



ODF Private Forests Division

Converting Oregon Forestland to Other Uses

September 2009

Conversion of forestland in Oregon to a different use is a complex process, designed to balance the personal rights of landowners with the public benefits derived from natural resources such as clean water and wildlife.

No provisions of Oregon's Forest Practices Act prohibit forestland from being converted to another use. If you are considering changing the use of your forest land, many other agencies may have rules which affect changing the use of your land.

Planning for Harvest prior to land use conversion

Prior to proceeding with a harvest, submit a Notification of Operation form to the Oregon Department of Forestry office in your region. Notification of Operation forms are available from ODF offices or from ODF's website, www.oregon.gov/ODF

A Plan for an Alternate Practice fully describing your proposed conversion project is also required.

What's included in the Plan for an Alternate Practice? Is there a version I can use as a guide?

The following information is required in your Plan for an Alternate Practice;

- A description of the proposed land use change and why the proposed use requires removal of forest tree cover on all or part of the operation area.
- Requirements of the Forest Practices Act you feel need to be waived, exempted, or modified.
- A map showing the specific portion of the operation area necessary for the proposed land use change.
- Written approvals from any state, county or city agency with resource protection jurisdiction over the proposed non-forest use. See the **Resource Protection: a Shared Responsibility** section for some specific instances where another agency exercises jurisdiction.

Resource Protection: A Shared Responsibility

Many different functions of state government have responsibility for natural resource protection under Oregon law. Sometimes, the regulatory authority for a proposed land conversion can involve several different agencies for the same land use proposal.

I am performing a final harvest of timber before the land is converted...

Exemption from Oregon's reforestation rules must include written approvals from your city or county planning department and the county assessors office stating that the proposed land use change is authorized under local land use and zoning laws – and that within 12 months all construction permits and approvals required under all local, state and federal land use requirements will be obtained.

Modifications, waivers or exemptions to Water Protection Rules within the Forest Practices Act must include written approval from the Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) regional office for your area. Water quality standards must be maintained during both the interim transition period for the land and the proposed future use. DEQ will also communicate sensitive water quality information to the landowner and advise on the water quality permit requirements needed for the proposed future use of the land.

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Final harvest may also affect the tax-deferral status of the land. Consult with the Oregon Department of Revenue (DOR) for additional information and current requirements.

I am converting my land from forest to agriculture uses...

When conversion from forest to agriculture use is proposed, contacting the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) is recommended. ODA oversees compliance with the Agricultural Water Quality Management Plan.

I am seeking to fill a wetland or perform forest activities in a navigable waterway...

Written approval from the Department of State Lands (DSL) may be required when seeking to fill, excavate or alter a wetland during conversion activities or when forest activities are proposed on a navigable waterway.

Land I'm seeking to convert has a sensitive resource site or habitat for a threatened or endangered species of wildlife on it...

Consultation with the Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) when conversion is proposed for forestland which contains a "Specified Resource Site" defined in Oregon Administrative Rules 629-665-0000 is advised.

My proposed conversion site is close to a scenic river or lake...

Written approval from the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) is required for any harvest or conversion activity within a quarter-mile of a state scenic waterway.

Additional information is available from:

Oregon Department of Forestry
Private Forests Division
2600 State Street
Salem, OR 97310
503-945-7200
www.oregon.gov/ODF

Department of Forestry (ODF)

Protects water quality on 12.2 million acres of public and private forests

www.oregon.gov/ODF or 503-945-7200

Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)

Protects Oregon's surface waters and groundwater.

www.oregon.gov/DEQ or 503-229-5696

Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)

Ensures that land use plans and zoning complies with state planning goals.

www.oregon.gov/LCD or 503-373-0050

Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD)

Protects and enhances scenic, aesthetic, natural, recreation, scientific, and fish and wildlife values along scenic waterways.

<http://www.oregon.gov/OPRD/RULES/waterways.shtml> or 800-551-6949

Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW)

Protects and enhances fish and wildlife resources, manages fishery and wildlife resources, and prevents the serious depletion of indigenous species.

www.oregon.gov/ODFW or 503-947-6000

Department of Agriculture (ODA)

Reduces water pollution associated with agricultural lands and activities by implementing water quality management plans and rules.

www.oregon.gov/ODA or 503-986-4700

Department of State Lands (DSL)

Administers Oregon's Removal-Fill Law to protect Oregon's waters for public navigation, fisheries and recreation. Ensure that activities of landowner do not adversely affect another and to minimize flooding, improve water quality, and provide fish and wildlife habitat.

www.oregon.gov/DSL or 503-986-5200

City and county governments must protect water quality during any forestland conversions within their city limits or urban growth boundaries if that local government has assumed responsibility of regulating forest operations.