

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 22, 2012

TO: Gordy Euler, Jose Alvarez, Christine Cook, and Oliver Orjiako; Clark County

FROM: Lisa Grueter, AICP, Morgan Shook, and Paul Roberts

RE: **Rural Lands Study: Draft Policy Options**

Urban and Rural Planning in Clark County

Pursuant to the Growth Management Act (GMA), Clark County has adopted a Comprehensive Plan addressing population growth for 20 years, containing a future land use plan, and including elements addressing goals, policies and strategies for land use, housing, rural and natural resources, environmental protection, transportation, capital facilities and utilities, parks and open space, historic preservation, economic development, schools, community design, annexation, and planning procedures.

Clark County's current urban, rural and resource land use designations and corresponding zoning classifications were established with the adoption of the County's first GMA Comprehensive Plan in 1994. The County's Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2004 and again in 2007, but the focus was on urban growth area (UGA) expansion to accommodate projected growth to the year 2024. During the 2007 Clark County comprehensive plan update process the Board of County Commissioners (Board) expressed a desire to focus on rural issues. Accordingly, the Board created the Rural Lands Task Force (RLTF) with the following charge:

- Increasing Rural Center economic development opportunities;
- Implementing the recommendations of the Agricultural Preservation Advisory Committee (APAC) who had prepared recommendations in 2009;
- Increasing rural economic development opportunities;
- Identifying potential urban reserve lands; and
- Identifying lands that would not develop.

The RLTF developed a number of recommendations between 2009 and 2010. Many were recommended changes to the County's Unified Development Code Title 40. Some RLTF recommendations have already been completed through the County's "Retooling Our Code" initiative. Other RLTF recommendations require a more comprehensive understanding and analysis of rural land use and rural economies. These recommendations include:

- Preparing market research for agriculture, forest products and natural resources
- Clustering on resource lands;
- Parcel sizes for resource lands;
- A transfer of development rights (TDR) program;
- A rural reserve program; and
- Current use taxation, including program goals, minimum parcel size and income requirements, and whether goals are being achieved.

It is these recommendations that are the focus of the County's Rural Lands Study.

Rural Lands Study

Following RLTF recommendations, Clark County is exploring methods to retain rural lands that contribute to rural character and promote economic development associated with agriculture and forest products. The County engaged BERK to prepare a Rural Lands Study providing an evaluation of the effectiveness of existing policies, as well as policy recommendations and alternatives regarding minimum parcel sizes for agriculture and forestry lands, clustering, a transfer of development rights (TDR) program, rural reserves, agricultural production districts, and current use taxation program.

The Rural Lands Study includes three general phases of study and outreach:

- **Study Phase 1 Situation Assessment** beginning in summer 2011 through winter 2012, including policy review, market research, and a TDR framework. This phase will include stakeholder interviews and focus groups, a Cities meeting, and a Joint Planning Commission/Board of County Commissioner meeting. This evaluation has been completed and is under County staff review with the goal of issuing it in summer 2012. General results are summarized later in this memo.
- **Study Phase 2 Policy and Evaluation** beginning in spring 2012 through summer 2012, including developing policy options and testing and evaluating them. Outreach opportunities will include a Public Open House and Joint Planning Commission/Board of County Commissioner Meeting. This Policy Options memo is part of Study Phase 2.
- **Study Phase 3 Policy Options Selection and Implementation** through late 2012, including the development of specific policy and code language that can be adopted. Outreach activities will be offered including a Cities meeting, a Public Open House, and Joint Planning Commission/Board of County Commissioner meeting. This phase will begin after County concurrence on the range of options to be considered.

This Policy Options memo provides a summary discussion of rural land use policy options for consideration by the County consistent with the scope for Study Phase 2. The options include examining parcel size alternatives, land use classifications, special land use classifications, or zoning districts including clusters, transfer of development rights (TDR), agricultural protection district, rural reserves, and current use taxation policy.

The policy alternatives are examined through a two part analytical framework.

- Part one is the relationship of the policy alternative to the County's goals, objectives and vision for rural lands. These County goals, objectives and vision are more specifically detailed in the Policy Review Brief contained in the Situation Assessment.
- Part two is the relationship of each policy alternative in meeting the goals of the GMA and other state and local laws. GMA goals are summarized also in the Policy Review Brief contained in the Situation Assessment.

Selected Review of Phase 1 – Situation Assessment

Policy options have been developed following a situation assessment in Study Phase 1. The Phase 1 Situation Assessment provided a broad perspective on the nature and character of farming in Clark County, and provided context for the preparation of this Phase 2 Policy Options memo. Generally, the Situation Assessment has found that agriculture in Clark County in 2011 is in the midst of a decade's long transition from large scale commodity farming into more intensive, value-added, urban-oriented farming.

Agriculture, farming, and forestry are diverse enterprises in the County. Some differentiations worth highlighting include:

- Economic, market, and production pressures differ between mid- to large scale commercial farming and small scale commercial and non-commercial farming.

- Commercial farming (those farmers whose main source of household income is derived from agriculture) are more sensitive to urban encroachment, land use conflict, labor, water rights, and commodity prices. For the purpose of land use regulation, the issues of land use conflict and suburban encroachment are most significant.
- While non-commercial farming (those farmers whose main source of household income is derived from non-agriculture) has exposure to similar issues, they have more flexibility to scale their operations to more workable arrangements. However, scaling up their operations presents challenges faced by larger enterprises (i.e. labor, acreage size, etc.).
- Many mid (~100 acres) and small farms (less than 5 acres) have moved into more value-add and direct marketing of their products. This includes business operations that have retail functions. The implication for land use planning is that the “idea” of the farm in Clark County is moving away from just traditional notions of agriculture production to also include uses that may be more industrial, commercial, and retail in nature (i.e. farm stands, value-add products, and tourism).
- Organic and locally sourced foods have seen robust growth in the last several years. The proximity of the farms to urban and suburban residential centers serves as a built-in market. This market will likely develop with the region’s growth.
- The access and supply of small parcel sizes does not seem to be a relevant constraint to engaging in agricultural practices. Agriculture is a permitted use throughout the County in all zones. The constraint for new farmers is access to land per se, not necessarily land of a particular size. This may be due to the mis-match of parcel sizes within the Ag-20 zone where only 17% of properties meet that parcel size, or due to the ease of obtaining leases.
- Land divestment is typically the exit strategy for most career commercial farmers in the cases where they are unable to find succession farmers. It will be necessary to think about measures that allow for some alternative forms of compensation for farmers (who are collectively an older cohort) that may also keep the land in resource use.

Potential Direction for Land Use Policies

Based on the Situation Assessment and this review of policy options, we recommend further study of the following land use policies and associated regulatory approaches:

Homesteading Provisions

We recommend developing homesteading provisions (Option A of the Matrix) as a tool that would support succession planning or financing for the forester or farmer. To ensure resource use is maximized, we recommend measures such as a limit on home site size, siting criteria (e.g. closer to the parcel access road, in already disturbed areas or at property corner. The inclusion of a conservation easement or a covenant or plat notice could help protect the land for resource use, and, together with siting criteria could protect rural character.

Parcel Sizes, Clustering, and TDR

We recommend the following tools and combinations of tools be developed:

- Smaller parcel size for resource use only (Option F): This would allow a smaller parcel to be created but only for resource uses. This would recognize the trend for smaller agricultural operations, and allow for flexibility in ownership options.

- Cluster provision with TDR element (Option B of the Matrix) for resource lands: This would allow flexibility in home siting to protect resource use, provide for succession planning. Limitations on the number of lots in a cluster, location criteria for parcels, and siting criteria for the homes, plus buffers could be needed to protect rural character. The County has some of these criteria in its non-conforming lot reconfiguration allowance. To avoid potential for conflicts with larger farming operations, this tool could be oriented away from the existing larger farms.
- Rural PUD for housing variety (Option D): We suggest that this tool may be best applied in rural areas such as in Rural Centers or in Rural Reserve or agricultural production districts (APDs – see below) with base rural zoning and not in Ag-20 or Forest Tier II or Tier I lands. This would allow greater housing variety, and the potential for smaller footprints, to allow agriculture or forestry to continue. It would require public benefits be demonstrated to allow for alternative lot and development patterns, with resource protection.
- TDR Program (Option J): We recommend this tool be carried forward and address resource to rural and resource/rural to urban transfers. We think tying UGA expansions to this tool (plus the added reserve/APD tool below) could mean more compact and smaller UGA expansions in the future, with greater potential to protect rural character.

Rural Reserve and Agriculture Production Districts (APDs)

We recommend that these tools (Option K and M) be combined, and that the County consider applying an agriculture production district (APD) to both Ag-20 lands and lands in forestry/agricultural use in the rural areas but which may not be commercial farms of long-term significance.

The APD may support the burgeoning small farm businesses in the rural areas. It would also allow the County to focus capital planning and other investments to support farms of all sizes in the Ag-20 zone, and allow for agri-tourism, value added enterprises, and other activities that support commercial farming.

It could assist the county further in its efforts to ensure that UGA expansions are thoughtfully planned as well as ensure rural lands are retained for a longer period of time. In order to be removed from the APD, TDRs could be required.

Current Use Taxation

Absent a thorough audit of individuals enrolled in the current use taxation program, it is not clear how additional resource for program enforcement would ensure that broader preservation goals are being met. However, in the case of the open space element of the law, a public benefit rating system would allow for a criteria-based, flexible method for evaluating applicants into the program. From the County’s perspective, such a rating system could determine the “value” of the land in question and commensurately award property tax relief.

POLICY OPTION MATRIX

Policy Option	Focus Rural Character or Resource Land Protection	Pros and Cons	Policy Review	
			County Goals	GMA Goals and Provisions
Homesteading on Resource Lands				
<p>A. Create a homesteading allowance on Forestry and Agricultural Lands where an existing or future home site is allowed at 1-3 acres paired with conservation easement or covenant to keep remainder in resource use. Include siting criteria. This tool generally allows the creation of a single added lot for purposes of accommodating a home for the farmer or their heirs.</p>	<p>This tool has a focus on resource land protection with a conservation easement/ covenant. At the same time it recognizes an existing home, or allows on a vacant property a single home for the operator or an heir.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May assist foresters or farmers obtain financing and help the primary resource activity continue. • May help with succession planning for heirs. • Provides some flexibility to recognize or provide home sites but keep the majority of the property in resource use. • Recognizes one home site but maintains overall density of zone. • Depending on original property size and underlying zoning, may only address one family member (farmer/forester or one heir). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets forestry policies allowing special development standards for dwellings within or adjacent to designated forest lands (Policy 3.3.12). • Allows the county to support farmers in the conservation on designated lands and is a way to identify and develop other incentives for continued farming (Policy 3.4.1). • Requires an amendment to policies establishing minimum lot sizes (Policies 3.3.17 and 3.4.12). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes RCW 36.70A.020 Goal (8) Natural resource industries. • The homesteading allowance could be considered an innovative technique per RCW 36.70A.177. • Per <i>Kittitas County V. E. Wash. Growth Mgmt. Hearings Bd.</i> the provision needs to be supported by a written record explaining local circumstances. Consider lot sizes, current use, location in relation to rural areas, etc. Must limit development so it is consistent with rural character and not characterized by urban growth. Measures such as the limit on home site size, siting criteria, and a covenant or similar measures would help protect character.
Clustering on Resource Lands				
<p>B. Clustering with density incentive and link to TDR; require that the remainder lot be reserved for Agriculture or Forestry use. This tool could reinforce rural character with appropriate lot cluster provisions and help protect resource lands with TDR and remainder lot covenants. While cluster density is slightly higher, the TDR could reduce development potential overall. This could be applied through a floating zone. This could allow the creation of more than one lot depending on the density of the base zone.</p>	<p>This tool could allow added dwellings and would maintain rural character provided clusters do not promote a suburban atmosphere. The remainder lot and TDR provision recognize conservation and implement broader land preservation objectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could allow agricultural/forestry landowners to sell unproductive land to support their farms/forest plots, provide for their heirs, or support their retirement. • Allowing for clustering could result in dwellings being co-located where there is already access to roads and infrastructure, reducing development costs. • The remainder agricultural land would be protected for agricultural use, and could be part of a larger “consolidated” farming area (e.g. if units are clustered at corners, the remainder lot could be contiguous to other remainder lots). • Could encourage more residential dwellings in resource areas. However, on net - this would be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County policies address rural lot size variety though clustering is not specifically mentioned (Policy 3.1.10). • Clustering is not currently allowed on Resource lands per the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element, and any prior lots created under former resource land or rural cluster provisions cannot further subdivide. • The Comprehensive Plan would need to be amended to allow for clustering on resource lands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes RCW 36.70A.020 Goal (8) Natural resource industries and Goal (2) Reduce sprawl, provided clusters can be designed to maximize resource use and avoid an urban appearance. • Clustering is directly identified as an innovative technique in RCW 36.70A.177: Cluster zoning, which allows new development on one portion of the land, leaving the remainder in agricultural or open space uses. • Local circumstances supporting clustering in agricultural areas could include the mis-match of actual lot sizes from zoned lot sizes, and the

Policy Option	Focus Rural Character or Resource Land Protection	Pros and Cons	Policy Review	
			County Goals	GMA Goals and Provisions
		<p>offset by TDR.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If cluster parcels are purchased by non-foresters or non-farmers, this could create some tensions regarding right-to-farm or right-to-forestry. 		<p>ability to re-arrange lots to protect more farmable land.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In forestry areas, some additional lot size comparisons and common ownership maps should be conducted to target clustering in most appropriate areas. Based on Comprehensive Plan descriptions of land use categories, Forest Tier II would have smaller lots than Forest Tier I. Current use taxation information also identifies some smaller properties in Forest Tier II.
C. Clustering without density incentive; require that the remainder lot be reserved for Ag or Forestry use.	Same Option B; would protect resource land on a case-by-case basis (e.g. remainder lot), but not as part of a broader program to transfer development rights.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same Option B, except that no density would be increased above 1 du/20 acre (Ag-20) or 1 du/40 acre (Forest Tier II) limit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as Option B. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as Option B.
D. Create Rural PUD allowing for innovative housing, e.g. rural cottages.	This tool would have more of a rural character focus, than a resource land focus, as it would promote alternative housing types, though if paired with a reserve remainder lot could be similar to Options B and C.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similar pros/cons as Option B. Potential additional pros/cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This tool has the potential to further limit the footprint of development as some units would be attached (e.g. duplex) or have a size limit (e.g. cottages). Depending on provisions to limit visibility and size of clusters, this tool would give more housing variety in rural/resource areas. Typically a PUD is treated like a rezone with a more lengthy review process. It would require an applicant to demonstrate or provide a public benefit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as Option B. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as Option B. Also, per RCW 36.70A.090, "a comprehensive plan should provide for innovative land use management techniques, including, but not limited to, density bonuses, cluster housing, planned unit developments, and the transfer of development rights."
Minimum Parcel Sizes				
E. No change to standard minimum lot size (20 acres in Agriculture or 40 in Forestry); only allow alternative lot size through clustering or homesteading.	See Options A to E.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Options A to D. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Options A to D. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Options A to D.

Policy Option	Focus Rural Character or Resource Land Protection	Pros and Cons	Policy Review	
			County Goals	GMA Goals and Provisions
F. Allow smaller lot sizes than minimum, but below a certain lot size (e.g. below 10 acres) restrict the use of the parcel for non-resource uses (e.g. only allowing a resource use and not allowing single family homes).	This tool is most directly for resource land protection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could allow more ownership options for farmers/foresters wanting smaller plots. • Recognizes resource use as reasonable use of property. • Recognizes most lots are less than 20 acres in size in the Ag-20 zone. Matches trends for smaller farm sizes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the conservation of long-term commercial significant forestlands for productive economic use. (Policy 3.3.1) • Allows the county to support farmers in the conservation on designated lands, and it is a way to identify and develop other incentives for continued farming (Policy 3.4.1). • Provides flexibility in parcel size adequate to allow reasonable and economic agricultural use. (Policy 3.4.2) • Requires an amendment to policies establishing minimum lot sizes (Policies 3.3.17 and 3.4.12). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Per RCW 36.70A.177(2)(a) (a) provides for agricultural zoning, which limits the density of development and restricts or prohibits nonfarm uses of agricultural land. • Per <i>Kittitas County V. E. Wash. Growth Mgmt. Hearings Bd.</i> the provision needs to be supported by a written record explaining local circumstances. Consider lot sizes, current use, location in relation to rural areas, etc.
G. Change to standard minimum lot size – create new Ag-10 zone along with Ag-20 acre; require percentage of lot is maintained in agricultural use.	With allowance for single family home, could increase rural residential uses. Requiring a percentage of lot be maintained in agricultural use would promote resource land protection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Option A, In addition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ May add residential uses in resource areas and over time be in conflict with long-term agricultural production. ○ Lack of siting criteria or clustering could interfere over time with long-term agricultural production. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Option F. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Option A.
H. Keep Ag-20 zone, but allow a percentage of lots to be smaller, provided average 20 acres is maintained. Require percentage of acres is maintained in Agricultural use. Keep Forestry-40 zone, but allow a percentage of lots to be smaller, provided average 40 acres is maintained. Require percentage of acres is maintained in Forestry use.	Same as Option G.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Options F and G. In addition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Would allow a development pattern that is less uniform and more varied in its rural character. ○ Requiring a percentage of lot be maintained in Ag or Forest use would promote resource land protection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Option F. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Option F.

Policy Option	Focus Rural Character or Resource Land Protection	Pros and Cons	Policy Review	
			County Goals	GMA Goals and Provisions
I. Encourage or require lot consolidation prior to subdivision with any of the above options. It could be paired with an incentive to waive boundary line adjustment fees. It could also be paired with a minimum density requirement.	More protective of resource lands if it results in larger tracts for conservation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could promote pre-planning of all agricultural or forest lands in contiguous area. • Could promote protection of the more rare moderate and larger farms left in County. • Could promote larger private forest tracts. • If paired with minimum density (e.g. must have minimum 20 acres to put new home), could reduce the number of future dwellings rather than one per legal lot. • Could discourage property owners from planning comprehensively if it reduces development potential; could mean property owners place lots in other family members' names. • May not match long-term parcel and farm size trends. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports County goals to promote agricultural and forest lands of long-term significance. (Goals 3.3 and 3.4) Does not change density nor add uses that interfere with production beyond current allowances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes RCW 36.70A.020 Goal (8) Natural resource industries and reducing sprawl Goal (2). • Per <i>Kittitas County V. E. Wash. Growth Mgmt. Hearings Bd.</i> the provision needs to be supported by a written record explaining local circumstances. Consider lot sizes, current use, location in relation to rural areas, etc. This tool may need to be targeted to the medium and larger farm or forestry operations.
Transfer of Development Rights				
J. Establish a TDR program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define sending areas: resource lands, sensitive areas not otherwise protected, historic sites, or other. • Receiving areas: Cities, UGAs, Rural Centers (with water and sewer)? UGA expansions, rezones or changes in land use designation? Rural clusters? Resource clusters? In the near term, focus on resource/rural to rural transfers or rural to unincorporated UGAs. 	Focuses on resource protection by transferring density from resource lands to less sensitive lands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires a market for buying credits. • Could help cities achieve objectives for urban centers. • Could limit size and scope of UGA expansions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Framework Plan Policies address innovative measures as an incentive to retain resource lands – TDR could be one tool that meets this intent (Policy 3.1.7) • County Framework Plan Policies also promote infill housing development in UGAs and for housing in rural centers that support resource industries – TDR could also be a tool to promote these infill opportunities (Policies 2.1.6 and 3.2.7) • Other County Framework Plan Policies encourage open space corridors between urban areas as well as encouraging densification along corridors – transferring density from priority open space areas and redirecting growth to centers or corridors could be accomplished with TDR (Policies 10.1.1 and 10.1.4) • The County's Comprehensive Plan 	<p>TDR can support multiple GMA goals including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban growth – focusing growth in centers • Reduce sprawl – remove development potential outside of UGAs • Natural resource industries – permanent conservation of resource lands while giving economic benefit of sold development credit to farmer/forester • Open space and recreation – promote open space between urban areas • Environment – protect less developed areas from conversion <p>Per RCW 36.70A.090, “a comprehensive plan should provide for innovative land use management techniques, including, but not limited to, density bonuses, cluster housing, planned unit developments, and</p>

Policy Option	Focus Rural Character or Resource Land Protection	Pros and Cons	Policy Review	
			County Goals	GMA Goals and Provisions
			Rural and Natural Resource Element currently has a policy and detailed implementation strategy regarding TDR that would implement some of the Framework Policies described above. (Policy 3.4.1) If a TDR program is implemented current policies should be updated and refined to match the actual program.	the transfer of development rights.”
Rural Reserve				
K. Criteria based, countywide: Define rural reserve overlay in Rural zoned areas for a period of time based on defined criteria, such as: prime soils, current use taxation, history of farming, and rural character, as well as the absence of UGA criteria. Consider an alternative term for “rural reserve”. Activities consistent with rural character will be allowed. Consider allowing reclassification from rural reserve to UGA with a TDR.	Promotes rural character protection for a period of time, and indirectly can remove pressure on resource lands of local importance (not of long-term significance).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could give rural land owners more certainty about investing in rural and resource activities. • Could focus on rural lands that contribute most to rural character. • Can limit the rate of rural land conversion to UGAs and allow policy makers to avoid areas having more sensitivity and contributing most to rural character. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A County policy generally considers rural area designation to be permanent until re-designated a UGA (Policy 3.1.3). A rural reserve overlay designation would further support this policy. • Additional rural reserve policies and maps would be needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar to Option J.
L. Establish pilot program for rural reserve: for example, north of Vancouver UGA. City does not want present UGA and does not want to see an expanded UGA.	Similar to Option K, but limited in geography.	Similar to Option K, but limited in geography.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar to Option K, but limited in geography. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar to Option K, but limited in geography.
Agriculture Production Districts (APD)				
M. APDs assigned to Rural lands in agricultural production at risk of conversion and also Agriculture zoned lands. Limit to productive agriculture land. Focus incentives such as clustering, farm stand allowances, and other land use allowances, as well as marketing, in APD to promote retention and addition of agricultural enterprises.	Focuses on resource protection.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May provide incentives or investments to reintroduce agriculture on non-farmed land designated as having long-term significance. • Can combine land use tools, capital facilities investments, and programs in an APD. • Can provide more protection for agricultural land that is not of long-term commercial significance, but nevertheless is part of the growing small farm enterprises. • Can limit the rate of rural land conversion to UGAs and allow policy makers to avoid areas having more sensitivity and contributing most to rural character. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports County goals to promote agricultural lands of long-term significance. (Goal 3.3) Allows for more County support in terms of land use and other investments. Additional APD policies would be needed. • Promotes rural character and supports small-scale farming such as Policy 3.1.1, to maintain and protect rural character and protect and enhance commercial and non-commercial farming. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes RCW 36.70A.020 Goal (8) Natural resource industries and reducing sprawl Goal (2). • Per <i>Kittitas County V. E. Wash. Growth Mgmt. Hearings Bd.</i> the provision needs to be supported by a written record explaining local circumstances.

Policy Option	Focus Rural Character or Resource Land Protection	Pros and Cons	Policy Review	
			County Goals	GMA Goals and Provisions
Current Use Taxation				
N. Maintain current program parameters but increase enforcement.	Supports both resource production and rural character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would reserve program for those that actually qualify. • Taxes would be spread more equitably. • Could create antagonism and reduce incentives for property owners to enter into new agricultural or forestry enterprises. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County policies support current use taxation for agriculture and forestry. (Policies 3.3.7 and 3.4.1) 	Promotes several GMA goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural resource industries • Open space • Environment
O. Modify program to require public benefit.	Promotes rural character – relates only to open space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would provide more rigor in the qualification process for a property that has no economic use but may have public benefit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports Policy 7.5.3: “A full range of implementation mechanisms should be considered to preserve and protect fish and wildlife conservation areas, including ... current use taxation programs.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes GMA goals addressing environmental protection.