



## Electoral Area G

### 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 G.

#### Farm Classification

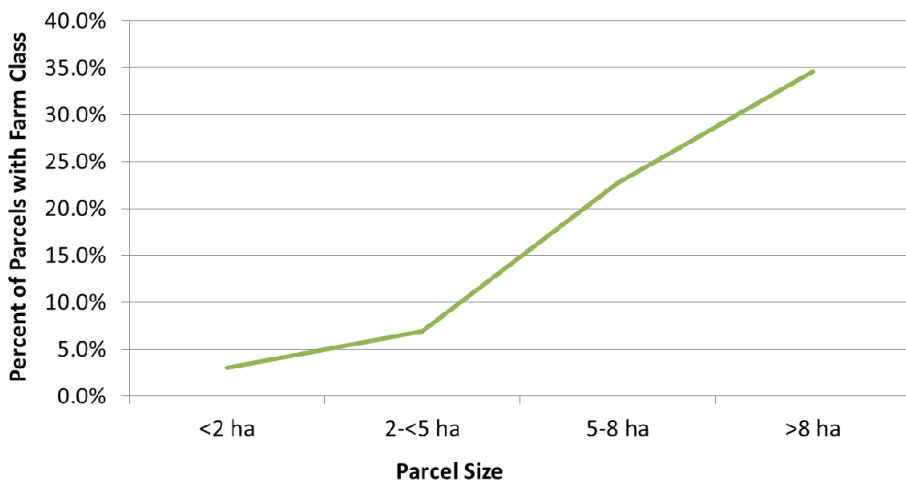
In British Columbia, farmers may apply to the BC Assessment Authority to have their land classified as farm land for tax assessment purposes. To qualify for farm classification, farmers must be using the land for agriculture and must generate a minimum amount of income from their farm operation.

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.

The chart to the right shows the percent of parcels classified as farm based on parcel size. As the parcel size increases, the proportion of properties with farm class also increases.

**Percent of Existing Parcels Classified as Farm in Electoral Area G**

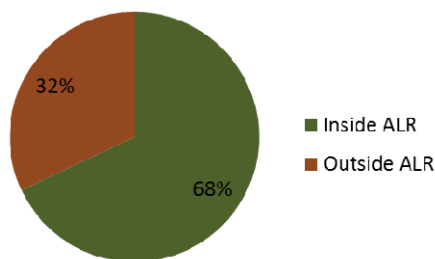


Parcel Size	# of Parcels with Farm Class
< 2ha	9
2-<5ha	8
5-8ha	5
>8ha	28

In Electoral Area G 82% of the parcels with Farm Class are larger than 2 ha.

The pie chart to the right shows the distribution of parcels with farm class. In Electoral Area G, more than two thirds (68%) of parcels with farm class are located in the Agricultural Land Reserve.

**Distribution of Parcels With Farm Class in Electoral Area G**



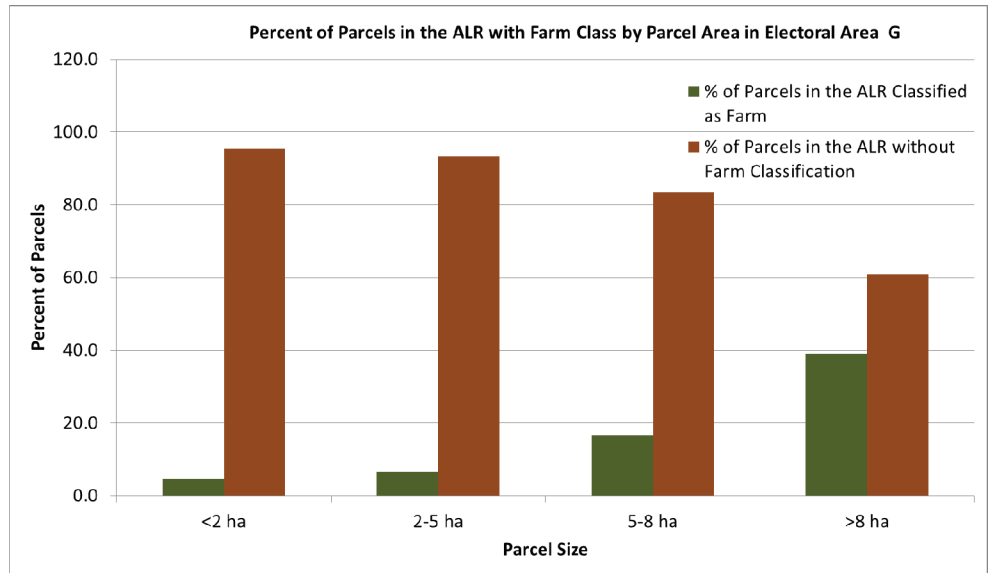
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#### Farm Class Continued

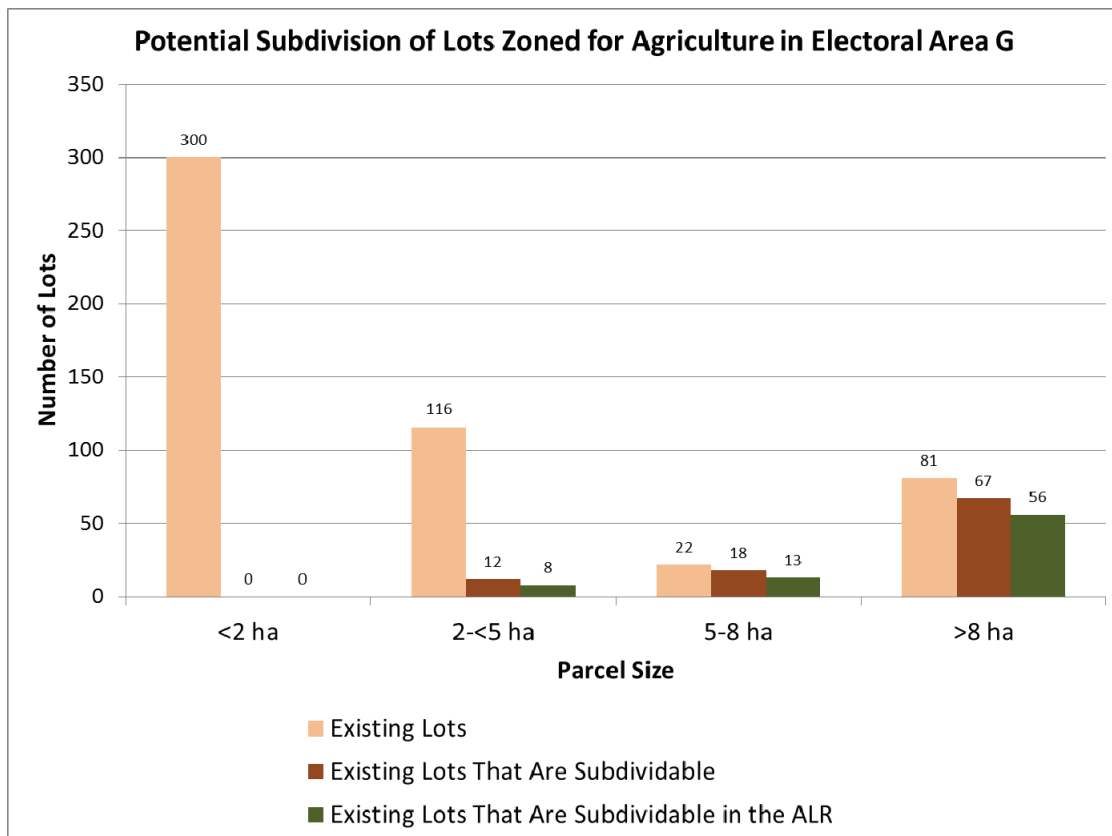
While most parcels with farm class are in the ALR, there is also a relationship between parcel size and farm class. The chart to the right shows the percent of parcels with farm class in the ALR organized by parcel size. As can be seen from the chart, in Electoral Area G, the proportion of properties with farm class located in the ALR 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 G there is significant potential for subdivision of lands zoned for agriculture into smaller parcels. As shown in the table below, in the 5-8 ha and >8 ha parcel size categories, the majority of parcels zoned for agriculture can still be subdivided under current zoning.

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



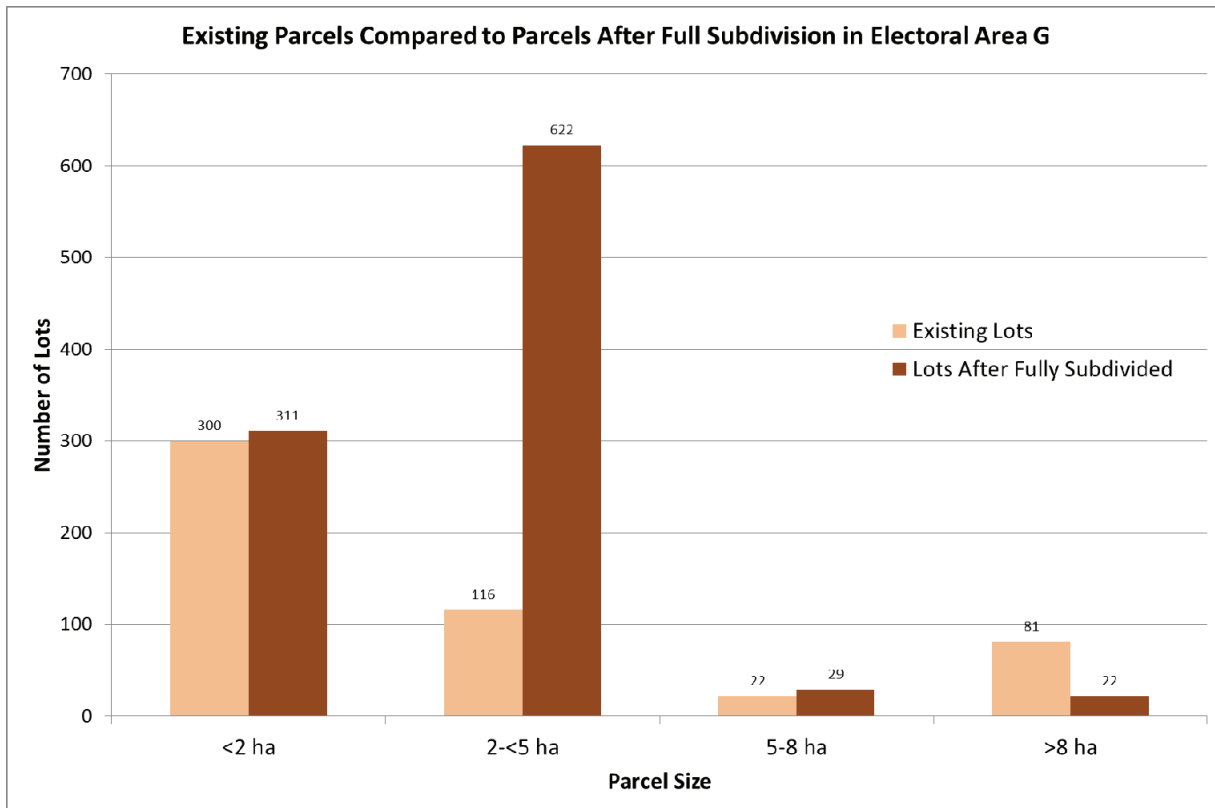
### Subdivision of Lands Zoned For Agriculture Continued....

The chart below shows the number of existing 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 will be a significantly greater number of parcels that are 2-<5 ha. While the number 5-8 ha parcels would remain relatively unchanged, there would be a significant reduction in the number of parcels that are >8 ha.

Research has shown that as parcel size increases so does the likelihood of agricultural activity at a measurable scale. Therefore, it is important to maintain and/or increase the number of larger parcels.

Many of the existing parcels that are 5-8ha or >8 ha are currently zoned for a 2.0 ha minimum parcel size. As these parcels are subdivided, the number of larger parcels in the 5-8 ha and >8 ha categories will be reduced. The reduction in the number of 5-8 ha parcels is offset by an increase in the number of 5-8 ha parcels which originate from parcels >8 ha. The net result is that the number of 5-8 ha parcels would increase slightly, while there would be a significant reduction in the number of >8 ha parcels.

At full buildout the number of 2-<5 ha parcels increases from 116 to 622. If this were to occur, it could have significant consequences with respect to protecting agricultural viability and productivity.



### Farm Facts



There are 519 parcels that are zoned to allow agriculture that occupy approximately 3,321 ha of land.



There are 2,496 ha of land located in the Agricultural Land Reserve. This represents 75.1 % of the total land base where agriculture is a permitted use.



Agriculture is a permitted use on most the land base in Electoral Area G.

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