



Electoral Area C

Agricultural Bylaw and Policy Updates Project Draft Property Data Summary

Background

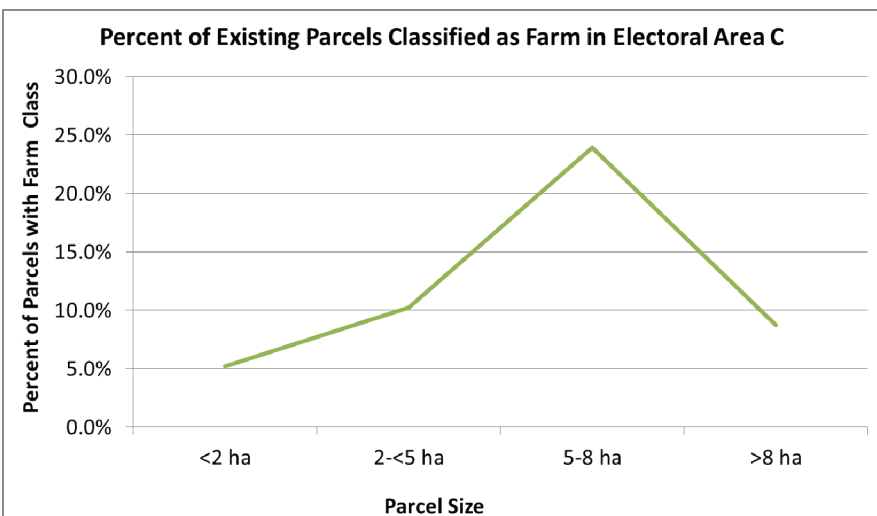
One of the projects identified in the Agricultural Area Plan Implementation Plan is the Bylaw and Policy Updates Project. The purpose of the project is to review Regional District of Nanaimo bylaws and policies with the purpose of identifying and taking action on obstacles and barriers to agriculture in the region.

As part of the Bylaw and Policy Updates Project, a detailed analysis of property data was completed. The purpose of the analysis was to gain a better understanding of agriculture in the region. This document represents a summary of the findings of the analysis for Electoral Area C.

Farm Classification

In British Columbia, farmers may apply to the BC Assessment Authority to have their land classified as farm land for tax assessment purposes. To qualify for farm classification, farmers must be using the land for agriculture and must generate a minimum amount of income from their farm operation.

Farm classification is an established source of data that provides an indication that agricultural activity is occurring on a given parcel. For the purpose of this project, farm class was used to determine if a property was being farmed. It is recognized that there are existing agricultural activities that do not qualify for farm class and have not been included here.



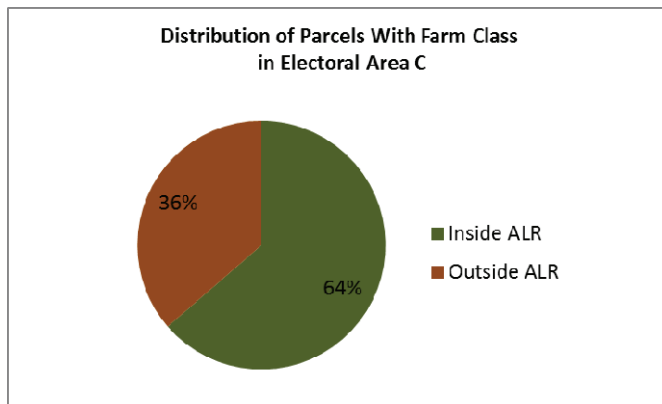
There are existing agricultural activities that do not qualify for farm class and have not been included here.

The chart to the left shows the percent of parcels classified as farm based on parcel size. Generally as the parcel size increases, the proportion of properties with farm class also increases up to about 8 ha. The data shows a drop in the percentage of >8ha parcels with farm class, primarily because of the large proportion of parcels with Private Managed Forest Land class that are zoned to allow agriculture.

The pie chart below shows the distribution of parcels with farm class. In Electoral Area C, nearly 2/3 (64%) of parcels with farm class are located in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR).

Parcel Size	# of Parcels with Farm Class
< 2ha	30
2-<5ha	38
5-8ha	11
>8ha	42

In Electoral Area C 75% of parcels with Farm Class are larger than 2 ha.



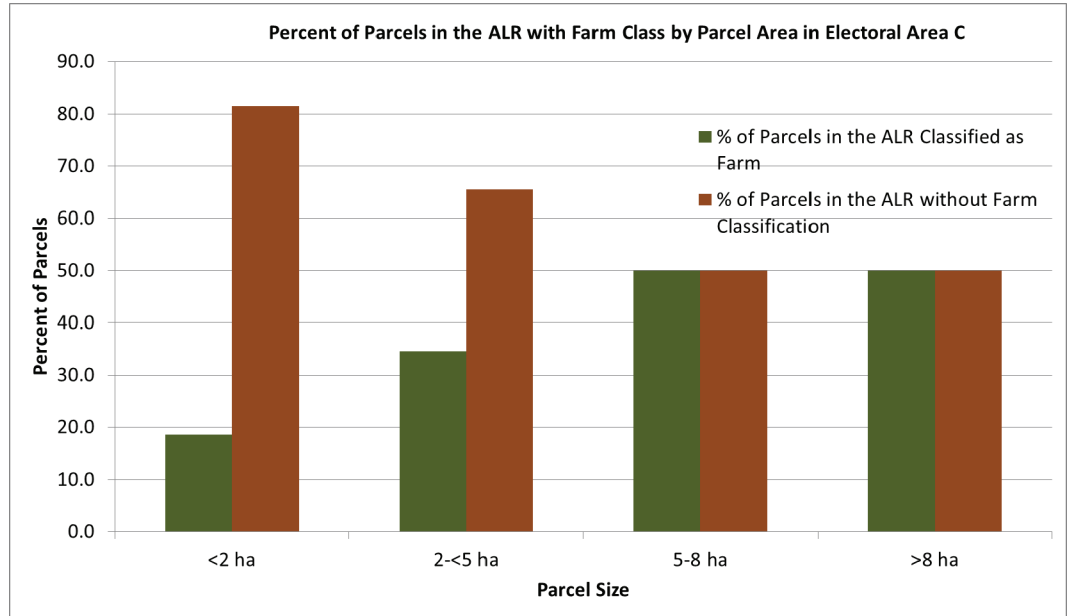
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Draft Property Data Summary

Farm Class Continued

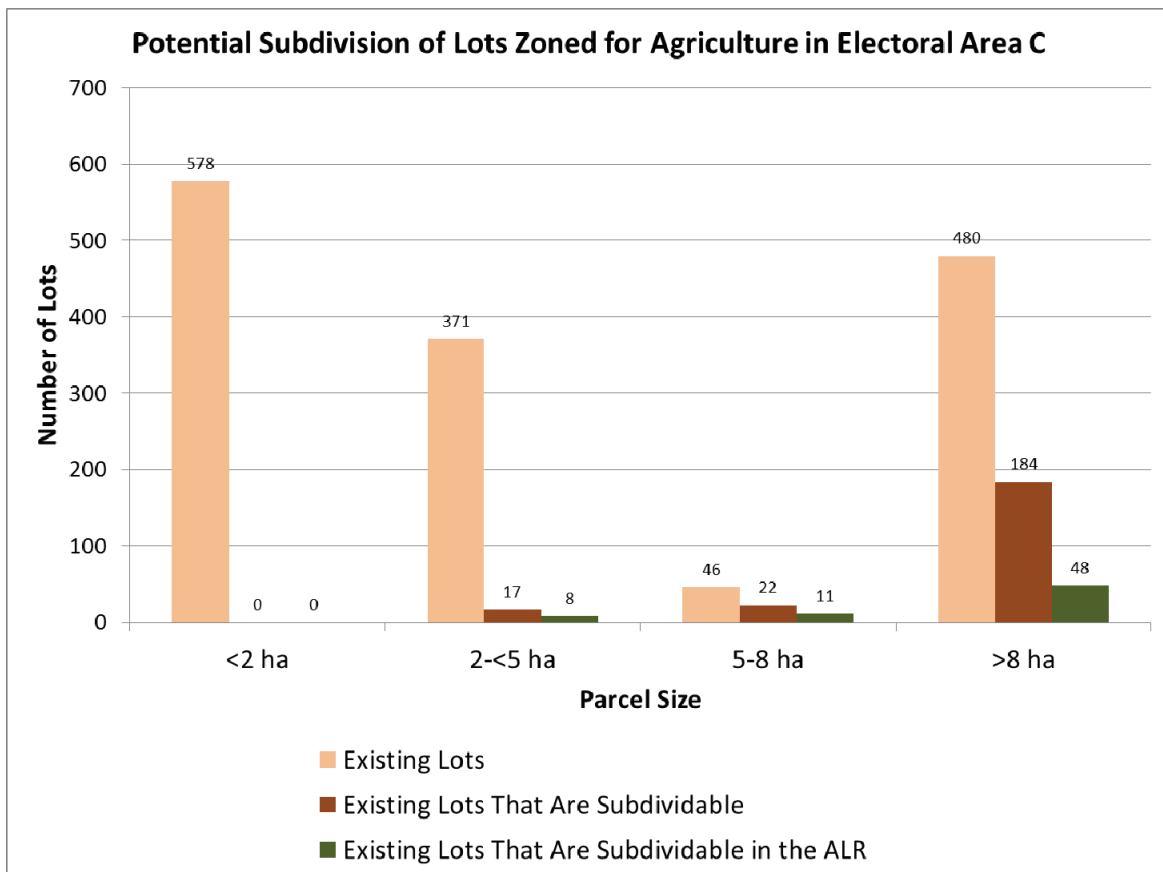
While most parcels with farm class are in the ALR, there is also a relationship between parcel size and farm class. The chart to the right shows the percent of parcels with farm class in the ALR organized by parcel size. As can be seen from the chart, in Electoral Area C, the proportion of parcels with farm class located in the ALR generally increases as parcel size increases.



Subdivision of Lands Zoned for Agriculture

As indicated in the previous section, the likelihood of farming being conducted on a parcel decreases as parcel size decreases. In Electoral Area C a number of the existing parcels zoned for agriculture are subdividable. As shown in the chart below, many of the larger parcels can be subdivided under current zoning.

It should be noted that approval from the Agricultural Land Commission is required for subdivision of ALR lands.

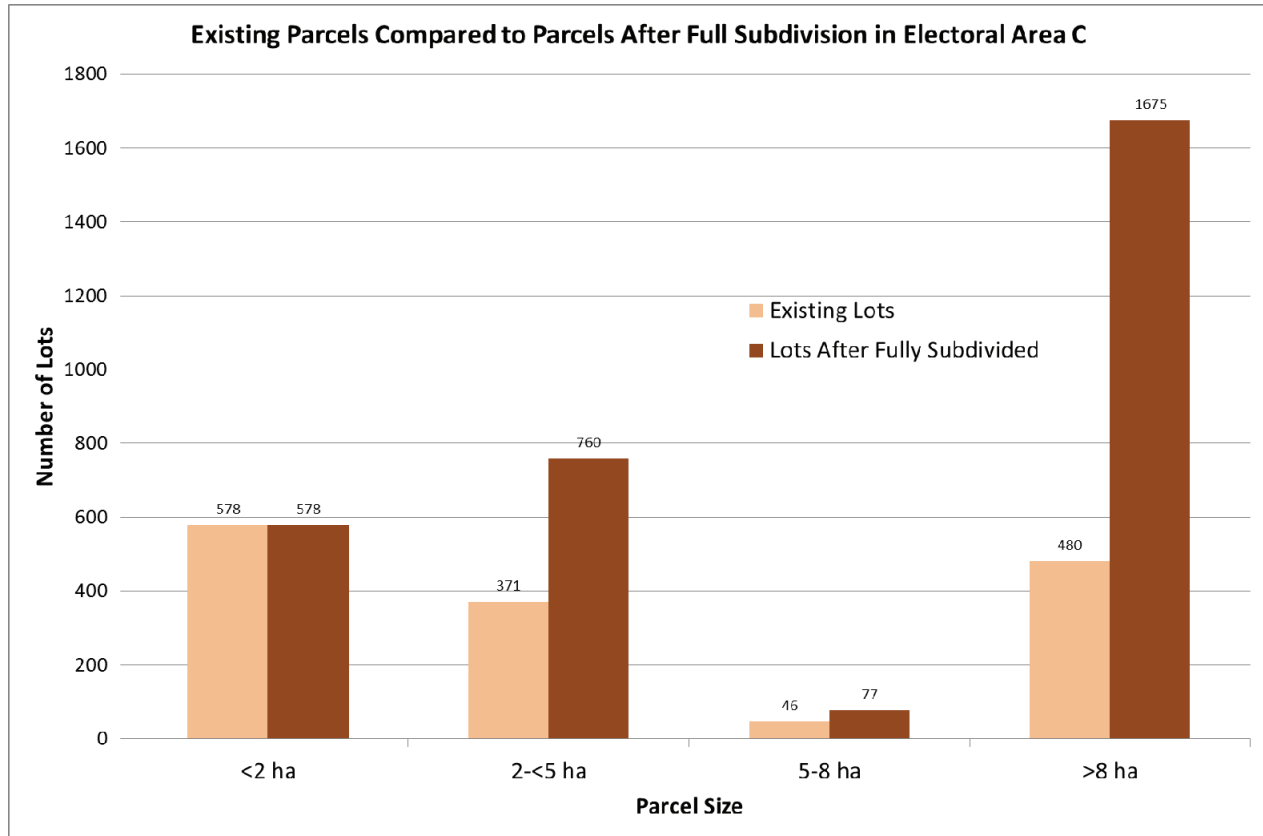


Subdivision of Lands Zoned For Agriculture Continued....




The chart below shows the number of parcels in each of the four parcel size categories now compared to the number of parcels if all of the subdividable parcels are subdivided into the smallest parcels permitted under zoning. As can be seen from the chart, there would be a significantly greater number of parcels that are 2-<5 ha and >8 ha.

Of particular concern is the limited number of 5-8 ha parcels as this parcel size category is most likely to have farm class. In addition, research has shown that parcels which are between 5-8 ha have the highest likelihood of agricultural activity at a measurable scale. Therefore, it is important to maintain and/or increase the number of 5-8 ha parcels. In Electoral Area C there is a high proportion of Private Managed Forest lands/large land holdings with significant potential to create 50 ha parcels. Although the zoning of these parcels permits agriculture, it is unlikely that most would be used for agriculture due to a number of factors such as topography, limited access, and affordability.

At full buildout, the number of 5-8 ha parcels increases from 46 to 77 and the number of parcels >8 ha increases significantly from 480 to 1,675. At full buildout the number of 2-<5 ha parcels increases from 371 to 760.



Farm Facts

-  There are 1,475 parcels that are zoned to allow agriculture that occupy approximately 108,300 ha of land.
-  There are 2,733 ha of land located in the Agricultural Land Reserve. This represents 2.5% of the total land base where agriculture is a permitted use.
-  Agriculture is permitted on most of the land base in Electoral Area C.

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