



Electoral Area H

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.

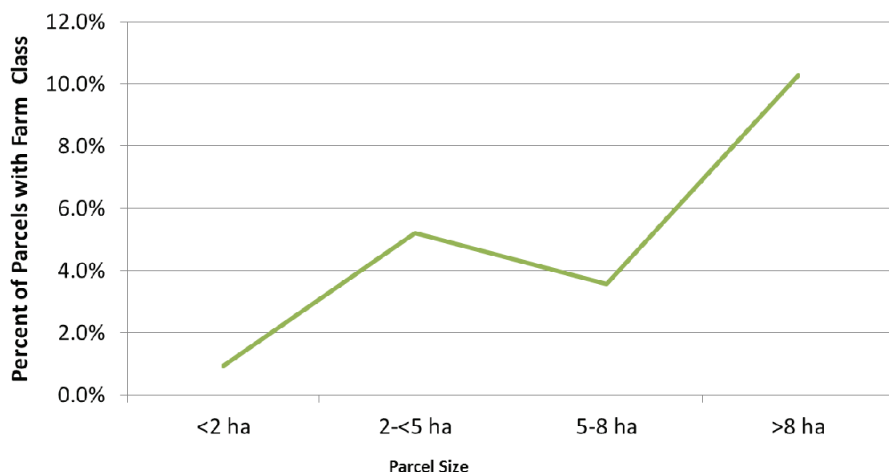
As part of the Bylaw and Policy Updates Project, a detailed analysis of property data was completed. The purpose of the analysis was to gain a better understanding of agriculture in the region. This document represents a summary of the findings of the analysis for Electoral Area H.

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.

Percent of Existing Parcels Classified as Farm in Electoral Area H



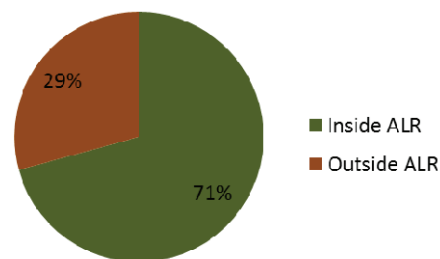
The chart to the left shows the percent of parcels classified as farm based on parcel size. In general, as the parcel size increases, the proportion of properties with farm class also increases.

In Electoral Area H 95% of the parcels with Farm Class are larger than 2 ha.

Parcel Size	# of Parcels with Farm Class
< 2ha	2
2-<5ha	15
5-8ha	2
>8ha	22

The pie chart to the right shows the distribution of parcels with farm class. In Electoral Area H, almost three quarters (71%) of parcels with farm class are located in the Agricultural Land Reserve.

Distribution of Parcels With Farm Class in Electoral Area H

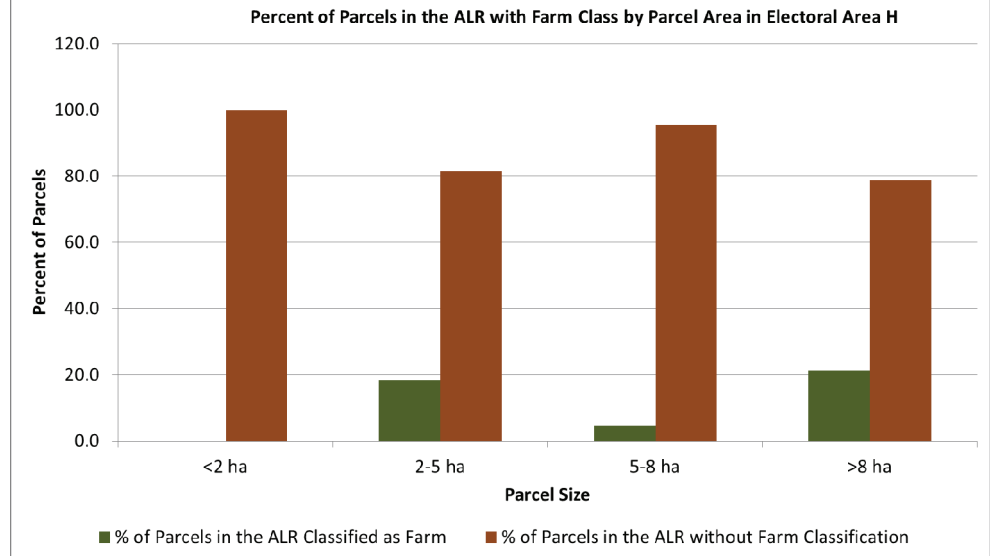


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Farm Class Continued

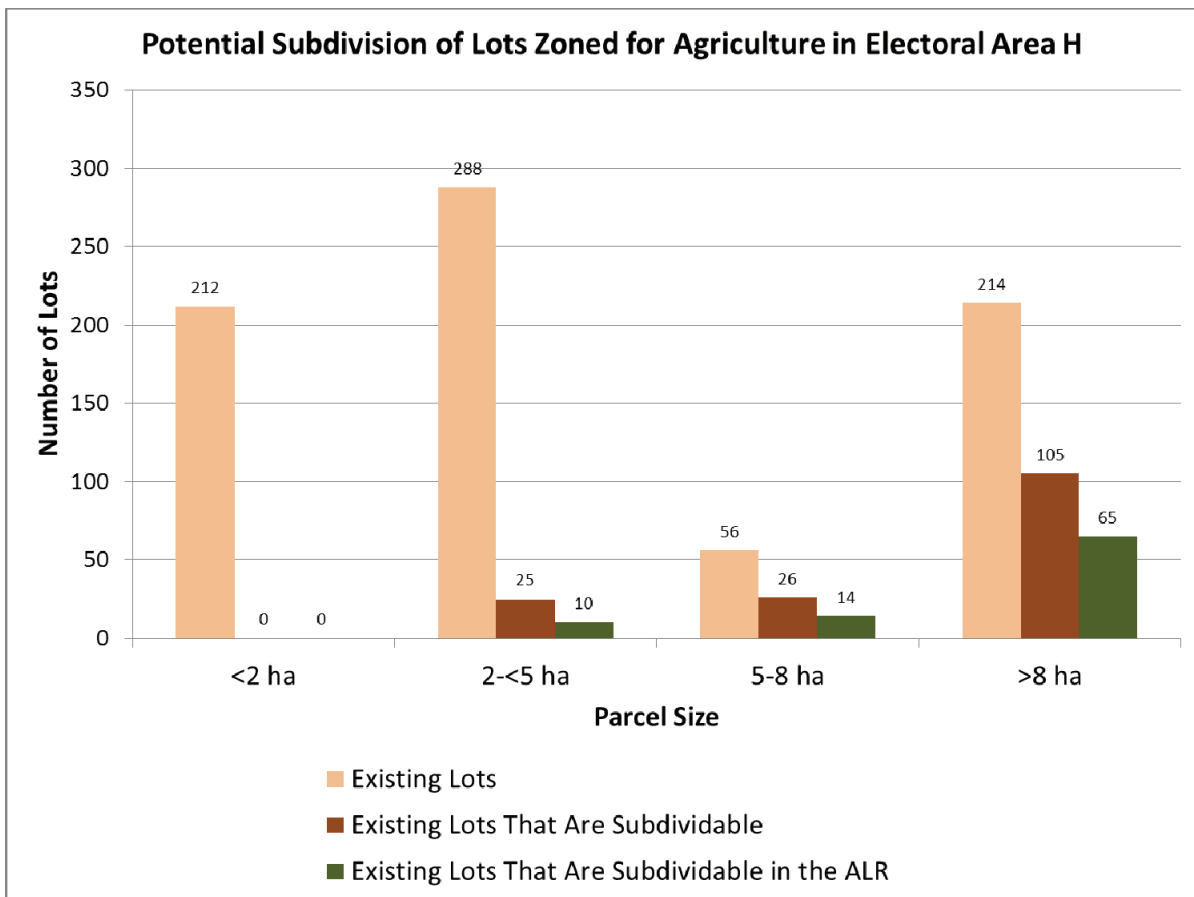
While most parcels with farm class are in the ALR, there is also a relationship between parcel size and farm class. The chart to the right shows the percent of parcels with farm class in the ALR organized by parcel size. As can be seen from the chart, in Electoral Area H, the proportion of properties 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 H, there are lands zoned for agriculture that can still be subdivided under current zoning. Of those lands with subdivision potential, almost half are located in the ALR in each parcel size category.

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

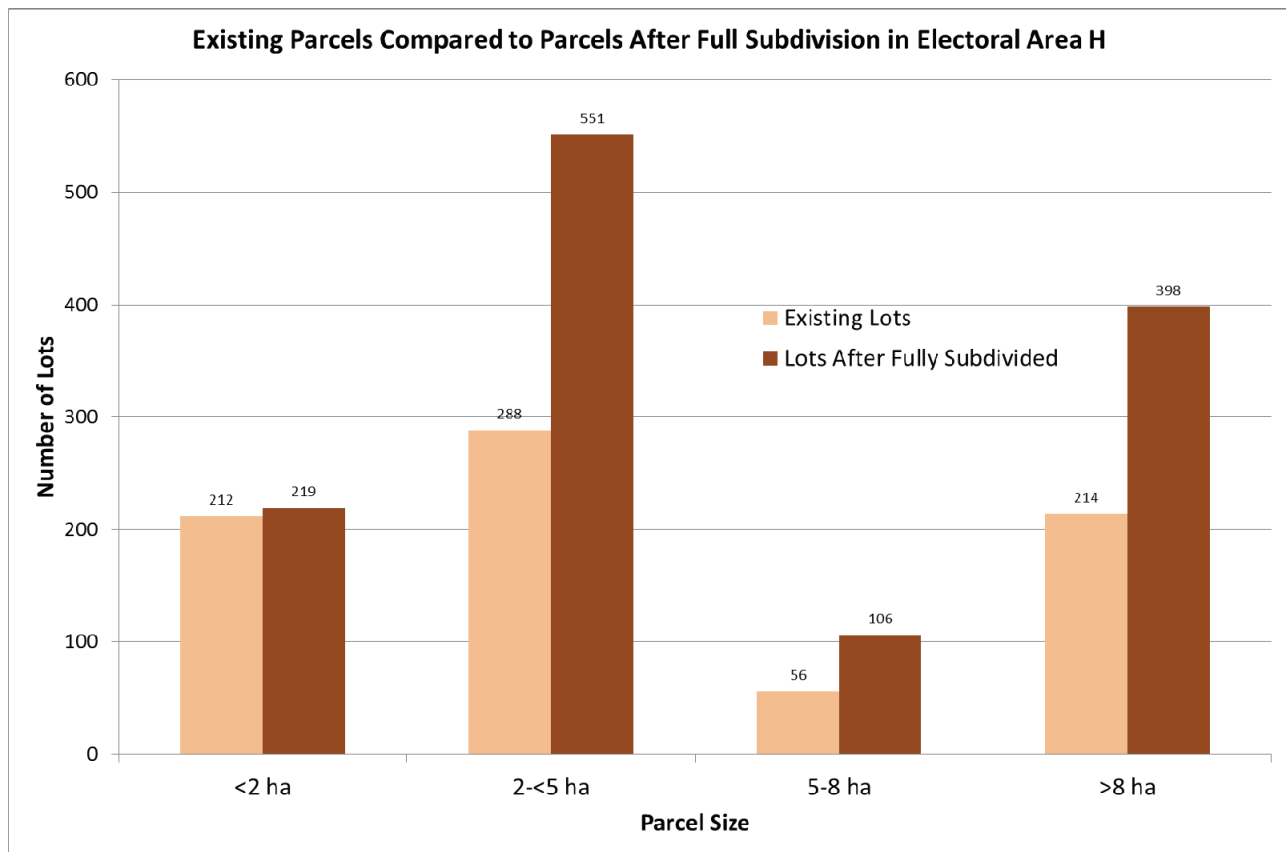


Subdivision of Lands Zoned For Agriculture Continued....

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 below, there would be a significantly greater number of parcels that are 2-<5 ha. Based on the analysis in the previous section, the likelihood that these smaller parcels will be farmed is less than if they were retained as larger parcels.

In addition to the above, there would be an increase in the number of 5-8 ha as a result of a large proportion of the existing >8 ha parcels which support an 8 ha minimum parcel size. There would also be an increase in the number of >8 ha parcels as a result of large land holdings currently classified as Private Managed Forest Land which can be subdivided into 50 ha parcels.

At full buildout, the number of 5-8 ha parcels increases from 56 to 106 and the number of parcels >8 ha increases from 214 to 398. At full buildout the number of 2-<5 ha parcels increases from 288 to 551. An increase in the number of 2-<5 ha parcels could have significant consequences with respect to protecting agricultural viability and productivity.



Farm Facts



There are 770 parcels that are zoned to allow agriculture that occupy approximately 25,731 ha of land.



There are 6,285 ha of land located in the Agricultural Land Reserve. This represents 24 % of the total land base where agriculture is a permitted use.



Agriculture is permitted on most lands in Electoral Area H.

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