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RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP DEPARTMENT

Creating Solutions for Our Future

Joshua Cummings,
Interim Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Thurston County Planning Commission

FROM: Maya Bühler, Associate Planner
Allison Osterberg, Senior Planner

DATE: December 14, 2017

SUBJECT: Mineral Resource Lands – Summary of Public Comment to Planning Commission

To date, staff has held one formal comment period on the Mineral Resource Lands draft inventory and classification. There have been several additional opportunities for public comment on the project at planning commission meetings:

- Planning Commission, June 21, 2017
- Planning Commission, October 18, 2017
- Planning Commission, November 1, 2017 (1 comment received)
- Planning Commission, November 15, 2017 (3 comments received)
- Planning Commission, December 6, 2017 (3 comments received)

There have been two written comments received from citizens, both submitted at the planning commission meeting on December 6, 2017. In addition to the two written comments received, five spoken comments have been given at planning commission meetings. The comments have encompassed the following topics:

- Compatibility of Mineral Resource Lands with Rural Residential Resource 1/5 (2)
- Compatibility of Mineral Resource Lands with Capitol Forest
- Compatibility of Mineral Resource Lands with agriculture (2)
- Considering criteria at the designation stage versus the permitting stage (2)

Christy White, citizen

- On November 1, 2017, Christy White requested the Planning Commission and staff to involve the public in the Mineral Resource Lands update, because designation will potentially impact landowners in the rural area, including the resources they use (water, land, air).

- On November 15, 2017, Christy White spoke in regards to the compatibility of Mineral Resource Lands with adjacent Rural Residential Resource lands. She noted that a new study was published from WSU that discusses the risk of landslides, specifically on logged lands, and impacts of landslide on climate change. Much of the mineral resource area is currently overlain with forest resource lands.
- Christy White also spoke and submitted a written comment on December 6, 2017, in regards to compatibility of mineral resource lands with Capitol Forest. She requested the Planning Commission consider Capitol Forest for exclusion to the mineral resource lands designation due to its public benefit as a recreation area, park, wildlife resource and watershed; due to the potential risks associated with mining that may affect air, land, and water; and due to Capitol Forest's existing use for commercial forestry.

South of the Sound Community Farmland Trust (SSCFLT)

- Two comments were submitted on co-designating long term agriculture with mineral resource lands. On November 15, 2017, Loretta Seppanen (SSCFLT) spoke in regards to a memo submitted, and urged that despite research showing agricultural lands can be reclaimed after mining use, the time frame required to restore agriculture is not economically feasible. She noted that not much acreage is added to mineral resource lands in co-designating, but a significant amount of the long-term agriculture land base is removed.
- On December 6, 2017, Bill Zachmann (SSCFLT) also spoke and submitted a written comment addressing co-designation of mineral resource lands with agriculture. Bill stated that mineral needs can be met by the current designation of mineral lands, and that co-designating viable and valuable agricultural land is not necessary to meet supply. Co-designation would result in only a 1% gain of land for rock extraction, but a large loss of agricultural lands. These lands are subpar for aggregate extraction (less than 10 years/depth of overburden), and there are better lands available for designation.

Segale Properties LLC

- Mark Hancock, a representative of Segale Properties LLC, spoke at two meetings in regards to designating mineral resource lands broadly and handling criteria mostly at the permitting stage. On November 15, 2017, Mark spoke in regards to public parks and the 1,000 foot buffer. He stated that different mines of different sizes occurring for different lengths of time can vary in impact, and a 1,000-foot buffer may not be necessary for all mines.
- On December 6, 2017, Mark Hancock spoke in regards to soil types marked as gopher habitat. He stated this criteria should be considered at the permitting stage as opposed to the designation stage.

December 6, 2017

Thurston County Planning Commission

I am requesting the Planning Commission to consider various designation options for Capitol Forest other than Blanket Mineral Land Compatibility designation. Give the extraordinary and unique nature of Capitol Forest, very serious consideration must be given to the use of the Capitol Forest. The use of Capitol Forest not only impacts the Capitol Forest directly, but also impacts the citizens who surround it.

Several options I am asking the Commission to consider and propose that these options be presented for consideration to the Thurston County Board of Commissioners:

- 1) For the purposes of Mineral Land Compatibility Designation, designate Capitol Forest as not compatible(except for Capitol Forest Road Maintenance) due to it's all ready resource maximization for forestry.
- 2) For the purposes of Mineral Land Compatibility Designation, designate Capitol Forest as not compatible(except for Capitol Forest Road Maintenance) due to its public benefit as a public recreational park, wildlife resource, and as a watershed.
- 3) For the purposes of Mineral Land Compatibility Designation, designate Capitol Forest as not compatible(except for Capitol Forest Road Maintenance) due to the environmental risks associated with mineral mining that effect the water, air, land stabilization, and release of toxins into the ground.
- 4) For the purposes of Mineral Land Compatibility Designation, if areas of Capitol Forest must be designated, that those areas are significantly restricted within Capitol Forest. To protect wildlife and citizens surrounding Capitol Forest, mining operations would meet strict environmental requirements, be limited in size, be limited in time frame and only be located at the center of the Forest to mitigate harm, impact, and disturbance to the residents who border Capitol Forest. I would ask that additional permitting requirements be implemented for Capitol Forest for any operations designated compatible.

Capitol Forest is not only a gem for Thurston County but for the State. Capitol Forest already serves as a significant renewable financial resource as well as a public benefit. Very serious consideration must be given to preserve this gem from blanket designations which may irreparably harm Capitol Forest and it's current long term and established uses.

Thank you, Christy White

DEC 06 2017

RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP

December 6, 2017 Thurston County Planning Commission Public Input.

Good Evening. My name is Bill Zachmann and I am a 28-year resident of Thurston County.

I'm speaking on behalf of the South of Sound Community Farmland Trust, a not for profit group whose mission is to preserve the current agricultural land base given the significant value it has in ensuring high quality, local farm products are available for Thurston County and nearby other county residents, as well as the sustainable income it provides for local growers and farm workers.

We are concerned about proposals before you to include a Mineral Lands co-designation on currently designated Long Term and Nisqually Agricultural Lands in the Comprehensive Plan rewrite. This appears to be justified for the purposes of expanding the county's land base for future sand, gravel and bedrock extraction, but not necessarily to meet in-county needs.

~~In other words~~, ^{OF} our review documents prepared for or by the county indicate that the long-term supply and demand for local, in-county aggregate and bedrock needs can be met by the County's current Mineral Lands designations.

Do we really need more mineral land acreage designations to serve out of county interests, at the expense of retaining viable and valuable Agricultural Land uses and their preservation?

Our review of county planning level documents also shows that if Mineral Lands and Ag Lands are co-designated, the gain would be a mere 2,140 more acres, or about 5.5% more land for aggregates, and about 1,100 more acres, which is less than 1% more land, for hard rock extraction.

We note that on/under these new lands that would be available under co-designation, the quality of aggregate resources from them is sub-par in terms of years of extraction at less than 10 years and/or the depth of overburden that needs to be removed from them is significant. Better lands are already designated for aggregate extraction for longer time periods, or with less impacts to remove overlain soils.