



Strengthening Farming in Central Okanagan & Kelowna



Farm Tour with
Central Okanagan & Kelowna
Agricultural Advisory
Committees
June 23, 2005

AGENDA

- Agricultural Land Availability - Canada, BC
- Common Non-Farm - Farm Interface Issues
- Strengthening Farming Program
 - AgFocused work with Local Governments
- Examples of Issues & Resolutions
- Strengthening Farming Publications, Web Site
- Future Planning for Agriculture - Kelowna and Central Okanagan

Agricultural Land in Canada*

- **“Dependable” agricultural land is scarce. Only about 5% of Canada’s land is free from severe constraints to crop production.**
- **About 87% of the dependable ag land is in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, & Ontario.**
- **Only 1.4% is in BC.**

“Dependable” agricultural land
= CLI classes 1 to 3

With water supply from the mountains, soil classes 4 & 5 can be dependable in BC.



* Statistics Canada, "Rural and Small Town Canada Analysis Bulletin"; Vol. 6, No.1 (January 2005)

Agricultural Land in Canada*

■ Demand for cultivated land:

- 1951 to 1976 14% increase
- 1976 to 2001 6% increase

"Cultivated land" =
cropland, summer fallow, and tame or seeded pasture.

■ Urbanization:

- 1971 to 2001 96% increase in area
 - Consumed **15,200 sq. km.** of surrounding land
 - Urban dwellers increased from 16 to 24 million = 50%

* Statistics Canada, "Rural and Small Town Canada Analysis Bulletin"; Vol. 6, No.1 (January 2005)

Loss of Farmland Across Canada

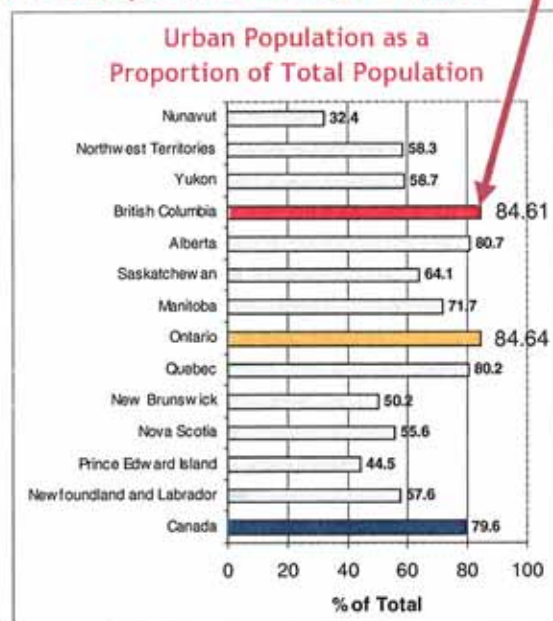
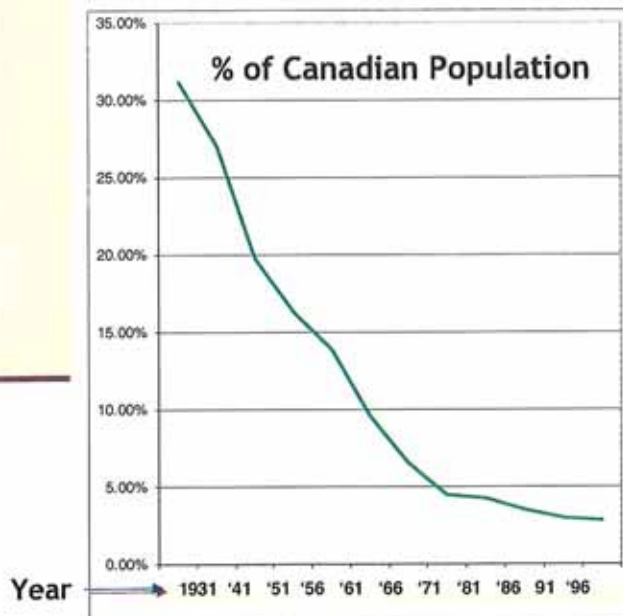
- Urban land occupying dependable agri. land:
 - 1971 = 6,900 sq. km.
 - 2001 = 14,300 sq. km.
 - = 3% of Class 1-3 and 7.5% of Class 1
- Urban + small rural settlements + farmsteads + rural housing lots:
 - 2001 = 23,200 sq. km.
 - = 57% of dependable agricultural land which was converted to non-agricultural uses
- Transportation & utilities: 11,700 sq.km. = 29%
- Protected areas & campgrounds: 8%

* Statistics Canada, "Rural and Small Town Canada Analysis Bulletin"; Vol. 6, No.1 (January 2005)

Urban Residents are Disconnected from Farm Land

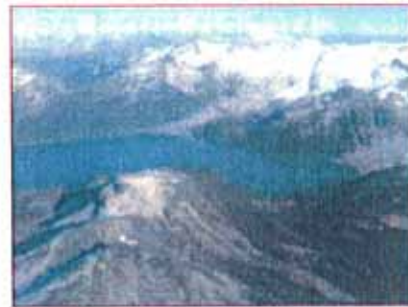
Rural residents are a decreasing %age of population

- BC is one of the most urbanized provinces
- BC Farm Population in 2001 = 1.6%



Land Suitable for Farming - BC

- 5% of the land area of BC is suitable for agriculture (Classes 1-7)
- 1.1% is prime (Class 1) soil



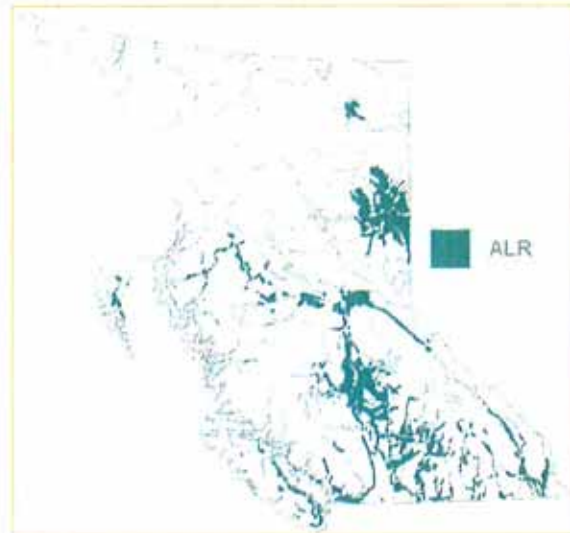
Settlement & Agriculture Share the Same Land Areas

- Two areas of BC
 - Lower Mainland, east Vancouver Island
 - Sicamous - Kamloops - Osoyoos Triangle
- contain:
- 2.7% of Provincial land area
 - 81% of BC's population (2001)
 - 81% of annual gross farm receipts (2000)



Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR)

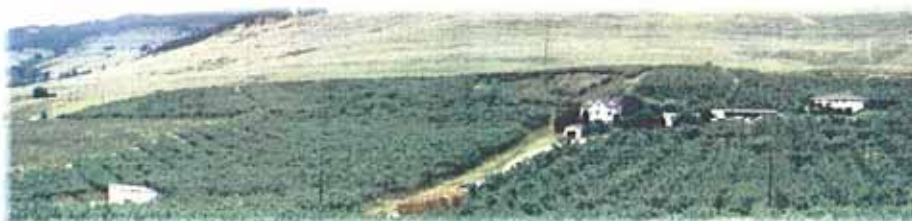
- In 1973, the ALR was created to preserve farm land for present and future agriculture.
- Approx. 4.7 million ha*
- Generally includes soil Classes 1 to 7*
- The Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) is a provincial zone in which agriculture is recognized as the priority use*. Farming is encouraged and non-agricultural uses are controlled*.



* <http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/> (June 2005)

Agriculture in Central Okanagan

- 26,299 ha in the ALR
- 1,102 farms (2001)
- \$75 million annual gross farm receipts (2001)
- \$829.5 million total farm capital (2001)



Common Non-Farm - Farm Interface Issues

■ Farm - side issues

- Proximity of houses or school limits spraying
- Theft of crop, equipment
- Vandalism
- Trespass -> recreation
- Flooding by urban uses
- Wildlife damage, riparian limits to crops

■ Non-farm - side issues

- Noise from machinery, equipment, bird-scare devices
- Odour from waste, composting
- Dust from exhaust fans, fields
- Chemical application

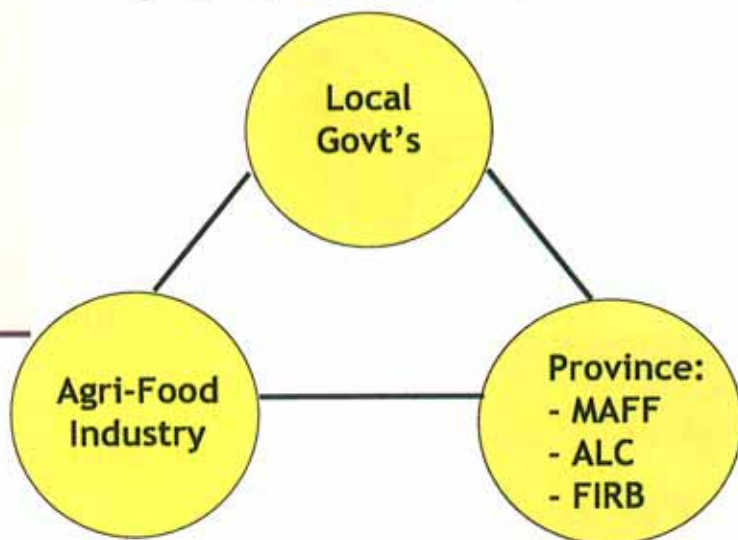


Strengthening Farming Program

- Initiated in 1996 to draw agriculture more fully into local government planning to:
 - Address urban - rural conflict
 - Encourage policies and bylaws supportive of farming
- Protection of farming component
 - Farm Practices Protection (Right to Farm) Act
 - Farm Industry Review Board - resolve disputes
- Planning component
 - Local Government Act
 - Land Title Act

Strengthening Farming Program - Agri-team Approach

- Partnerships to connect farmers, local governments, and Provincial agencies



Agri-teams are assigned to farming communities.

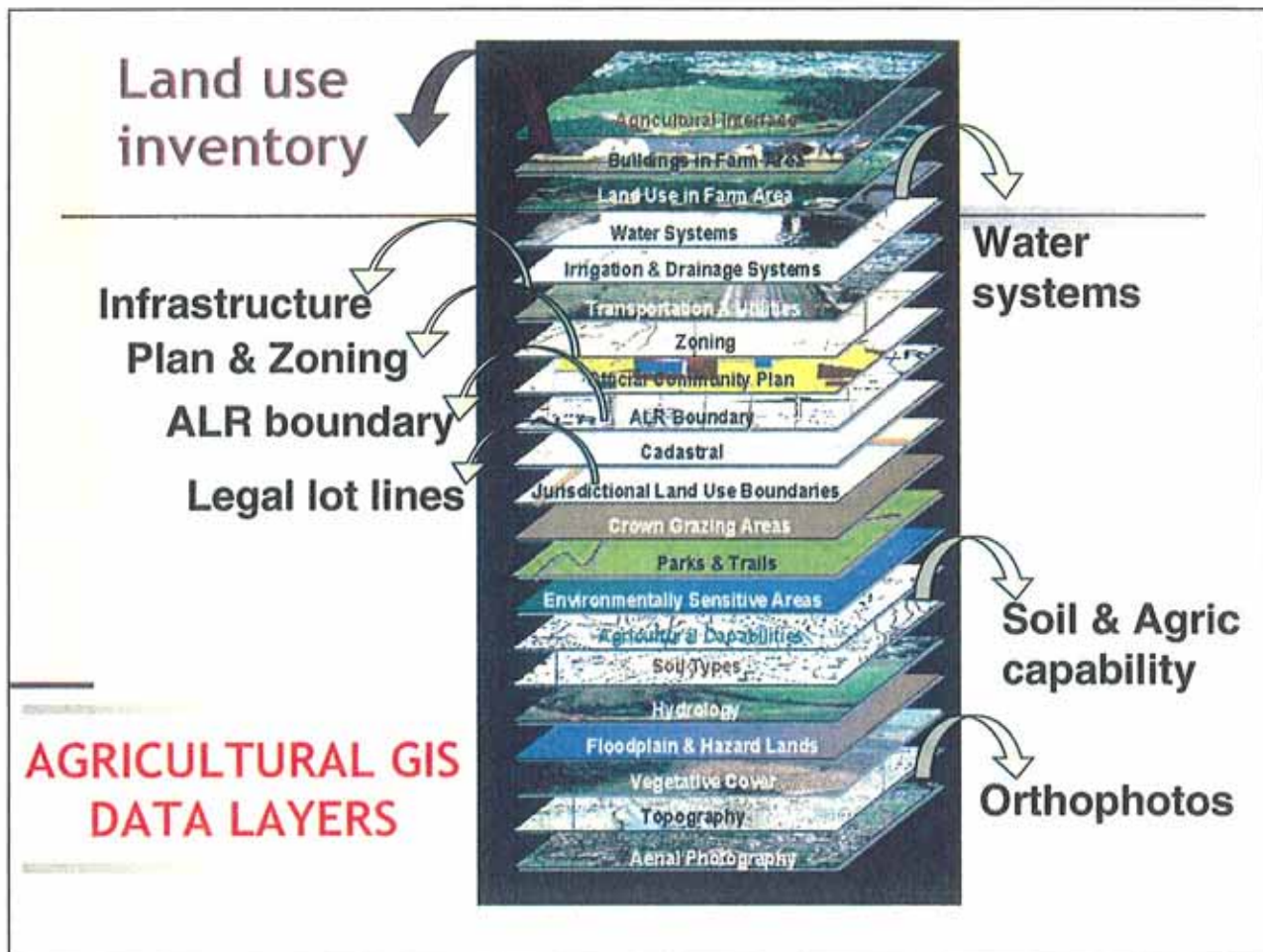
Find them at:

<http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/sf/Contacts.htm>
[#Agri-Team Members](#)

AgFocused Work with Local Governments

- Agricultural Advisory Committees
 - 23 AAC's across the province
 - Advise local governments on land use issues
 - Promote awareness of agriculture - e.g. tours
 - Day-to-day & broader issues re. farming
 - Appointed by Council or Regional Board
 - Operate under Council's or Board's terms of reference
 - Strictly advisory





Agricultural GIS

■ Benefits

- Enhance knowledge of agriculture
- Understand impacts of policies & regulations
- Help promote agricultural development

■ Uses

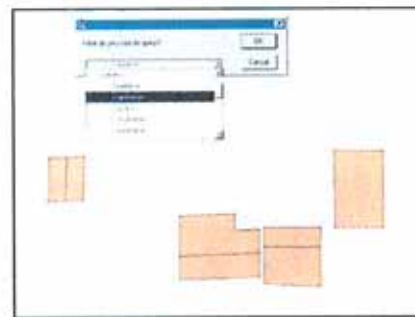
- Agricultural area planning
- Drainage and irrigation studies
- Map land uses & changes over time
- Examine specific topics, e.g.
 - Dwellings & subdivisions in the ALR

Agricultural GIS

- Query an individual property

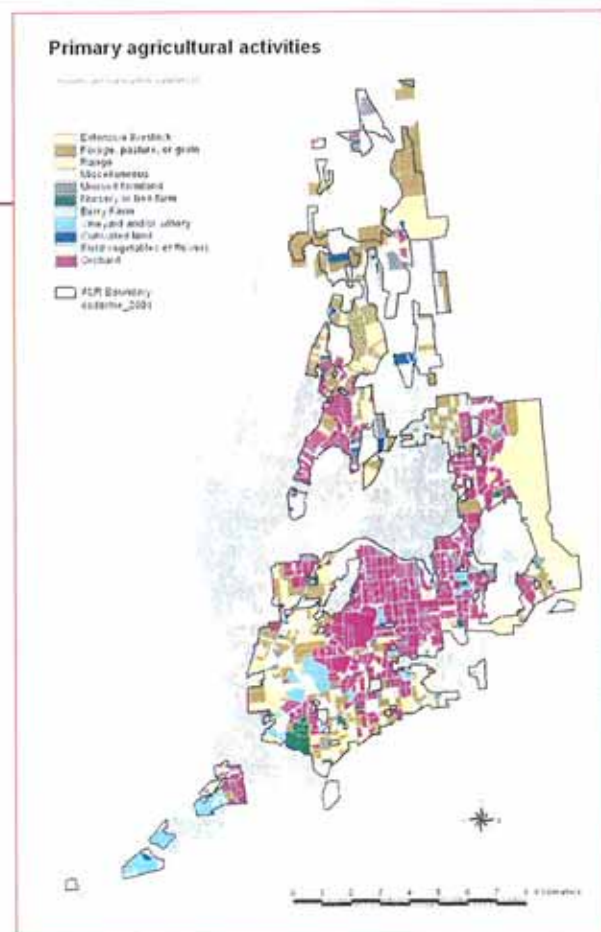


- Look for all instances of a specified land uses or crop

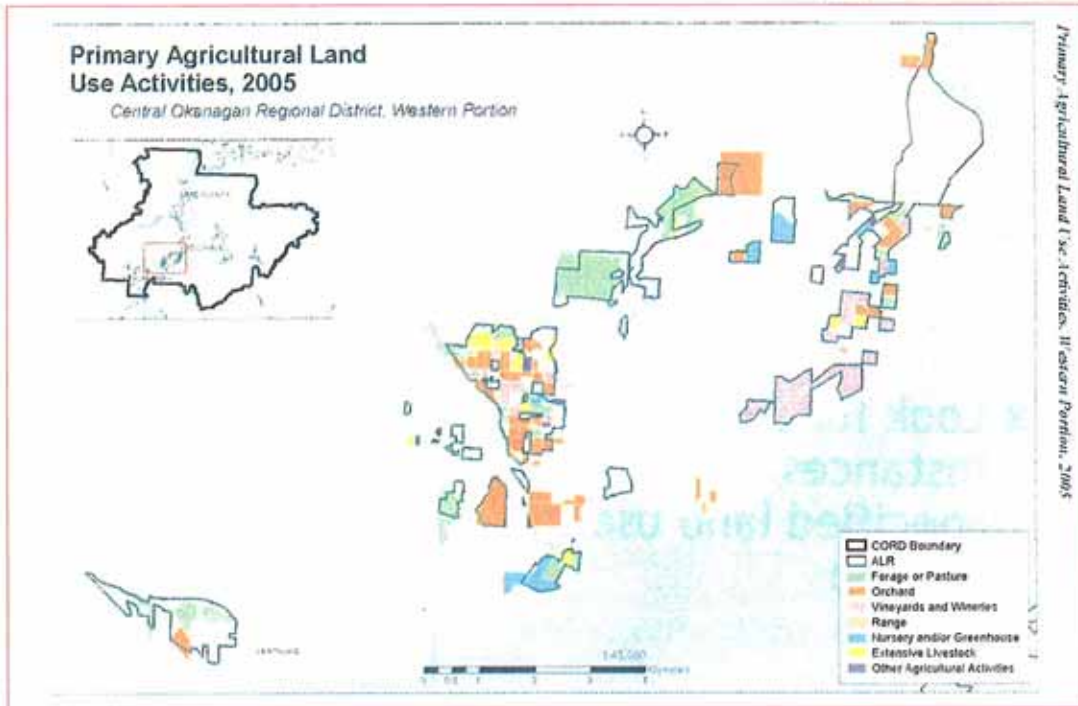


GIS Example:

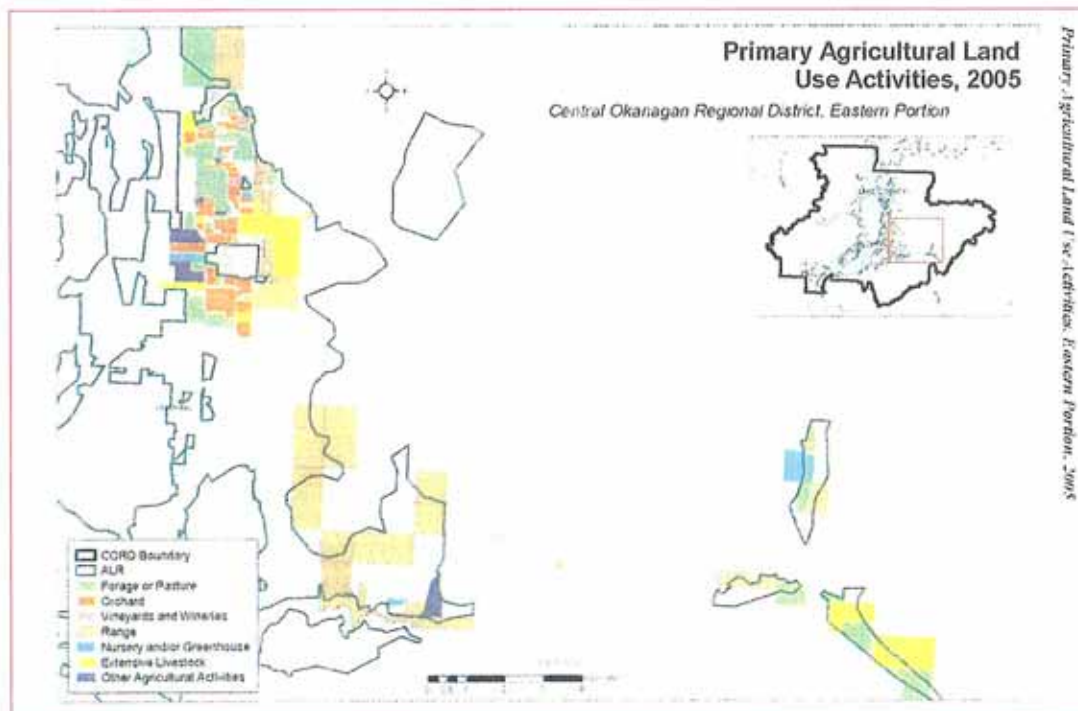
Primary Agricultural Activities - Kelowna



Primary Agricultural Activities - Central Okanagan, Western Portion

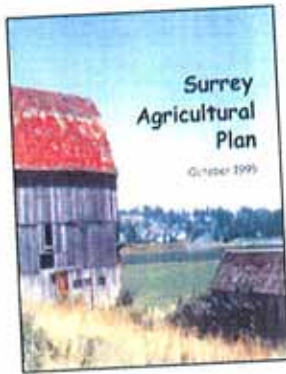


Primary Agricultural Activities - Central Okanagan, Eastern Portion



Agricultural Area Plans & Strategies

- Raise awareness of agriculture
- Identify opportunities to support and expand farming
- Promote land use compatibility - urban-rural



Agricultural Area Plans & Strategies

- Corporation of Delta - 1992
- Township of Langley - 1993
- Saanich Peninsula - 1997
- City of Kelowna - 1998
- City of Chilliwack - 1999
- City of Surrey - 1999
- District of Pitt Meadows - 2000
- District of North Cowichan - 2001
- Cariboo Regional District - 2003
- City of Richmond - 2003
- Comox-Strathcona Reg. Dist. - 2003
- City of Penticton - 2004
- City of Salmon Arm - 2004
- RD Central Okanagan - under way 2005
- District of Summerland - under way 2005
- Township of Spallumcheen - 2005-06

**13 AAP's
completed
in the past
13 years**

AgFocused Work with Local Governments

■ Zoning & other bylaw reviews

- Input on agricultural components
- Allow flexibility in farm uses - for variations in local and world markets
- Regulations that are fair to farmers



AgFocused Work with Local Governments

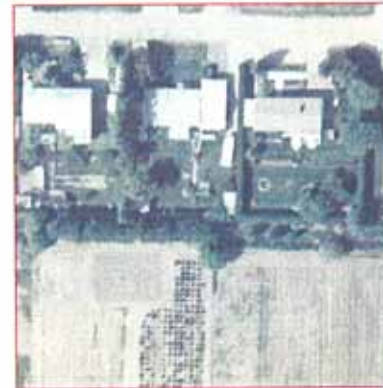
■ Promote compatible uses along farm / non-farm interfaces

- An approving officer may refuse a subdivision if: *(Sec. 86 Land Title Act)*
 - it would unreasonably interfere with nearby farm operations due to inadequate buffering or separation or
 - its road patterns would unreasonably or unnecessarily increase access to land in the ALR.



AgFocused Work with Local Governments

- Promote compatible uses along farm / non-farm interfaces
 - Establish a development permit area to protect farming
 - Provision of buffering, covenants, or separation of development from farming on adjoining or reasonably adjacent land



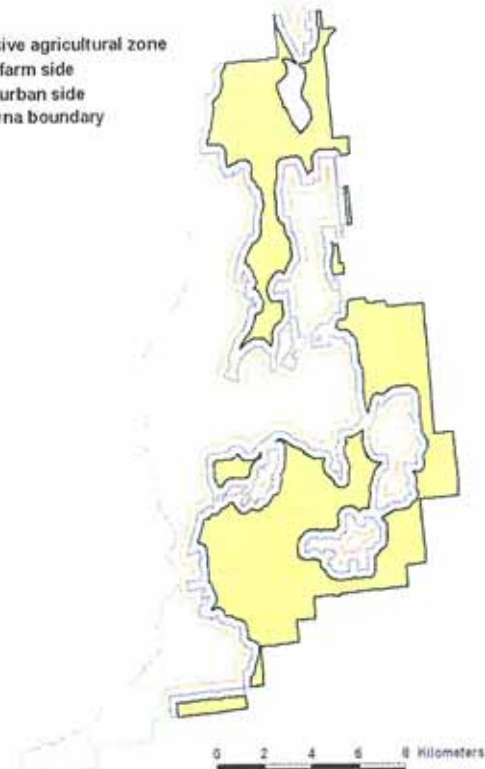
Kelowna Special Management Area (SMA) [On hold since 2001]

300 m each side of ALR boundary – to be studied

- Shared responsibility on both sides of the boundary - urban side, farm side
- 900 farm parcels (3,600 ha) included
- 1,800 non-farm parcels (3,100 ha) included

Special Management Area, Kelowna

- Intensive agricultural zone
- SMA, farm side
- SMA, urban side
- Kelowna boundary



AgFocused Work with Local Governments

■ Farm Bylaw

- A local government may use a farm bylaw to regulate farming activities.

- Such bylaws require the approval of the Minister of Agriculture Food & Fisheries.



- A development permit area that limits or regulates farming should be discussed with MAFF.

Examples of Issues & Resolutions

Composting mushroom-growing medium

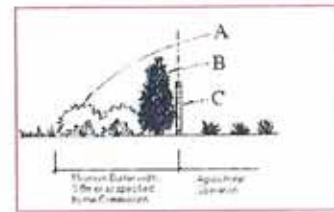
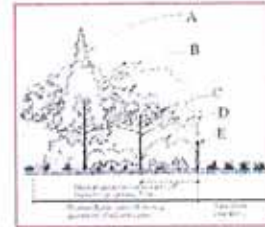
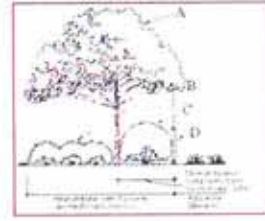
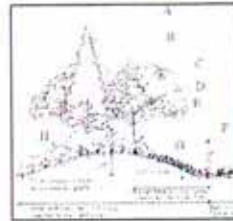
- Mushroom spawn is seeded into beds containing compost made from hay, straw, manure, gypsum, and other nitrogen-containing compounds
 - Negative-pressure building to capture odours
 - Bio-filters to remove odours from emissions
 - Waste & storm water treatment on site



Examples of Issues & Resolutions

Non-farm - farm buffers

- Various densities of planting to limit noise, dust, visual, & trespass
- Retain existing natural features - woods, water, slope



Strengthening Farming Publications

- Guide for Bylaw Development in Farming Areas
- Farm Practices Factsheets
- “Growing Together” newsletters
- Planning for Agriculture
- Agriculture in Brief
- Trails in Farm & Ranch Areas
- GIS and Land Use Inventory
- Edge Planning

Future Planning for Agriculture - Kelowna & Central Okanagan

- **Finish Agricultural Area Plan in RDCO**
 - Policies that support & promote farming
 - Identify funds and staff for implementation
- **Complete Kelowna agricultural projects**
 - Review agricultural plan to ensure it is still current
 - Finalise planning of urban edge
 - Review farm bylaw to ensure it is current
 - Identify funds and staff for implementation of other agricultural plan recommendations

Strengthening Farming in Kelowna & Central Okanagan



www.agf.gov.bc.ca/resmgmt/sf

Strengthening Farming Web Site