

****Below is a preliminary look at Conservation Alliance comments on the Theme Two Rewrite. More details will be posted on February 15.

February 10, 2010

Preliminary Talking Points

RE: Theme Two (Manage Growth Responsibly) Rewrite released in January 2010



Dear commissioners,

On behalf of the members of the Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance, we would like to submit the following comments regarding the Theme Two discussion scheduled for the February 18 hearing. Thank you for your hard work throughout this process.

We greatly appreciate the efforts to bring this chapter more in alignment with community sentiment and long-term vision. The rewrite considerably reflects this shift in many instances, which puts the overall document much more on track. In some cases, it will be helpful to clarify inconsistencies among different policies. Below is a brief summary of the key points of improvement from the earlier (April 2009) Theme Two chapter as well as several questions and concerns regarding some of the new language.

It is our understanding that your review of this chapter will primarily focus on confirmation of staff's interpretation of previous planning commission votes on Theme Two, rather than as an opportunity for reconsideration of the theme's policies. With this in mind, our comments are framed in a different format than for the Theme One Rewrite, where we recommended voting actions. That said, there are a number of issues specific to Theme Two that we feel should be discussed and addressed prior to your final review of the entire plan, which we will briefly mention as part of these comments.

At a broad level, below are key areas in which the rewrite improved the earlier draft:

- Emphasis on the importance of overall development potential (not just development location) as it relates to other priorities in the plan, particularly with regard to the role of cumulative impacts in the ecosystem
- Increased emphasis on the importance of permanent conservation through the use of conservation easements
- A fundamental principle of the 1994 Plan, the protection of rural character, has been reincorporated
- The concept of county nodes as areas appropriate for town-level densities has been removed
- Increased emphasis on the use of data to inform decision-making (ex. Buildout Task Force)

At a broad level, below are key issues that remain a concern to the Conservation Alliance:

- Lack of policies that emphasize the importance of managing the fiscal costs of growth and that future expansions must pay their way
- Lack of policies that emphasize the importance of slow growth and the potential use of a growth rate regulatory mechanism
- Lack of clear policies describing preferred community character, which affects overall goal of predictability
- Policy inconsistencies, such as capping of commercial development rights versus expansion of light industry
- Lack of clear direction for recommended implementation strategies

*** To Follow.... Detailed comments associated with new language in specific sections, principles and policies of this chapter.