

Nevada County Board of Supervisors
September 27, 2022
Public comment

Good morning,

My name is Randall Strossen and I live in District 1, where we have a history of problems with outdoor events, both permitted and not. I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the 2020 Outdoor Event Ordinance pilot.

As some might remember, I actively commented on the original 2014 Outdoor Event Ordinance, have also addressed wildfire risk in our country, spoken about the cause and consequences of PSPS, and, most recently, have suggested three specific amendments to the 2020 Outdoor Event Ordinance pilot. This morning I would like to briefly focus on the first of these essential amendments: No Outdoor Event permits should be granted to any rural/residential property in a Tier 3 Fire Threat Zone.

Tier 3 Fire Threat Zones have extreme likelihood of devastating wildfires and to minimize the loss of human lives, evacuation routes must be kept as clear as possible . . . 24/7. In my neighborhood, the primary evacuation route is North Bloomfield Road, which has two lanes, little or no shoulders and is winding and confusing to most people until they become familiar with it. To get a sense of what happens when the road is blocked, consider when winter storms have knocked down trees, and North Bloomfield is no longer open.

Outdoor events that can draw 80 cars and hundreds of people to a residential property in my neighborhood pose a serious and unnecessary fire hazard: besides the increased risk of an unintended ignition, should an evacuation become necessary, everyone's safety would be severely compromised by so many additional cars—driven by people unfamiliar with the road—desperately try to flee. One accident could easily block the road, trapping everyone behind.

An impossible scenario? Consider that due to a fire a few years ago [on July 8, 2017], North Bloomfield was closed from the intersection of Lake Vera to Highway 49. Thanks to the quick and able response from our firefighters, the road was reopened within 2 hours, but with a larger fire, the consequences of blocked ingress/egress along North Bloomfield would be catastrophic.

As a postscript I would add that we survived a recent event in our neighborhood that resulted in drunk couples wandering off the host's property in the early morning hours, smoking on our road—is this not a recipe for disaster?

Please act now to save our community: amend the 2020 Outdoor Event Ordinance pilot so that no permits can be granted to any rural/residential properties in the Tier 3 fire threat zone.