

Benton County Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan 2026 Update

1/6/2026

Presented by:

Adam Cares, AC Geo

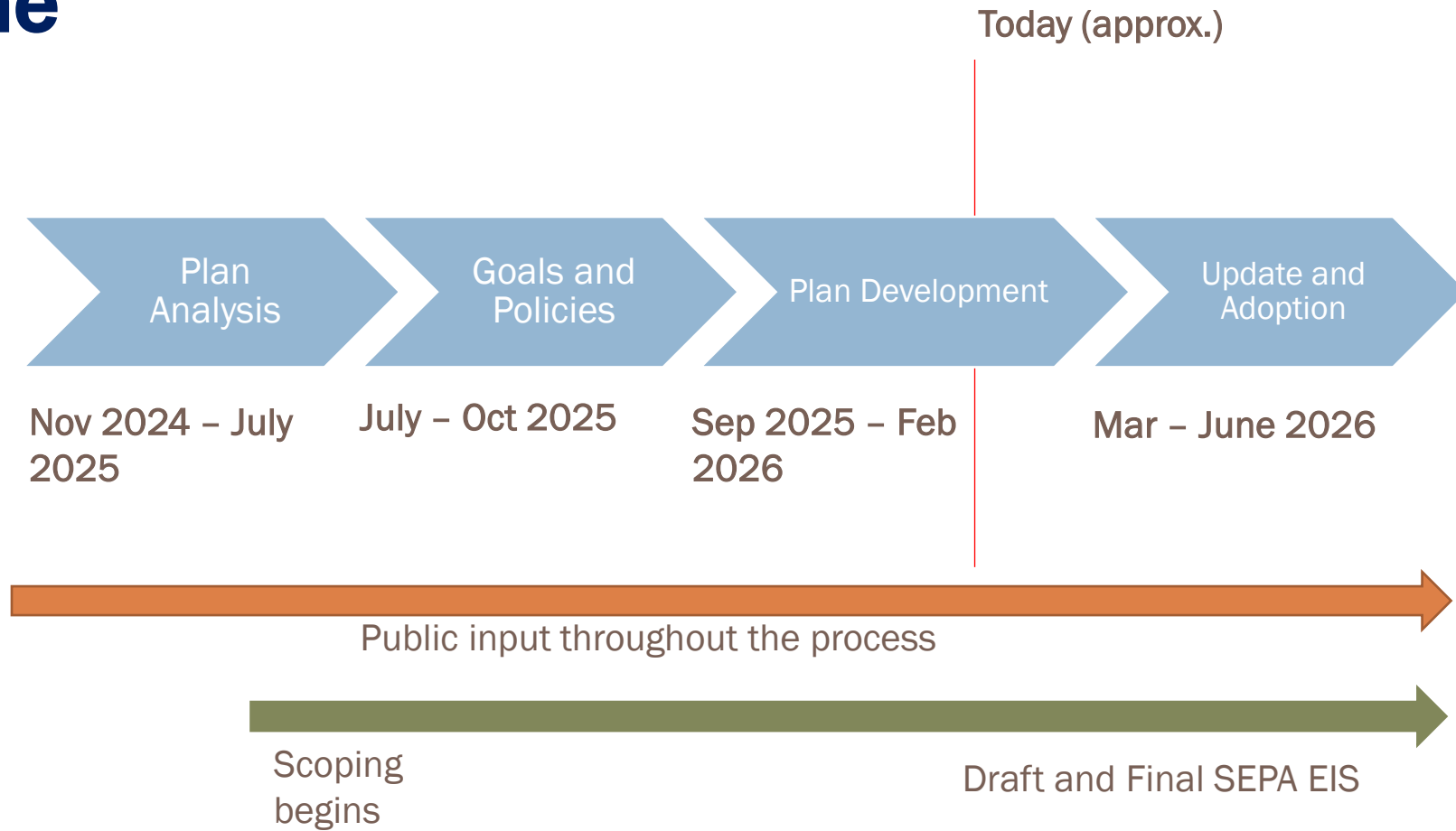


Topics

- Updates On:
 - Shrubsteppe Mitigation Program
 - Agritourism
 - DNR Property in Badger Canyon
 - EIS Progress
- Land Use Element
- Proposed Land Use Changes
- Goals & Policies - Climate
- Q&A



Timeline

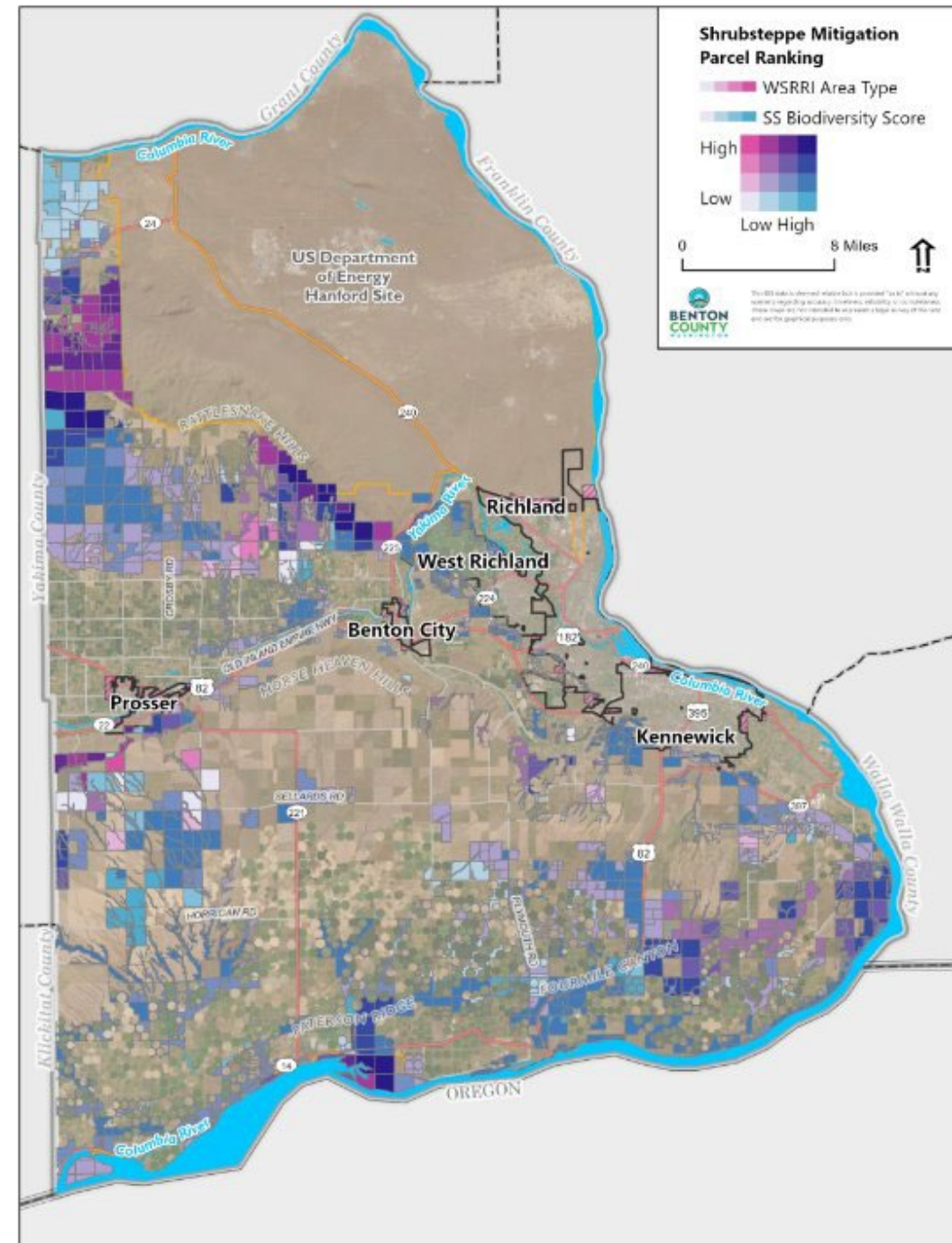


Update: Shrubsteppe Mitigation Program

- ✓ Modeling – quality, spatial priority, mitigation ranking
- ✓ Draft Program Description
- ✓ Mitigation Workgroup Kickoff in October

To Complete:

- 20-year impact estimate for each jurisdiction
- ID entity to hold and manage easements



Update: Agritourism

Winter 2026 survey and workshops to investigate further flexibility for:

- Onsite Food
- Overnight Accommodation
- Seasonal Events/attractions

Benton County Agritourism Preliminary Survey

To help us prepare for discussions on agritourism, please take 2-3 minutes to respond to this short survey. Individual responses will remain anonymous unless directed otherwise. If you would like a copy of the survey responses, please email Adam Cares - adam@acgeospatial.com

1. Currently, how important is agritourism to the overall viability of your operation?

1 2 3 4 5

Not important at all Extremely important

2. What level of additional benefit to your operation's viability could agritourism provide if Benton County code allowed greater flexibility?

- No additional benefit
- Minor additional benefit
- Moderate additional benefit
- Substantial additional benefit
- Transformational benefit

3. Follow up - describe any specific code flexibility your operation would need to expand or pursue agritourism activities.

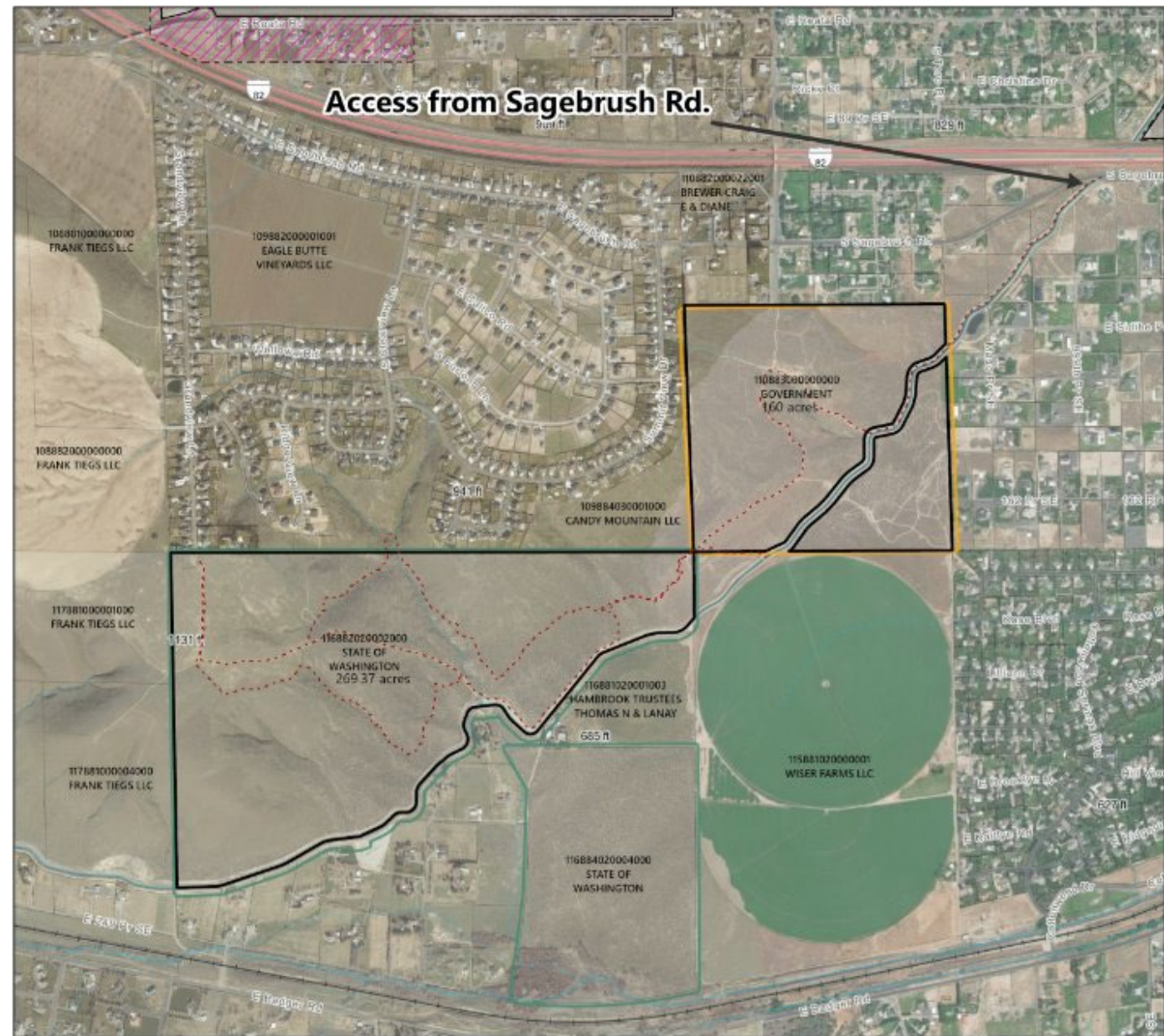
Short answer text
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4. What agritourism activities/amenities do you currently host on your property?

- Special events – weddings, live music, festivals, retreats, culinary events
- Overnight lodging
- Onsite food served directly to visitors food trucks/catering services

Update: Badger Canyon DNR Property

- 269-acre Property
- Robust public backing, letters of support
- DNR Transfer application submitted in Sept. -> 2-year wait



- ▭ Proposed Outdoor Recreation Parcel
- ▭ DNR Managed Lands
- ▭ BLM Ownership
- ⋯ Trail (informal)

Badger Canyon DNR & BLM Property

Overview Map



0 1,000 Feet



Update: EIS

- Programmatic EIS Required
- Three (3) draft alternatives have been formulated for evaluation in the draft EIS
- Full draft EIS ready for review early spring

Alt 1: No Action

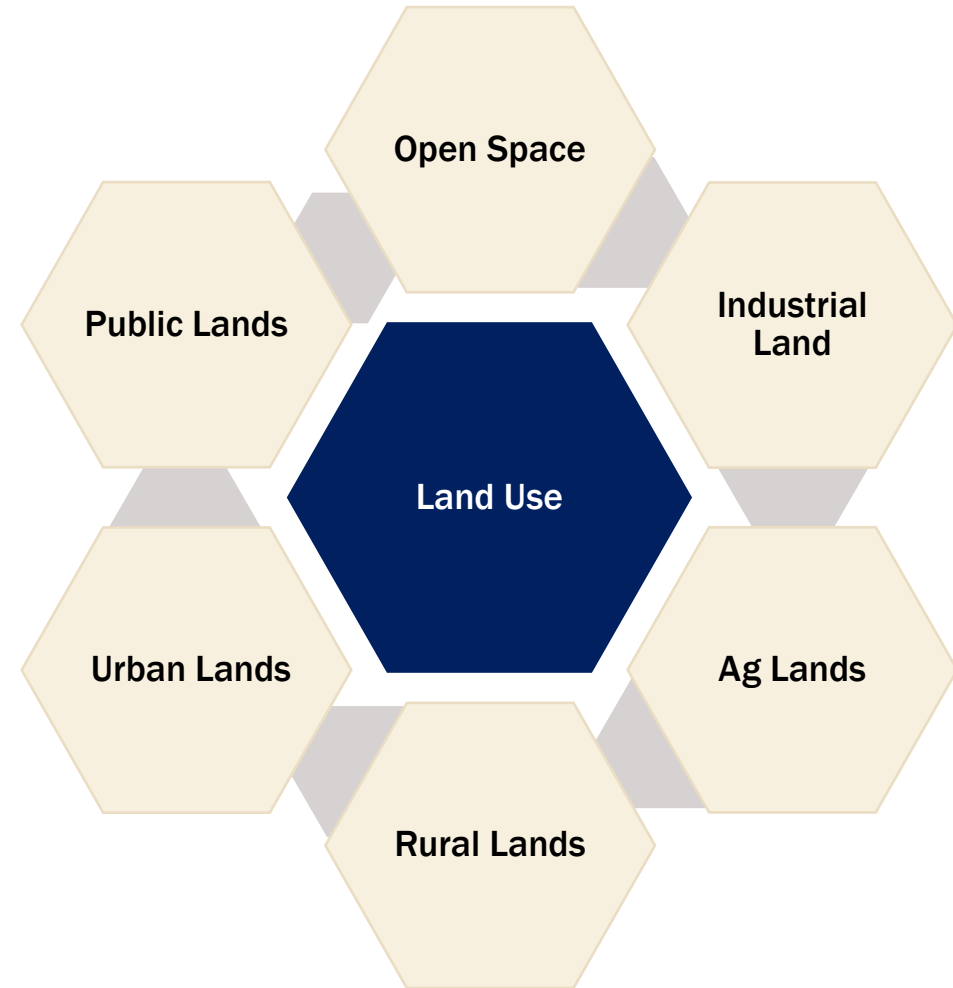
Alt 2: Higher Growth,
Expanded Energy
Overlay

Alt 3 (Preferred):
Moderate growth,
Reduced energy overlay
to protect ag lands,
critical areas

Land Use Element

Updates focused on:

- Siting for renewable energy development
- Industrial lands
- Agricultural land designations
- Agritourism (not completed yet)
- Open space



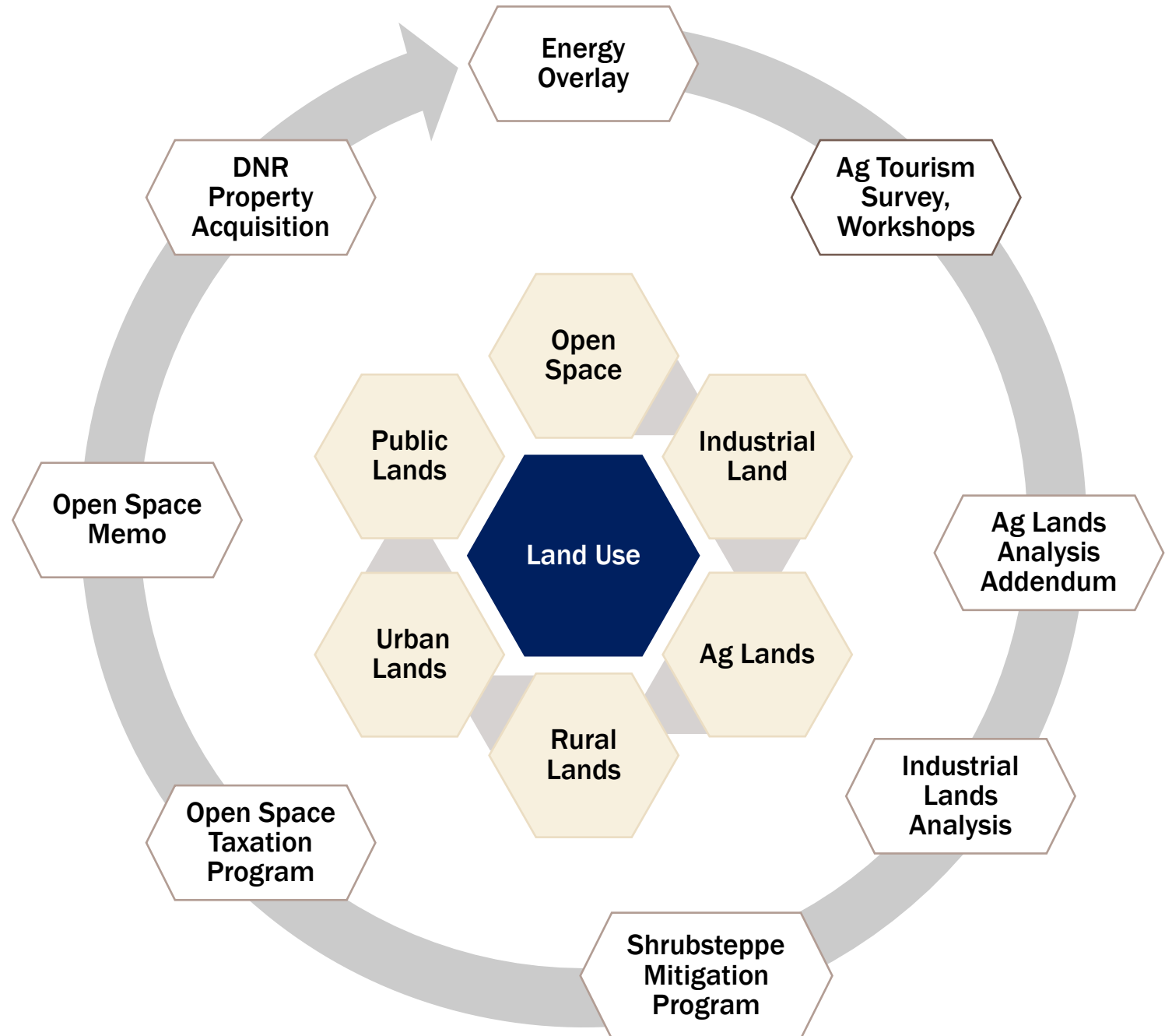
Land Use Element

Supporting Analysis for LU Changes

- Energy Overlay Memo
- Open Space Memo
- Industrial Lands Memo
- Ag Lands Analysis Addendum

Implementation:

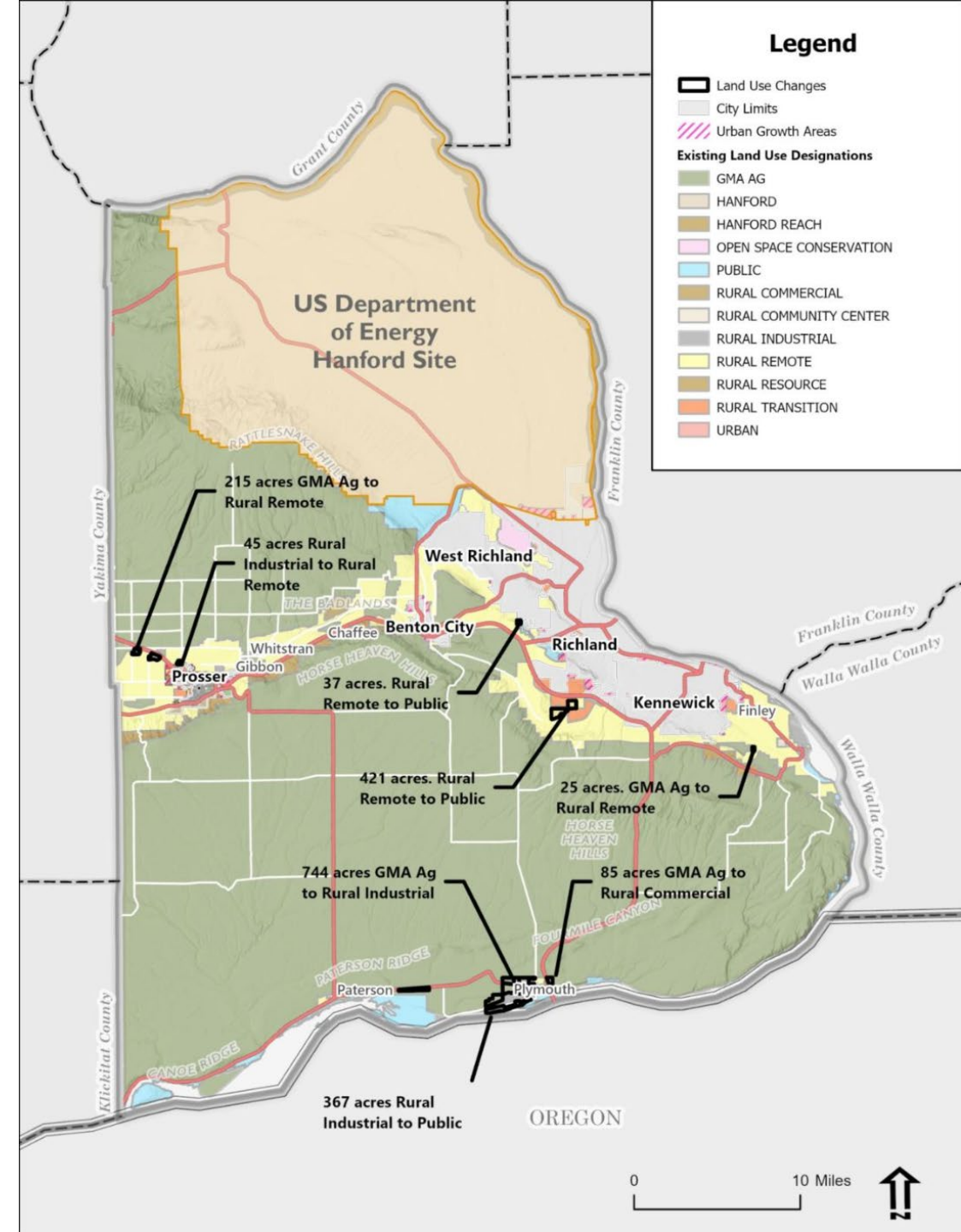
- Open Space Taxation Program
- Badger Canyon DNR Property Acquisition
- Shrubsteppe Mitigation Program
- Ag Tourism Workshops



Land Use Designation Changes

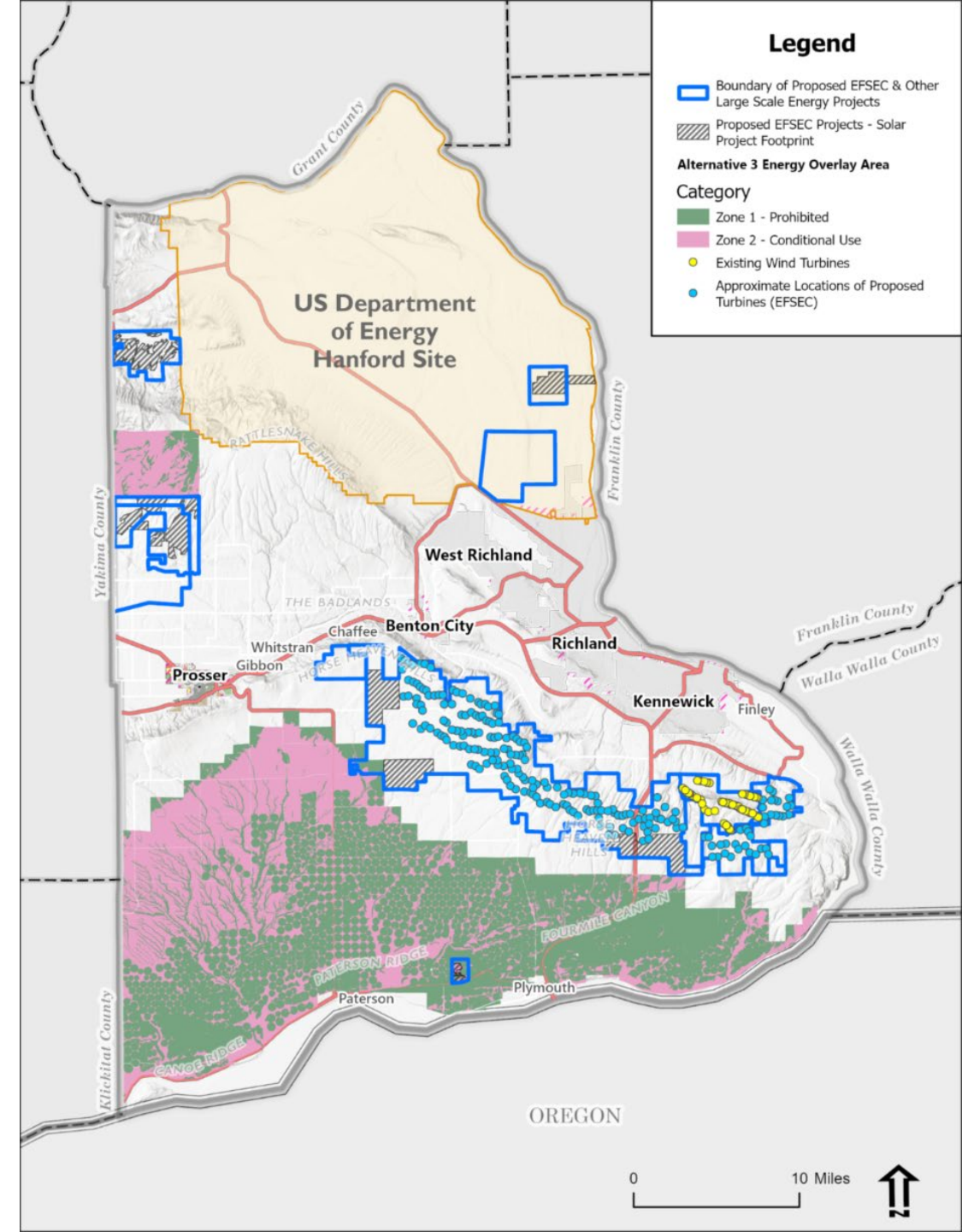
Alternative 3 Land Use Designation Changes

From	To	Acres
GMA AG	RURAL INDUSTRIAL	744
GMA AG	RURAL COMMERCIAL	85
GMA AG	RURAL REMOTE	240
RURAL INDUSTRIAL	RURAL REMOTE	45
RURAL INDUSTRIAL	PUBLIC	367
RURAL REMOTE	OPEN SPACE/PUBLIC	457

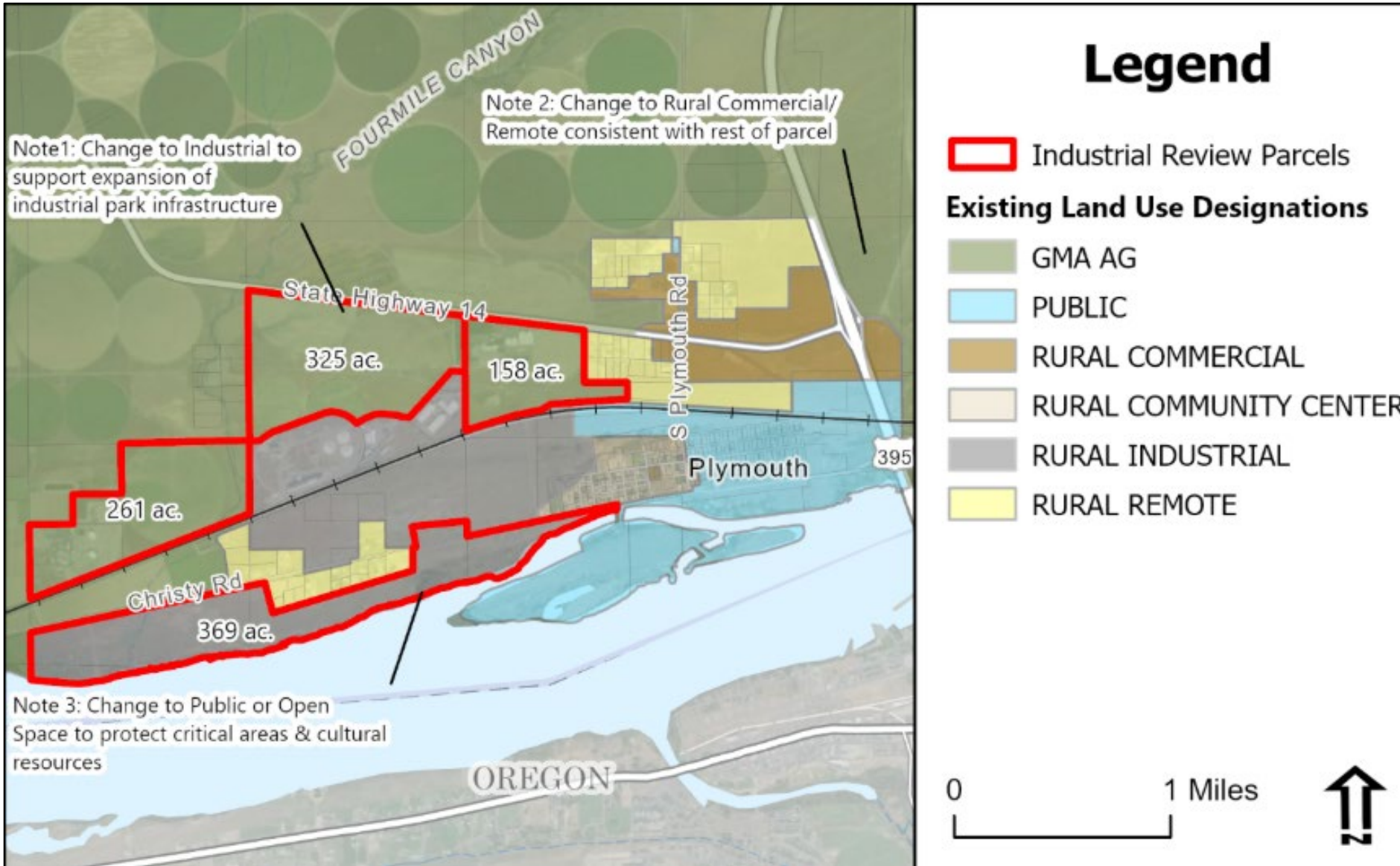


Land Use Designation Changes - Energy Overlay

Energy Overlay Zone	Total Acres	In CA		Not CA	
Zone 1 - Prohibited ¹	178,602	81,331	(46%)	97,271	(54%)
Zone 2 - Conditionally Permitted	114,893	65,704	(57%)	49,189	(43%)
Total Acres	293,495	147,035	(51%)	146,460	(49%)



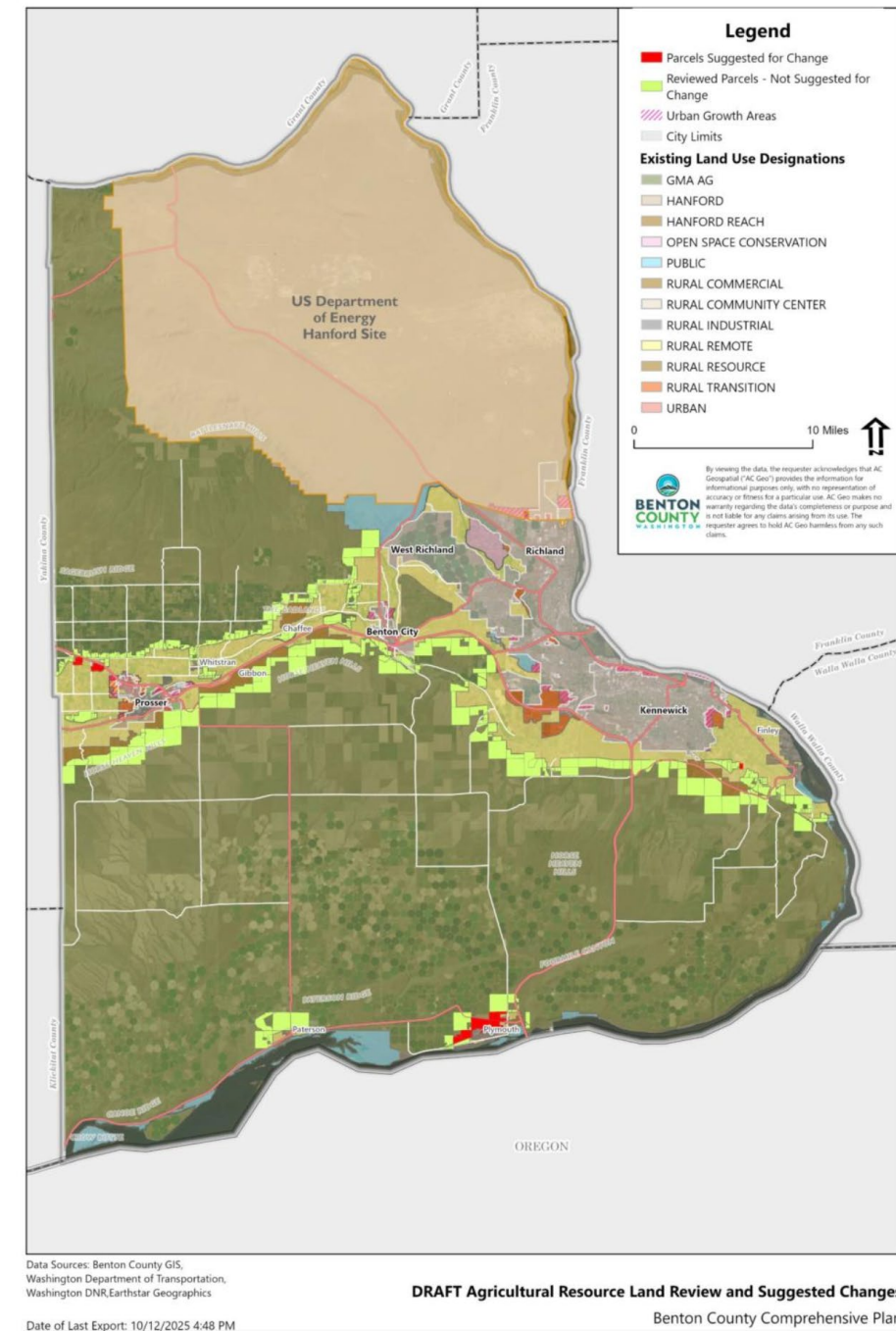
Land Use Designation Changes - Industrial



Land Use Designation Changes GMA Ag to Rural Remote

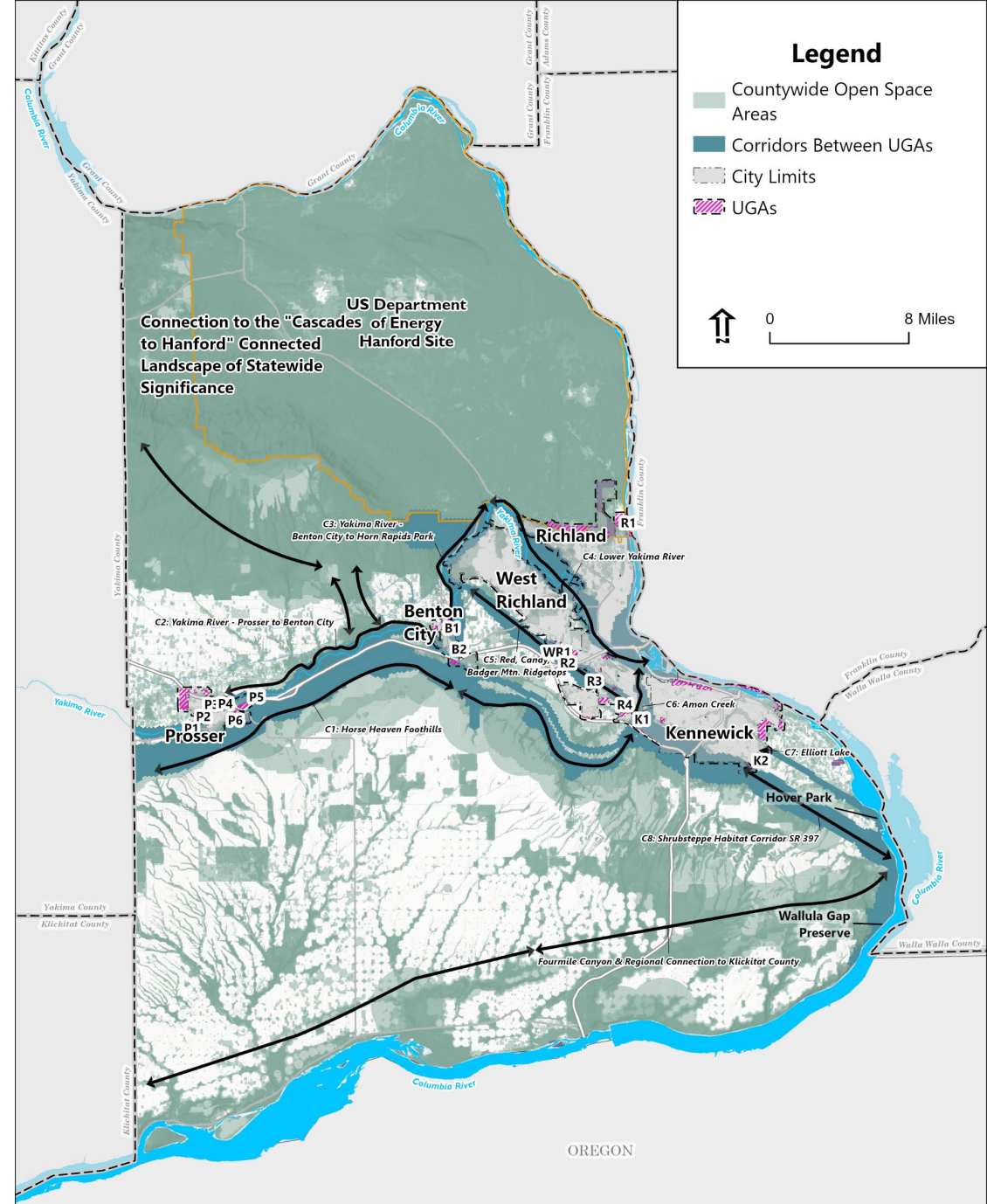
Supported by Countywide Analysis:

- Supplement to 2018 Analysis
- Looked at:
 - Soil suitability – irrigated and non-irrigated capability class
 - Critical areas overlap
 - Surrounding patterns of urban growth



Land Use Designation Changes - Open Space

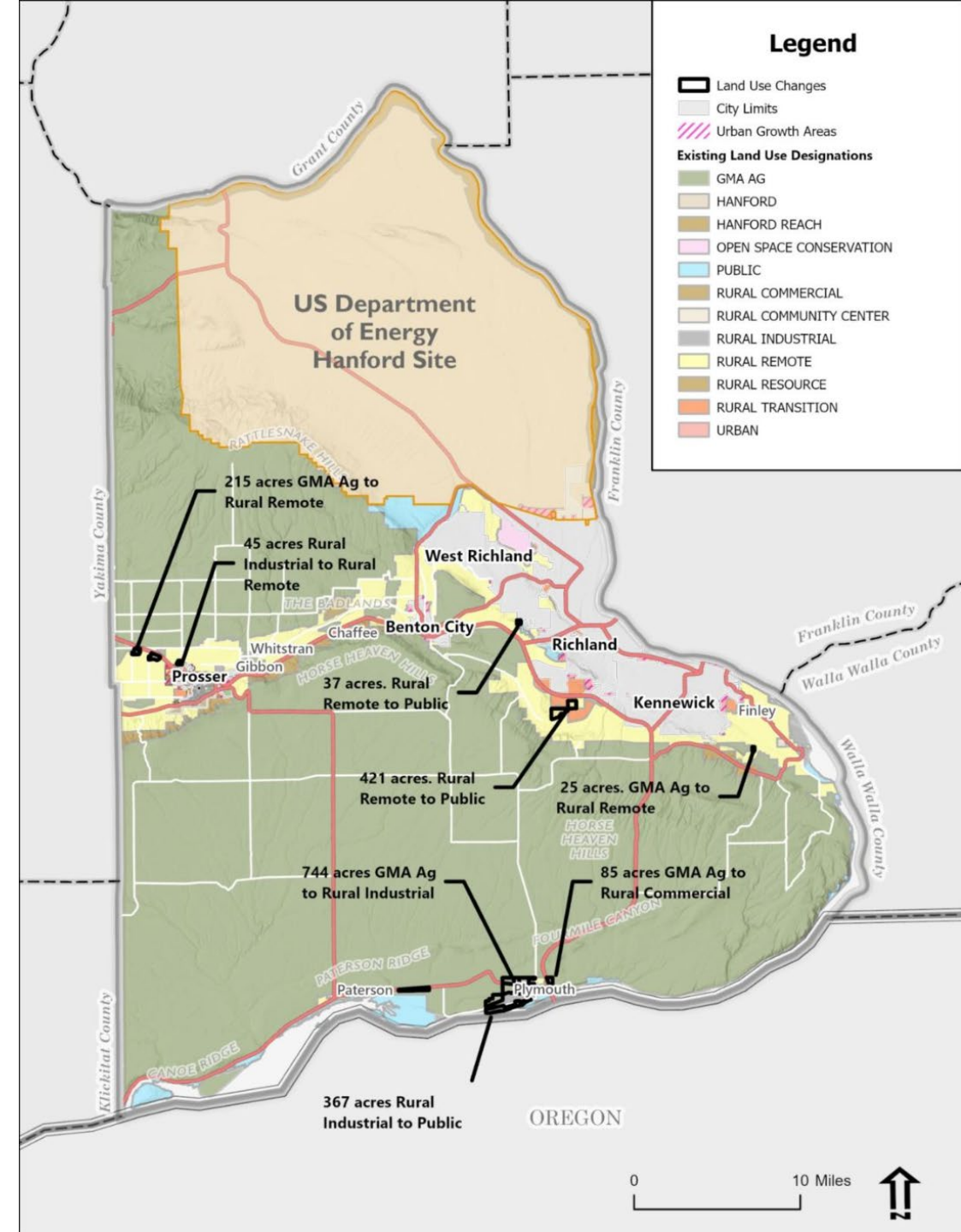
- Corridors within & between UGAs
- WSRRI Cores, Corridors, Growth Opportunity Areas
- Critical Areas
- PHS Biodiversity Areas & Corridors



Land Use Designation Changes

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Pause for Q & A