

WAC 458-30-325 Transfers between classifications—Application for reclassification. (1) **Introduction.** This rule discusses the process used when land is reclassified into a different classification under chapter 84.34 or 84.33 RCW.

(2) **General information - When reclassification is required.** The following circumstances may cause an owner of classified land to seek reclassification:

(a) The classified land is no longer being used for the purpose for which it was granted classification;

(b) The owner of classified land has decided to change the use of classified land;

(c) The classified land no longer meets the requirements of the classification under which it was originally classified. For example, farm and agricultural land that no longer produces the minimum gross income or investment requirements in RCW 84.34.020 (2)(b), (c), or (d) must either be reclassified or removed from classification; or

(d) A new owner who received classified land from a deceased owner and the land does not meet the requirements of the classification under which the land is currently classified.

(3) **Reclassification process if land is subject to removal.** Within thirty days of receiving notice from the assessor that land was removed from classification; e.g., Notice of Removal of Current Use Classification and Additional Tax Calculations form, the owner must submit an application for reclassification into another classification under chapter 84.34 or 84.33 RCW if the owner elects to have the land remain classified. The removal notice must include a statement informing the owner of the classified land about the reclassification option. If an application for reclassification is submitted within thirty days, the land is not considered removed from classification until the application for reclassification is approved or denied.

(4) **Reclassification process if an owner seeks change of classification.** An owner of classified land may seek to have the land reclassified under a different classification under chapter 84.34 RCW or may seek designation as forest land under chapter 84.33 RCW.

(a) If an owner elects to have land reclassified, the owner must submit an application for reclassification to the assessor of the county in which the land is located. This application form will be prepared by the department and supplied to assessors.

(b) Within seven days of receiving the application for reclassification, the assessor must forward a copy to the appropriate granting authority. The assessor retains a copy of all applications for reclassification.

(c) When an application for reclassification is submitted, the classified status of the land is not changed until the application is approved.

(5) **Application procedure.** An application for reclassification is processed in the same manner as an initial application for classification, which may include payment of an application fee if the county requires one. All classification requirements of RCW 84.34.035 for farm and agricultural land, RCW 84.34.037 for open space land, RCW 84.34.041 for timber land, and chapter 84.33 RCW for forest land must be satisfied in order to reclassify land. For example, if an owner of classified farm and agricultural land under RCW 84.34.020 (2)(a) submits a reclassification application into the timber land classification under RCW 84.34.020(3), some of the classified farm and agricultural land may not qualify for reclassification into the timber land

classification because the timber land classification only allows up to ten percent of the land for compatible incidental uses and does not allow integral residential homesites to qualify.

(a) The granting authority must process an application for reclassification in the same manner as it processes an initial application for classification under chapter 84.34 RCW or for designation as forest land under chapter 84.33 RCW.

(b) A timber management plan must be filed with the county legislative authority within sixty days of the date the application for reclassification under RCW 84.34.020(3) is received. The application for reclassification will be accepted, but may not be processed until this plan is received.

(i) If this plan is not received within sixty days of the date the application for reclassification is received, the application will be denied.

(ii) If circumstances require it, the assessor may allow an extension of time for submitting a timber management plan when an application for reclassification is received. The applicant will be notified of this extension in writing. When the assessor extends the filing deadline for this plan, the granting authority should delay processing the application until the plan is received. If the timber management plan is not received by the date set by the assessor, the application for reclassification will be automatically denied.

(c) An application for reclassification may be approved or denied, in whole or in part.

(i) The granting authority must notify the applicant in writing of the extent to which the application for reclassification is approved or denied.

(ii) The applicant has the same appeal rights in relation to a denial of an application for reclassification as the applicant has in regard to an initial application for classification.

(iii) If land is subject to removal and the application for reclassification is denied, the assessor removes the land from classification and calculates additional tax, interest, and penalty in accordance with RCW 84.34.108.

(6) Reclassifications exempt from additional tax, interest, and penalty. No additional tax, interest, and penalty are due when reclassification is a result of any of the following transfers between classifications:

(a) Reclassification from farm and agricultural land under RCW 84.34.020(2) to: Timber land under RCW 84.34.020(3), open space land under RCW 84.34.020(1), or forest land under chapter 84.33 RCW;

(b) Reclassification from timber land under RCW 84.34.020(3) to: Farm and agricultural land under RCW 84.34.020(2), open space land under RCW 84.34.020(1), or forest land under chapter 84.33 RCW;

(c) Reclassification from open space/farm and agricultural conservation land under RCW 84.34.020 (1)(c) to farm and agricultural land under RCW 84.34.020(2) if the land was previously classified as farm and agricultural land;

(d) Reclassification from forest land under chapter 84.33 RCW to open space land under RCW 84.34.020(1), farm and agricultural land under RCW 84.34.020(2), or timber land under RCW 84.34.020(3); or

(e) If a county merges its timber land classification into its designated forest land program pursuant to RCW 84.34.400, a reclassification application as described in subsection (5) of this rule will not be required.

(7) **Gross income requirements of land to be reclassified.** The minimum gross income requirements relating to the following reclassifications may be deferred for a period of up to five years from the effective date of reclassification when:

(a) Land classified as open space/farm and agricultural conservation land under RCW 84.34.020 (1)(c) or timber land under RCW 84.34.020(3) is reclassified as farm and agricultural land under RCW 84.34.020 (2)(b) or (c); or

(b) Land designated as forest land under chapter 84.33 RCW is reclassified as farm and agricultural land under RCW 84.34.020 (2)(b) or (c).

(8) **Valuation of reclassified land.** If approved, the assessed value of reclassified land will be based on the new classification as of January 1 of the assessment year following the year of application. For example, if an application for reclassification from farm and agricultural land to open space/farm and agricultural conservation land is submitted on February 15, 2014, and approved on July 15, 2014, the land will be valued and assessed as open space/farm and agricultural conservation land on January 1, 2015, and the owner is required to pay taxes on this new assessed value in 2016.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 84.08.010, 84.08.070, 84.08.080, 84.34.141, 84.34.360. WSR 15-03-017, § 458-30-325, filed 1/8/15, effective 2/8/15. Statutory Authority: RCW 84.34.141, 84.34.020, and 84.34.030. WSR 02-20-041, § 458-30-325, filed 9/24/02, effective 10/25/02. Statutory Authority: RCW 84.34.141. WSR 01-24-030, § 458-30-325, filed 11/27/01, effective 12/28/01. Statutory Authority: RCW 84.08.110, 84.08.070, 84.34.141 and 84.34.360. WSR 95-21-002, § 458-30-325, filed 10/4/95, effective 11/4/95. Statutory Authority: RCW 84.08.010 and 84.08.070. WSR 90-24-087, § 458-30-325, filed 12/5/90, effective 1/5/91. Statutory Authority: RCW 84.08.010(2), 84.34.141 and chapter 84.34 RCW. WSR 88-23-062 (Order PT 88-12), § 458-30-325, filed 11/15/88.]