

Solar Farm Rules Advisory Committee



Madras Airport

11/10/10

Jefferson County SoFTAC

Jefferson County has taken 2-step approach to attract solar farm developments:

- Rural Renewable Energy Development Zone – tax benefits for renewable projects in Jefferson County.
- SoFTAC - goal is to create a streamlined permitting process for solar farm proposals in specific areas of the County.



Oregon's Land Use Planning System

- In the 1970s and 1980s Counties worked to inventory their lands.
- Goal was to protect farm and forest lands (resource lands).
- Counties had to justify urban and developed rural areas that were committed to non-resource uses.
- “Default” zoning outside of UGBs was resource zoning (Goal 3 or 4).



Oregon's Land Use Planning System

- Resource protections didn't necessarily differentiate between true capability.
- “Not all Goal 3 lands were created equal.”



Oregon's Land Use Planning System

- Rural counties protect huge amounts of “resource lands.”
- Jefferson County protects over 620,000 acres of Goal 3 land.
 - Entire county is 1,150,000 acres
 - Another 420,000 acres are either CTWS reservation land or Deschutes National Forest).
- Not constrained on supply – limited economic opportunities on much of the land.
- Solar farms are a valid resource use of resource land if appropriately sited.



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Currently 3 Options for Solar Farms:

- Limit to 12 or 20 acres depending on soils.
- Interpretation Route.
- Goal 3 Exception.



Goal 3 Exception Process:

LENGTHY

SUBJECTIVE



VULNERABLE

EXPENSIVE

Goal 3 Exception Process: Sanctity of the Goal Exception Process.

Exceptions must be exceptional!



Displacement of Farm Land/Use

Lease rates comparison:

Eastern Jefferson County AUM is roughly 20 acres.

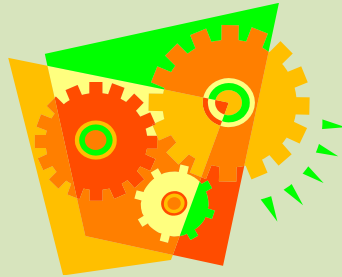
Grazing lease rates = +/- \$0.80/acre annually.

Solar farm standard lease rates not set presently – typically tied to percentage of revenue produced by facility – could be in the \$200 – 400 per acre range.



What is an adverse impact on farm use?

Will not force a significant change in accepted farm or forest practices on surrounding lands devoted to farm or forest use; and



Will not significantly increase the cost of accepted farm or forest practices on surrounding lands devoted to farm or forest use.



Goals for Solar Farm Rule?

Create rules that protect productive farm uses and farm land.

Accommodate the industry needs by properly analyzing impacts of solar farms on Goal 3 lands.

Allow property owners to diversify resource use and economic use of Goal 3 lands.

How to accommodate goals in new rule?

Remove Goal 3 Exception requirement for non-high value farmland.

Increase acreage for High Value Farmland with rigorous review standards for such proposals.

Recognize that solar farms are yet another legitimate resource use of resource land.

Jefferson County SoFTAC

Questions?



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