

FINDINGS OF FACT AND ORDER

Jackson County Forestland-Urban Interface Classification Committee Jackson County, State of Oregon

In the matter of an order and findings of)	
fact which classify forestland-urban)	Order
interface property in Jackson County,)	No. 2004-01
pursuant to ORS 477.052.)	

FINDINGS OF FACT

Whereas, the committee developed preliminary classification assignments during 14 meetings of the committee, between March 2003 and March 2004, pursuant to ORS 477.031.

Whereas, the committee determined that 12,007 tax lots (93,053 acres) in Jackson County meet the criteria to be classified as forestland-urban interface property. These tax lots have been grouped into 122 forestland-urban interface areas. The committee made classification assignments to these properties as follows: twenty-three areas (1,146 lots; 7,581 acres) were classified as “High” and ninety-nine areas (10,861 lots; 85,472 acres) were classified as “Extreme”, pursuant to ORS 477.031.

Whereas, maps showing the classification assignments made by the committee are maintained for public review at the following locations: Jackson County Clerks office, 10 South Oakdale, Room 216, Medford, OR 97501, and at the Oregon Department of Forestry, 5286 Table Rock Road, Central Point, Oregon, pursuant to ORS 477.052.

Whereas, the committee held informal community meetings in Sams Valley on December 2, 2003, in Ruch on February 17, 2004, in Phoenix on February 18, 2004, in Ashland on February 19, 2004, in Rogue River on February 25, 2004, in Eagle Point on February 26, 2004, and in Central Point on March 4, 2004 to provide the public an opportunity to review the preliminary classification assignments made up to that time, pursuant to ORS 477.017. An estimated 1,000 people attended these community meetings.

Whereas, a public hearing on preliminary classification assignments was held in White City, on March 9, 2004, pursuant to ORS 477.052. Written and oral testimony was submitted and heard by the committee. Following receipt of this testimony, the committee reviewed it for possible changes in the preliminary classifications, pursuant to ORS 477.052. The reviewed testimony consisted of requests for specific tax lots to not be classified as forestland-urban interface property.

Whereas, notification of preliminary classification and notice of the March 9, 2004 public hearing was mailed to over 11,000 landowners, pursuant to ORS 477.031. Notice of the public hearing was also posted at public libraries in Applegate, Ashland, Butte Falls, Central Point, Eagle Point, Gold Hill, Jacksonville, Medford, Phoenix, Prospect, Rogue River, Ruch, Shady Cove, Talent and White City, pursuant to ORS 477.031. A legal notice advertising the public hearing was twice published prior to the hearing, in the "Mail Tribune" a Medford-based daily newspaper which serves all of Jackson County, pursuant to ORS 477.031. Digital copies of maps, which showed the preliminary classification assignments, were made available on the Oregon Department of Forestry World Wide Web site. A news release about the community meetings and the public hearing of March 9, 2004 was circulated to newspapers, radio stations and television stations in Jackson County and was posted on the Oregon Department of Forestry's World Wide Web site.

Whereas, a preliminary Order and Finding of Fact was approved by the committee on June 30, 2004, pursuant to ORS 477.0.52

Whereas, a final classification was made by formal written order of the committee on October 8, 2004, pursuant to ORS 477.052.

Whereas, the criteria used by the committee for identifying forestland-urban interface properties to be classified were: that the properties must be within the Jackson County, the properties must be within a forest protection district, the properties must meet the definition of "forestland" and the properties must meet the definition of "suburban" or "urban", pursuant to OAR 629-044-1010.

Whereas, definitions of "forestland," "suburban" and "urban," and the definitions of other terms used by the committee, are set forth in ORS 477.001, ORS 477.015 and OAR 629-044-1005.

Whereas, the method for the assignment of classifications was for the committee to view digital maps projected on a wall or a screen. Jackson County, the Oregon Department of Forestry and other government agencies provided the information that was displayed. The digital maps, using the application ArcView, were able to show lands that met the criteria of being forestland-urban interface properties. The digital information also enabled the committee to assign preliminary classifications, using topographic map layers to assign the Topographic Hazard Value, and aerial photos, showing vegetative cover, to assign the Natural Vegetative Fuel Hazard Value. The third required factor, the Wildfire Weather Hazard Value, was drawn from the Wildfire Weather Hazard Value table in OAR 629-044-0230. In addition, the committee received professional opinions and perspectives from fire and forestry agency staff members. In instances when the committee experienced difficulty in initially determining clear boundaries or classification assignments, members of the committee were assigned to conduct site visits and to report their observations to the committee, at its next meeting.

ORDER

The Jackson County Forestland-Urban Interface Classification Committee hereby finds, concludes, and orders, as shown on maps which accompany this order:

1. Lands having a dominant vegetative cover of oak and grass, or juniper and grass, were generally assigned a classification of "High."
2. Lands having a dominant vegetative cover of conifer and brush were generally assigned a classification of "Extreme."

The Jackson County Forestland-Urban Interface Classification Committee has reviewed this document and, by roll call vote, declared this Order and the Findings of Fact to be true.

DATED this ____8th____ day of _____October_____, 2004.

Signed, Reeve Hennion, chairman

Signed, Bill Rose, secretary