearance of the community, help provide a cohesive sense of community, and contribute to improving the economy through the use of design standards and design guidelines.

- Principle 3.** Design standards and design guidelines shall address:
- a. Signs (number, type, size, height, construction material, lighting);
 - b. Lighting (type and design of parking and building lighting, intensity, direction);
 - c. Street lighting (type and design, intensity, height);
 - d. Subdivision design (cluster design, orient away from valley roadways, reduce impacts on rural and mountain vistas);
 - e. Landscaping (require use of plants native or common to the valley and require preservation of a certain percentage of medium to large trees and the related understory in commercial centers, especially along roadway edges);
 - f. Site design (relationship between the buildings, parking, and roadways with environmental features of the site);
 - g. Street scape (sidewalks, street furniture); and,
 - h. Architectural design (roof pitch, building type, facade materials, colors, building appendages, window types).
- Principle 4.** Require commercial development, employee housing, multi-family housing, mobile home parks, and signs to comply with design standards within centers.
- Principle 5.** Require compliance with design standards for signs outside of centers.
- Principle 6.** Design standards shall reflect the heritage and the existing historic character of the Upper Nisqually Valley by utilizing rural, rustic, alpine, and/or Pacific Northwest/Cascadian design elements. The emphasis should be on craftsmanship, materials detailing, proportion and mass of structural elements, and an organic quality.
- Principle 7.** Modern architectural styles (1950's to present) such as large, box shaped buildings are discouraged within the plan area.

- Principle 8.** Store fronts should have covered entryways, walkways, roofs, or porch designs that protect pedestrians from the rain.
- Principle 9.** Provide a set of incentives for new and existing structures to conform to the community's design guidelines.
- Principle 10.** While no single architectural style is required, reliance on or use of standardized "corporate or franchise" style is prohibited.
- Principle 11.** Recognize the growing demands of tourist and the tourist industry by encouraging the development of existing properties into more remarkable presentations.

Viewsheds

The intent of the Viewshed policies are to recognize that views, viewsheds, and visual aesthetics are part of what sets the Upper Nisqually Valley apart from the rest of South Puget Sound. The policies are intended to emphasize to residents, visitors, and developers the importance of these aesthetics without creating burdensome regulations.

- CC-VS Objective 7.** Maintain a natural and scenic environment that appeals to residents and visitors.
- Principle 1.** Recognize that the surrounding views of hillsides, mountains, the Nisqually River, majestic trees, and wildlife are part of what makes this valley unique by protecting and enhancing views from SR-7 and SR-706.
- Principle 2.** Strive to achieve a corridor along State Highways 7 and 706, between Alder and the entrance to Mt. Rainier National Park which is visually attractive to tourists, recreational visitors, local businesses, and residents.
- Principle 3.** Roadways through the Upper Nisqually Valley should provide a pleasing diversity of residential, agricultural, commercial, light industrial, forest, and natural vistas.
- Principle 4.** Recognize the visual quality of the corridor produces pride in local residents and creates a desirable transition from urban areas to Mt. Rainier National Park.
- Principle 5.** Consider developing viewshed guidelines to:
- 7.5.1 Retain and/or enhance positive characteristics;

- 7.5.2 Improve, remove, or screen negative characteristics;
- 7.5.3 Take advantage of opportunities to create positive visual diversity where extensive areas of character exist;
- 7.5.4 Create vistas of attractive features where none exist; and
- 7.5.5 Guidelines should not be written with the intention of becoming regulation.

- Principle 6.** Viewshed guidelines should provide recognition of positive accomplishments by landowners and managers.
- Principle 7.** Coordinate with and inform the U.S. Forest Service, DNR, private timber companies, and business and property owners as to the importance of maintaining attractive views.
- Principle 8.** Pursue opportunities for creating new vistas or positive variations in visual character.
- Principle 9.** Explore options to preserve and protect key open spaces and forest lands for natural aesthetic value.
- Principle 10.** Work with public and private landowners to limit visual impacts on scenic resources.
- Principle 11.** Pursue abatement of illegally operating junkyards.
- Principle 12.** Discourage business activities associated with junk yards.
- Principle 13.** Pursue opportunities to screen junk yards from the roadway.
- Principle 14.** Recognize that the surrounding valley hillsides are part of working forests that can provide important views to Mount Rainier, the Cascades, and the Nisqually River.
- Principle 15.** Identify key forest resource lands which should be preserved for viewshed protection.

Historic Resources

The intent of the Historic Resources policies is to emphasize the importance of history in providing a sense of place in the Upper Nisqually Valley and to preserve and prioritize historic structures, places, and traditions.

CC-HR Objective 8. Ensure the history of the Upper Nisqually Valley is conveyed to residents and visitors.

Principle 1. Preserve sites of historical significance and strive to emphasize the importance of community history.

Standards

- 8.1.1 Promote the history of events, people, traditions, unique structures, and artifacts.
- 8.1.2 Promote the knowledge and presence of history in the community because it provides a sense of belonging and tradition for those who live in or visit the community.
- 8.1.3 Strive to educate visitors and local citizens about the history of the valley.
- 8.1.4 Weave historic themes into the economic development plans to encourage protection of historic character.
- 8.1.5 Integrate historic resources with natural resources when developing new recreational and visitor facilities.
- 8.1.6 Encourage the National Park to provide historical interpretations of the relationship between the Park and the local communities.
- 8.1.7 The UNAC should be afforded an opportunity to provide input into the review process when a nomination application to the Pierce County Register of Historic Places for a property located in the Upper Nisqually community is filed with the Pierce County Landmarks Commission.
- 8.1.8 Encourage local businesses to have historic plaques or pictures as part of the decor.
- 8.1.9 Develop a comprehensive inventory of cultural resources including historically significant features for the community.
- 8.1.10 When there is a conflict between the adopted design standards and preservation of the architectural integrity of a historical building

that has been identified on the Pierce County Register of Historic Places, the historical architectural integrity shall prevail. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation shall be used to review alterations to designated historic properties of the Pierce County Register of Historic Places unless separate review standards or guidelines for the designated historic properties located in the community are adopted.

- 8.1.11 Develop a historic tour of important places and structures in the valley.
- 8.1.12 Develop standardized identification signs for historic tour properties.
- 8.1.13 Encourage property owners of historic properties and structures to be involved with the development of a tour.
- 8.1.14 Recognize the valley contains many potential archaeological resources and ensure the provisions of RCW 27.53 are properly followed when development or site disturbance is proposed.

Community Relations

The intent of the Community Relations policies is to emphasize the need for the community to speak with one voice and to work with public land managers for the betterment of the Upper Nisqually Valley.

CC-CR Objective 9. Improve opportunities for social interaction, cooperation, and information sharing within the community.

Principle 1. Provide an atmosphere and infrastructure that promotes community interaction.

Standards

- 9.1.1 Provide central gathering places for the community through the implementation of Village Centers. (UNAC)
- 9.1.2 Improve community cooperation, coordination, and communication through newsletters and periodic community forums. (UNAC)
- 9.1.3 Support the development of a community park with a community center to meet recreational needs and provide a meeting place for local residents. (UNAC, business association)

- 9.1.4 Encourage local residents to participate in community events and volunteer activities. (UNAC, business association)

Principle 2. Establish an Upper Nisqually Advisory Commission to ensure that policies and actions of the community plan are implemented.

Standards

- 9.2.1 The Upper Nisqually Advisory Commission (UNAC) should be comprised of a diverse group of individuals with representation from each of the Rural Gateway Communities, the arts and heritage, business, the environment, residents, forestry, public lands, and a non-voting member from Lewis County. The UNAC shall also contain a design professional, such as a landscape architect, architect, or planner.
- 9.2.2 UNAC should implement the policies and action steps of the community plan by working with citizens, local interest groups, the local business community, representatives of public lands, Pierce County, and other groups that may be necessary to aid with implementation steps.
- 9.2.3 The UNAC responsibilities should include:
- 9.2.3.1 Implementation of the community plan and recommending policy changes to the Pierce County Council for final action;
 - 9.2.3.2 Review of development proposals to ensure that community character and standards are maintained and the policies of the community plan are put forth. The UNAC will complete findings and recommendations to the Hearing Examiner or Department Director as appropriate; and,
 - 9.2.3.3 Community education and coordination toward implementation of the community plan.
- 9.2.4 Pierce County should assist and provide staff support to the UNAC.

IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS FOR COMMUNITY CHARACTER AND CULTURAL ELEMENT

The following is a list of actions that should be completed in order to implement the policies contained within this plan. They are arranged according to the timeframe within which each

should be completed; short, medium, or long term. Short term actions should occur immediately or within one year of plan adoption. Mid-term actions should be completed within 2-5 years. Long term actions should be completed within 5-20 years of plan adoption. The party or parties responsible for leading the effort to complete the action item is listed in parenthesis following the action. Actions are assigned to the Gateway Community Advisory Board (GCAB), the Upper Nisqually Advisory Commission (UNAC), or Pierce County Planning and Land Services (PALS). Those actions assigned to the GCAB are completed as part of the adoption and implementation of this plan.

Short Term Actions

Appoint members to the Upper Nisqually Advisory Commission ensuring a mix of representation. (PALS)

Set a regular meeting time and place for UNAC meetings. (UNAC)

Develop a two-year and five-year work program for policy implementation, public education, and plan monitoring. (UNAC)

Provide staff support for the UNAC in design review of proposed projects. (PALS)

Develop and adopt design standards for centers. (GCAB, PALS)

Develop and adopt design guidelines for use outside of designated centers. (GCAB, PALS)

Mid-Term Actions

Convene a community forum to educate local property owners about the use of design standards and design guidelines. (UNAC, PALS)

Coordinate with and inform the Pierce County Landmarks Commission regarding adopted design standards and guidelines. (UNAC)

Periodically review the effectiveness of design standards and guidelines toward achieving the preservation of community character. (UNAC)

Adopt a set of incentives for compliance with design guidelines for new and existing structures by:

- (a) Researching possible incentives;
- (b) Developing alternatives;
- (c) Convening a community forum to solicit public comment; and
- (d) Completing any regulatory changes which would be necessary to implement incentives. (UNAC, PALS)

Work with individual businesses to suggest ways of improving site and building presentations.

Research the possibility of designating portions of the valley timberlands as a pilot project area as a means to provide research opportunities and preserve forested areas. (UNAC, DNR, USFS, National Park)

Within five years, , adopt the list of *Historically Important Features* to be emphasized:

- (a) Identify all sites, events, people, traditions, structures, and artifacts of historical significance;
- (b) Develop educational brochures, tours, presentation to emphasize the historical list; and
- (c) Develop strategies to convey the historical information to the community. (UNAC, community)

Work with the National Park, historians, local citizens, and businesses to obtain historical photos and artifacts to place into local businesses as part of the decor. (UNAC, business association)

Publish periodic community newsletters and establish an Internet bulletin board to inform residents of upcoming community events, the history of the community, the status of community plan implementation, land use proposals under review by the Upper Nisqually Advisory Commission, introduction of new business people, or change in existing businesses, etc. (UNAC)

Hold periodic community get-together (e.g., picnics, ice cream socials) to introduce existing and new residents to one another. (UNAC, community, business association)

Long Term Actions

Work with the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, the Dept. of Natural Resources, and private landowners when considering development of a valley viewshed plan that maintains, enhances, or creates important views by:

- (a) Coordinating a forum which brings together community residents and public agencies to identify key forest resource lands which should be preserved; and
- (b) Develop visual quality objectives and viewshed guidelines for preservation of viewsheds; and,
- (c) Develop a five year assessment program to determine whether viewshed guidelines are effective. (UNAC, U.S. Forest Service, National Park, DNR)

Develop incentives such as residential density bonuses, tax incentives, or an incentive award program to encourage compliance with viewshed preservation and maintenance. (UNAC)

Work with the Department of Transportation to strengthen enforcement of existing scenic highway regulations for SR-7 and SR-706. (UNAC, Pierce County)

Work with the Washington State Department of Transportation's Heritage Corridors Program to develop a corridor management plan for SR-7 and SR-706 that articulates the community's vision and goals for the scenic roadway. The corridor management plan should document the resources of the corridor and specific action strategies designed to preserve and enhance them. (UNAC, Pierce County)

Apply for a National Scenic Byway and All-American Road designation at the Federal level which would recognize SR-706 for its outstanding qualities and amenities. (UNAC, Pierce County)

Coordinate with the National Park to develop a program to plant native wildflowers along SR-7 and SR-706 to beautify the trip to the mountain. (UNAC)

Identify and pursue acquisition of key open spaces and cultural sites:

- (a) Identify open spaces important to the community;
- (b) Prioritize the list of identified open spaces;
- (c) Investigate funding opportunities to purchase or preserve open spaces; and
- (d) Purchase property or development rights for property which has significant aesthetic, historic, or cultural value. (UNAC, Pierce County)

Work to expand the list of *Historically Important Features*, including archeological resources, for the Upper Nisqually Valley in the Pierce County Register of Historic Places. (UNAC, PALS)

Develop a historic property tour:

- (a) Compile an inventory of all the historical properties and structures in the Upper Nisqually Valley;
- (b) Solicit local residents to design a brochure which maps the historic properties and structures and provides its historic relevance;
- (c) Solicit funds to print and distribute the tour brochures;
- (d) Solicit local residents to design a standard sign to be placed at the historical properties and structures; and
- (e) Solicit funds and/or resources to construct the signs. (PALS, UNAC)

Disseminate information regarding tax incentives for rehabilitating or restoring historic properties. (UNAC)

Educate the community about the advantages of rehabilitating or restoring historic properties. (UNAC)

Pursue the development of a museum to illustrate, preserve, and centralize the community history. (UNAC, business association)

Develop a program that presents the history of the community to visitors, local schoolchildren, and residents. (UNAC)

Investigate the possibility of the Pierce County Landmarks Commission review and influence any proposed changes to or demolition of properties listed on the community plan list of historically important features until eligible properties on the community plan list are formally designated to the Pierce County Register of Historic Places. (UNAC, Pierce County Landmarks Commission)

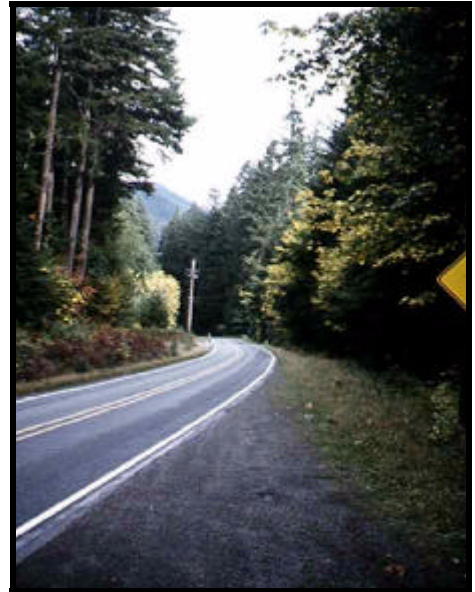
Pursue the development of a community park with a community center. (UNAC, business association, Pierce County)

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Natural Environment Element addresses the protection and conservation of the natural resources such as water, air, forests, vegetation, fish and wildlife, and other critical areas. The residents of the Upper Nisqually Valley value the surrounding natural environment and intact ecosystems as an integral part of who they are and what makes the community unique. Residents believe the Upper Nisqually Valley is “blessed with some of the world’s most majestic scenery, favorable climates, abundant wildlife, pristine air, and soil and water”. The citizens want to “be the community that preserves and protects our special place for the experience and appreciation of others and future generations¹”.

Protection and preservation of critical areas, other environmentally sensitive areas, air and water quality, and sustainable natural resources are key components of the community's vision. A number of environmental protection strategies are identified within the element including establishing land use practices which protect critical areas, preserving the environment in its natural state to the greatest extent possible, maintaining or improving the quality of air and water resources, encouraging forest management which promotes sustainable harvests, limiting pesticide use, and developing educational and community outreach programs which further the awareness of environmental issues.



State Road 706

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

The unique environment found in the Upper Nisqually Valley is one of the area's most defining characteristics. The majestic Cascade hillsides, expansive views, and dignified conifers can stir a mix of humility and awe. But it is more than this that makes the Valley unique--it is the lingering morning fog along the river, the fresh smell of cottonwoods on a summer's evening, watching the elk quietly feeding in a pasture, all of the lush vegetation and greenery, seeing a thousand stars at night, and an ongoing peaceful solitude. This is what the residents of the Upper Nisqually want to preserve for future generations.

¹ The Upper Nisqually Community Workshop Summary Report, June 5 & 6, 1994.

Earth Resources

Landslide and Erosion Hazard Areas

The plan area contains a variety of slopes ranging from practically level to extremely steep. The portion of the plan area containing slight slopes, i.e., 0-8 percent, is located on the floor of the river valley, from Elbe to the entrance to Mount Rainier National Park. Moderately steep slopes, i.e., 15-30 percent, are found predominantly in the Elbe Hills, north and east of Elbe and on lower hillsides in the west end of the plan area. Isolated areas of moderately steep slopes are also found in the mountainous areas at the east end of the plan area. Steep slopes, i.e., 30-65 percent, dominate the Cascade Mountains north and east of Ashford and are common on the sides of the Elbe Hills, Alder Hill, Reliance Hill, and other outcrop hills in the west end of the plan area. The areas of very steep slopes, i.e., 65-90%, are mostly confined to the upper reaches of peaks and outcrops in the Cascade Mountains north and east of Ashford. Areas most susceptible to landslide and erosion hazards occur on steep and very steep slopes.

Seismic Hazard Areas

Areas vulnerable to seismic hazards which could result in severe damage to life or property typically include alluvial surficial geologic units or recessional outwash surficial geologic units. Maps released by the Washington Department of Natural Resources in 1987 show there are isolated areas of alluvium geologic units located at the east and west ends of the plan area. Alluvial deposits are found in three pockets along the shore of Alder Lake in the Cemetery Road area. A large area of alluvium is located in the Nisqually River and Tahoma Creek drainages to the east of the plan area boundary in Mount Rainier National Park, with the western end of the deposit located in the plan area at the Nisqually Park Subdivision. There are alluvial-based soils on the Nisqually River valley floor that may also be unstable.

Volcanic Hazard Areas

Portions of the plan area are subject to potentially catastrophic impacts from activities originating on the Mount Rainier volcano. Due to its height, frequent earthquakes, active system of steam vents, and extensive glacial system mantle, Mount Rainier is potentially the most dangerous volcano in the Cascade Range. There are several types of hazards associated with volcanoes such as Mount Rainier. These include ash eruptions, lava flows, pyroclastic flows, and lahars (also known as mudflows or debris flows). In addition, glacier caused mudflows and traditional mountain flooding are relatively common within the plan area. Lahars and mudflows can occur without any volcanic activity and with little or no warning. Lahar and mudflow hazards present the greatest risk to the inhabitants and visitors of the Upper Nisqually.

Mount Rainier and the Nisqually River Valley have experienced numerous debris flows in post-glacial times (over the past 10,000 years). Mount Rainier poses the most severe debris flow risks of any volcano in the United States. The Upper Nisqually Valley has historically experienced a number of debris flows. Debris flows can be defined as slurries of sediment and water that look and behave much like flowing concrete. A debris flow contains 60 percent or more sediment, with the remaining volume composed of water. There are two types of volcanic debris flows (lahars): (1) "cohesive," relatively high clay flows originating as debris avalanches; and (2) "noncohesive" flows with less clay that begin most commonly as meltwater surges.

Cohesive (Case I) Debris Flows

The largest debris flows to occur on Mount Rainier have been cohesive flows that began as debris avalanches formed from huge volcanic landslides. The potential suddenness of these debris flows means little or no warning to those downstream. It would take less than two hours for one of these large debris flows to reach Ashford and Elbe. These lahars have occurred at Mount Rainier at a frequency of once every 500-1,000 years. The Electron Mudflow inundated the Puyallup River Valley, downstream to Sumner, to a depth of over 20 feet approximately 550 years ago. A similar event has a 10-18 percent probability of occurring within the next 100 years in the river valleys leading from Mount Rainier, including the Nisqually.

The U.S. Geological Survey, in analyzing the risk and impacts of debris flows on the river valleys surrounding Mount Rainier, has determined that a flow the size of the Electron Mudflow is a reasonable event to assume. In the case of the Nisqually River Valley, scientists estimate a debris flow the size of the Electron would inundate the valley floor and lower hillsides of the upper stretches of the valley, east of Elbe. The depth of the flow would range from approximately 50 feet at the base of the volcano to 22 feet at the lowland end of the debris flow. An Electron-size debris flow is estimated to have speeds of 11-49 miles per hour with an estimated arrival time at Alder Lake of between 0.6 and 2.5 hours.

Noncohesive (Case II) Debris Flows

Noncohesive debris flows have occurred much more frequently at Mount Rainier than the cohesive debris flows, i.e., at a frequency of once every 100-500 years. A noncohesive debris flow has a 64 percent probability of occurring at least once in the next 100 years. Noncohesive debris flows most commonly originate as water surges from the melting of snow and ice by volcanic heat, lava, or pyroclastic flows. These flows begin as streamflow and gradually increase in bulk as sediments accumulate along the path of the flow until the flow contains a significant amount of sediment.

The Nisqually River Valley has experienced several noncohesive debris flows in post-glacial times. The largest noncohesive debris flow in the Mount Rainier area, the National Lahar, inundated the lower river valley all the way to Puget Sound. The U.S. Geological Survey, in analyzing the risk and impacts of debris flows has determined that a noncohesive debris flow the size of the National Lahar is a reasonable event to assume. In the case of the Nisqually River Valley, another debris flow the size of the National is estimated to inundate a portion of the valley floor, east of Elbe. The valley portion of the plan area, east of Copper Creek, and within approximately 0.25-0.50 miles of the river, east of Elbe, would be the most susceptible area. The depth of flow would range from 15 feet at the base of the volcano to 8 feet at the lowland end of the debris flow. Debris flows are estimated to have speeds of 7-18 miles per hour with an estimated arrival time at Alder Lake of between 1.6 and 4.2 hours.

Water Resources

Watershed Identification

The community plan area is located within the Nisqually River Watershed. All waters in the area eventually flow to the Nisqually River. The river originates at the Nisqually glacier on the south

side of Mount Rainier and ultimately reaches the Nisqually Delta entering Puget Sound some 70 miles to the west. The watershed contains 720 square miles.

The Nisqually River serves as the boundary between Pierce and Lewis Counties. It is the fifth largest river entering Puget Sound and provides fifty percent of the discharge into the South Sound below the Tacoma Narrows. The upper 28 miles of the Nisqually River have been identified by the National Park Service as a potential wild, scenic, or recreational river. The Washington Department of Ecology has classified the whole river as having statewide significance under a state scenic waterway program and under the Nisqually River Management Plan.

Most tributaries to the Nisqually within the upper sub-watershed exhibit steep mountain stream characteristics, producing falls, cascades, and rapids with large rock or boulder stream bottoms. Most tributaries are surrounded with dense cover, usually deciduous trees and underbrush with some conifers. Goat, Copper, and Mueller Creeks are major tributaries within the plan area (see Water Resources Map). The principal land uses within the Upper Nisqually are rural residential homesites, timber harvest activities, and recreation. The area is rural in character with a few small communities such as Ashford and Elbe. Potential pollution sources include forest practices, stormwater runoff, and sewage disposal.

Water Quality

The Nisqually River is relatively cool and well oxygenated. The river is clear much of the time. Glacial melt occurs sporadically during the summer and fall causing seasonally high suspended solids and turbidity. Logging activity may increase erosion and possibly lead to increases in turbidity during storm events. Upstream water temperature warms during July, August, and September, occasionally exceeding the State temperature standard.

Rainfall, snowmelt, and glacial melt provide the principal runoff to the Nisqually River. Glacial meltwaters, laden with rock flour (finely-ground rock formed when glaciers move over bedrock), cause seasonally high suspended solids and turbidity which reduce the clarity of the river. Fine glacial sediments give the river a milky green color in late summer.

Washington Department of Ecology (WDOE) classifies the Nisqually River upstream of Alder Lake as having extraordinary water quality. Alder Lake water quality sustains resident fish populations and does not appear to be substantially degraded by sediment deposition. Nutrient concentrations are below EPA criteria. There is no evidence of toxic substances in lake sediments. Potential sources of pollution in the area include stormwater runoff, erosion and sedimentation, agricultural runoff, and forest practice activity.

No specific data is available on the water quality of many smaller tributary streams to the Nisqually River. However, their quality is generally assumed to be excellent because their flows enter the Nisqually River which has extraordinary water quality.

Flooding

The powerful force of water rushing downstream causes rivers to move and change their course over time. The river has significantly changed course in the last 100 years since the Pierce/Lewis

County lines were established. Flooding creates new channels in upland areas and erodes river banks, displacing homes and land.

Flow volumes in the upper half of the Nisqually, above Alder Reservoir, result solely from runoff and snow melt into the tributaries. The river experiences seasonal fluctuations in discharge; high flows in April, May, and June correspond to snowmelt, and high flows in November through February correspond to heavy rains. Lowest flows typically occur in August and September.

Occasionally, high flows occur in late summer or early fall because of rapid glacial melt in the headwaters of the river. These glacial outbursts, known as jokulhlaups, have historically caused flooding along the Nisqually. The outburst is caused by a sudden release of a large amount of water from the head of a steep mountain valley containing loose alluvial glacial deposits. The massive outpouring often results in one or more surges flowing downstream and carrying boulders, trees, mud, and huge amounts of debris. Floods caused by glacial outbursts are known to have occurred on the Nisqually in 1926, 1932, 1934, 1947, 1955, and 1986.

There is an extensive history of flooding along the Nisqually River. Pierce County records show a flood occurred in January 1959 that provided the impetus for construction of a dike that extends from Mount Rainier National Park to just beyond the Nisqually Park subdivision. The dike was built in 1961. In 1962, the Kernahan Bridge was damaged in a flood. In early December 1977, eight homes and twelve lots in the Nisqually Park subdivision were destroyed when a flood destroyed the dike. The Army Corps of Engineers subsequently rebuilt the dike. In February of 1996, the landward portions of the Kernahan Bridge (which had been rebuilt in 1994), were wiped out in a flood event.

Portions of the plan area reside in 100-year and 500-year floodplains. Most of the 100-year floodplains are associated with the Nisqually River and form some of the streams that empty off the hillsides into the river. Land in a 100-year floodplain is subject to a one percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year. The 500-year floodplains are minimal, but do exist near the Park Junction site and some of the streams near Kernahan Road.

Hydroelectric Dams and Reservoirs

Two large hydroelectric dams, located at Alder and LaGrande, influence the planning area. The dams and their associated reservoirs have significantly altered the flow of the Nisqually River. Each facility consists of a dam, flowline, powerhouse, and an associated power transmission switchyard. Alder and LaGrande are considered part of the Nisqually Hydroelectric Project. Tacoma Power owns the facilities and in 1996 applied to the Federal Energy Commission for relicensing. Approval of the relicensing occurred in early 1997. As part of the approval, several changes were made in regard to flows, fish, wildlife, and recreation. Tacoma Power is purchasing 3,350 acres of land to be set aside for wildlife habitat and protection. These lands are meant to help mitigate the impacts of lost habitat because of the reservoirs. In addition, the LaGrande bypass reach will be opened for recreational whitewater rafting several days a year.

Wetlands

The community plan area has a considerable number of wetlands. Most of the wetlands are associated with the Nisqually River or its tributaries (see Water Resources Map). There are several wetlands located north of SR-706 approximately two miles east of Elbe. There is a large wetland situated between Ashford and Elbe, approximately three miles west of Ashford and north of SR-706. Several more wetlands exist immediately west of Ashford. Wetlands in the Upper Nisqually watershed have experienced minimum disturbance and are in relatively good condition.

Groundwater

Most of the soils found in the valley are sandy loam, gravelly loam, or sand. Permeability of these soil types is moderate to high. Groundwater is generally more susceptible to contamination in areas with permeable soils because contaminants are not effectively filtered before reaching the aquifer. However, the valley floor is underlain by unconsolidated alluvial and mudflow deposits which rest upon bedrock consisting mostly of volcanic breccias and flows. Due to these deposits, the Nisqually Valley has a complex subsurface geology. At this time, no geohydrologic models exist which describe the horizontal and vertical characteristics of the subsurface geology of the Valley, thus making it difficult to assess the susceptibility of the aquifer.

In October of 1963, the Ground Water Branch of the U.S. Geological Survey was requested by the National Park Service to drill a well approximately 3-1/2 miles east of Elbe, in conjunction with plans for the new headquarters site. The report concluded that the amount of groundwater stored in the valley alluvium fluctuates in close response to precipitation and snow melt. Water quality analysis of samples taken during the pumping test showed that the water was of excellent chemical quality.

Vegetation

The plan area has a mix of forests, pastures, and river plains. The west end of the plan area, west of the Cascade foothills, contains a mix of pasture, farmfields, clear cuts, meadows, and mixed deciduous/coniferous forest. The Elbe area is characterized by forested hillsides to the north and east of the townsite. The stretch of valley floor extending east a couple of miles contains a mixed deciduous/coniferous forest. The central portion of the valley floor, from the Park Junction area to National, is characterized by broad openings, mature/second growth forest, and clearcuts. In

the vicinity of National, the valley is characterized by pasture and farmfields on the north side of the highway and a mix of clearcuts and isolated mature/second growth forest on the south side of the highway. The Ashford area is characterized by broad openings of pasture and clearcuts on both sides of SR-706. Scattered deciduous and coniferous trees line the highway from the National area through the commercial area of Ashford. East of Kernahan Road, the valley floor is characterized by a thick mixed coniferous/deciduous forest, with pockets of mature/second growth forest south of SR-706, near Kernahan, and on both sides of the highway, east of Goat Creek.

The area contains a healthy mix of forest types and ages. Late-seral, or old-growth, coniferous forest occurs in the eastern end of the plan area, adjacent to Mount Rainier National Park. This type of forest is found primarily in the Glacier View Wilderness Area and in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. The only old-growth forest identified in the valley floor exists south of SR-706, east of Kernahan Road, and between Goat Creek and the Park Entrance. Mid-seral, or mature/second growth, coniferous forest occurs throughout the plan area but dominates the foothills and mountain areas from north of and between Elbe and National. Smaller areas of mid-seral forest are located on the mountainsides from National to Kernahan Road. There are pockets of mid-seral forest also found throughout the valley floor. Early-seral, or young, coniferous forest is found primarily in combination with the mid-seral forest on hillsides and hilltops from Elbe to Ashford. Very little early-seral forest exists in the valley floor. Where it does occur, it is found in areas which have been clearcut.

In addition to the different seral stages of forest development outlined above, the plan area is also divided into different vegetative communities. The location of these different communities depends primarily on elevation. The western hemlock zone occupies the valley floor and lower hillsides, extending up to the 2,000 feet elevation level. The Pacific silver fir zone generally occupies hillsides at elevations of 2,000 to 4,250 feet in the plan area. The mountain hemlock zone is the highest forested zone and it is also the wettest and coolest. Elements of this zone can be found from 4,000 to 6,000 feet (timberline). Timberline is found about 5,100 feet. The alpine zone begins at timberline. Alpine vegetation communities are generally restricted to the higher mountains regions.

Fish and Wildlife

The community plan area is abundant with wildlife. The Nisqually River and associated wetlands, the land within the National Park and National Forests, and the numerous large tracts of vacant land all contribute to the rich diversity of wildlife found in the area. Forests provide habitat for birds and mammals. Forest canopies help shade streams and wetlands for a variety of fish species. Riparian areas, such as those adjacent to the Nisqually River, provide essential corridors for wildlife movement. Riparian areas and wetlands provide nesting, migratory, and wintering areas for over 50 percent of the nation's migratory bird species.

Vegetative cover plays a vital role in providing habitat for all species of wildlife. Forested areas within the plan area are utilized by wildlife for cover, foraging, and movement corridors. The removal of forest cover from timber harvesting or land development activities can remove

valuable habitat. Removal of forests near streams and wetlands can also impact water quality of surface waters upon which both fish and wildlife depend. Although limited removal of forested vegetation may improve habitat for some species (e.g., elk utilize open areas for grazing), the cumulative impacts of vegetation removal can be significant to wildlife. With losses in vegetation, most wildlife species have fewer places to use for food, water, cover, or nesting.

Many of the species found in the Upper Nisqually communities are large mammals such as cougar, bobcat, bear, elk, and deer. These animals need large home ranges and unrestricted movement corridors such as forest lands, open space, and parks. At this time, most of the Upper Nisqually is undeveloped and supports the habitat required for large mammal species.

Species Found in the Community Plan Area

Fish

The Nisqually River is home to anadromous and resident fish populations. The river provides prime spawning habitat for anadromous steelhead, cutthroat trout, and four known species of salmon: coho, pink, chum, chinook, and possibly sockeye. All six species of salmonids are vital to the river's ecology, but chum are perhaps the most important. The Nisqually Rivers' annual chum migration is a unique late run which begins in December and continues into March. It is the single largest salmon run in the river. The wild (in contrast to hatchery raised) fish are the latest run of salmon in the State. There are no anadromous fish found above LaGrande and Alder dams. No fish passage facilities are located at the dams. Table 11 details the status, spawning habits, and origin of these anadromous species.

Table 11. Anadromous Fish Species			
Species*	Status	Origin and Type	Spawning
Chinook Salmon - Fall Run	Healthy	Mixed/Composite	September - November
Coho Salmon	Healthy	Mixed/Composite	November - January
Chum Salmon	Healthy	Native/Wild	November - February
Pink Salmon	Healthy	Native/Wild	August - October
Steelhead Trout	Healthy	Native/Wild	March - June
Searun Cutthroat	N/A	N/A	February - March

Information from 1992 Washington State Salmon & Steelhead Stock Inventory; WDOF, WDOW, Western Washington Treaty Indian Tribes

*All salmon and trout species found in the Nisqually are considered priority species by the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The Nisqually River is also home to other species of fish such as kokanee salmon, rainbow and cutthroat trout. Information on resident fish species is limited. The small, self-sustaining population of kokanee are found above Alder dam. In the fall, the kokanee swim upstream to spawn in tributaries to the lake. The Nisqually River rainbow and cutthroat trout populations are also small, but are found in some of the tributary streams in the plan area. The May 1997 Draft Environmental Impact Statement contains detailed information on fish and wildlife species within the Upper Nisqually Valley.

Wildlife

The Upper Nisqually Valley is abundant with wildlife including large and small mammals, amphibians, reptiles, bird species, and invertebrates. Some species are declining in numbers and are protected through Federal or State laws. Federally endangered and threatened species that range within portions of the the plan area are the gray wolf, spotted owl, grizzly bear, bald eagle, marbled murrelet, and the peregrine falcon.

The Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has established a Priority Habitats and Species Program which designates habitats and species as *priority* and represents a proactive measure to help prevent species from becoming threatened or endangered. The category of Priority Species includes all species that are presently State or Federal endangered, threatened, sensitive, or candidate. Priority Species also include species that the WDFW believes are vulnerable to future listing and species with recreational importance that are vulnerable to impacts because of lost or degraded habitat. The WDFW designates endangered and threatened species in Washington State pursuant to RCW 77.12.020. In addition, sensitive, monitor, and candidate species are recognized by the WDFW.

The Upper Nisqually Valley contains significant diversity of species. Most species utilize several different types of habitats throughout their life cycles and often use a different habitat for breeding, feeding, and cover. There are numerous habitat types found in the plan area including caves, cliffs, riparian areas, old-growth and mature forests, wetlands, snags, talus slopes, and meadows. Bald eagles, for example, utilize saltwater areas, lakes, and rivers particularly during feeding. Breeding territories are located in predominantly coniferous, uneven-aged stands with old-growth components usually with an unobstructed view of nearby water.

Table 12 lists the Priority Wildlife Species that are likely to be found in or near the plan area. Certain species such as the grizzly bear and gray wolf may be only infrequent visitors to the plan area. Table 13 lists the Priority bird species that are likely to be found in or near the plan area.

Table 12. Potential Wildlife Species in Plan Area*			
Common Name	Primary Habitat	State Status	Federal Status
Carnivores			
Fisher	Riparian ¹ ; Nontimber ²	Candidate	Candidate
Gray Wolf	Nontimber; Coniferous ³	Endangered	Endangered
Grizzly Bear	Nontimber; Coniferous	Endangered	Threatened
Marten	Riparian; Nontimber; Coniferous	Priority	
Mink	Riparian; Nontimber	Priority	
Ungulates			
Black-Tailed Deer	Riparian; Nontimber; Coniferous	Priority	
Mountain Goat	Nontimber; Rocky Slopes	Priority	
Roosevelt/ Rocky Mt. Elk	Riparian; Nontimber; Coniferous	Priority	
Bats			
Big Brown Bat	Riparian; Nontimber; Coniferous	Priority	
California Myotis	Riparian; Nontimber; Coniferous	Priority	
Fringed Myotis	Riparian; Nontimber; Coniferous	Priority	
Keen's Myotis	Riparian; Coniferous	Priority	
Little Brown Myotis	Riparian; Nontimber; Coniferous	Priority	
Long-Eared Myotis	Riparian; Coniferous	Priority	
Long-Legged Myotis	Riparian; Nontimber; Coniferous	Priority	
Townsend's Big-Eared Bat	Nontimber; Coniferous	Candidate	Candidate
Yuma Myotis	Riparian; Coniferous	Priority	
Rodentia			
Western Gray Squirrel	Riparian; Nontimber; Coniferous	Threatened	
Western Pocket Gopher	Riparian; Nontimber	Candidate	Candidate
Other Species			
Valley Silverspot Butterfly	Nontimber	Candidate	
Johnson's Hairstreak	Coniferous	Candidate	
Oregon Spotted Frog	Riparian	Candidate	
Van Dykes Salamander	Riparian, Coniferous	Candidate	

¹ Riparian areas are rivers, streams, springs, seeps, lakes, ponds, swamps, marshes, and wetlands.

² Nontimber lands include shrub steppe, grasslands, shrub mosaic, meadows, deciduous stands, and wet meadows.

³ Coniferous areas include mixed conifer, hardwoods, subalpine, and alpine.

* Source: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Table 13. Potential Bird Species in the Plan Area*			
Common Name	Habitat Type	State Status	Federal Status
Bald Eagle	Riparian-Snags	Threatened	Threatened
Band-Tailed Pigeon	Forested	Priority	
Barrow's Goldeneye	Snags-Riparian	Priority	
Blue Grouse	Shrub-Forest	Priority	
Bufflehead	Snags-Riparian	Priority	
Common Goldeneye	Snags-Riparian	Priority	
Common Loon	Lakes	Candidate	
Golden Eagle	Mature Forest-Shrub-Forest	Candidate	
Goshawk	Mature Forest	Candidate	Candidate
Great Blue Herron	Riparian	Priority	
Hooded Merganser	Snags-Riparian	Priority	
Marbled Murrelet	Mature Forest	Threatened	Threatened
Mountain Quail	Mature Forest-Shrub-Forest	Priority	
Osprey	Snags-Riparian	Monitor	
Peregrine Falcon	Cliffs	Endangered	Endangered
Pileated Woodpeckers	Mature Forest	Candidate	
Purple Martin	Snags-Shrub-Forest	Candidate	
Ring-Necked Pheasant	Shrub-Grass	Priority	
Spotted Owl	Mature Forest	Endangered	Threatened
Vaux's Swift	Snags-Mature Forest	Candidate	
Western Bluebird	Shrub-grass	Candidate	
Wild Turkey	Shrub-Forest	Priority	
Wood Duck	Snags-Riparian	Priority	

* Source: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Many species found in the Upper Nisqually Valley are not on Federal or State listings. Coyote, red fox, mountain lion, bobcat, and black bear are common mammals that make the west side of the Cascades their home. River otter, muskrat, and beaver can be found along the Nisqually River and other animals such as shrews, voles, frogs, snakes, and birds can be found throughout the valley.

Elk

The Upper Nisqually Valley is home to elk species which are generally thought to be Rocky Mountain elk, but may also be a Roosevelt-Rocky Mountain cross. The elk are part of the valley pride of local residents. The winter range of elk often occurs at lower elevations along foothills, valley edges, and steep canyons, although actual use areas during a given year vary depending on

the severity of weather, the accessibility of various vegetation types, and the amount of disturbance. Summer range consists of well-distributed, moderate-sized patches of forage openings and cover areas. If possible, elk will avoid sites with snow accumulation in excess of 46 cm. (18"). Elk can do well in the absence of traditional conifer cover as long as the elk are not disturbed. They are very sensitive to disturbance on open winter ranges. Elk calving habitat needs water within 300 m. (1,000'), occurs on terraces or slopes less than 15 percent, and is generally found on south or west slopes. Elk are particularly susceptible to human disturbance on calving grounds during the period from May 1 to June 30. Special features of elk habitat include travel corridors and wallows. These features are characterized by screening vegetation and lack of disturbance. Elk show reduced use of habitat areas adjacent to roadways. All human disturbance can impact survival and effective reproduction during crucial times of the year.

DESCRIPTION OF DESIRED CONDITIONS

Earth Resources

Landslide and Erosion Hazard Areas

The valley contains slopes and hillsides that are susceptible to erosion and landslide hazards. Sluffing of slopes and erosion of hillsides is a concern to local residents because of the various impacts such as the loss of natural contours and topography, loss of stabilizing vegetation, increased site runoff, and increased sediment to streams and creeks. Erosion due to logging and development activities are of concern to the community. The desired condition is to minimize erosion and potential landslides and preserve the natural resources of the area. The policies of the community plan strive to ensure land use activities will not detrimentally impact hillsides and slopes. Development is to be located away from areas that might experience high erosion. Design standards provide opportunities for development to work with the natural features and contours of a site as opposed to using large amounts of cut and fill. Finally, the plan actions include coordinating with the timber companies and forest agencies to work toward future consideration of developing viewshed guidelines that could help reduce erosion from logging activities as well as provide aesthetically pleasing views from the valley.

Seismic Hazard Areas

The valley does not contain a significant number of seismic hazard areas. Landslides and volcanic hazards are a greater potential threat to residents and visitors. The plan policies do not specifically address seismic hazards. The community wants to continue to follow County standards for seismic hazards.

Volcanic Hazard Areas

Due to its proximity to Mount Rainier, most of the valley is located within a volcanic hazard area. The community recognizes the greatest threat of volcanic activities occurs along the Nisqually River where debris flows, lahars, and jokulhlaups are likely to be more common. The desired condition is to protect property, residents, and visitors from the greatest threat by zoning Case II volcanic hazards areas Rural 40 which would allow one unit per 40 acres. All of the Case II volcanic hazard areas are located along the Nisqually River. The plan policies also address designing educational brochures and informational handouts to be distributed at kiosks and any

visitor center, museum, or information center to inform visitors and residents about the risk of volcanic hazards. The community would also like to develop an evacuation plan for valley residents in the event of an emergency. Community plan policies call for the evacuation plan or emergency management plan to be in place by the year 2001.

Water Resources

Water resources are an important component of life in the Upper Nisqually Valley. The plan area contains the Nisqually River, Alder Lake, and numerous creeks and streams that feed into the Nisqually from adjacent hillsides. The Nisqually River and its tributaries are in good condition with extraordinary water quality and much vegetative cover in tact. Flooding is a concern and a relatively frequent occurrence within the valley.

There are a variety of wetlands and floodplains associated with the Nisqually River. The plan area appears to have abundant groundwater.



Lovejoy's House

The policies in the plan describe the desired condition to be an ongoing maintenance of clean and abundant water resources. Development is to occur outside of floodplains, wetlands, streams, and creeks wherever possible. The community values the conservation of the natural resource over the potential economic benefit of development. The community also recognizes that building away from wetlands, streams, and particularly floodplains helps to ensure against loss of property as well. The plan policies also ask for further research into the current condition of water resources through the completion of a study to determine today's baseline. This data can then be used to measure future impacts on the water resources and adjust community plan policies, zoning, or regulations where necessary.

Vegetation

The Upper Nisqually Valley is abundant with a variety of vegetation including old growth coniferous forest, mature/second growth coniferous forest, young coniferous forest, a mix of pasture, farmfields, clearcuts, meadows, and mixed deciduous/coniferous forest. The mix and abundance of natural vegetation contributes to the overall quality of life by contributing to diverse wildlife and excellent water quality in rivers and streams. Unlike urban areas of Puget Sound where the earth has been paved with development or other towns nestled in the Cascade foothills where mini-malls and parking lots have taken much of the natural vegetation and been replaced with manicured lawns, the Upper Nisqually Valley remains in a more wild, rustic state.

The maintenance and conservation of this environment is of upmost importance to the community. Policies in the community plan speak to the preservation of the natural vegetation and restrict the most intensive development to within four centers. All development is encouraged to retain as much natural site vegetation as possible. Design standards provide

guidelines for integrating a development with the natural vegetative features of the site. If the natural features of the valley are denuded as development occurs, then much of the rural character, privacy, and pristine surroundings that comprise that plan area will be considered lost.

Fish and Wildlife

The Upper Nisqually Valley is abundant with fish and wildlife. The large tracts of land used for forestry, single-family, or left vacant contribute to a continuous habitat for species with a large home range. The National Park and Forest Service lands also provide a safe haven for many wildlife species. The people of the Upper Nisqually Valley choose to conserve and protect the local wildlife to maintain the health of the environment and preserve the enjoyment of the harmony of living with the wildlife for future generations.

The policies and practices in the community plan promote the management of forests and forest edges to provide habitat for wildlife. Policies within the Community and Cultural Element also ask for coordination between the local community, private timber companies, and public land managers to consider developing viewshed guidelines in the future. The viewshed guidelines could indirectly contribute to furthering wildlife conservation. The viewshed protection plan could indirectly contribute to furthering wildlife conservation. Natural Environment policies address waste disposal practices and problems that are harmful to fish. Upgrading failing septic systems and proper maintenance of septic systems are addressed through educational measures. Pesticides are a concern to local citizens and plan policies address reducing the use of unsafe pesticides that can harm human health and wildlife. This reduction is intended to be accomplished through educational measures. Finally the plan asks for further research into the current condition of wildlife habitat and inventory through the completion of a study to determine today's baseline. This data can then be used to measure future impacts on the fish and wildlife and adjust community plan policies, zoning, or regulations where necessary.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT POLICIES

The policies in the Natural Environment Element are divided into five sections: Critical Areas and Natural Resources; Waste Disposal; Traffic; Air; and, Pesticides. Critical Areas and Natural Resource policies are geared toward minimizing the impacts of land use activities so that the environment is not detrimentally affected. Waste disposal addresses septic systems and the dumping of sewage that may impact water resources. Traffic addresses measures to reduce traffic congestion that adversely impacts the rural character, air quality, and water resources. Air policies address the quality of the air within the Upper Nisqually Valley and stress the importance of maintaining good air quality for the protection of vegetation, wildlife, and views. Finally, pesticides are a special topic with which the community has some history and the policies address the desire to use alternatives and education regarding the distribution of pesticides.

Within the policies the term “Critical Areas” is used. Critical Areas refers to all those items covered in Pierce County Code Title 18E, Critical Areas and includes Wetlands, Geologically Hazardous Areas, Aquifer Recharge Areas, Fish and Wildlife Habitat Areas, and Flood Hazard Areas.

Goal: **We envision a valley where healthy habitats exist for humans and wildlife; where clean air and unpolluted water resources are enhanced through responsible management of our natural resources.**

OBJECTIVES, PRINCIPLES, STANDARDS

Critical Areas and Natural Resources

The intent of the Critical Areas and Natural Resources policies is to recognize current County regulations sufficiently protect critical areas and to emphasize the importance and strive for conservation of unprotected resources such as vegetation.

NE-CA Objective 10. Minimize impacts to the natural environment caused by development and growth.

Principle 1. Emphasize the importance of protecting critical areas as part of the natural beauty that is found in the Upper Nisqually Valley.

Standards

- 10.1.1 Regulate development on or adjacent to critical areas through practical, impartial standards and procedures.
- 10.1.2 Use the information contained in the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement to identify and protect critical areas and facilitate the permitting process where possible.
- 10.1.3 Support efforts to refine or update critical areas information for the Upper Nisqually Valley.

Principle 2. Strive to ensure land use activities will not significantly impact the natural resources such as aquifers, wetlands, streams, fish and wildlife, forests, lakes, hillsides, slopes, and native plants.

Standards

- 10.2.1 Stress the importance of the natural environment and strive to maintain the longevity of natural resources through conservation and preservation.
- 10.2.2 Recognize that the community prefers to preserve the environment in its natural state to the greatest extent possible.
- 10.2.3 Development should integrate the natural features of the land and conserve as much natural vegetation as possible .
- 10.2.4 Development proposals which have significant adverse impacts to critical areas that cannot be mitigated to less than significant levels shall be denied.
- 10.2.5 Development alternatives which do not encroach upon critical areas and their associated buffers are preferred over development proposals that provide mitigation.
- 10.2.6 Manage forests and forest edges with the realization that they also provide habitat for wildlife.
- 10.2.7 Recognize that recent changes in forest practices help retain forest resources.
- 10.2.8 Educate landowners about forest management and sustainable forest practices.

- 10.2.9 Direct growth and commercial activities into planned community centers to reduce sprawl and preserve the natural environment and rural character.
- 10.3.0 Protect the elk herds and habitat that are part of the important wildlife resources of the Upper Nisqually.
- 10.30.1 Landowners are encouraged to retain a contiguous area of open space when developing and subdividing properties in the Rural 10 or Rural 40 lands for the purposes of providing elk corridors from the forest lands to the Nisqually River.

NE-CA Objective 11. Protect and conserve the environment in its natural state.

Principle 1. Improve the information currently available on the quality and state of the natural resources, critical areas, and environmentally sensitive lands in the valley.

Standards

- 11.1.1 Support the completion of baseline information and inventories about valley resources for the purposes of monitoring, scientific research, and enhancement.
- 11.1.2 Investigate a partnership to complete the water resources study and the fish and wildlife resources study by contacting possible cooperative agencies such as the Nisqually and Puyallup Tribes, Trout Unlimited, USFS, DNR, National Park Service, private timber companies, local businesses, and other environmental interest groups.

Waste Disposal

The intent of the Waste Disposal policies is to recognize that unsafe waste disposal practices are a detriment to water resources and community health. The policies are intended to educate and encourage cooperation in order to terminate unsafe waste disposal practices.

NE-WD Objective 12. Ensure clean and safe water resources.

Principle 1. Reduce the risk of unsafe waste disposal practices and septic tank failures.

Standards

- 12.1.1 Recognize that improperly functioning septic systems can have detrimental impacts to the natural environment and human health.
- 12.1.2 Educate residents and business owners on the:
 - 12.1.2.1 Importance of septic maintenance;
 - 12.1.2.2 Proper installation of a system;
 - 12.1.2.3 Proper maintenance of a system;
 - 12.1.2.4 Latest technology in septic design;
 - 12.1.2.5 Health Department regulations and enforcement;
 - 12.1.2.6 Impacts of failing systems; and
 - 12.1.2.7 How and where to obtain loans/availability of financial assistance.
- 12.1.3 Support public and private funding mechanisms for replacement or repair of failing septic systems.
- 12.1.4 Consider replacing individual systems with multi-user systems.
- 12.1.5 Work with the railroad companies to stop the dumping of sewage along tracks.

Transportation

The intent of the Transportation policies is to recognize that traffic congestion can be a detriment to the community during the peak tourist season and to strive to seek alternative modes of transporting visitors through the Valley to reduce congestion.

NE-TRAF Objective 13. Provide a variety of transportation alternatives to decrease seasonal traffic congestion, maintain the rural character, and conserve air and water resources.

Principle 1. While encouraging tourism, reduce the number of vehicle trips through the Upper Nisqually Valley.

Standards

- 13.1.1 Promote a variety of transportation options such as transit, bike trails, pedestrian facilities, and shuttle services.
- 13.1.2 Permit land use patterns which allow residents and visitors to access multiple businesses and services with one stop.
- 13.1.3 Permit facilities which support non-motorized transportation and high occupancy vehicles.
- 13.1.4 Pursue and support shuttle services to the National Park.
- 13.1.5 Encourage the National Park to encourage employees to shuttle or carpool to work during the peak season.

Air Quality

The intent of the Air Quality policies is to recognize the importance of air quality to the health of the Upper Nisqually Valley and Mount Rainier.

NE-AIR Objective 14. Recognize the importance of air quality to the health and economy of the Upper Nisqually.

Principle 1. Maintain air quality in the Upper Nisqually Valley and promote awareness of air quality issues.

Standards

- 14.1.1 Promote the importance of good air quality in order to maintain the health of citizens, the environment, the economy, and the visibility of Mount Rainier.
- 14.1.2 Educate local citizens and visitors about air resources.
- 14.1.3 Encourage local citizens not to operate woodburning stoves that were manufactured prior to 1988.
- 14.1.4 Recognize that the largest contributors to poor air quality from within the valley are woodburning stoves and outdoor burning.

Pesticides

The intent of the Pesticides policies is to recognize that pesticide use can be detrimental to the health of the community and resources and to educate businesses and landowners to best management practices for safe pesticide use.

NE-PES Objective 15. Protect the health of humans and the environment by minimizing the use of pesticides.

Principle 1. Reduce the use of pesticides and herbicides in the valley and recognize they may damage the health of humans and wildlife, impact water resources, and destroy native vegetation.

Standards

- 15.1.1 The use of pesticides within critical areas and their buffers shall not be allowed except under extreme circumstances.
- 15.1.2 Develop an education strategy on the application, storage, and impacts of and alternatives to pesticides for local residents, agencies, and businesses.
- 15.1.3 Initiate a dialogue with the Washington Department of Transportation, U.S. Forest Service, DNR, Pierce County, City of Tacoma, and private timber companies to discuss the reduction of pesticide use for the general management of their resources.

IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS FOR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ELEMENT

The following is a list of actions that should be completed in order to implement the policies contained within this plan. They are arranged according to the timeframe within which each should be completed; short, medium, or long term. Short term actions should occur immediately or within one year of plan adoption. Mid-term actions should be completed within 2-5 years. Long term actions should be completed within 5-20 years of plan adoption. The party or parties responsible for leading the effort to complete the action item is listed in parenthesis following the action. Actions are assigned to the Gateway Community

Advisory Board (GCAB), the Upper Nisqually Advisory Commission (UNAC), or Pierce County Planning and Land Services (PALS). Those actions assigned to the GCAB are completed as part of the adoption and implementation of this plan.

Short Term Actions

Amend the County's official mine hazard map in the Ashford area to more accurately reflect the area of potential danger. (PALS)

Develop a procedure in which a property owner may use the Draft Supplement EIS for the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan (December, 1998) to minimize environmental review for a development within the commercial centers. (PALS)

Request local timber companies to have public meetings with the community when applying to the state or county for a timber cut within the plan area. (UNAC)

Designate and zone portions of the valley to allow for a variety of transportation modes and facilities. (GCAB, UNAC)

Designate and zone portions of the valley to allow for a variety of transportation modes and facilities. (GCAB, UNAC)

Work with the Nisqually Indian Tribe and the Department of Fish and Wildlife to establish Elk Management Corridors and migration routes which will link the forest lands to the Nisqually River. Specific geographic areas of concern include, but are not limited to, Section 25, R5E and the East ½ of Section 30, R6E and Section 30 of R7E. (UNAC)

Mid-Term Actions

Work with the Washington State Department of Transportation to stop or reduce pesticide use along roadways. (UNAC)

Encourage the City of Tacoma to investigate cutting vegetation instead of pesticide spraying along the train right-of-way. (UNAC)

Investigate funding opportunities to assist homeowners in the upgrading of older or inefficient woodstoves. (UNAC)

Develop criteria to determine which residents qualify for assistance in replacing older stoves. (UNAC)

Publicly support development proposals which do not impact critical areas. (UNAC)

Develop a process to encourage developments which are integrated with the natural resources of the site and avoid critical areas. The process could include:

- (a) Bypassing UNAC approval;
- (b) Scheduling special or emergency UNAC meetings to facilitate process;
- (c) Demonstrating support for the project before the Hearing Examiner; or
- (d) Using the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for threshold determinations where possible. (PALS, UNAC)

Work with the U.S. Forest Service, DNR, National Park, private timber companies, and Pierce County to develop a public education program about sustainable management of natural resources including forest and agricultural lands. (UNAC)

Work with the public agencies to ensure enforcement of all provisions and mitigation measures of forest practice permitting. (UNAC)

Support land exchange proposals between private and government agencies which help preserve resource lands in the Upper Nisqually Valley. (UNAC)

Enter into a partnership with private organizations, public organizations, or local tribes to initiate a study and inventory of all water resources including streams, wetlands, groundwater, flooding areas, and water quality. (UNAC)

Enter into a partnership with private organizations, public organizations, or local tribes to initiate a study and inventory of wildlife resources which includes species, habitat location, and condition. (UNAC)

Investigate the possibility of allowing various school districts (elementary, secondary, or college) to use the Upper Nisqually Valley as a field laboratory for natural science classes or projects. (UNAC)

Establish an outreach program to educate landowners and correct failing septic and woodburning systems. (Pierce County , UNAC)

Work with the existing homeowner associations and property managers in educating absentee homeowners about the importance of maintaining septic tanks. (Pierce County , UNAC)

Develop a brochure which discusses the installation, maintenance, and operations of septic tanks and mail them to property owners. (Pierce County , UNAC)

Develop strategies to assist property owners in replacing or correcting failing systems. (Pierce County, UNAC)

Actively pursue correction of any septic tanks that are adversely impacting water resources. (Pierce County , UNAC)

Find a method of guaranteeing State Revolving Loans to ensure monies are available to those in need of septic corrections. (UNAC, Pierce County)

Review State grant opportunities and apply for funds if applicable. (UNAC, Pierce County)

Research non-profit organizations which may provide funding for environmental improvement projects. (UNAC)

Contact City, State, and Federal representatives to stop the dumping of sewage on the tracks and request holding tanks be placed on all trains passing through the valley. (UNAC)

Work with the National Park to develop transportation alternatives for Park visitors that shuttle groups from the Village Centers to the Park. (UNAC)

Develop educational materials for distribution at kiosks, local businesses, and schools about air resources and actions to improve air quality. (UNAC)

Long Term Actions

Research and identify alternatives to the use of pesticides and share the information with residents, U.S. Forest Service, DNR, and private timber companies. (UNAC)

Investigate the type and extent of spraying occurring on forest service lands and work with private timber companies and the Forest Service to find natural alternatives to pesticide spraying. (U.S. Forest Service, UNAC)

Review proposed changes to the current Critical Area Regulations and provide comments to the County through the adoption/review process. (UNAC)

As new information is obtained, UNAC may propose or recommend regulations to the County Council to protect resources in the Upper Nsiqually Valley after formal public comment and review. (UNAC)

Develop a rideshare program. (UNAC, Pierce County, Pierce Transit)

Based upon research and data resulting from the studies, increase public education or recommend regulatory changes to protect water and wildlife resources. (UNAC)

Review the completed studies and incorporate appropriate recommendations into community plan policies and regulations. (UNAC, PALS)

Establish a monitoring program to measure the impacts of development with established baseline data to determine whether community plan policies and regulations are effective. (UNAC, PALS)

Work with the State, County, National Park Service, and Puget Sound Air Pollution Control Agency to establish baseline air quality standards that can be monitored. (UNAC)

Incorporate air quality education in the public outreach forums conducted through campground programs. (UNAC, National Park)

ECONOMIC ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

While the Upper Nisqually Valley is abundant with natural resources and wildlife, it is scarce on jobs and economic opportunities for local residents. Balancing economic development and quality of life are key concerns in nearly every small town. Rural towns across the State have struggled with economic decline as their traditional resource-based industries of forestry, mining, and agriculture have declined. The Upper Nisqually Valley has been slow to diversify away from an economy dependent upon the forest industry which declined significantly in the 1940's and 1950's. However, the slow growth has helped maintain some of the community's greatest assets--the pristine river valley, forest lands, steep slopes, abundant wildlife, and large tracts of open space. The community plan strives to conserve the natural environment while improving economic opportunities for local citizens by directing business and employment opportunities into three small community centers and diversifying the economy.



Pacific Lumber Mill pond in National circa 1930s

The residents of the Upper Nisqually Valley would like to diversify the economy and provide year-round family wage jobs to local residents. The community would like to make economic improvements that build upon the unique talents and historic strengths of local residents. Enhancing the tourism industry, marketing mountaineering opportunities, capitalizing on changes in the forest products industry, and encouraging environmentally appropriate businesses are key steps to achieving the community vision. The Land Use Element supports the Economic Element by directing growth into three centers (see the Proposed Comprehensive Plan Designation map or the Proposed Zoning map in the Land Use Element): two Village Centers which serve as the main focal points of the valley; and one center oriented toward serving tourists. All three centers in the plan area are targeted for development of commercial business.

Local ownership is another important component of the community plan. Many of the successful businesses in the valley are presently owned by local citizens and families. Cottage industries, home occupations, and bed and breakfast facilities are common throughout the valley. The community would like to see this trend continue as it provides a sense of

cohesiveness among residents while promoting individualism and uniqueness. Design standards accompany the plan and do not allow corporate or franchise styles to be constructed.

The Economic Element emphasizes the community's vision by setting forth the community's goals and objectives related to economic development. The element is divided into three parts: the first part briefly describes the existing economic conditions in the valley; the second part describes the economic conditions desired by the community; and the third part sets forth the actions to be taken to achieve the community's vision. In addition, a technical appendix to this plan provides a detailed economic analysis of the valley and a feasibility analysis of the action items.

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

As with many small communities in the West, residents of the Upper Nisqually Valley are attempting to navigate the currents of change as they move from dependence on natural resource extraction to a more diverse economic base. The communities in the valley got their start as timber towns, helping to supply the raw materials for development of the western frontier. During the second half of the twentieth century, the dominance of forestry in the local economy has declined, and there has been no organized effort to fill the void left by the changing timber industry. The changing economy has culminated in higher unemployment and lower business and personal income than in other parts of Pierce County and Washington State as a whole. In 1997, Chase Economics was retained to complete an economic analysis of the Upper Nisqually community. Chase Economics completed a series of reports which are included with the source documents for this community plan.

Labor Market and Employment

Based on the 1990 census, the 1996 labor force residing in the Upper Nisqually Valley is estimated at 511 persons. The employed workforce residing within the area is estimated at 463 persons, implying an annual average unemployment rate of 9.1 percent. In comparison, Pierce County's 1996 unemployment rate was 6.2 percent. In addition, a large percentage (43.6 percent) of the employed residents commuted 30 minutes or more to work sites outside of the area. Although this high rate of commuting leads to the characterization that the Upper Nisqually is a bedroom community, these jobs bring in outside earnings (e.g., wages, salaries, and proprietors' incomes) to the area. A sizable portion of the labor force is employed outside of the area or is unemployed. This large percentage implies that there is an overall lack of job opportunities within the local area.

Employment within the Upper Nisqually Valley is largely oriented toward service sector jobs such as government, wholesale and retail trade (e.g., eating and drinking establishments, souvenir shops, art dealers), and personal services (e.g., motels and lodges, tourist cabins). In 1990, the ratio of service-producing jobs to goods-producing jobs for the valley was 7.76, meaning for every one goods-producing job in the area, there were nearly eight service-producing jobs. The statewide ratio in 1990 was 3.43 which shows proportionately far more people working in the service industry in the Upper Nisqually Valley than statewide.

Table 14 provides an illustration of employment and earnings in the valley. In 1996, average earnings for all jobs in the Upper Nisqually Valley was \$21,379. In comparison, the 1996 average earnings per job in Washington State and Pierce County was \$30,476 and \$29,975 respectively. Area workers employed by the Federal government garner the highest annual earnings followed by manufacturing (logging) and State and local government. The lowest annual earnings in the area were found in agriculture, trade, and services. For the latter two sectors, the reason for the low average earnings are due to the pronounced seasonality of employment in the valley.

While tourism-related services currently provide the majority of private-sector jobs and income in the Upper Nisqually, Federal, State and local governments account for more than half of all jobs and nearly seventy percent of wages generated within the valley. The majority of government jobs are found in the administrative headquarters for Mount Rainier National Park. The U.S. Forest Service and the Washington Department of Natural Resources also employ Valley residents.

Table 14. Industry Earnings & Employment					
Industry	Earnings (\$1,000)	% of Total Earnings	Total Persons Employed	% of Total	Average Earnings per Job
Agriculture	\$11.80	.1	3	.7	\$3,946
Forestry	\$317.20	3.7	13	3.2	\$24,403
Construction	\$290.60	3.4	15	3.7	\$19,375
Manufacturing	\$410.00	4.8	14	3.5	\$29,287
Transport, Commun. & Utilities	\$495.30	5.7	30	7.4	\$16,511
Other Retail Trade	\$353.80	4.1	35	8.7	\$10,108
Eating & Drinking	\$511.80	5.9	51	12.7	\$10,035
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	\$37.70	.4	4	1.0	\$9,429
Hotels & Lodging	\$227.60	2.6	32	7.9	\$7,111
Miscellaneous Amusements	\$47.10	.5	9	2.2	\$5,238
Other Services	\$60.80	.7	12	3.0	\$5,064
State & Local Government	\$778.70	9.0	30	7.4	\$25,958
Federal Government	\$5,073.20	58.9	155	38.5	\$32,730
Total	\$8,615.70	100.0	403	100.0	\$21,379

Notes: Earnings include both wages & salaries and proprietor income; total employment include both full and part-time wage & salaried workers and self-employed. Earnings and employment is by place of work, i.e., employment and earnings associated with establishments located within the Upper Nisqually Valley.

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Washington Employment Security Dept., Chase Economics.

Personal Income

Per capita personal income for Valley residents in 1996 was approximately \$14,773. In comparison, Pierce County per capita income for the same year was \$21,728, a difference of 47 percent. Per capita income figures indicate that Upper Nisqually households and families are less affluent compared with the State and Pierce County. Not surprisingly, the Chase Economic Analysis showed the number of residents living in poverty is substantially above that of the State and Pierce County.

Personal income consists of three major components, identified by earnings, property incomes, and transfer payments. Earnings accounted for 77.6 percent of the area's total personal income in 1996. Labor earnings accounts for a far greater share (77.6 percent) to the Valley's total income compared with Pierce County (67.8 percent) and the State (66.5 percent). Income from self-employment represent a greater share in the Valley's total (8.3 percent) than in Pierce County (6.6 percent). The remaining 22.4 percent of personal income is split between dividends, interest, rent, and transfer payments. (Transfer payments are from the government to people for reasons other than payment of labor services.) The proportion of transfer payments related to retirement is smaller when compared to the rest of Pierce County and Washington State. Consistent with the relatively lower per capita income figures and smaller percentage of retirement-related transfer payments, there is also a higher incidence of poverty in the plan area and a greater proportion of households receiving some form of public assistance than in either the County or State taken as a whole.

Business Income

After rising steadily in the late 1980's and early '90's, gross business income for firms operating in the valley began to fall in the mid '90's. In addition, taxable retail sales for valley businesses increased an average of only .23 percent, after adjusting for inflation, from 1987 through 1997, and actually finished the period 3.84 percent lower than they started. That decline occurred at a time when retail sales for all of Pierce County increased by 29 percent, and 33 percent for all of Washington State. Several factors contribute to the business income trends including: seasonal weather patterns affecting visitation to Mount Rainier; road closures and construction projects, again affecting visitation to the Park; and the tendency of many local residents, especially those who commute to work, to travel to larger communities for shopping. Given that much of the local economy now relies upon tourist-related expenditures, this is an issue facing the Upper Nisqually business community. In addition to capturing tourism dollars, valley merchants must contend with the increased tendency of local residents to travel to nearby larger communities for shopping.

Mount Rainier National Park

The grandeur of Mount Rainier is the symbol of the Cascade Mountains that is most familiar to Americans. It is located within 75 miles of major urban centers on both the east and west sides of the Cascades. Over three million people live within one hundred miles of the Park. On the basis of proximity, a significant share (44 percent) of Mount Rainier visitors come from these urban centers. In addition to the pristine areas contained in the Park, numerous recreational opportunities abound. Mountain and rock climbing, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, hiking, and camping are just a few of the recreational activities available in the Park.

Visitor Estimates

The National Park Service has the responsibility to manage Federal parks in a manner which minimizes the environmental impacts of visitors on the Park's natural environments, while still providing various recreational opportunities for the public. The National Park Service estimates 2,181,396 people visited Mount Rainier National Park in 1995. This estimate reflects an annual visitor increase of 1.8 percent since 1975. Although the annual visitation rate has increased over the past twenty years, the number of visitors to Mount Rainier has fluctuated, in some instances dramatically from year to year. Fluctuations in annual attendance are the result of a number of factors including weather, flooding damage, road closures, road construction, avalanche hazard, fuel prices, local and national economies, and government shut downs.

Until the 1990's it was a very rare for the Park to attract more than 2,000,000 visitors. However, between 1989 and 1995, visitation exceeded two million persons in six of the seven years. The National Park Service estimates 245,333 vehicles entered Mount Rainier National Park through the Nisqually entrance in 1995. This estimate reflects an annual visitor increase of 1.3 percent since 1988. This annual rate is slightly lower than experienced during the same time for the entire Park, a 2.4 percent annual increase.

The economy of the Upper Nisqually Valley is largely influenced by Mount Rainier National Park. Fluctuations in the local economy may occur due to weather conditions, road closures, or other factors that influence visitation to the Park.

The average summer visitation (June through September) to Mount Rainier National Park accounts for 70 percent of the yearly total. The peak month of visitation is in August, consisting of 24 percent of the yearly total. January and December are the months experiencing the lowest visitation, two percent each month, during the year.

The Vail Agenda

In 1991, the National Park Service celebrated its 75th anniversary. While most organizations focus on past achievements during their anniversary year, the National Park Service concentrated on improving its organization and management of its resources. The Park Service, in cooperation with institutions concerned about the management of the national park system, initiated an intensive review of its responsibilities. This effort was coordinated by a steering committee with working groups discussing specific problems and challenges.

In October 1991 at the 75th Anniversary Symposium, "Our National Parks: Challenges and Strategies for the 21st Century," held in Vail, Colorado, the working groups presented a draft report to nearly 700 experts and interested parties from inside and outside the Park Service. The draft report facilitated debate and discussion regarding the future of the national park system. The outcome of this event was a report which clarified the evolving role of the National Park Service and identified strategic objectives and specific recommendations for the organization for the 21st century. This report was published in 1992, titled, "National Parks for the 21st Century; The Vail Agenda, Report and Recommendations to the Director of the National Park Service."

The report contains a variety of recommendations related to gateway communities. Among the recommendations that impact the Upper Nisqually Valley are limiting the number and type of facilities within national park boundaries, improving transportation systems, and translating the importance of the park through coordination and planning with agencies responsible for management of lands outside the national park boundaries.

Throughout the evolution of the national park system, facilities have been constructed within park boundaries which are for the convenience of visitors and not necessarily needed to enjoy the park's resources. Examples of such facilities are gas stations and grocery stores. The Vail Agenda calls for these facilities to be provided outside park boundaries by the private sector within surrounding gateway communities. The outcome of implementing these recommendations would be a greater demand for visitor facilities and services in the communities surrounding park entrances. For the Upper Nisqually Valley, this demand would be focused on the commercial areas providing tourist services such as the communities of Ashford and Elbe.

The National Park Service also wants to encourage improved public transportation systems. Improved transportation systems would help protect natural resources and enhance the visitor experience. The Park Service would like to coordinate in-park transportation systems with public transportation systems and design innovative transportation alternatives. The result of these recommendations could be a better transportation system to the National Park through the Upper Nisqually Valley. Additional public transportation facilities, such as shuttle systems, could be located in one or more of the centers. Although the improved transportation system is intended to accommodate visitors to Mount Rainier National Park, local residents and employees of the National Park could also benefit.

In past years, managers in the National Park Service have focused their attention on the activities within the Park Service's boundaries. This was in part due to the fact that much of the land surrounding the parks was undeveloped. In recent years, as development began to occur outside national park boundaries, park managers have observed adverse impacts to park resources. These impacts may affect components of the environment ranging from air and water quality to cultural landscapes. Participants in the Symposium believed the Park Service must work closer with the communities outside their boundaries. As a result, various recommendations contained in the Vail Agenda address how park managers can deal with their neighbors and their activities. The result of these recommendations should be a greater presence of National Park Service representatives in surrounding communities. Both the National Park Service and the residents should have a

better understanding of issues and limitations. Working closer with the surrounding communities should also bridge communication better than what has been experienced in previous years.

Gifford Pinchot National Forest

The U.S. Forest Service is responsible for the lands within the Gifford Pinchot National Forest. The Forest Service is responsible for managing the forest for long-term timber production while providing recreational and natural opportunities for public enjoyment. The forest is managed through the Land and Resource Management Plan of 1990, as amended, which addresses timber harvest and recreational activities.

Many of the lands suitable for timber production in the Forest have been extensively harvested in the past. The forest plan identifies 2,284 acres of the Pierce County portion of the Forest as being suitable for timber production.

Although estimates for existing recreational usage are not available, day visitors are taking advantage of the roads and trails for hiking and biking. All Forest Service roads are designated as secondary forest routes. Various trailheads are located off the main route accessing the forest from the Nisqually Valley floor, Forest Road 59. The trails within the National Forest lie mostly within the Glacier View Wilderness Area.

Elbe Hills State Forest

The Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages approximately 23,000 acres of land as the Elbe Hills State Forest. Approximately 20,774 acres of the Forest lies within the Plan Area. The Elbe Hills State Forest is part of an original 1889 land grant from the federal government.

Forest Condition/Character

An inventory of the age of timber stands in the Elbe Hills State Forest was issued in July 1990 as part of a draft Nisqually Resource Management Plan prepared by the DNR. The management plan was never finalized. The 1990 inventory identified, northeast of Elbe, scattered stands of less than 1,800 acres in overall area with an origin in the 1920's or earlier. The 1990 inventory identified that the overwhelming majority of timber has origins in the 1930's and 1940's. In addition, the inventory identified scattered stands with origins in the 1950's, 1960's, 1970's, and 1980's.

Recreation Use

In addition to its role as a timber producer, the Elbe Hills State Forest plays a significant role in providing recreation opportunities. The forest contains two large trail systems for different types of recreation users. The Elbe Hills Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Trail System located off 9 Road, west of Busywild Creek, is used by mountain bike, motorcycle, and four-wheel drive vehicle enthusiasts. The Sahara Creek/Nicholson Horse Trail System located on the hillsides and ridges above the Nisqually River Valley between Elbe and Ashford is used by horseback and hiking enthusiasts. In addition to the designated trail systems, there are numerous roads open to the public for exploration of the forest.

DESCRIPTION OF DESIRED CONDITIONS

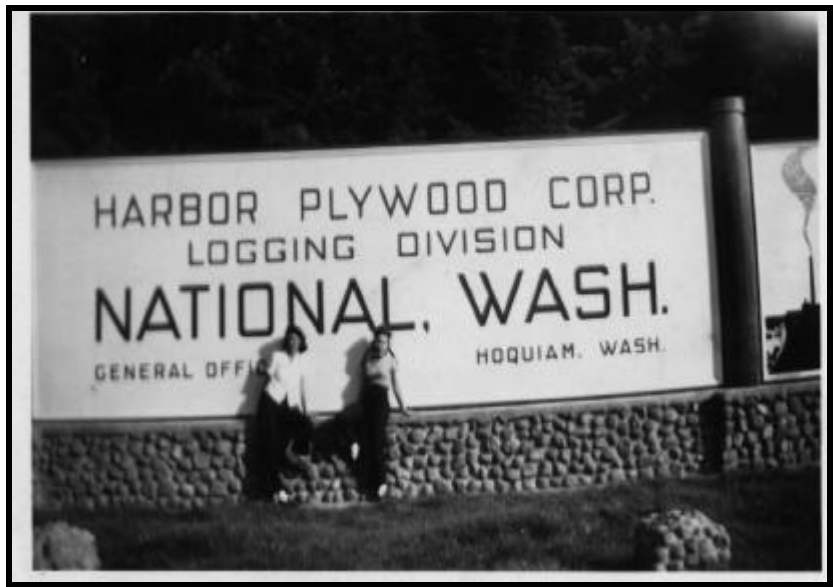
Residents of the Upper Nisqually Valley would like to improve the economy and job opportunities available closer to home. However, there is a certain reluctance in the community to accept growth and change. There is an underlying, and quite valid fear of losing some of the qualities that make life in the Upper Nisqually unique. All of the elements of the community plan work together to try to balance these sometimes opposing goals of improving the economy while retaining a rural character and pristine natural resources. Growth is directed into three designated centers and is not allowed to spread haphazardly throughout the valley. These centers are targeted for development of commercial business. The rest of the valley is zoned into large tracts of land in order to continue the rural landscape. Within the centers, shopping and service opportunities would be provided not only for tourists, but local citizens as well, thus reducing the need for local residents to travel to larger communities outside of the valley to do their everyday shopping.

The economic strategies build upon the traditional strengths and talents of the local community by: encouraging local ownership, encouraging home occupations and cottage industries, growing the tourism, mountaineering, and forestry sectors of the economy.

Tourism

Residents of the Upper Nisqually Valley would like to change the seasonal nature of their economy by strengthening and lengthening the tourist season to better capture the dollars otherwise bypassing the communities. Residents would like to see the early spring and late fall become important times in the tourist trade, allowing local business owners to realize profits through more of the year. The plan policies contain a myriad of strategies to achieve the desired condition of improving and lengthening the tourist season. These strategies focus on building upon the outdoor recreational opportunities, artistic skills of local residents, history of the region, and natural resources of the valley. Expanding upon these opportunities will be accomplished through improved marketing (regionally and nationally), zoning areas for opportunities to occur (such as allowing for rental of recreational equipment or micro-breweries within centers), building infrastructure (such as connections between the valley and mountain biking opportunities or a museum for historical information), organizing annual events (such as an arts festival), and coordinating the local business community with other regional and national networks (coordination with the Park Service, Visitor Convention Bureau, etc.).

The tourist season may extend into the fall, winter, and spring seasons if marketing of existing amenities is properly expanded. The valley has ample access to winter sports and recreational opportunities such as cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling. Further, there are ample opportunities for relaxing in the fresh mountain rain at one of the many bed and breakfast facilities with jacuzzi or spa facilities.



National Harbor Plywood Corp. circa 1930s

Mountaineering

The Upper Nisqually Valley is in a prime location for those interested in learning or furthering their mountaineering skills. The proximity to Mt. Rainier, the Cascade Range, Mt. Adams, Mt. St. Helens, and the Olympic Range allows numerous opportunities for mountaineering challenges. The desired condition is to build upon this opportunity by promoting mountaineering opportunities, advertising the local guide schools, and coordinating with the National Park to offer more mountaineering experiences. The area's heritage and local expertise in mountaineering can be developed as a significant portion of the local economy, as well as provide a unifying theme for economic development efforts. Plan policies also promote and encourage the manufacturing of mountaineering equipment, outdoor clothing, or other spin-off industries.

Forestry

The desired condition is to maximize timber dollars with sustainable forestry and to diversify forestry employment from the cutting of raw timber to promoting other forest-related activities. Plan policies allow for the continuation of timber harvesting but, recognize that diversification of the forest industry is likely to have stable long-term economic results. The community plan promotes offering the valley for ecosystem, wildlife, and forest research to universities, scientists, and Washington State. Federal, State, and private timber companies are also encouraged to provide management or administrative offices within the community. Finally, forest-related industries such as cabinet-making, log cabins, or other hand-crafted wood products are encouraged and should be actively marketed. Adding value to local timber products and developing the specialty forest products industry would allow valley residents to enter increasingly profitable niche markets.

The National Park and Other Public Lands

A sustainable economy and community development will best be achieved through improved coordination and cooperation with the public agencies and private interests that control large land

holdings in the valley and influence the tourist industry. Cooperation and coordination should also occur between communities that are located at the base of Mount Rainier. The desired condition is to develop a working partnership between the community, other public agencies, and private timber companies. An improved relationship will result in better information and resource sharing to further the interests of the local community and the public land administrators. For example, information such as visitor data and traffic counts should be shared to allow local businesses and residents to better plan and provide for the needs of visitors. Easily accessed up-to-the-hour information regarding Park closures and road conditions should also be disseminated throughout the community. Furthermore, the public land administration and private timber companies have resources that can benefit the community. These resources can include knowledge, skills, and monies.

The community also needs to begin to take a more active role in participating in and influencing the decisions regarding the public lands. Public land representatives and local citizens need to interact and discuss proposed changes in the management of the public lands that affect the community. The community also needs to be clear about stating its position and goals. If the community wants the Park Service to consider constructing an information center in the valley, it needs to be clearly stated. Finally, the local citizens should strive to improve the relationship with the Park Service by providing support for the public lands through such activities as volunteering.

ECONOMIC POLICIES

The policies of the Economic Element address the desires of the community to diversify the economy and continue to allow small scale, family-owned businesses. The policies and regulations build upon the traditional strengths of the Valley in forestry and mountaineering; diversify the economy by encouraging other non-tourism commercial activities; and strengthen tourism and lengthen the tourist season to better capture the dollars otherwise bypassing the communities.

The policies are divided into three main headings that support the overall goal: Tourism, Mountaineering, and Forestry; Industry; and, Coordination. The policies are simply organized in this fashion to assist the reader and are not intended to draw distinctions between policy types.

Goal: **We envision a healthy economy that recognizes our unique talents and builds on our historic strengths. We envision a valley economy that is based on environmentally sound businesses and industry which provides year-round family wage jobs while encouraging local ownership.**

OBJECTIVES, PRINCIPLES, STANDARDS

Tourism, Mountaineering, And Forestry

The intent of the Tourism, Mountaineering, and Forestry policies is to improve and diversify the economy through a myriad of strategies which build upon the outdoor recreational opportunities, artistic skills of local residents, history of the region, and natural resources of the valley.

EE-TMF Objective 16. Strengthen the economy by building upon the traditional strengths of the valley in tourism, mountaineering, and forestry.

Principle 1. Strengthen and extend the tourist season into spring, winter and fall by capitalizing on outdoor recreational, artistic, heritage, eco-tourism and natural opportunities of the Valley.

Standards

- 16.1.1 Improve the local economy by marketing tourist opportunities in the valley.
- 16.1.2 Promote arts related business and activity.
- 16.1.3 Coordinate an organized network of local artists that can support and market the wares of the artistic community.

- 16.1.4 Market the recreation opportunities in the valley such as snowmobiling, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, hiking, and fishing.
- 16.1.5 Display the historic and cultural heritage of the community.
- 16.1.6 Encourage visitors to Mount Rainier to stop at local retail and service establishments in the valley by designing pedestrian oriented centers that entice people to stop.
- 16.1.7 Encourage ecotourism through tours of the National Forests, National Park, Nisqually River, and natural resource amenities in the valley.
- 16.1.8 Encourage a diversified tourist economy with small scale industries such as wineries, breweries, or manufacturing of outdoor mountaineering gear.
- 16.1.9 Work closely with the Tacoma-Pierce County Visitor & Convention Bureau and the Washington State Division of Tourism to coordinate, publish, and distribute information. (UNAC, business association)
- 16.1.10 Allow wineries and breweries in centers in the zoning code. (GCAB, UNAC)
- 16.1.11 Develop an annual festival in the Valley that could consist of a sport competition, or local Washington products, or theater plays. (UNAC)
- 16.1.12 Target each of the Rural Gateway Communities for development of commercial business to serve visitors.

Arts

- 16.1.13 Work with public and private agencies to market the wares of local artists. (UNAC)
- 16.1.14 Allow for a centralized retail sales location for local arts (possible business incubator) within Village Centers. (UNAC)

Recreation

- 16.1.15 Work with public land representatives to market the recreation opportunities particularly for winter activities such as snowmobiling, mountain biking, cross-country skiing. (UNAC, U.S. Forest Service, DNR)
- 16.1.16 Allow for sporting goods stores and sales/rental of outdoor gear within centers. (UNAC, PALS)
- 16.1.17 Encourage local businesses to coordinate and design package deals for lodging/recreation activities. (UNAC, business association)
- 16.1.18 Allow for U-Cut Christmas tree farms throughout the rural lands in the Upper Nisqually. (GCAB, UNAC, PALS)

Principle 2. Promote the Upper Nisqually Valley as a premier destination for mountaineering

Standards

- 16.2.1 Recognize that Mount Rainier provides an ideal location for developing and promoting mountaineering guide schools.
- 16.2.2 Promote year-round mountaineering opportunities, including diversification of permitted outfitted guide services.
- 16.2.3 Work closely with the National Park to open guide service opportunities to more than one provider a year.
- 16.2.4 Promote interpretation and education of Rainier mountaineering.
- 16.2.5 Encourage manufacturing of associated mountaineering equipment.

Principle 3. Maximize timber dollars with sustainable forestry and diversify forestry employment from the cutting of raw timber to promoting other forest-related activities.

Standards

- 16.3.1 Support and promote opportunities to make the valley a place where forest research can occur.
- 16.3.2 Encourage Federal, State, and private timber companies to provide offices within the community so foresters and their management can be located in the valley.

- 16.3.3 Support the wholesale and retail sale of forest products.
- 16.3.4 Encourage the DNR, U.S. Forest Service, and private timber companies to contract with valley operators when harvesting timber in the valley.
- 16.3.5 Promote forest industry employment by encouraging active management of sustainable forest lands.

Industry

The intent of the Industry policies is to diversify the economy and provide year-round family wage job opportunities for local citizens.

EE-IND Objective 17. Change the seasonal nature of the economy and provide year-round jobs to local residents.

Principle 1. Encourage diversification of the local economy.

Standards

- 17.1.1 Avoidance of impacts through preservation of critical areas shall take priority over mitigation.
- 17.1.2 Encourage environmentally friendly businesses that have little or no impact on the environment.
- 17.1.3 Environmentally friendly cottage industries and home occupations are strongly encouraged as a means of employment throughout the valley.
- 17.1.4 Diversify the economy through eco-tourism opportunities unique to the Upper Nisqually Valley.

Coordination

The intent of the Coordination policies is to improve the relationship of the local community with public land managers and agencies which have a role in the Upper Nisqually Valley.

EE-CRD Objective 18. Develop the relationship between the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Transportation, Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development, Visitor Convention Bureau, private timber companies, and the community to promote the economic vitality and environmental preservation of the community.

Principle 1. Create a working partnership with public land representatives, private timber companies, and the community.

Standards

- 18.1.1 Foster a relationship between the National Park Service and the community that strengthens and encourages communication and cooperation.
- 18.1.2 Strengthen coordination of the local business community with the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, and Department of Natural Resources.
- 18.1.3 Develop partnerships with the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Department of Natural Resources, and private timber companies to fund improvements within the communities or place seed money into the community and lend technical assistance.
- 18.1.4 Encourage business operators and residents of the Upper Nisqually Valley to take a more active role in participating in and influencing decisions made by the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Department of Natural Resources, and timber companies.
- 18.1.5 Encourage the DNR to develop a fee-based recreation program for forest recreation activities such as tours, guided activities, trail uses, etc.
- 18.1.6 Encourage the Mount Rainier concessionaires to move some or all facilities into designated centers.

IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS FOR ECONOMIC ELEMENT

The following is a list of actions that should be completed in order to implement the policies contained within this plan. They are arranged according to the timeframe within which each should be completed; short, medium, or long term. Short term actions should occur immediately or within one year of plan adoption. Mid-term actions should be completed within 2-5 years. Long term actions should be completed within 5-20 years of plan adoption. The party or parties responsible for leading the effort to complete the action item is listed in parenthesis following the action. Actions are assigned to the Gateway Community Advisory Board (GCAB), the Upper Nisqually Advisory Commission (UNAC), the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Mount Rainier National Park, or Pierce County Planning and Land Services (PALS). The local business association is also listed as they are recognized as a major influence within the Upper Nisqually Valley. Those actions assigned to the GCAB are completed as part of the adoption and implementation of this plan.

Short Term Actions

Establish a subcommittee of the UNAC to work with the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Department of Natural Resource, Department of Transportation, Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development, Visitor Convention Bureau and private timber companies.

- The subcommittee should set a schedule for discussing:
 - (a) Specific actions the community can participate in to aid the public lands; and
 - (b) Specific actions on behalf of the public lands and large timber companies that will market the recreation or environmental aspects.
- The subcommittee should set a method for communicating and coordinating with the UNAC, business association, and the community so that all can be involved. (UNAC)

Advertise valley opportunities by:

- (a) Developing brochures that advertise valley attractions and are distributed in the valley and throughout Puget Sound;
- (b) Attending trade shows to market valley attractions such as snowmobile shows, mountain bike shows, etc;
- (c) Developing a web page that tells of valley amenities and links to other public land web pages; and,
- (d) Developing an advertising slogan for the valley. (UNAC, business association)

Conduct a market analysis to determine which businesses are most likely to be successful in the valley. (UNAC, business association, Pierce County)

Mid-Term Actions

Develop an interpretive forest tour that shuttles visitors through wild and managed forests. (UNAC, U.S. Forest Service, DNR)

Advertise the opportunity to learn mountaineering in one of the world's best locations and from some of the world's best mountain guides. (UNAC, business association)

Pursue dedication of areas in the valley for forest research opportunities with universities, public forest lands, and private timber companies. (UNAC)

Work with the Washington State Division of Tourism to develop a "mountain loop drive" that could include Mount Adams, Mount St. Helens, and Mount Rainier. (UNAC, PALS)

Organize an annual or bi-annual arts festival in the valley. (UNAC, Pierce County)

Coordinate with public land representatives regarding proposed changes in the management of public lands in decisions that affect the community. (UNAC)

Actively pursue public and private funding opportunities to support businesses and capital facility improvements:

- (a) Pursue grants to help small businesses and to recruit new businesses;
- (b) Pursue grants to assist in redevelopment of centers to comply with themes; and
- (c) Work to keep hotel/motel taxes in the community for community improvements. (UNAC, Pierce County)

Market the valley for cottage industries and home occupations (including home-based computer operators). (UNAC, business association)

Investigate the establishment of a local business incubator to provide space for start-up industries consistent with the rural policies of the Comprehensive Plan. (UNAC, business association, Pierce County)

Develop performance standards for small scale industry which prevent the degradation of the natural environment (standards may relate to air or noise pollution). (UNAC, Pierce County)

Encourage the establishment of a master craftsmen's guild that could market handcrafted wood products that use local hardwoods. The guild may offer apprenticeships and/or tours of the craftsman at work. (UNAC, business association)

Place advertisements in outdoor/backpacking/environmental magazines which inform readers that the valley is looking for strong, environmentally friendly businesses to locate in the valley. (UNAC, DNR, business association)

Create maps/brochures illustrating biking, hiking, skiing, horse trails -- distribute at sporting goods stores throughout Puget Sound. (UNAC, business association, U.S. Forest Service, DNR)

Encourage the Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Forest Service, and private timber companies to develop a policy for soliciting bids from valley operators. (UNAC)

Coordinate with the National Park so that information such as visitor data and traffic counts could be shared with the community to allow local businesses and residents to better plan and provide for the needs of visitors and local citizens. Information such as easy access to up-to-the-hour information regarding Park closures and road conditions should be disseminated throughout the community. (UNAC, business association, National Park)

Work in partnership with Mount Rainier National Park to encourage economic sustainability in the community by:

- (a) Encouraging development of private sector visitor services so as to improve competition, increase choices for visitors, and minimize the need for in-park facilities;
- (b) Providing camping facilities within the community based on needs assessment;
- (c) Marketing appropriate winter use activities within the park to encourage more off-season use;
- (d) Encouraging more weekday and off-season use to help distribute visitation "loading" away from peak, overcrowded summer weekend days;
- (e) Enhancing park interpretative capabilities within the "gateway community"; and
- (f) Becoming a transportation, housing, and food services hub to support park visitation and use. (UNAC, PALS, National Park)

Long Term Actions

Establish linkages with technical/vocational colleges for training of employees. (UNAC, business community)

Establish an art exchange program with one of the urban areas. (UNAC)

INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Infrastructure and Services Element articulates the need for facilities and services that will implement the visions and goals of the community plan. Facilities and services are collectively considered “infrastructure” and may include public and/or privately funded projects. The adoption of policy statements regarding infrastructure provides direction to investors and decision-makers about what investments are desired and needed by the community.



Alder Lake Park

The policies of the Infrastructure and Services Element call for facilities and services that meet the needs of the local community (such as developing a community park or museum) while accommodating the needs of tourists without impacting the local citizens. The element also prioritizes the projects and suggests potential funding sources to complete the projects.

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT CONDITIONS

The Upper Nisqually Valley is rural and sparsely populated. Urban facilities and services such as bus services, libraries, parks, public restrooms, or sewer service are not available. However, in the summertime when more than ½ million tourists move through the area, some of these facilities or services would be helpful to defray the impact. The community plan recognizes the need for improved infrastructure. Some of the proposed improvements meet the needs of tourists while mitigating impacts to local residents and other proposed improvements are intended to strictly serve the local community. The most immediate need, and a top priority within the community plan, is for public restrooms. This need becomes ever more pressing as the Park celebrates its centennial in 1999.

Sewer and Wastewater Treatment

Two sewage treatment plants exist within the plan area: the Elbe wastewater treatment plant and the Tahoma Woods sewage treatment plant. The plant at Elbe is operated by the Elbe Water and Sewer District and services the community of Elbe. The Tahoma Woods plant is operated by Mount Rainier National Park and serves only the Tahoma Woods administration and housing facilities.

The Elbe treatment plant utilizes a mound system with sand filter providing secondary treatment. The plant has a treatment capacity of 29,000 gallons per day and presently serves approximately 35 households. There is a remaining treatment capacity for approximately 45 additional households. The Tahoma Woods treatment plant provides tertiary treatment which involves chlorination and percolation into the ground. The treatment plant has a permitted capacity of nine to ten thousand gallons per day and is currently operating at four to five thousand gallons per day.

Domestic Water Systems

Domestic water within the plan area is provided by individual on-site wells and six community water systems. The community water systems are the Ashford Water District, Elbe Water and Sewer District, Tahoma Woods water system, Holiday Hills water system, Nisqually Park Water Company, and the Alpine Village water system (see Domestic Water Systems Map). The largest of these systems is the Ashford Water District which is licensed for 500 connections with only 179 of those connections being utilized. Although the valley has six water systems, the conditions of the systems and their ability to expand is questionable. Tahoma Woods is currently operating at 40-50 percent capacity, however, it is unlikely that water service will be provided to adjacent landowners, as excess capacity is being reserved for future expansion of National Park facilities on the site. Four of the remaining five community water systems have a combined total of 385 licensed connections with 76 of those connections still available.

Transportation

Roads and Highways

The Upper Nisqually Valley is accessed through a variety of regional State highways and county arterials that provide access to and from the I-5 corridor. In Pierce County, SR-7 and SR-161 provide north/south access to Puyallup and Tacoma, while SR-702 provides east/west access to 507/510 leading to the I-5 corridor. Ashford and Elbe are both located along SR- 706, which begins in Elbe and terminates at the entrance of the National Park. Access to the Upper Nisqually community through Lewis County is via SR-508, US 12 and SR-7. SR-508 extends from I-5 south of Chehalis eastward to Morton. US 12 begins at I-5, south of Chehalis and SR-508, through Morton where it intersects with SR-7 before continuing eastward over the Cascades to eastern Washington.

There are few County roads in the plan area due to the rural nature of the community. The County roads with the highest traffic volumes are Alder Cutoff Road, Kernahan Road, and Mt. Tahoma Canyon Road. Many of the County roads are narrow and have poor visibility. Drivers often cannot see far enough at intersections because of hills, curves, or brush overgrowth. Some of the roadways do not cross at 90 degree angles, which also reduces intersection visibility. Another concern is the condition of the roadway pavement.

Congestion is an important transportation issue in the Upper Nisqually Valley. While southern Pierce County does not experience a significant amount of commuter traffic, it does have high volumes of recreational travel, which clogs the roadways and creates long traffic lines and parking

problems. The recreation related congestion is seasonal, occurring in the warm summer months. Visitors and tourists come to the South County area to boat on numerous lakes, tour Mount Rainier National Park, or to participate in any of a number of other activities, such as horseback riding, bicycling, or using recreational vehicles (four-wheeling).

Mount Rainier National Park has three main entrance stations located at Nisqually (SR-706), Stevens Canyon (SR-123), and the White River (SR-410). About 50 percent of the vehicle entries occur at Nisqually while Stevens Canyon and the White River each accommodate 25 percent (Final Report Transportation Feasibility Study, Mt. Rainier National Park, May 1995). The road from Nisqually entrance to Paradise is open year round.

The primary local routes in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest are Forest Roads 59, 5900037, and 5900079. Forest Service Road 59 extends north of SR-706 east of Ashford. It provides access into the Gifford Pinchot Forest and from it extends Forest Service roads 037 and 079. These roads are used for access to forest lands and recreational opportunities, such as hiking and trails.

The Washington Department of Natural Resources manages the Elbe Hills State Forest located immediately north of SR-706 between the areas of Elbe and Ashford and the Tahoma State Forest located south of SR-706 in the vicinity of Ashford. Elbe Hills has two entrances, Stoner Road which is open year-round, and the Elbe entrance which is open to motorized vehicles for the hunting season. The main roads in the Elbe Hills Forest are Roads 8, 9, and 800 which are open year-round and roads 5, 57, 7, 923, and 92 which are open seasonally. Tahoma State Forest has one entrance which is open year-round. The main roads in the Tahoma Forest are 1, 2, and 23 which are open in varying parts of the year.

Rail Services

Railroad tracks are in place from the Port of Tacoma to National, with a branch line that extends through Mineral to Morton in Lewis County. Mount Rainier Scenic Railroad, which is funded by Washington Forest Industry Museum, operates an excursion train on a part of the line between Elbe and Mineral. In addition, the Mount Rainier Dining Company operates a dinner train over this same line segment extending to Morton.

The City of Tacoma owns the railroad tracks from near Freighthouse Square in Tacoma to Ashford and is interested in starting a "Train to the Mountain" passenger rail service. This train could bring tourists to the Upper Nisqually and Park areas. Shuttles would likely be established to transport people from place to place once in the Upper Nisqually area. The train trip from Tacoma to the Upper Nisqually would be completed in approximately 1.5 to 2 hours. A layover in the valley of at least three hours would be likely. Therefore, a round trip to the mountain would total approximately seven hours or a trip from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Significant capital investments are necessary to complete the Train to the Mountain concept. Currently the rail line is a single track branch line with numerous curves and steep grades. The track would need to be brought to appropriate standards that would allow for freight and passenger movement. Needed improvements include tie replacement, track improvement,

resurfacing and lining of track, bridge rehabilitation, slope stabilization, ditch and culvert improvements, automatic crossing protections, and signage for public safety.

Public Airports

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) identifies no airports in the plan area. The closest facility is the Eatonville Airport, also known as Swanson Field, located east of Eatonville adjacent to the city limits and approximately six nautical miles (seven miles) north of Elbe. The airport, at an elevation of 850 feet, has a 3,000 foot long by 36 foot wide paved, lighted runway that is attended continuously. It is within the FAA's Seattle Center airspace and can accommodate prop and turboprop airplanes, but not jets. There are two other public airfields in the vicinity. Strom Field in Morton and an airfield in Packwood can accommodate prop airplanes only.

Law Enforcement and Fire Protection

Pierce County Sheriff

The Pierce County Sheriff's Department provides police protection to the plan area. The Department's Mountain Detachment office is located north of Eatonville at the junction of SR-161 and the Eatonville Cutoff, and serves a population of 30,000 in an area bounded by Fort Lewis, the Nisqually River, Mount Rainier National Park, the Puyallup River, and 224th Street South. The detachment has a staff of one sergeant and ten deputies, with no clerical support. A minimum of two deputies are on duty between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 3:00 a.m. If necessary, two mountain detachment deputies who reside in the plan area may be called in to provide additional support when necessary during off-duty hours.

Washington State Patrol

The plan area is within the Washington State Patrol's Zone 8. This zone serves all of Pierce County east of I-5. State troopers assigned to Zone 8 are dispatched from an office at 2502 112th Street E. There are two detachments on duty at all times, with one trooper in each detachment assigned to a region which includes the plan area.

Fire Protection

The plan area is served by Pierce County Fire District No. 23. The District has two fire stations: Station One is on SR-706 on the west side of Ashford, and Station Two is at 18109 541st Street in Elbe. Currently, the average response time is 10 minutes, 13 seconds. Equipment at Station One in Ashford includes:

- 1 1995 ambulance with a 1983 patient compartment (Basic Life Support part time Adv. Life Support)
- 1 1985 pumper (1,250 gallons-per-minute (GPM) with 750 gallon tank)
- 1 1994 tender (1,500 gallon capacity manufactured in 1975)
- 1 1988 3/4 ton utility rescue truck (carries pump and 75 gallon tank for brush fires in the summer time)
- 1 1973 Snow Cat (used for winter rescues)
- 1 trailered breathing air compressor and 5 KW generator

Equipment at Station Two in Elbe includes:

- 1 1988 ambulance (Basic Life Support
- 1 1979 pumper (1,000 gallons-per-minute (GPM)) with 750 gallon tank
- 1 1992 tender (1,500 gallon capacity manufactured in 1975)
- 1 1986 4x4, 1 ton brush truck with 240 gallon tank and pump

Assigned 24 hour response vehicles:

- 1993 4X4 sport utility command vehicle (Fire Chief)
- 1986 1-1/4T 4X4 brush-utility flatbed (Assistant Chief)

The combined staff at the two fire stations include:

- 1 full-time paid fire chief
- 1 assistant volunteer chief
- 1 part-time paid secretary
- 5 volunteer lieutenants
- 1 part-time, paid maintenance person (2 days a week) responds as a volunteer on calls
- 1 volunteer paramedic
- 10 volunteer firefighter emergency medical technicians (EMT's)
- 5 volunteer first responders
- 3 volunteer firefighters
- 3 volunteer support members (traffic control, rehab, support functions)

Both stations have restroom and kitchen facilities. Both stations are frequently used as community meeting facilities. Station One at Ashford is also used as a base for search and rescues and natural disasters by the Pierce County Sheriffs office, Lewis County Sheriffs office, DNR and other agencies as needed. Both stations are equipped with emergency power, blankets, and emergency first aid supplies, as well as two-way VHF radio, CB communications and HAM radio antennas.

Public Schools

The plan area is served by Eatonville School District No. 404. The District includes three elementary schools, a middle school, and a high school, with a total capacity of 1,819 students. Columbia Crest Elementary School is located between Elbe and Ashford. From 1990 to 1996, enrollment at the school has ranged from a low of 207 students to a high of 228 students. As of September 1998, enrollment at the school is 212 students.

Parks and Recreational Areas

There are numerous parks and recreational areas within the Upper Nisqually Valley. Most of these facilities are built to attract visitors on a regional, State, or national basis. Park and recreational areas within the plan area include:

Alder Lake Park

The 148-acre Alder Lake Park is located off State Highway 7 near Alder Dam, and is owned and maintained by the City of Tacoma. The park is open throughout the year and includes numerous amenities such as boat ramps and docks, campgrounds, an RV dump station, picnic areas, swimming beaches and restrooms.

Sunny Beach Point Day-Use Park

The 9-acre Sunny Beach Point is a day-use park located off of State Highway 7 at the Eatonville Cut-off Road, and is owned and maintained by the City of Tacoma. Facilities include a swim beach, sunning area, water ski dock and area, picnic shelter, 20 picnic sites with tables and grills, restrooms, and parking for 65 vehicles. The park operates only in summer.

Rocky Point Day-Use Park

Rocky Point is a small day-use park located on the north shore of Alder Lake, off State Highway 7, west of Elbe, owned and maintained by the City of Tacoma. The park operates only in summer.

Elbe Hills State Forest

Elbe Hills State Forest is owned and managed as timber and recreational resource area by the State Department of Natural Resources. Several recreational facilities are located within the state forest including Sahara Creek Campground, Sahara Creek/Nicholson Horse and Hiking Trail System, and the Elbe Hills Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Campground.

Tahoma State Forest

Tahoma State Forest is owned and managed as a timber and recreational resource area by Washington State Department of Natural Resources. Tahoma State Forest is located south of Ashford, outside of the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan area. It is accessible only through the National entrance off the State Highway 706.

Mount Tahoma Ski Trails

The ski trails system consists of 100 miles of cross country skiing on snow covered logging roads. The trail system is a partly connected system of ski trails and huts located in Elbe Hills State Forest, Tahoma State Forest land, privately owned Champion Company timberland, Mt. Baker Snoqualmie National Forest Land, and Mt. Rainier National Park.

Mt. Baker Snoqualmie National Forest

A part of the Mount Tahoma Ski Trails is located in Mt. Baker Snoqualmie National Forest. A snowpark and trailhead located near Copper Creek off Road 453 provide access to the Mount Tahoma Ski Trails.

Mt. Rainier National Park

Visitor centers, hiking trails, lodging, mountain climbing, auto camping, back country camping, and picnic areas are located throughout the Mt. Rainier National Park. The following summarizes major recreational facilities within the Park:

- Visitor centers are located at Longmire, Paradise, Ohanapecosh, and Sunrise.
- There are approximately 240 miles of hiking trails which are generally accessible from June or early July until early October. Nearly 100 miles of park trails are open to equestrian use.
- There are 11 different picnic areas with a total of approximately 320 tables within the Park in addition to 211 roadside tables and one picnic shelter scattered around the Park.
- There are two hotels located within the Park. The hotels are managed by Mount Rainier Guest Services. National Park Inn at Longmire has 25 rooms, a full service restaurant, and gift shop. Six rooms are fully accessible for individuals with disabilities. Paradise Inn at Paradise has 126 rooms, full service restaurant and lounge, gift shop, and snack bar.

Five automobile campgrounds provide a total of approximately 580 sites. They are in five locations within the Park:

- Sunshine Point (SW entrance): 18 individual sites, open year round, approximately 0.5 mile from the Nisqually entrance.
- Cougar Rock (SW entrance): 200 individual sites (including 60 pull-through sites) and 5 group sites, open late May to mid-October, approximately 7.25 miles from the Nisqually entrance.
- Ohanapecosh (SE entrance): 205 individual sites, open late May to mid-October, approximately 1.25 miles from the Stevens Canyon entrance.
- White River (NE entrance): 117 individual sites, open late June to late September, approximately 6 miles from the White River entrance.
- Ipsut Creek (NW corner): 29 individual sites and 2 group sites, open year-round (weather permitting), approximately 4.5 miles from the Carbon River entrance.

Pierce County Library System

The plan area is served by the Pierce County Library System. The Eatonville branch library is the closest Pierce County library to the plan area. The library has a total floor space of 4,200 square feet, 2.6 full-time library staff, and approximately 14,000 catalogued books in its collection. The total collection size is 26,503. The library is open 28 hours per week. In addition, a bookmobile travels to Elbe and Ashford on one weekday and on Saturday.

Electricity

Electric power is supplied to the plan area from two sources. The Lewis County Public Utility District (PUD) supplies electric power to the area outside of the Alder area, generally from Elbe to Mt. Rainier National Park along the SR-706 corridor. The other is the Alder Mutual Light Company supplying electric power to the Alder area.

The Lewis County PUD distribution line for the district's Elbe substation has a maximum capacity of 5 megawatts, with 3.7 megawatts of that capacity currently being used by customers, leaving available capacity for future use at 1.3 megawatts. The district estimates that the 1.3 megawatts of future reserve capacity can serve an additional 150 residential customers. Both the size of the distribution line and the current voltage at which it is operated limit growth beyond 5 megawatts.

The Lewis County PUD is in the process of upgrading the Elbe Substation and the distribution feeders extending east and south from the town of Elbe. The project involves increasing the substation distribution voltage and upgrading the distribution feeder voltages from 14 Kv to 25 Kv. Phase I of the project includes replacement of the substation transformer and increasing the distribution voltage of the substation and the distribution feeders approximately 3 miles east and 4 miles south. To date the District has completed most of the design and material's procurement work for Phase I. Phase I is scheduled to be completed this summer, with work starting in June.

Phase I will increase the District's service capability to the area upgraded approximately twofold. Phases II and III, which will upgrade the feeder voltage to Ashford and the Kernahan Road, are expected to be completed within the next 5 years.

Solid Waste

Refuse collection and curbside pickup of recyclables is available to residential and commercial customers by Harold LeMay Enterprises, Inc., franchised under the authority of the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission. Yard waste pickup service is not available, as the plan area is located outside the permanent burn ban area established by the Puget Sound Air Pollution Control Authority. Household hazardous wastes are not collected on a regular basis in the plan area, however, they can be brought to disposal facilities at the City of Tacoma Landfill.

DESCRIPTION OF DESIRED CONDITIONS

The community wants to be able to meet the summertime needs of the tourist population without overburdening the local citizens with taxes to complete infrastructure projects. Further, the community is interested in retaining its rural character and privacy. The plan policies recognize the need for new facilities and services for both the tourists and the local community. These projects are intended to help improve the economy and mitigate the impacts of the large numbers of visitors. Table 15 lists a number of potential facility and infrastructure improvement projects which are not imperative to implement the plan. The projects simply provide more amenities to the community or provide a more cost-effective means of development. Project costs are not identified on Table 15 because: (1) the projects are not necessary to implement the community plan; and (2) the majority of projects require a feasibility study which would reveal the true costs of capital improvements. For example, a feasibility study is necessary to determine whether development in Ashford would be better served by a community septic system or individual on-site septic systems. Until the feasibility study is complete, it is difficult to estimate the costs of a community septic system. The feasibility studies will assist in determining the most cost-effective and efficient manner in which to provide public facilities for future growth.

Permits are not issued in Pierce County if septic disposal, storm drainage, potable water, and fireflow are not available. If a development proposal does not have the appropriate facilities and services available to meet Pierce County level of service standards, no permit will be issued.

**Table 15. Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan
Improvement Projects**

Project/Phases	GCAB Rank	Implementation Periods:			Funding Source
		1999-2002	2003-2009	2010-2019	
Transportation					
Rest Area	1				
1) Determine Suitable Location		X			WSDOT
2) Construct Rest Area			X		WSDOT
Community Benefit: Encourage visitors to stop and get out of their cars, provide public restrooms, and increase the “sanitariness” of the Upper Nisqually Valley. (Note: Funds for this project have been secured through the federal and State government.)					
Boardwalks, Sidewalks, Crosswalks, and Street Lighting	6				BPIA Various loan funds
1) Determine Preliminary Areas to be Improved		X			
2) Pursue Funding Opportunities		X	(X)		
3) Complete Preliminary Improvements			X	(X)	
Community Benefit: Increase pedestrian friendliness, provide links between businesses as well as to the residential areas, and help direct tourists to the enhanced areas of the village centers.					
Shuttle System to Park	8				Private investment; Park Service; Pierce Transit
1) Feasibility Study of Creation and Operation			X		
2) Pursue Funding Opportunities			X		
3) Implementation				X	
Community Benefit: Encourage visitors to stop in a gateway community and use the shuttle to access the park in order to reduce single occupancy vehicles, preserve air quality, and reduce traffic congestion in the park as well as along State Route 7 and SR-706. A shuttle system may be constructed and operated privately.					
Infrastructure					
Community Septic System	4				CDBG*;USDA*; Public Works Trust Fund
1) Feasibility Study		X			EPA-RCAP*
2) Pursue Funding Opportunities			X		

**Table 15. Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan
Improvement Projects**

Project/Phases	GCAB Rank	Implementation Periods:			Funding Source
		1999- 2002	2003- 2009	2010- 2019	
3) Construction of Appropriate System(s)			X	(X)	
<i>Community Benefit: Reduce septic costs for current and future property owners, potentially make development more feasible, and create a system with simplified maintenance.</i>					
Community Water System (Ashford)	4				CDBG*;USDA*; Public Works Trust Fund; State Drinking Water RLF
1) Feasibility Study		X			
2) Pursue Funding Opportunities			X		
3) Construct Appropriate System(s)			X	(X)	
<i>Community Benefit: Reduce water costs for current and future property owners, make a village center more feasible, and upgrade the system to handle higher volumes.</i>					
Stormwater Drainage	-				CDBG*;USDA*; Public Works Trust Fund
1) Feasibility Study			X		EPA-RCAP*
2) Pursue Funding Opportunities				X	
3) Construct Appropriate System(s)				X	
<i>Community Benefit: Remove unsightly drainage ditches and conserve valuable land.</i>					
Underground Distribution Lines	5		X	(X)	Utility
<i>Community Benefit: Preserve natural views, rural character, and wildlife habitats.</i>					
Recreation					
Bike and Barrier Free Trails	3				
1) Feasibility Study		X	(X)		
<i>Community Benefit: Encourage outdoor recreation throughout the Upper Nisqually Valley as an alternative to the crowded National Park. Provide a connection between centers.</i>					
Community Gatherings					

**Table 15. Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan
Improvement Projects**

Project/Phases	GCAB Rank	Implementation Periods:			Funding Source
		1999- 2002	2003- 2009	2010- 2019	
Community Center and Park	2	X	(X)		Local capital campaign; CDBG
Museum and Information Center	7		X	(X)	Local capital campaign
Kiosks	9		X	(X)	Local capital campaign
<i>Community Benefit: Enable a greater sense of community by providing a community gathering place where people may relax. Encourage visitors to stop and leave their cars by providing information on the history of the Upper Nisqually Valley. Inform the community and its visitors of local & park events.</i>					

* CDBG - Community Development Block Grant

Before CDBG funds could be used, an income eligibility survey for the centers would need to be conducted. Also, competition for these funds is extremely competitive and if awarded would probably provide only a portion of the total amount required.

USDA - US Department of Agriculture

The USDA offers several loan programs which could be accessed, including Community Facilities loans and Rural Development loans.

EPA - RCAP - Environmental Protection Agency Rural Community Assistance Program

RCAP is a network of non-profit agencies that can provide on-site technical assistance in needs assessment, financing, technology selection, operation, and maintenance practices.

Sewer and Wastewater Treatment

Within the next 20 years, the Upper Nisqually Valley is expected to experience the majority of commercial and residential growth within the Village Center zone. In order to accommodate this growth, improvements will need to be made to the local sewer and wastewater treatment systems. Since Elbe currently has a treatment system that has available capacity, the focus in the community plan is on Ashford. The desired condition is to have a treatment system that can support the planned growth in Ashford. This system may consist of one large community septic system, a series of smaller community septic systems, or individual on-site septic systems. The policies of the community plan call for an inventory of present conditions (capability of local soils to treat wastewater) and an evaluation of options to meet the treatment needs. The inventory may point to the need for one large community system or several smaller systems within Ashford.

Domestic Water Systems

Similar to sewer and wastewater treatment, the need for improving the water systems needs to be inventoried and evaluated. The desired condition is to have water facilities and services to accommodate the needs of residents and visitors. Although there appears to be an ample supply of available groundwater, some of the water systems need more water rights to access the water

or need to upgrade facilities in order to convey the water to users. For example, the Ashford Water District would need to upgrade and resize its conveyance pipes and pumphouses in order to serve anticipated growth. The policies of the community plan call for an inventory of the current systems and an evaluation of upgrade and repair options to meet the future needs.

Transportation

The desired condition for the Upper Nisqually Valley is to improve the transportation system to accommodate tourists while minimizing the impacts to local citizens. Public restrooms and rest areas are a top priority for the community as it cannot continue to be inundated with a summertime urban tourist population with no rest stop facilities. The policies in the community plan call for constructing pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks, boardwalks, and striped crosswalks in centers to encourage tourists to leave their cars and shop/tour the Upper Nisqually centers. A barrier-free trail system is desired to be constructed to provide a connection between Alder and the National Park with access to the Nisqually River and surrounding public lands. In order to accommodate large numbers of visitors to the National Park without impacting local citizens, two items are desired: a public parking facility to help accommodate RV and many cars, and a shuttle system which will move people from Puget Sound up to the Park or from the valley into the Park.

Law Enforcement, Fire Protection, and Emergency Management

The desired condition is to improve the resources and funding available in law enforcement, fire protection, and emergency management to accommodate the summertime visitors and population without impacting local citizens. The strategies contained in the community plan ask for funding and support from other agencies such as the National Park, Forest Service, Department of Natural Resources, and Tacoma Power to help the local agencies handle the summertime overload.

Secondly, the community recognizes Mount Rainier as a volcanic hazard and chooses to take measures to ensure the safety of citizens and visitors. The policies in the community plan call for an evacuation plan with a public education program to be prepared by the year 2002.

Public Schools

The plan does not contain any policy direction pertaining to the elementary school. The plan does encourage the establishment of a work training program in the Upper Nisqually Valley through a technical college.

Parks and Recreational Areas

The Upper Nisqually Valley has numerous recreational opportunities that are designed to attract visitors on a regional, State, or national basis. These recreational opportunities include the National Park and national and State forests. The residents of the Upper Nisqually Valley would like a local park to be developed for the community to use for baseball games, basketball, tennis, picnicking, or other recreational opportunities.

At the present time, a 23-acre site in Ashford is being considered for a potential future community park. Once public ownership is secured, the community park would provide a central gathering place and recreational facility for area residents.

The community plan also calls for the development of a museum and/or an information center. The museum would be a historical museum that would house local development and history information. The information center would be oriented to sharing local information to tourist and visitors but would likely contain historical information as well.

Pierce County Library System

The community is content with the availability of the Eatonville Library and bookmobile. The plan does not contain any policy direction pertaining to the library system.

Electricity

Electrical supply is not an issue within the community plan area; however, the community would like to see utility lines placed underground whenever possible. Recently, a bald eagle was lost after becoming entangled in utility lines. Community plan policies strive to improve the appearance of the valley and reduce risks to wildlife by placing utility lines underground.

Solid Waste

The community plan does not contain any policy language pertaining to solid waste disposal.

Stormwater Facilities

Currently, each development or property owner is expected to meet standards for stormwater retention in accordance with Pierce County Code. In recent years, this code has become more stringent regarding the amount of discharge that leaves a developed site and can require a significant portion of land to be dedicated to stormwater holding ponds. The policies in the community plan call for stormwater facilities to be combined where possible.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES POLICIES

The Infrastructure and Services Element policies are divided into five sections which support the overall goal: Rural Centers, Rest Areas, Other Facilities and Services, and Funding. The Rural Centers policies address infrastructure projects proposed for any of the three commercial centers. The Rest Areas policies strictly address the need for public rest facilities. Other Facilities and Services address a myriad of proposed projects throughout the valley to further the local community as well as accommodate tourists. The Funding policies discuss potential funding sources and who should seek funding for the proposed projects.

Goal: We envision a valley with infrastructure and services that meet the needs of area residents, businesses, and visitors while providing for the health and safety of individuals.

OBJECTIVES, PRINCIPLES, STANDARDS

Rural Gateway Communities Infrastructure

The intent of the Rural Gateway Communities Infrastructure policies is to recognize the need for infrastructure improvements that would support pedestrian oriented commercial centers.

IS-RC Objective 19. Develop capital facilities and services which support the Village Centers in Ashford and Elbe.

Principle 1. Construct pedestrian facilities throughout Village Centers.

Standards

- | | |
|--------|--|
| 19.1.1 | Improve pedestrian facilities within the Village Centers zone through boardwalks, sidewalks and crosswalks. |
| 19.1.2 | The materials used in the construction of the pedestrian routes should be consistent with the rural character of the Upper Nisqually Valley. |

19.1.3 The pedestrian circulation pattern should connect all the businesses within the Village Center.

19.1.4 Street lighting should be provided to improve safety.

Principle 2. Determine the need for community septic systems in Ashford.

Standards

19.2.1 Support a soil assessment study to determine if a single community septic system or several smaller community septic systems are needed to achieve desired village densities. The study should make recommendations as to the location, types of systems, and potential sources to construct systems.

19.2.2 Investigate private and public funding sources available to construct community septic system(s).

19.2.3 Pierce County shall provide guidance to the community in conducting the soil assessment and design and construction of any community systems.

19.2.4 Educate local property owners as to the financial and environmental benefits of a community septic system.

Principle 3. Ensure an adequate water supply system capable of supporting Village Centers.

Standards

19.3.1 Coordinate with the Ashford Water District to update the Comprehensive Water System Plan and necessary improvements to the infrastructure. The update to the Water System Plan should include a prioritized list of recommended infrastructure improvements.

Principle 4. Determine the need for community stormwater system in Ashford and Elbe.

Standards

19.4.1 Support an assessment study to determine if a community stormwater system is needed to achieve desired commercial intensity. The study should make recommendations as to the

location, types of systems, and potential sources to construct systems.

19.4.2 Investigate private and public funding sources available to construct community stormwater system(s).

19.4.3 Educate local property owners as to the financial and environmental benefits of a community stormwater system.

Principle 5. Infrastructure placement should be compatible with the visual environment.

Standards

19.5.1 The siting and design of infrastructure projects should blend with the natural and surrounding built environment.

19.5.2 Encourage electrical distribution systems and other utility lines to be placed underground.

19.5.3 Capital facilities should conform to adopted design standards and guidelines.

19.5.4 Any publicly funded facilities should conform to adopted design standards and guidelines.

19.5.5 Street lighting should be of historic character.

Rest Areas

The intent of the Rest Areas policies is to address the need for restroom and rest area facilities.

IS-RA Objective 20. Provide capital facilities and services which mitigate impacts caused by tourists.

Principle 1. Develop public rest areas and restrooms in the valley.

Standards

20.1.1 Public restrooms should be available within centers.

20.1.2 A rest area which serves motorists and non-motorists shall be located in or immediately adjacent to one of the Village Centers.

- 20.1.3 The rest area should have a site design which encourages individuals to visit and shop in the center.
- 20.1.4 The rest area shall meet the design standards of the village center.
- 20.1.5 The rest area should display historical information about the Upper Nisqually Valley.
- 20.1.6 In siting a rest area, consideration should be given to minimizing potential traffic hazards and congestion.
- 20.1.7 The preferred site for a rest area is Elbe
- 20.1.8 Rest area buildings should represent the historic character through a train station design.

Other Facilities and Services

The intent of the Other Facilities and Services policies is to identify infrastructure needs of the Upper Nisqually Valley to serve residents and tourists.

IS-OTH Objective 21. Develop capital facilities and services which support the policies of the Economic Environment Element.

Principle 1. Encourage transportation services that facilitate tourism.

Standards

- 21.1.1 Transportation services that move large numbers of people and reduce reliance on the automobile are encouraged as they reduce traffic and encourage pedestrian use.
- 21.1.2 Encourage development of a shuttle system with stops in Alder, Elbe, Ashford and the Park Entrance.
- 21.1.3 Design the shuttle system to accommodate the needs of visitors and employees.
- 21.1.4 Encourage development of the Train to the Mountain if financially feasible.
- 21.1.5 The Village Center in Ashford is the preferred site for passenger rail.

- 21.1.6 Develop public parking facilities within Rural Gateway Communities.
- 21.1.7 Seek to establish a transit connection or bus route between the communities of Ashford and Graham.

Principle 2. Provide facilities and services for the community and visitors.

Standards

- 21.2.1 Develop a barrier-free trail system for walkers, hikers, and cyclists that provides access to the Nisqually River, public lands, and the National Park along the trail system.
- 21.2.2 Place historical or environmental interpretive signs along the trail.
- 21.2.3 Encourage property owners of historic properties and structures to be involved with the development of a tour.
- 21.2.4 Develop a museum/information center in one of the Village Centers for display of information relating to the history and natural resources of the Upper Nisqually Valley.
- 21.2.5 Encourage the National Park, U.S. Forest Service, and private timber companies to provide information for the museum/information center.
- 21.2.6 Develop a park for use by local residents and supported by Pierce County Parks and Recreation.
- 21.2.7 Include indoor and outdoor facilities in the park along with passive and active recreation opportunities such as baseball fields, basketball courts, play equipment, a climbing rock, a community center, restrooms, natural areas, and picnic area.
- 21.2.8 The preferred location for the park is in the Ashford vicinity.
- 21.2.9 Encourage residents and businesses to donate labor and materials for the construction of community facilities.
- 21.2.10 The design of the park should be oriented away from SR-706.
- 21.2.11 Buildings in the park should meet design standards for Village Centers.

- 21.2.12 Encourage the development of public parking lots in Elbe and Ashford.
- 21.2.13 Developments that have a significant impact upon the schools, traffic, and housing availability shall be required to provide mitigation of impacts to less than significant levels.

Quality of Life

The intent of the Quality of Life policies is to identify those facilities and services that are needed in the Upper Nisqually Valley to maintain or improve the quality of life and mitigate the impacts of new development.

IS-QL Objective 22. Develop capital facilities and services which maintain or improve the community's quality of life and mitigate the impacts of development.

Principle 1. Construct facilities and provide services which improve the health, safety, and welfare of community residents.

Standards

- 22.1.1 Identify the Upper Nisqually Valley as a high priority for developing an emergency evacuation plan.
- 22.1.2 Improve the emergency services in the valley through increased funding, improved equipment, and more staffing.
- 22.1.3 New commercial, multi-family, subdivisions, and employee housing developments may be required to upgrade existing roads to meet an increased road standard. .
- 22.1.4 New development shall provide on-site pedestrian facilities in Village Centers.
- 22.1.5 If a road improvement is required for a new development, installation of sidewalks shall be required along the improvement.
- 22.1.6 Pursue development of a bike shoulder along SR 706.

Funding

The intent of the Funding policies is to identify a myriad of possible funding sources to be investigated to complete infrastructure projects.

IS-FND Objective 23. Obtain adequate funding to construct the identified capital facilities and support community services.

Principle 1. Identify and pursue a myriad of funding opportunities.

Standards

- 23.1.1 Persuade government funding agencies to recognize/adopt the community plan as a planning document for their individual agency.
- 23.1.2 Recognize that Pierce County Fire District #23 is heavily impacted by visitors to the valley and seek funding participation from the National Park, U.S. Forest Service, Tacoma Power.
- 23.1.3 Ensure that continuous funding for police, fire, and emergency medical services is prioritized by actively pursuing opportunities to increase the commercial base.
- 23.1.4 Enter into a partnership with the National Park, U.S. Forest Service, DNR, Tacoma Power, private individuals and companies to provide matching funds for infrastructure projects.
- 23.1.5 Work with the National Park to seek alternative funding sources for shuttle or transit services for Park visitors.
- 23.1.6 Seek funding from grants, low-interest loans, and other sources before considering the formation of special taxing districts.

IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES ELEMENT

The following is a list of actions that should be completed in order to implement the policies contained within this plan. They are arranged according to the timeframe within which each should be completed; short, medium, or long term. Short term actions should occur immediately or within one year of plan adoption. Mid-term actions should be completed within 2-5 years. Long term actions should be completed within 5-20 years of plan adoption. The party or parties responsible for leading the effort to complete the action item is listed in parenthesis following the action. Actions are assigned to the Gateway Community Advisory Board (GCAB), the Upper Nisqually Advisory Commission (UNAC), the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Mount Rainier National Park, or Pierce County Planning and Land Services (PALS). The local business association is also listed as they are recognized as a major influence within the Upper Nisqually Valley. Those actions assigned to the GCAB are completed as part of the adoption and implementation of this plan.

Short Term Actions

Work with the Washington State Department of Transportation to ensure the rest area is designed to meet the design standards identified in the community plan. (UNAC, Pierce County)

Determine if the current rest area proposal meets the objectives and policies of the community plan. If necessary, review and propose other potential sites. (UNAC)

Work with Pierce County Fire District #23 to develop an emergency management evacuation plan by January 2002. (UNAC, Pierce County)

Allow for transportation facilities that would accommodate a shuttle system in each of the centers. (GCAB, UNAC)

Allow a passenger rail station to be located in Ashford. (GCAB, UNAC)

Mid-Term Actions

Discuss possible funding opportunities or matching funds to improve community services with representatives from the National Park, U.S. Forest Service, DNR, and Tacoma Power. (UNAC, Pierce County)

Work with the Tourist Division of Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development to assist in funding community facilities. (UNAC, Pierce County)

Encourage the Pierce County Public Works and Utilities Department and Washington State Department of Transportation to include capital facility improvements in their appropriate planning documents. (UNAC, Pierce County)

Map the public road right-of-way in the Village Centers where the pedestrian paths would be located. (Pierce County)

Identify the preferred placement of street lighting. (UNAC)

Work with Pierce County Public Works to develop a program to place pedestrian facilities within Village Centers. (UNAC, PALS)

Work with Pierce County to earmark a percentage of the hotel/motel tax revenue collected from businesses throughout the County for community facilities and services in the Upper Nisqually Valley. (UNAC)

Coordinate with the Lewis County Public Utility District (PUD) commissioners and managers about the goals and objectives of the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan. (UNAC)

Identify potential economic benefits to the PUD associated with the community plan. (UNAC, business association)

Investigate and pursue the development of public parking facilities in Rural Gateway Communities. (UNAC, Pierce County)

Pursue funding opportunities for public restrooms in Village Centers. (UNAC)

Investigate and pursue (if feasible) a community stormwater system:

- (a) Secure a grant for conducting a stormwater system study;
- (b) Implement the recommendations of the stormwater system study;
- (c) Convene a community forum which educates local property owners about establishing a community stormwater system;
- (d) Research funding opportunities for construction of a community stormwater system; and,
- (e) Work with the Washington State Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development to obtain funding for a community stormwater system. (UNAC, Pierce County)

Educate citizens and visitors about the emergency evacuation plan:

- (a) Develop and distribute educational materials and brochures to citizens and visitors regarding volcanic hazards and the evacuation plan;
- (b) Place maps of the emergency evacuation plan at community kiosks;
- (c) Incorporate information about the evacuation plan into campground education programs; and,
- (d) Place maps and information about the emergency evacuation plan at visitor centers within Mount Rainier National Park. (UNAC, National Park, USFS, business association, Pierce County)

Pursue improvement of emergency services:

- (a) Meet with Pierce County Fire District #23 to assess funding, equipment, and staffing needs;
- (b) Prioritize the list of needs within the District;
- (c) Seek grant opportunities for improving emergency funding; and,
- (d) Recruit commercial businesses as a means of expanding the tax base for emergency services. (UNAC, DNR, business association)

Work with the Washington Department of Transportation to develop a bike shoulder along SR 706.

Work with the Pierce Transit Board to establish a transit connection or bus route between Ashford and Graham.

Develop a barrier-free trail system:

- (a) Conduct a feasibility study to determine trail users, routes, cost estimates, potential funding sources, maintenance options, and a timeline for development;
- (b) Conduct public workshops to solicit public comments on trail development; and
- (c) Develop a strategy to fund and construct the trail system. (Pierce County Parks, PALS, UNAC)

Develop a park:

- (a) Work with Pierce County Parks and Recreation and review the current proposal for a park and ensure it is consistent with policies and design standards of the community plan;
- (b) Work with the Pierce County Parks Department to incorporate any new modifications and determine the roles and responsibilities in the maintenance of the park;
- (c) Conduct public workshops to solicit public comments on park development; and
- (d) Support Pierce County Parks and Recreation when seeking funds for park development. (PALS, UNAC)

Investigate and pursue (if feasible) a community septic system in Ashford:

- (a) Secure a grant for conducting a soil assessment study;
- (b) Implement the recommendations of the soil assessment study;
- (c) Convene a community forum which educates local property owners about establishing community septic systems;
- (d) Research funding opportunities for construction of community septic systems; and,
- (e) Work with the Washington State Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development to obtain funding for a community septic system. (UNAC, Pierce County)

Investigate and pursue upgrading the Ashford water system:

- (a) Secure a grant or a funding source to complete an update to the Comprehensive Water System Plan;
- (b) Implement the recommendations of the Comprehensive Water System Plan update;

- (c) Research funding opportunities for upgrading the water system; and,
- (d) Obtain the approvals necessary to incorporate the updates through the Pierce County Health Department and the State Department of Health. (UNAC, Pierce County)

Long Term Actions

Work with the Lewis County PUD to research funding options for moving utility lines underground. (UNAC)

Investigate the impacts of requiring all new development to place utility lines underground. (UNAC)

Work with the National Park and Pierce Transit to develop a transit plan and encourage development of a shuttle system. (UNAC)

Periodically update the list of capital facilities needed to support the Village Center concept. (UNAC)

Develop a museum/information center:

- (a) Conduct a feasibility study to determine museum users, locations, cost estimates, potential funding sources, maintenance options, and a timeline for development;
- (b) Ask the National Park and US Forest Service to provide technical assistance in developing interpretive displays at the museum or information center;
- (c) Conduct public workshops to solicit public comments on museum development; and
- (d) Develop a strategy to fund and construct the center. (PALS, UNAC)

PLAN MONITORING

Purpose

The 1990 State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires jurisdictions planning under GMA to report on progress made in implementing the Act, and to subject their comprehensive plans to continuing evaluation and review. As part of the County's Comprehensive Plan, the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan is subject to this requirement. One mechanism for conducting this evaluation and review is to monitor the development standards, regulations, actions, and other programs called for in the plan for the purpose of determining their effectiveness in fulfilling the vision of each of the five elements of the plan.

This chapter provides a framework both for monitoring the various actions undertaken to implement the plan and for offering recommendations to make adjustments to the actions in order to better fulfill each of the visions in the plan. Actions may include the development and implementation of regulations and design standards, working with State and Federal agencies to develop programs, organizing community groups and events, developing interpretive and educational programs, conducting community forums, and other actions. This framework for monitoring provides a means for measuring the effect of each action, identifies participants and their roles in monitoring the actions, lays out time frames for monitoring, and specifies how the monitoring program should be documented. Information obtained from the monitoring program will be used to offer recommendations to decision makers as to what changes to the community plan may be needed in order to attain specified goals and meet the visions in the plan.

How to Measure the Effect of Standards

The Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan identifies actions which should be implemented to meet its visions, goals, and objectives. Monitoring evaluates the effectiveness of the actions in fulfilling these visions, goals, and objectives. The monitoring program outlined here includes several steps which are intended to identify actions taken, the ease with which they can be used, and whether the actions actually fulfill the objectives they were intended to fulfill.

To do this, the monitoring program is divided into five steps: Actions, Inputs, Process, Outputs, and Outcomes. Each of the steps and the responsible participant is discussed briefly here.

Phase 1: Actions. Phase 1 monitoring would consist largely of reviewing the visions, objectives, policies, and actions stated in the plan and identifying all the actions which need to be undertaken to be consistent with the plan. The actions should be grouped according to the objectives they are intended to meet. PALS staff and the Upper Nisqually Advisory Commission (UNAC) would be the primary participants in this activity. A report from PALS would be submitted to UNAC for review.

Phase 2: Inputs: Phase 2 monitoring would determine whether actions called for in the plan have actually been undertaken and completed. PALS staff would evaluate if regulations and

design standards have been adopted. Review to determine if other actions, such as community forums or other events, have been completed could be done by UNAC, PALS staff, and event organizers.

Phase 3: Process: Phase 3 monitoring would evaluate whether an action is straightforward, understandable, or easy to use. In the case of regulations and design standards, those persons who have submitted permit applications requiring compliance with these regulations and design standards would need to be involved in the evaluation. Citizen advisory boards which review such applications, as well as PALS staff, would also be included in the monitoring. PALS staff would coordinate the monitoring and could conduct interviews or distribute questionnaires to persons who have submitted or reviewed permit applications subject to the regulation being monitored. Monitoring of other actions, such as events and ongoing activities, would include event organizers and participants, UNAC, and PALS staff.

Phase 4: Outputs: Phase 4 monitoring would determine whether the action has been carried out as stated in the plan. For example, monitoring would determine whether a regulation or design standard has been complied with and identify reasons for any noncompliance. In regard to events and ongoing activities, monitoring would determine whether the immediate objectives of the activity have been met. Participants would include residents, property owners, the UNAC, and PALS staff.

Phase 5: Outcomes: Phase 5 monitoring would evaluate the extent to which each action results in the desired effect on the community. The primary participants are the residents and property owners in the plan area. Assistance would be provided by the UNAC and PALS staff. The UNAC would need to provide a forum in which adopted vision statements are reiterated to residents and property owners. PALS staff would assist in organizing public meetings, preparing and distributing questionnaires, and using other means to gather information.

Timeline

It is anticipated that the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan will take a substantial period of time to be implemented. There are a number of actions that can be accomplished within a short timeframe, some will take much longer, and others will involve ongoing actions with no specific completion date. It is important that monitoring be done on a continuing basis with specific actions monitored at different times.

In regard to monitoring the development and implementation of regulations and design standards, it would be appropriate for monitoring to be phased over time as the five phases outlined above are accomplished. Phase 1 would begin almost immediately upon the plan adoption. Phase 2 would take place within two years following the plan adoption. This would provide adequate time for the County Council to adopt implementing regulations called for in the plan. Phases 3, 4, and 5 would occur within two to three years following completion of Phase 2. This would allow time for the regulations to be applied to a number of development projects. Phase 3 analysis of how understandable the regulations are, and the ease to which they can be applied, would then be based on the application of the regulations to those projects developed within that time period.

Phases 4 and 5 monitoring would be done simultaneously with Phase 3 monitoring. The total time for initial monitoring for Phases 1 through 5 would be about five years. As changes are made to regulations and design standards, the monitoring cycle would need to be repeated to address the changes.

Other actions which do not involve the implementation of regulations or design standards would be monitored on a similar timetable. Phase 1 and Phase 2 would occur within two years of adoption of the plan, while Phase 3, 4, and 5 monitoring would occur within five years of plan adoption.

As amendments are made to the plan, monitoring would need to continue to determine how effective the changes are in carrying out the visions in the plan. In addition, it would be appropriate to continue monitoring all actions in the plan every five years to evaluate whether the actions continue over time to effectively carry out those visions.

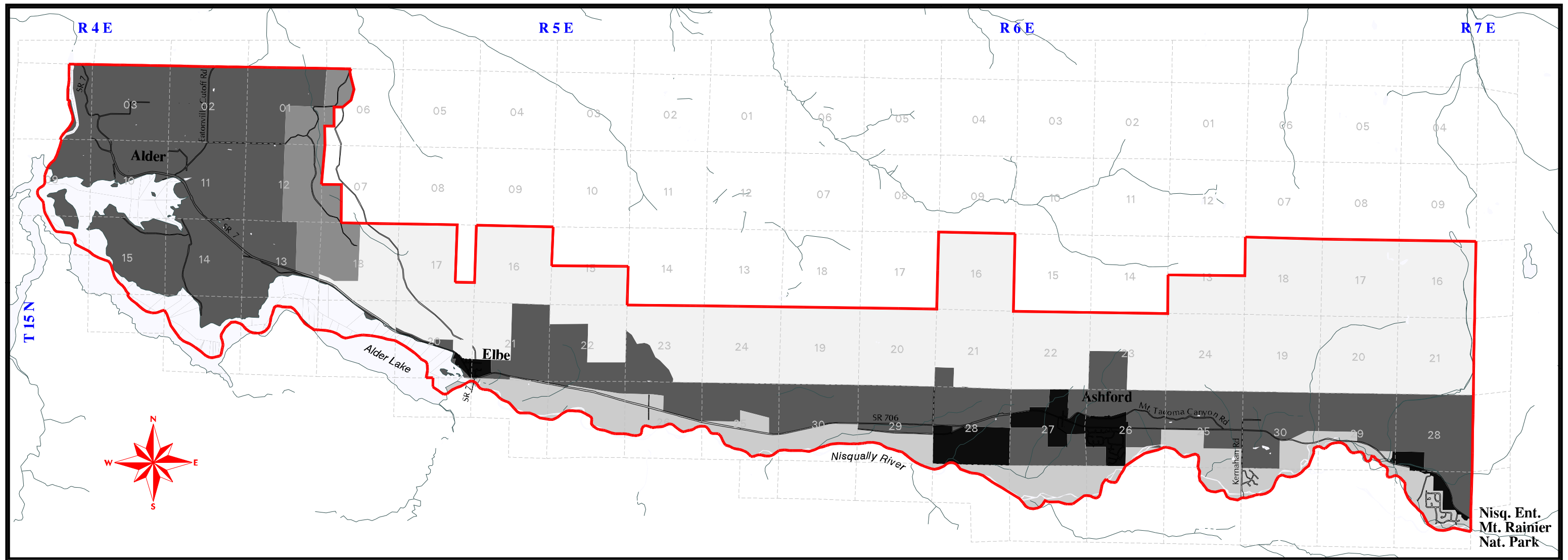
Documentation

A review of baseline information is necessary to effectively monitor whether the objectives of the Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan are being met. Information regarding community attitudes, visual characteristics of the community, community services, infrastructure, business climate, land uses, permitting activity, and other community characteristics would be evaluated. The plan and other documents provide much of the baseline information. It may be necessary, however, to supplement that information prior to effectively monitoring the plan.

As each phase of monitoring is completed, a report should be prepared by PALS staff which identifies the action being monitored, the specific purpose of the monitoring, methods used in monitoring, data collected, analysis of the data, findings, and recommendations for further action. The report should be submitted to the UNAC for review and comment and to the County Council for its consideration.

Recommendations for Further Action

In addition to determining the effectiveness of the plan in fulfilling the vision of the Upper Nisqually community, a key component to monitoring would be the recommendations for further action. These recommendations should clearly identify the specific vision statement being addressed, how the recommended action corrects a deficiency in the plan, how the recommended action will contribute to fulfilling the vision statement, and a timeline for completing the proposed action.



Comprehensive Plan Designations

Adopted September 28, 1999 –Ord. #99-65

Effective January 1, 2000

- Gateway Community (GC)
- Rural 10 (R10)
- Rural 20 (R20)
- Rural 40 (R40)
- Designated Forest Land (FL)



PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Plan Area Boundary

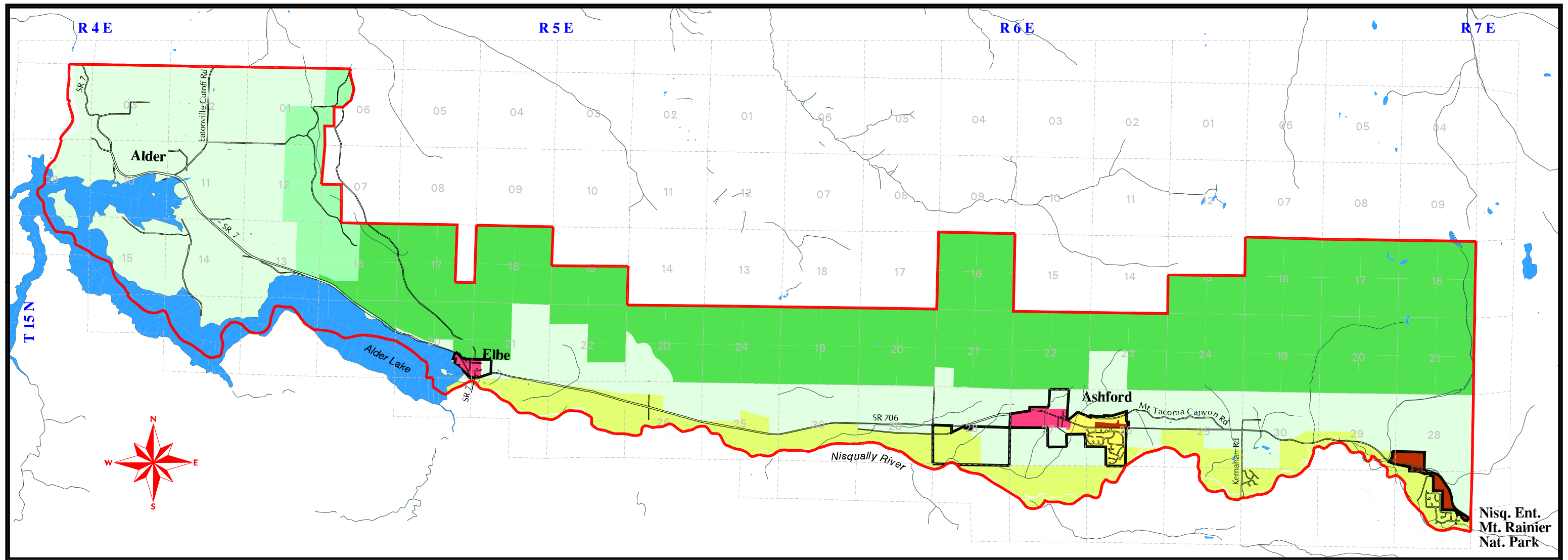
Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan



Department of Planning and Land Services

Plot Date: June 16, 2003

Comprehensive Plan Designations



Zoning

Adopted September 28, 1999 –Ord. #99-66s
Effective January 1, 2000

- Village Center (VC)
- Tourist Commercial (TC)
- Village Residential (VR)
- Rural 10 (R10)
- Rural 20 (R20)
- Rural 40 (R40)
- Designated Forest Land (FL)
- Gateway Community Boundary



PIERCE COUNTY, WASHINGTON



— Plan Area Boundary

Upper Nisqually Valley Community Plan



Department of Planning and Land Services

Plot Date: June 16, 2003

Zoning