



THURSTON COUNTY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

OPEN SPACE TAX PROGRAM

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS TIMBER LAND CLASSIFICATION

Preparing an Open Space-Timber Land application will take some effort. The documents described in the list that follows are required for the review of your application by the Thurston County staff and the Thurston County Board of Commissioners. Sorry, but incomplete or inaccurate applications will be returned to the applicant.

PRELIMINARY MEETINGS

Be sure to discuss your intentions Development Services staff. These discussions may alter your decision to submit an application. If you have any questions about the program requirements or application procedure, feel free to ask the staff.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Your application must contain a complete and accurate description of the property that you wish to classify as open space. Assessor tax statement descriptions are not adequate. Attach either a copy of the full description from your ownership document (for example, a quit-claim deed), or a description supplied by a licensed surveyor or title company.

If your property contains a residence you must indicate the residential area on a map so it can be excluded from the application. The amount of area excluded for a residence must be at least one (1) acre. If additional area does not meet eligibility criteria, it too may need to be excluded from classification.

Please note that you must have at least 5 acres eligible for timber land classification excluding the 1-acre (or more) home site or other ineligible property. Up to 10 percent of the timber land may be used for incidental uses compatible with growing and harvesting timber (see the Eligibility Criteria Checklist).

Individual applications will be required for two or more parcels of land which do not touch, or when requesting different current use classifications for different portions of a parcel. A legal description for each parcel (or portion of a parcel) must be identified separately.

ASSESSOR'S SECTION MAP (1 copy):

A current print of an 8½" x 11" Assessor's section map must be provided to identify the property you wish to classify as timber land. **The correct map will show the entire square-mile section that your property lies within on an 8½ x 11" sheet.** You'll need the section, range and township numbers of

your property to obtain the section map. Development Services or Assessor's Office staff can help you identify those numbers. (Maps are available for a small fee from the Assessor's Office. Call 786-5410 for information.) Once you have obtained a section map, add the following information:

- a. Outline each property in your classification request in red.
- b. Label each parcel or portion of a parcel that you wish to enroll as timber land. Specify dimensions where you propose to enroll a portion of a property.
- c. Draw in improvements (house, barn, well, septic drainfield, etc.) streams, roads and other distinguishing physical characteristics (such as gullies, rocky areas, surface water, etc.).

AERIAL PHOTO:

In order to see your property and its relation to the surrounding area, an aerial photo that shows the entire section is necessary. These are available for a small fee from the Thurston Geodata Center. You'll need the section, range and township numbers to obtain the photo. Development Services staff can help you identify those numbers. (For aerial photo information call 360-754-4594, or visit www.geodata.org.)

TIMBER MANAGEMENT PLAN:

A Timber Management Plan is required to establish that the site can and will be managed for commercial timber production. The Timber Management Plan must be prepared by a professional forester or by another person who has adequate knowledge of timber management practices, concerning the use of the land to grow and harvest timber. In addition to the information provided on the application form, the Plan must include the following four elements:

- a. An evaluation of the long-term viability of commercial timber production at the site.
- b. Management measures that will provide long-term timber productivity at the site.
- c. An implementation plan which provides **general target dates** for various management practices (e.g. crop maintenance measures, harvesting, replanting).
- d. If the land has been recently harvested or supports a growth of brush and noncommercial type timber, a description of the owner's plan to restock the timber land within three years.

Please discuss these requirements with your forester to avoid costly revisions and delays. If an existing timber or forest management plan for the land has been in effect for more than one year, the application must indicate the nature and extent to which the plan has been implemented or changed. **Timber Management Plans which do not include all required elements will be returned to the applicant.**

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS: (optional)

You may also submit photographs, petitions, production logs, or any other relevant information to support your application.

TAXES AND JUDGMENTS DUE COUNTY:

Thurston County policy requires that you pay all taxes and judgments due to the County prior to current use classification in the Open Space Tax Program. Staff will verify with the appropriate county departments that all taxes, judgments and court fines have been paid. Properties with outstanding violations will not be eligible for enrollment in the program.

APPLICATION FORM:

Application forms are available from Thurston County Development Services. If you have any questions about the form, contact Development Services staff at 360-786-5490.

Be sure to read the statement about tax penalties before signing the form. If there is anything you don't understand, contact Development Services staff.

- ◆ All owners must sign the application form, and all signatures must be notarized. If the named owner is married, both spouses must sign.
- ◆ An Application is not complete unless accompanied by the required fee and necessary documents.
- ◆ Incomplete applications cannot be processed and will be returned to the applicant.

Submit your complete application to Thurston County Development Services. The application may be filed in person or by mail (use the complete address shown below). A filing fee for each application is due at the time the application is filed. (Check with Development Services for current fee.) This fee should be paid with a check or money order made out to Thurston County.

MAILING ADDRESS:

Attn: Open Space Tax Program
Thurston County Development Services
The Atrium
3000 Pacific Ave. SE, Suite 100
Olympia WA 98501