Mineral Resource Lands: Designation Options
OVERVIEW

- Review of the Context
- Review from Public Hearing
- Planning Commission Recommendation
OVERVIEW: HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- Oct 18, 2017 - Staff requested a recommendation from the Planning Commission on the **SCOPE** of the Mineral Lands Designation Criteria and associated Map.

- This is not the final say on Mineral Lands.
## Project Steps for Mineral Resource Lands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify and classify</td>
<td>Develop a countywide inventory based on geologic data on the location and extent of mineral deposits, existing land uses, and other factors. These areas are categorized based on their quality, using available data from DNR, USGS, and others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Designate</td>
<td>Identify priority areas where high quality mineral resources are available and compatible with existing land use patterns and other criteria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Conserve</td>
<td>Establish policies that ensure future land uses will be compatible with mineral extraction in designated areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Permit</td>
<td>New mining operations planned in areas designated as mineral resource lands will still need to be reviewed before they are permitted to operate. Mining activities must abide by all relevant state and local regulations, including environmental rules.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THURSTON COUNTY MINERAL LANDS: A HISTORY

1990
Growth Management Act

1993
Thurston County establishes designation criteria for mineral lands in the Comprehensive Plan

2003
BoCC places moratorium on new designation of mineral lands
Establishes Task Force

2010
Weyerhaeuser Co, et al submit challenge to Growth Management Hearings Board (GMHB)

2010
County adopts revised criteria for mineral lands designation, excluding forest lands and most critical areas
2011
GMHB rules that County must reconsider its designation criteria

2012
GMHB rules that County must reconsider exclusions of forest lands and critical areas

2012
County adopts amended designation criteria, further specifying reasoning for excluding forest lands and specific mineral lands

2013
County adopts revised criteria for mineral lands designation, removing exclusions of forest lands and most critical areas*

2013
GMHB rules County’s designation criteria is in compliance, and will be mapped during the Comprehensive Plan Update
THURSTON COUNTY MINERAL LANDS: RECENT HISTORY

**Early 2017**
BoCC approves Scope of Work for Comprehensive Plan Update

**Jan-Aug 2017**
AESI Maps MRL Inventory

**April-Nov 2017**
MRL Focus Group Convened

**June 2017**
PC Work Sessions on Mineral Lands start

**Oct 2017**
Staff ask PC for Recommendation on Scope of Designation Criteria

**March 2018**
PC Public Hearing on MRL Scope Options

**Future!**

MRL Policies
Chapter 3
Dev Code
CLASSIFICATION & DESIGNATION FACTORS: MINIMUM GUIDELINES

- Geology: depth and quality of resource and characteristics of resource site
- Projected life of the resource
- Resource availability and needs in the region
- Accessibility and proximity to point of use or market
- Energy costs of transporting materials
- Proximity to population areas
  - General land use patterns
  - Availability of utilities, including water supply
  - Surrounding parcel sizes and uses
  - Availability of public roads and public services
  - Subdivision and zoning of small lots

“Counties and cities must designate known mineral deposits so that access to mineral resources of long-term commercial significance is not knowingly precluded. Priority land use for mineral extraction should be retained for all designated mineral resource lands.”

- 365-190-070 WAC
**WAC 365-190-040:** Overlapping designations. The designation process may result in critical area designations that overlay other critical area or natural resource land classifications. Overlapping designations should not necessarily be considered inconsistent. If two or more critical area designations apply to a given parcel, or portion of a given parcel, both or all designations apply.

- If a critical area designation overlies a natural resource land designation, both designations apply. For counties and cities required or opting to plan under the act, reconciling these multiple designations will be the subject of local development regulations.

- If two or more natural resource land designations apply, counties and cities must determine if these designations are incompatible. If they are incompatible, counties and cities should examine the criteria to determine which use has the greatest long-term commercial significance, and that resource use should be assigned to the lands being designated.

**WAC 365-190-070 (4)(d):** In designating mineral resource lands, counties and cities must also consider that mining may be a temporary use at any given mine, depending on the amount of minerals available and the consumption rate, and that other land uses can occur on the mine site after mining is completed, subject to approval.
# EXISTING DESIGNATION CRITERIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum Designation Criteria: Chapter 3</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Mineral Deposits</strong></td>
<td>Should contain deposits based on USGS maps, DNR permits, or site specific geologic information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **2. Location** | 1,000 ft from  
- public preserves,  
- urban growth areas (UGAs)  
- residential areas with existing densities > 1/5  
60% of area within 1,000 ft of a proposed site must have parcels of 5 acres or larger (excludes applicant) |
| **3. Min Site Size** | 5 acres |
| **4. Marketability** | Mineable, recoverable, marketable |
| **5. LTA and Historic** | Long-term agriculture lands and historic/cultural sites are excluded |
| **6. LTF** | Long-term forestry lands may be co-designated |
**EXISTING DESIGNATION CRITERIA: TC CODE (20.30B)**

**Minimum Designation Criteria: 20.30B TCC**

Most Criteria are the same as in the Comprehensive Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXCEPTION Critical Areas</th>
<th>Site does not contain the following critical areas: Zone 1 or Zone 2 areas for Group A public water systems, Class 1 or 2 wetlands or their buffers, FEMA 100-year floodplains, habitat areas for threatened or endangered species or their buffers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Site is located away from geologically hazardous areas (steep slopes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A full critical area review is done at the time of application.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Critical Area exclusions are NOT currently in Chapter 3 of the Comprehensive Plan
Option 1. Adopted Current Designation Criteria

Option 1 reflects the Current Criteria in Chapter 3 of the Comprehensive Plan

- Map 1a. Does NOT co-designate agricultural lands
  - At some point, may require that the county do an economic study to determine what resource designation to apply where LTA overlaps with MRL

- Map 1b. Co-designates Agricultural Lands
**Option 2. All Exclusionary Criteria**

Would require the county to conduct extensive, countywide biological and other studies to serve as the basis of criteria. This is beyond the current scope of the Comprehensive Plan Update and would require approval from the Board of County Commissioners.

- **Map 2a. Does NOT co-designate agricultural lands**
  - At some point, may require that the county do an economic study to determine what resource designation to apply where LTA overlaps with MRL

- **Map 2b. Co-designates Agricultural Lands**
Option 3. Blended Criteria

Limits exclusionary criteria to current, adopted criteria and to those additional criteria for which the county has high-quality, countywide data (i.e., Flood Zones, Marine Shoreline Hazard Areas, and Mima Mounds).

- Map 3a. Does NOT co-designate agricultural lands
  - At some point, may require that the county do an economic study to determine what resource designation to apply where LTA overlaps with MRL

- Map 3b. Co-designates Agricultural Lands
PUBLIC COMMENTS

- 15 People testified at March 7 Public Hearing
- 41 written comments
- Themes
  - Supporting Option 1 because it best meets state regulations
  - Supporting Option 2 because it provides best “up-front” protection of the environment and/or specific critical areas
  - Supporting all “A” options, and continue not co-designating Agricultural Lands
  - Concern that Option 3 “review area” misleads people into thinking other areas won’t need review
  - Request to remove existing criteria for 1,000 foot buffer setback from UGAs and public parks and preserves, and set this at the permit stage
  - Request to exclude Capitol Forest from designation as a “public park or preserve”
  - Request to designate all DNR lands, including Capitol Forest
  - Concern about protections at the permitting stage and cumulative impacts on rural character and environment
NEXT STEPS

- Planning Commission recommendation will be presented to the Board of Commissioners
- Policy language will be considered as part of the review of Chapter 3 of the Comprehensive Plan
Questions?

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## DESIGNATION CRITERIA OPTIONS - UPDATED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current MRL Designation</th>
<th>2017 Inventory</th>
<th>Map 1a</th>
<th>Map 1b</th>
<th>Map 2a</th>
<th>Map 2b</th>
<th>Map 3a</th>
<th>Map 3b</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Acres</td>
<td>5,623</td>
<td>189,475</td>
<td>141,331</td>
<td>143,391</td>
<td>107,447</td>
<td>108,110</td>
<td>135,765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Inventory</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of LTA</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggregate supply est*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years supply</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Very rough estimate – uses an average estimate to convert cubic yards of material to tons. Any specific mining proposal would be subject to state and local regulations that could limit extraction potential on a particular site.*