

**DECISION CRITERIA
YAMHILL COUNTY FORESTLAND CLASSIFICATION COMMITTEE**

General Parameters

The preservation of the forests and the conservation of the forest resources through the prevention and suppression of forest fires hereby are declared to be the public policy of the State of Oregon. ORS 477

In order to accomplish this a complete and coordinated forest protection system is acknowledged and the primary mission of the State Forestry Department in such a system is protecting forest resources, second only to saving lives. ORS 477.

Forestland classification committees established under ORS 526.310 periodically investigate and study all land within the boundaries of its county or counties and determine which of the land is “forestland”.

Forestland is defined as a woodland, brushland, timberland, grazing land or clearing that, during any time of the year, contains enough forest growth, slashing or vegetation to constitute, in the judgment of the forester, **a fire hazard**, regardless of how the land is zoned or taxed. As used in this subsection, “clearing” means any grassland, improved area, lake, meadow, mechanically or manually cleared area, road, rocky area, stream or other similar opening that is surrounded by or contiguous to land described in the first sentence of this subsection.

By policy, all lands west of the cascade crest and North of Lane County are considered Class 1 forestlands, if they are forestland. Lands are not classified as Class 2 (grazing) or Class 3 (agricultural) in these areas.

Oregon Revised Statutes Chapter 526 and Oregon Administrative Rules Chapter 629 guide this portion of the classification process.

Determination of forestland shall take into consideration climate, topography, elevation, rainfall, soil conditions, roads, extent of fire hazards, recreation needs, scenic values, and other physical, economic and social factors and conditions relating to the land involved.

Specific Criteria

- All parcels within Yamhill County should be examined for classification.
 - Each parcel, including “non-forestland” lots, need to be identified as forestland or non-forestland for use by county assessor’s offices in their respective databases.
- No minimum size lots for classification.
- Areas classified as non-forestland should not be allowed on an individual lot basis within an area of like fuels. Subdivisions or areas of like fuels and probability of fire suppression needs should be classified alike.
- Parcels of land that are classified as “forestland” need to be contiguous to, or a threat to, land that is also classified as “forestland.”
- All lands within a forest protection district should be reviewed at a minimum of every five years.

Instructions for Yamhill Forestland Classification Flowchart

This “Forestland Classification Flowchart” is to be used only in assisting the Yamhill County Forestland Classification Committee, in determining which lands, including agricultural and wildland urban interface lands, should be included within the protection of the Oregon Department of Forestry, and part of the statewide “complete and coordinated” fire protection system.

The following instructions are to be used with the Yamhill Classification Flowchart.

1. Does it meet the definition of Forestland?

You must first determine if the lands meet the definition of forestland* (see definition of forestland below). If it does not meet the definition then the land will **not be classified** as forestland. If the answer is “yes” then go to # 2.

* Forestland Definition ORS Chapter 477.001: “Forestland” means any woodland, brushland, timberland, grazing land or clearing that, during any time of the year, contains enough forest growth, slashing or vegetation to constitute , in the judgment of the forester, a fire hazard, regardless of how the land is zoned or taxed. As used in this subsection, “clearing” means any grassland, improved area, lake, meadow, mechanically or manually cleared area, road, rocky area, stream or other similar forestland opening that is surrounded by or contiguous to forestland and that has been included in areas classified as forestland under ORS 526.305 to 526.370.

2. Is the area contiguous to or a threat to Forestland?

In other words if a fire was to occur, would that area be threatened by a perimeter type fire coming from forestland, or if a fire was to occur within the evaluation area, would it threaten forestland? If the answer to the question is “Yes” then go to # 3. If the answer to the question is “No”, then the land **will not be classified** as forestland.

* “Contiguous” further defined: The Classification Committee considers a fire within **a mile** of contiguous forestland, in any direction, a potential fire risk to that forestland. Therefore, areas which may not normally be classified as forestland, but are less than 1 mile from classified forestland, may also be classified as forestland in this process.

Example: Not contiguous – inside a city

3. Does the area have improved infrastructure? (Multiple lane-paved streets, standard fire hydrant systems)

This is to help the Classification Committee evaluate the infrastructure in the area. There are many physical features to be considered when evaluating areas for classification. Infrastructure such as two lane paved streets with sidewalks, hydrant systems for structure suppression/protection are just a couple of factors to consider when evaluating the land. If the answer to the question is “No”, the land **will be classified** as forestland.

If the answer is “Yes” and then Classification Committee may consider local concerns and situations, including input from the fire department in determining if the land will be or will not be classified as forestland. If the area has a home/structure density greater than 4-6/acre then the primary carrier of the fire will likely be structures. Areas such as this should generally not be classified as forestland. The exception to this recommendation would be if the local fire agency and the Forestland Classification Committee, as well as ODF, feel that there are significant reasons for ODF to protect these lands, such as threat to/from forestland. These will typically be in high hazard areas with a potential risk to the Oregon Forest Land Protection Fund and areas with large fire potential.

Forestland Classification Flowchart

For Classification of Yamhill County Forestlands within
The Northwest Oregon Forest Protective Association or the
Western Oregon Protection District, by ¼ of ¼ section

