

*Below are comments Nancy Taylor, Alliance Board Co-Chair, verbally presented at the **March 8, 2011**, Jackson Town Council and Teton Board of County Commissioners public hearing on the Comp Plan.*

Given a three-minute cap this evening, we cannot possibly comment on every policy and principle of the draft that needs additional work.

For the last four years, the Conservation Alliance has submitted extensive verbal and written comments on all the policies and principles of the various drafts.

In addition to our comments that we submitted yesterday, which summarize the major issues and inconsistencies, we will continue to provide specific recommendations on each draft you release, as well as on each upcoming issues discussion. The pivotal decision to separate the Future Land Use Plans from the themes and policies will in the end make much more work for you, and we do not think that is what you are looking for given how fast you want this process to move. You have objectives of predictability, measurability and accountability, and those objectives cannot be met without the inclusion of the Future Land Use Planning Maps.

You, our elected officials, are the guardians of this pristine place. You are the keepers of the crown jewels, the unique ecosystem and all that it encompasses.

I was involved in the first Comp Plan planning efforts in Teton County and have watched the valley develop in a piecemeal fashion over the last thirty years.

The crown jewels need to be guarded, not sold off in little pieces.

As guardians of this unique land, it is incumbent on you to make this Comp Plan strong and to enforce it with your clear vision.

Chief Seattle states, "Treat the earth well: it was not given to you by your parents, it was loaned to you by our children. We do not inherit the Earth from our Ancestors, we borrow it from our Children."

We as a community are not taking this message to heart. We are not treating this earth well when we approve five golf courses in this tiny community, when we approve more commercial development when commercial space is sitting vacant, when we do not have the resources to monitor the impacts of that which we approve.

This plan needs teeth and you as our elected officials need to ensure that it is strong and then you need to enforce it with every decision you make.

Why not make history as a group of elected officials that took the long view, that recognize with every ill-conceived development we are borrowing from our children. This valley is a finite place and you have a responsibility to protect it with a strong plan, with clear and enforceable Land Development Regulations and with a vision that carries this community into a vibrant and sustainable future.

The economy of Jackson will tank as soon as the wildlife that depend on open migration corridors are gone. The animals cannot attend your meetings and speak about wetlands that have been filled in, that used to be their winter habitat, they cannot speak about the fatalities they experience every year by crossing our highways and they have no representation on your natural resources technical advisory board.

This is an invitation from the Jackson Hole Conservation Alliance to step forward with courage and a strong united voice to protect this fragile and unique place for perpetuity. If you do not act now, no one will and it will be too late.

Thank you for listening and for giving the public the opportunity to speak.