

Electoral Area 'H' Official Community Plan Review



ALR Boundary Review Preliminary Analysis

What is the ALR Boundary Review Project?

The Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) boundary project has been initiated by the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) and will review land that is suitable for farming in Electoral Area 'H'. The project is considered an preliminary analysis intended to provide information that will be considered as part of the Electoral Area 'H' Official Community Plan Review. The information from the study may also be used to inform an future investigation in the event the RDN were to pursue an application to the ALC for an ALR boundary adjustment in the future.

One of the primary outcomes of the ALR boundary project is to increase confidence in the accuracy of the ALR boundary in Electoral Area 'H'. The project will evaluate land lying within and outside of the ALR for its suitability for farming. The project includes three key elements:

- ◆ a review of historical Agriculture Land Commission (ALC) decisions;
- ◆ a technical review of agriculture capacity and suitability for different types of agricultural production, including soil capacity rating, parcel size, and existing land uses; and
- ◆ stakeholder consultation.

Landowners and farmers will be contacted by the RDN and Ione Smith from Upland Consulting, to see if they wish to participate in the project. Participants are asked to share agrology reports related to their property and/or provide first-hand accounts or photographs that relate to the agricultural suitability of their land. Participants may also request an on-site visit to assist the consultant in gaining site specific information. In addition, the RDN will consult with external agencies such as the ALC, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

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What is the ALR?

The ALR is a provincial land designation intended to preserve and protect agricultural lands in BC. The ALR is administrated by the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) who is dedicated to preserving agricultural land and encouraging farming in BC.

In the early 1970s, the determination of the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) boundary was based largely on the Government of Canada's Canada Land Inventory (CLI) maps which were available at a 1:50,000 scale. The CLI system rated land for agricultural capability on a scale of Class 1 to Class 7 based on biophysical factors such as soils and climate. Class 1 land is considered the most suitable for a wide range of agricultural production while Class 7 land has no capability for agriculture. The original designation guidelines, generally stated, included lands in the ALR if they had capability ratings of Class 1 to 4.

In the 1980's, a province-wide ALR fine tuning review was initiated by the ALC in order to have the boundary refined for accuracy in areas where new data had become available. This review resulted in changes being made to the ALR in Electoral Area 'H'. Today, the ALR in the RDN consists of an estimated 18,729 hectares of lands, of which 3,387 hectares is located within Area 'H'. About 2,271 hectares in Area 'H' has been identified as being farmed within the ALR and 42 hectares of land outside of the ALR has been identified as being farmed .



Did you know?

Information on land use and development in Electoral Area 'H' is available in the **OCP Review Background Report: Part 2: Land, Building & Spaces**, which is available on the OCP review webpage at www.rdn.bc.ca/areahocp

How do I get Involved?

The ALR boundary review project is targeted at landowners who have either applied to the ALC for subdivision/non-farm use/exclusion or inclusion within the ALR and been denied; have expressed an interest in applying to the ALC; or landowners, who farm land that is currently not within the ALR. These people will be invited to share information about their property relating to agricultural suitability.

If you meet this criteria and have not been contacted by the RDN or Upland Consulting, you can contact Ione Smith at 778-999-2149 or ione@uplandconsulting.ca to participate.

For general questions and comments regarding the OCP review in Area 'H', please visit the OCP review website at www.rdn.bc.ca/areahocp or contact Courtney Simpson, Senior Planner, RDN at csimpson@rdn.bc.ca or 250-390-6510.

