

From: [Jeff Lemelin](#)
To: [PlanningAgency](#)
Cc: [Claudette Diaz](#); [Gary Helfrich](#)
Subject: Item No: 1. ZCE23-0001, Vacation Rental Rezone 3/16 Public Comment
Date: Monday, March 13, 2023 4:23:42 PM
Attachments: [SCFD Patch.png](#)

EXTERNAL

Hello,

My name is Jeff Lemelin and I am a Battalion Chief with the Sonoma County Fire District and former Mountain Volunteer Fire Chief, I am responsible for the emergency response as a first responder in the Gates Road community. This area is being considered for an X overlay during this meeting. I am writing to encourage the Planning Commission and the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors to institute an X overlay in Gates Canyon for the following reasons.

1. The high percentage of vacation rentals already in our small community.
2. One way in and one way out with over grown vegetation.
3. History of 2 recent fires impacting our neighborhood and the Hanley fire of 1964.
4. Limited access for fire equipment due to steep roads, blind turns, no turnouts, and a bridge that Santa Rosa Fire won't cross due to weight limits.
5. No water supplies in neighborhood when there is a fire.
6. During red flag conditions and PSPS we loose all communication due to no internet and poor land lines.

I also have first hand experience having to evacuate intoxicated VR residents during life threatening fires bearing down on them, they usually don't know what to do or which direction to travel. This obviously puts myself and my team in harms way as its another liability we have to navigate during life threatening situations.

I am begging the Planning commission and Sonoma County Board of Supervisors to help protect the lives of first responders and uneducated vacationers in the Gates Road Community by declaring Gates Road an X overlay in Phase 1. This area is deemed a Critical Fire Hazard due to the extreme vegetation, narrow canyons, and limited access.

Thanks for your attention.

Jeff Lemelin | Volunteer Battalion Chief



Sonoma County Fire District
Honesty Respect Integrity

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