

County Redistricting Committee Seeks your Input

The count is in. Let the drawing begin.

The San Juan County Redistricting Committee is hosting a series of public meetings to gather input as they consider redrawing the boundaries of the 6 County Council districts. The public's input is important to the process.

"Washington is one of the few states that has opted for a fair, non-partisan process in redistricting," says Lura Powell, chair of the State Redistricting Commission. "Our laws help to ensure that redistricting is just, but the only way for fairness to happen in reality is if people weigh in and give us their thoughts and suggestions."

In San Juan County, public input is all the more critical this year. Prior to the adoption of the new County Charter, County Commissioners were elected at-large. The new Charter requires the County Council members be elected by district, and all districts must be nearly equal in numbers of people. The currently existing Council Districts have unequal population and must be readjusted.

The Committee must follow the State guidelines that include:

- Each district must have nearly equal numbers of people as determined by the 2010 census
- District boundaries should encompass areas that are contiguous and compact.
- Districts may not favor or disfavor political or racial groups
- District boundaries should endeavor to preserve existing communities of related interest.

Our mission is to come up with a plan to redefine district boundaries to more nearly equalize the populations. A number of options are being considered and examples will be presented at the public meetings.

We now invite your comments and discussion. Waldron residents are invited to join us at the Waldron community meeting at 4 PM on July 9. All are welcome at redistricting meetings on San Juan in the Legislative Hearing Room 55 Second Street Friday Harbor at 4 PM on July 11; or on Orcas at the Eastsound fire station on Mt. Baker Road at 4 PM on July 29.

The Districting Committee can also be contacted at redistricting@sanjuanco.com

More information is available on the County web page:
WWW.SANJUANCO.COM/ELECTIONS.