



May 5, 2006

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Gentlemen:

Please accept this letter concerning the potential downzoning of the Webster forest seedling nursery. The Webster nursery is composed of seven parcels totaling 266.28 acres (map attached for reference):

- Parcels 12720130000, 12720110100, 12720120400, and 12720120600 totaling 118.19 acres is in the Tumwater Urban Growth Area (UGA) zoned Light Industrial (LI);
- Parcel 12717440100 equals 68.09 acres is in the Tumwater UGA zoned Single Family Low Density 4-7 (SFL 4-7);
- Parcels 12720210000 and 12720240000 totaling 80 acres is in Thurston County zoned Rural Residential one unit per two acres (RR ½). During the April 5th County Commissioners public briefing meeting I saw a map that included these two parcels in a Limited Areas of More Intensive Rural Development (LAMIRD). Again in the April 12th e-mail which referenced the Thurston County Residential Subdivision Moratorium Rural County map, these two parcels are included in a LAMIRD, which raises additional concerns.

Background and future

Webster nursery produced its first crop in 1957 and during the past 49 years the nursery has produced 783,706,605 seedlings. Our primary mission is to produce seedlings for reforestation of DNR trust properties that generate \$300,000,000 per year in non-tax revenue for Washington schools. We also grow seedlings that are sold to individuals to restock forest areas throughout Washington State. The current location is unique in the state as to its soil characteristics and ability to produce healthy, vigorous, and affordable forest seedlings for school and county trust lands as well as for the many small forest landowners that collectively encompass a significant portion of the state's and county's forest land. It would be next to impossible to find a new location for a nursery to fulfill Webster's mission. Pictures provided for visual reference.





Washington DNR is currently investing capital resources in expanding the greenhouse production facility. Consequently, we envision the nursery will not only be celebrating its 50th anniversary next year, but its 100th anniversary in 2057. The long-term viability of the nursery is critical to the DNR's long-term mission of managing the trust properties for the citizens of Washington.

Recommendations

- Downzone parcels 12720130000, 12720110100, 12720120400, and 12720120600 totaling 118.19 acres out of the Tumwater Urban Growth Area (UGA). It is currently zoned Light Industrial (LI) and that seems consistent with our current and future use, as well as our neighbors.
- Downzone parcel 12717440100 (68.09 acres) out of the Tumwater UGA. It is currently zoned Single Family Low Density 4-7 (SFL 4-7), which is not consistent with our current or future use. We request that it be zoned LI. Also, property west of this parcel is mapped as "High Ground Water Hazard" and does not seem suitable for either the Tumwater UGA or SFL 4-7 zoning. This portion of the Salmon Creek basin is a logical candidate for downzoning.

- Re-zone parcels 12720210000 and 12720240000 totaling 80 acres. Remove these two parcels from the LAMIRD boundary. Zoning these parcels as Light Industrial (LI) would be consistent with the 118 acres east of Jones Rd. and consistent with the long-term mission of the nursery. Also, property west of this parcel is mapped as “Wetlands” and does not seem suitable for Rural Residential one unit per two acres (RR ½). Property north of these parcels, between 93rd and Littlerock Rd. is also included in the LAMIRD. This LAMIRD boundary is not consistent with the High Ground Water Hazard warning for this area. This portion of the Salmon Creek basin is a logical candidate for downzoning.

Thank you for your consideration of these recommendations.

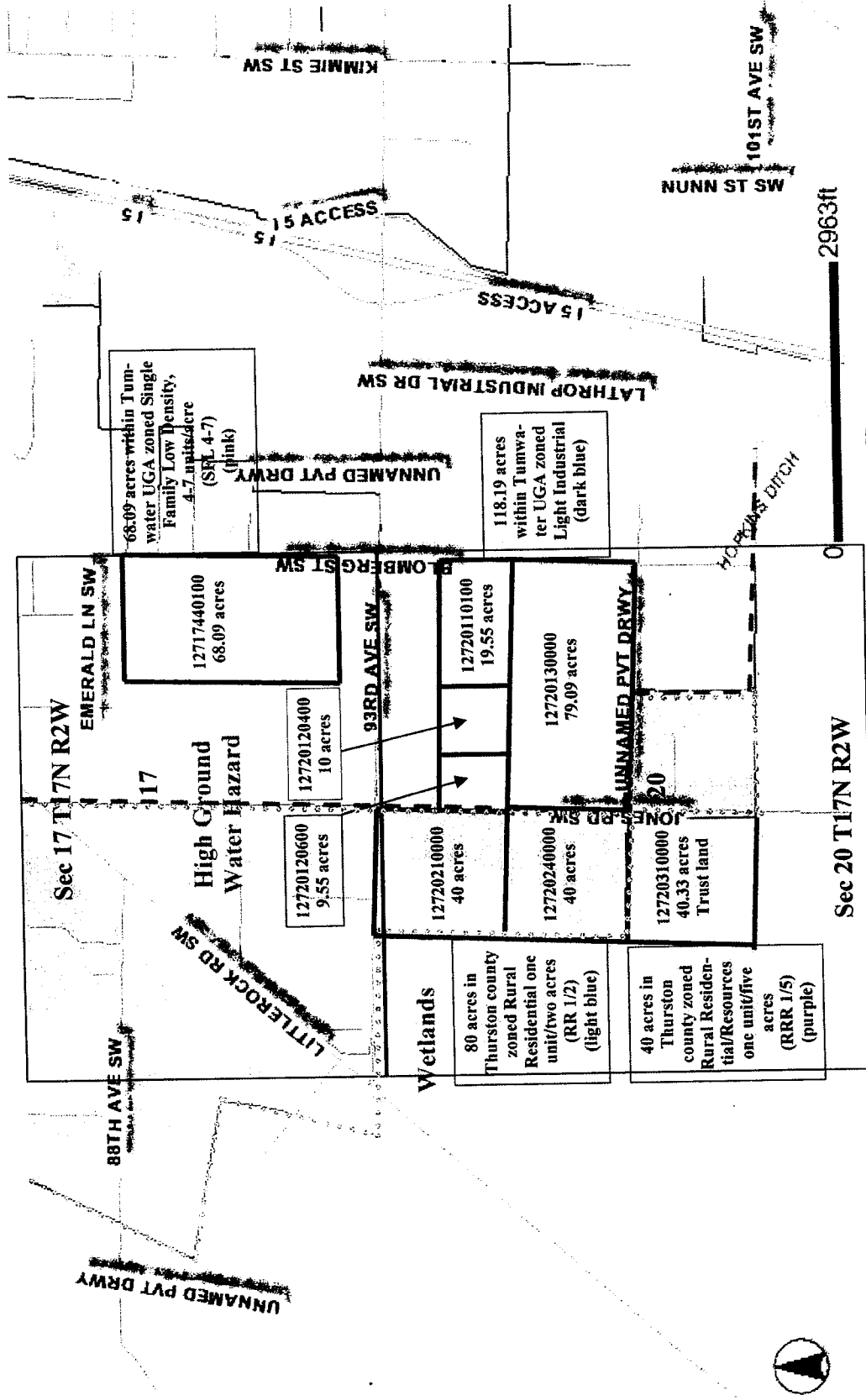
Sincerely,



Gretchen Nicholas
Manager – Land Management Division

cc: Jennifer Hayes, Thurston County
Diana Smith, Thurston County
Pete Holmberg, WA DNR
John Trobaugh, WA DNR

**Webster Forest Seedling Nursery, Washington Department of Natural Resources
Parcel Numbers and Acres (266.28 acres total)**



John R. Trobaugh
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Tumwater Urban Growth Area (UGA) Boundary
Limited Areas of More Intensive Development (LAMIRD) Boundary