

Summary of Draft Proposed Ordinance relating to King County Code Chapter 20.36 Timberlands Current Use Assessment

This summary fulfills Washington State Growth Management Act and King County Code (K.C.C.) 20.18.100 requirements for a “plain language summary.”

This ordinance proposes to terminate King County’s Timberland current use assessment program and merge those classified properties into the Designated Forestland program. If enacted, it will place administrative responsibility of these properties formerly classified as Timberland with the King County Department of Assessments under its Designated Forestland program, as authorized by passage of the Washington State Senate Bill 6180 in 2014. It would also create administrative efficiencies without affecting the existing tax incentive to manage private lands for timber production. The following is a summary of the draft proposed ordinance addressing these code changes, primarily in K.C.C. Chapter 20.36, Open Space, Agricultural, and Timber Lands Current Use Assessment.

Ordinance Section	King County Code Section	Current Code	Proposed Change	Intent/Rationale
1	N/A	N/A	States that the Timberland classification will be merged with the Designated Forestland program, and any land currently classified as timberland will be designated as forestland	RCW 84.34.400 allows counties to their Timberland classification with their Designated Forestland program. This ordinance proposes such a merger. Terminating the Timberland current use assessment program creates administrative efficiencies without affecting the existing tax incentive to manage private lands for timber production. It also eliminates the need for Council to act on and approve property enrollment in the Timberland program as the King County Department of Assessments administratively approves enrollment in the Designated Forestland program.
2	N/A	N/A	Directs the Department of Assessments to provide notice of the merger to the WA Department of Revenue (DOR) and to all affected land owners	The Department of Assessments, with help from DNRP current use staff, will work to ensure there is a smooth transition in the administrative oversight of previously classified Timberland properties program under their Designated Forestland Program. State DOR and all Timberland property owners will be informed of County’s merger, per requirements in RCW 84.34.400(3) and 84.33.130(1)(b).

Ordinance Section	King County Code Section	Current Code	Proposed Change	Intent/Rationale
3	9.08.010	Adopts definitions pertaining to Surface Water Management Program, including definition of "open space" in subsection P.	Amends "open space" definition to remove references to "timberland"	To reflect merger of Timberland program into the Designated Forestland program.
4	20.22.060	Details types of cases where Hearing Examiner issues recommendations, including Timberland applications in subsection D.	Removes references to Timberland applications	To reflect merger of Timberland program into the Designated Forestland program.
5	20.36.010	States County intent to implement current use taxations programs, per RCW 84.34 guidelines and policy	Removes references to "timberland"	To reflect merger of Timberland program into the Designated Forestland program.
6	20.36.015	Defines terms for K.C.C. Chapter 20.36., including "enrolled parcel" and "timberland"	Removes references to "timberland"	To reflect merger of Timberland program into the Designated Forestland program.
7	20.36.020	Details role of Hearing Examiner in reviewing applications and appeals related to enrollment in the Public Benefit Rating System (PBRS) and Timberland current use assessment programs	Removes references to "timberland"	To reflect merger of Timberland program into the Designated Forestland program.
8	20.36.030	Details how and to whom current use applications are filed	Removes references to timberland.	To reflect merger of Timberland program into the Designated Forestland program.
9	20.36.040	Details current use program applications fee amounts collection process by program	Removes references to "timberland"	To reflect merger of Timberland program into the Designated Forestland program.
10	20.36.060	Details public hearing notice requirements and role of the Council Clerk's Office for current use applications	Removes references to "timberland"	To reflect merger of Timberland program into the Designated Forestland program.
11	20.36.070	Details special instructions for current use applications received after October 1 st of each calendar year	Removes references to "timberland"	To reflect merger of Timberland program into the Designated Forestland program.
12	20.36.080	Details the requirement that the Council chair must sign any ordinance and open space agreement that approves a property for enrollment in current use programs	Removes references to "timberland"	To reflect merger of Timberland program into the Designated Forestland program.

Ordinance Section	King County Code Section	Current Code	Proposed Change	Intent/Rationale
13	20.36.090	Details the process for distribution and hearings on incorporated area current use applications	Removes references to "timberland"	To reflect merger of Timberland program into the Designated Forestland program.
14	20.36.100 B (7)	Details requirements edibility for current use programs, including for award of the forest stewardship land open space resource category in subsection B.7.	Removes references to "timberland"	To reflect merger of Timberland program into the Designated Forestland program.
15	20.36.110	Details eligibility criteria for enrollment in Timberland program	Repeal	To reflect merger of Timberland program into the Designated Forestland program.
16	21A.37.020 (A)	Details criteria to be considered a sending site for the Transfer of Development Rights program	Removes references to "timberland"	To reflect merger of Timberland program into the Designated Forestland program.
17	N/A	N/A	Severability	Standard King County severability clause.

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