

County Farm Designation and Land Uses



COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS



Deschutes County Planning Commission
January 23, 2014

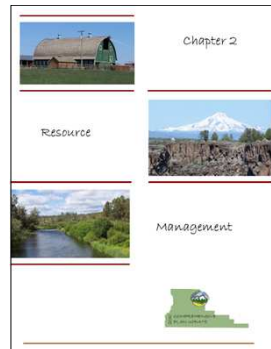
Reframing the Discussion

1. Process to date enabled staff to reframe the issue away from ~~Non-Resource Lands~~
 - Planning Commission engagement
 - Panel Discussions
 - Public Input
2. It is premature to contemplate agricultural land alternatives (i.e. Non-Resource Lands) when we don't know all the issues today
3. Topic of interest is **understanding community, stakeholder, and landowner opinions about Deschutes County farm designations and land uses**



Why Discuss Farm Designations and Land Uses?

1. The *Comprehensive Plan Update* (2011) recaps the contentious history of agricultural land designations in Deschutes County and recognizes they remain controversial
2. Public expressed differences of opinion over which lands should be designated farm lands and what uses should be allowed



Why Discuss Farm Designations and Land Uses?

3. The *Comprehensive Plan Update* recognizes:

- Agriculture is part of the ongoing local economy
- Secondary benefits of agricultural lands: scenic open spaces, rural character, and contributions to tourism economy
- Difficult to predict future agricultural opportunities
- Preserving farm lands benefits the wider public at expense of landowners
- Farm land is marginal without irrigation
- Agricultural zoning applied to land with no history of farming
- Potential adverse impacts to farming community from agricultural land conversion



Why Discuss Farm Designations and Land Uses?

4. *Comprehensive Plan Agricultural Lands Goals and Policies:*

- Provide basis for evaluating the future of agriculture over next 20 years
- Encourage flexibility, within state guidelines, to the farming community
- Support preserving farm lands by ensuring a variety of alternative paths to profitability

5. *Comprehensive Plan Community Involvement Goals and Policies:*

- Underscores the importance of engaging all members of the community on programs affecting land use

*Comprehensive
Plan Update*

*Agricultural
Lands*

Goals 1 - 3

Policies

2.2.3, 2.2.4,
2.2.12, 2.2.13,
2.2.14



Why Discuss Farm Designations and Land Uses?

Goal 1 **Preserve and maintain agricultural lands and the agricultural industry.**

Policy 2.2.3 Allow comprehensive plan and zoning map amendments for individual EFU parcels as allowed by State Statute, Oregon Administrative Rules and this Comprehensive Plan.

Policy 2.2.4 Develop comprehensive policy criteria and code to provide clarity on when and how EFU parcels can be converted to other designations.

Goal 2 **Promote a diverse, sustainable, revenue-generating agricultural sector.**

Policy 2.2.12 Review County Code and revise as needed to permit alternative and supplemental farm activities that are compatible with farming, such as agri-tourism or commercial renewable energy projects. When a preferred alternative or supplemental use identified through a public process is not permitted by State regulations work with the State to review and revise their regulations.

Why Discuss Farm Designations and Land Uses?

- Goal 3** Ensure Exclusive Farm Use policies, classifications and codes are consistent with local and emerging agricultural conditions and markets.
- Policy 2.2.13** Identify and retain accurately designated agricultural lands.
- Policy 2.2.14** Explore new methods of identifying and classifying agricultural lands.
- Apply for grants to review and, if needed, update farmland designations.
 - Study County agricultural designations considering elements such as water availability, farm viability and economics, climatic conditions, land use patterns, accepted farm practices, and impacts on public services.
 - Lobby for changes to State statute regarding agricultural definitions specific to Deschutes County that would allow some reclassification of agricultural lands.

Why Discuss Farm Designations and Land Uses?

It Starts with a Conversation

Deschutes County is interested in understanding public, stakeholder, and landowner opinions about the opportunities and challenges facing agricultural designated (EFU) lands

- What's working?
- What's not?



Why Discuss Farm Designations and Land Uses?

Potential Questions

- What do you value about EFU Lands?
- What are the advantages of EFU zoning?
- Are there emerging agricultural opportunities given the possibilities of new farming techniques, different crops, and climate change?
- What are the disadvantages and challenges of EFU zoning?
- Given the disadvantages and challenges, what would you like to see changed relative to the EFU zone?
- Should the County explore alternatives to EFU zoning? If so, what would you like considered?

Outreach Strategies

Engaging Groups and Communities



Public Forums

Media Outreach



General Public
Interested Public/Citizen Leaders

Targeted Stakeholder Input



EFU Landowners
Irrigation Districts
Public Agencies
Stakeholder Groups



Public Outreach

Government

- * Cities of Bend, La Pine, Redmond, Sisters
- * Deschutes Basin Board of Control
- * Natural Resource Conservation Service
- * Oregon Department of Agriculture
- * Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- * Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development
- * Oregon State University Extension

Non-Governmental Organizations

- * Central Oregon Landwatch
- * Deschutes River Conservancy
- * 1000 Friends of Oregon
- * Oregonians In Action
- * Oregon Water For Life
- * Sierra Club – Juniper Group
- * Upper Deschutes Watershed Council

Business Community

- * Central Oregon Association of Realtors
- * Central Oregon Builders Association
- * Chambers of Commerce

Other Organizations

- * Community Groups
- * Deschutes Farm Bureau
- * Deschutes Soil and Water Conservation District
- * Friends of Family Farms



Community Input Strategies and Timeline

Resource Materials

- [Background material](#)
- GIS Zoning Maps
- Written materials
- Opportunities for verbal comments

Tentative Timeline

Upon receiving Planning Commission and BOCC support, staff will initiate community conversations for 2-3 months throughout the region, holding listening sessions in Alfalfa, Bend, Brothers, La Pine, Redmond, Sisters, Terrebonne, and Tumalo and other locations TBD

* Results will be presented to the Planning Commission and BOCC and staff will seek direction on next steps . . .

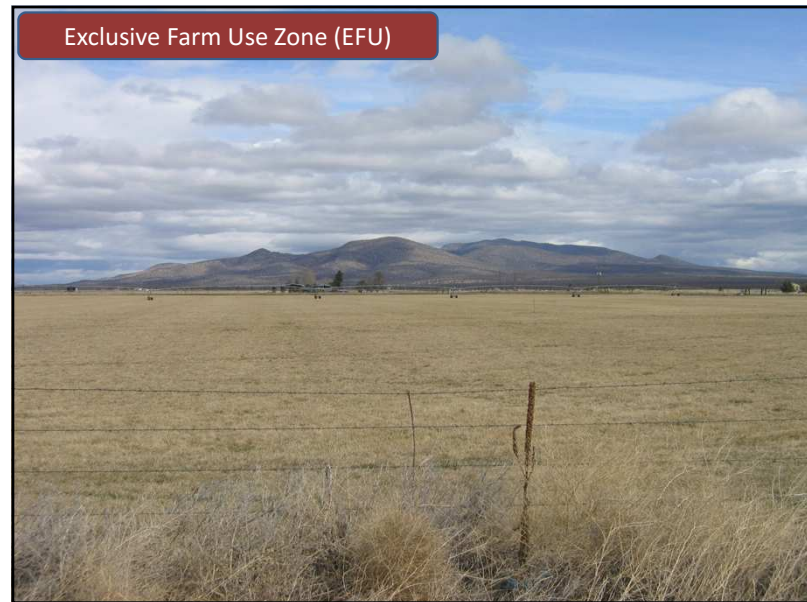
Community Input Strategies and Timeline

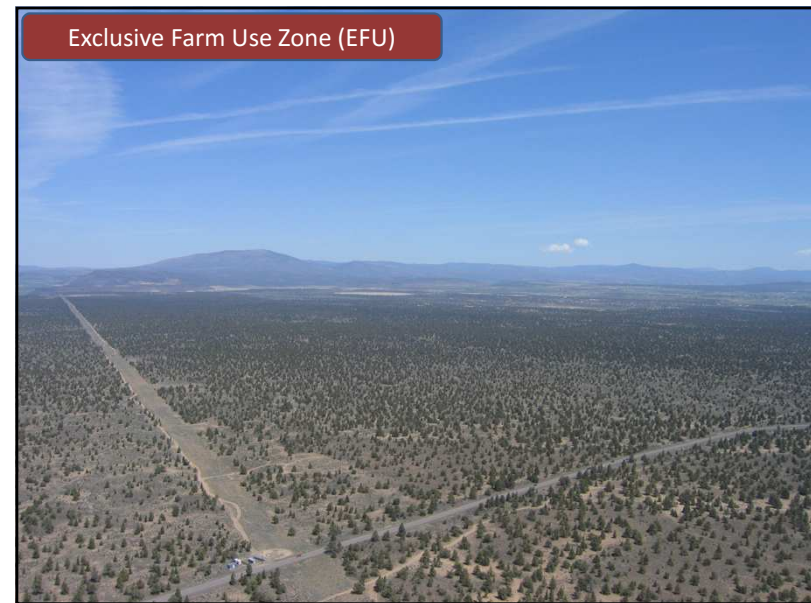
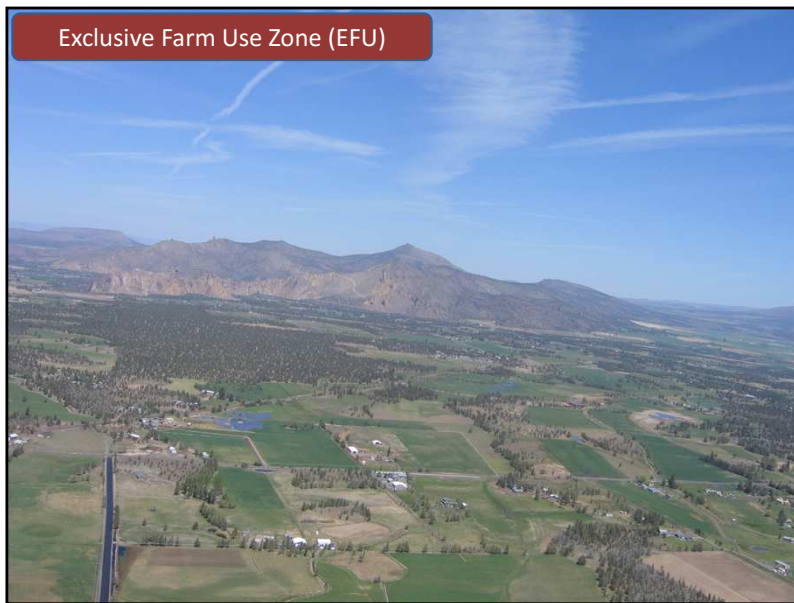
Resource Materials: EFU Land Characteristics

- Describe Agricultural Lands Legal Definition
- Describe EFU Lands by:
 - Total parcels / property owners
 - Total in farm deferral
 - Total non-farm dwellings
 - # of subzone parcels / property owners
 - Parcelization by subzone (average parcel size)
 - Ownership history / property owner transactions
 - Irrigation districts
 - Irrigation water / non-irrigation
 - Wildlife combining zone
 - Rural fire districts
- Summarize EFU zoning / development standards



Exclusive Farm Use Zone (EFU)





Questions, Comments, Revisions

