



KINGSTON COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

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MEMORANDUM / FORMAL CORRESPONDENCE

TO: Kitsap County Board of Commissioners
FROM: Kingston Community Advisory Council (KCAC)
DATE: October 14, 2026
SUBJECT: Request for Objective Analysis and Impact Assessment Regarding Proposed PSCAA County-Wide Residential Yard Waste Burning Ban

Dear Commissioners:

At the recent meeting of the Kingston Community Advisory Council (KCAC) Environment and Land Use (E&LU) Committee, members discussed the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency's (PSCAA) proposal to extend the ban on residential yard waste burning to encompass all unincorporated areas of Kitsap County outside the Urban Growth Area (UGA).

While the KCAC recognizes the critical importance of maintaining clean air and public health standards, extending an outright burn ban across rural and semi-rural acreage presents significant practical challenges and unintended consequences. Rather than taking an immediate stance in favor of or against the proposal, the KCAC respectfully requests that the Board of County Commissioners require this public policy decision to be guided by **objective, data-driven criteria and a comprehensive community impact assessment**.

We urge the Board to seek clarity and empirical data regarding the following key areas before endorsing or adopting a county-wide prohibition:

1. Correlation of Air Quality Data with Permitted Burning

Air quality in Kitsap County is monitored continuously in real time through permanent and mobile monitoring stations managed by PSCAA and the Washington State Department of Ecology, supplemented by widespread community sensor networks.

- **Data Request:** Has PSCAA demonstrated a direct, measurable correlation between permitted rural residential yard waste fires and regulatory air quality threshold exceedances in non-UGA areas?
- **Policy Basis:** Public policy of this magnitude should rely on demonstrable air monitoring data rather than broad assumptions, clearly isolating seasonal wildfire smoke and urban stagnation events from routine, permitted rural land management activities.

2. Economic and Logistical Impact on Residents

Given the recent discontinuation of the County's fee-exempt yard waste disposal programs due to budget constraints, rural residents face substantial new logistical and financial burdens to manage vegetation.

- **Community Disposal Costs:** What is the projected aggregate cost to rural property owners in commercial disposal fees, fuel, vehicle wear, and labor hours required to haul bulk vegetation to county transfer stations?
- **Capacity and Access:** Are existing solid waste and transfer facilities equipped to handle the significant influx of organic debris that would otherwise be managed on-site?

3. Practical Contingencies for Agricultural and Large Rural Acreage

Rural land ownership frequently involves scenarios where off-site transport of organic debris is practically or economically unfeasible—such as storm damage, large tree falls in pastures, and routine stewardship of multi-acre parcels.

- **Operational Workarounds:** What viable alternatives or exemptions are being considered for large-lot rural properties where chipping or hauling is physically impossible or cost-prohibitive?

4. Wildfire Hazard and Noxious Weed Disincentives

Restricting on-site debris management risks creating secondary environmental and safety hazards. For example, during a recent Parks, Trails, and Open Space (PTOS) Committee stewardship event, the Fire Marshal required volunteers to haul away cleared invasive debris specifically because dry, accumulated piles created a wildfire hazard.

- **Wildfire Risk:** What is the contingency plan to address the increased risk of catastrophic brush fires resulting from unmanaged vegetation and fuel loading on rural parcels?
- **Invasive Species Control:** How will the County prevent a policy disincentive that discourages private landowners and volunteer stewardship groups from actively removing and eradicating designated noxious weeds?

Conclusion

A blanket prohibition outside the UGA affects rural land stewardship far differently than in denser urban environments. We respectfully ask that the Board advocate for a measured approach—requesting that PSCAA provide concrete data correlating burn permits to localized air degradation, and that Kitsap County evaluate the full environmental, economic, and wildfire-related impacts on rural residents.

Thank you for your consideration and ongoing commitment to the communities of North Kitsap.

Sincerely,

Tim Davis

Glen Hutchinson

Co-Chairs, Kingston Community Advisory Council