

**John Andersen Phone Conversation / Notes**  
**January 15, 2015**

---

John Andersen worked for Deschutes County from 1978 to 1985. He started as a Senior Long-Range Planner, and then progressed to Planning Director and Community Development Director. His responsibilities as a Senior Planner were to prepare a Comprehensive Plan for Deschutes County.

### **SB 100 / Referendum**

When Senate Bill (SB) 100 was adopted in 1973, Deschutes County prepared a Comprehensive Plan, relying on the Bureau of Government and Research from the University of Oregon. It was sent to the voters of the county either by referendum or referral by the County Commissioners, and was rejected. Out of the thirty-six counties, Deschutes County was the only one to have its Comprehensive Plan repealed by voters.

### **Developing the Comprehensive Plan**

Negotiations between the State of Oregon and County subsequently took place to develop a Comprehensive Plan that could comply with State law. The State directed Deschutes County to protect resource land consistent with the State Land Use Goals. Many people in Deschutes County felt the land was too marginal for farming and advocated for greater flexibility to allow development. Deschutes County's "sagebrush subdivisions," created in the 1960s and early 1970s were cited to the Legislature as part of the reason to approve SB 100 and the State enabling planning legislation.

There was tremendous political turmoil during the Comprehensive Plan's development. Staff hosted numerous public meetings with hundreds in attendance, with meetings often lasting well into the early hours of the next day. There was violence and threats aimed at the staff. There was also an unsuccessful recall effort aimed at the two Commissioners who supported the newly drafted Comprehensive Plan. Despite all of the hostility and general turmoil the staff worked diligently to prepare reasonable recommendations based upon factual data.

### **Agricultural Land Designations**

*How did Deschutes County designate agricultural land?*

As outlined in the Resource Element, Staff relied on soil maps and irrigation data provided by the irrigation districts. Staff also examined topography, recognizing that elevation could affect land productivity (example: Lower Bridge area). Soil and irrigation were the two primary factors for determining agricultural land. The one exception was the eastern section of the county which was recognized as rangeland (Brothers, Millican, and Hampton).

*There are two rural subdivisions, one near Sisters (Squaw Creek Canyon Recreational Estates 1st Addition), the other north of La Pine (Meadow Crest Acres) interspersed with Exclusive Farm Use and Rural Residential zoning. Any idea how this might have happened?*

Too many years have passed for me to remember specific subdivisions, however, in general, pre-platted subdivisions, lacking development, utilities, or infrastructure were deemed to be vacant and therefore suitable for agriculture uses, based on direction from the State. The County was also required to protect the land for wildlife and open space values, as well as to direct development into areas that could be more efficiently served, thereby reducing required taxation.

### **Forest Land Designations**

*How did Deschutes County designate forest land?*

Staff relied on soil maps and information provided by the Oregon Department of Forestry.

*There are four rural subdivisions, one near Sisters (Squaw Creek Canyon Recreational Estates 1st Addition), one west of Bend (Skyline Subdivision) and two near La Pine (Haner Park - - along the Upper Deschutes River, Section 36 - - West of La Pine) interspersed with Forest Use (F2) and Rural Residential zoning. Any idea how this might have happened?*

Please refer to my previous answer. Pre-platted subdivisions, lacking development, utilities, or infrastructure were deemed to be vacant and therefore suitable for forest uses, based on direction from the State. The County was also required to protect the land for wildlife and open space values.

### **Rural Residential Land Designations**

*How did Deschutes County designate Rural Residential Land (Rural Residential - 10, Multiple Use Agricultural - 10)?*

Deschutes County had to demonstrate that the land was committed to rural residential uses. There were extensive property owner negotiations. Many property owners wanted maximum flexibility to preserve their investment for retirement. Staff examined the level of development, utilities, roads, and infrastructure to make the determination. They examined every property, lot by lot in the county. If they could demonstrate the land was committed, even if it was not necessarily completely built-out, it was designated rural residential.

Upon the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, property owners had the ability over a period of one year to initiate an exception to their resource land designation. No one took advantage of it because the methodology and information relied upon by Staff was the best available.