

Timeline:

2021 Skagit County initiates an Agritourism Study

- Skagit County Planning and Development Services (PDS) staff evaluated current practices for agritourism activities and contrasted them with case studies from other jurisdictions.
- Staff also conducted local discussion groups and released a public engagement survey to develop a common understanding of agritourism and the public interest in the direction of the study overall.

Deliverable: assessment report

2022 PDS provides three policy recommendations

- Staff released a report in March 2022 outlining three policy options for agritourism, detailing allowed activities and pros/cons.
- Multiple public workshops were held to gather feedback on the options.
- A second survey was conducted for additional public input.

Deliverable: Public engagement and survey results were compiled into a report published in June 2022.

2023 PDS works through the legislative process with the Skagit County Planning Commission

- PDS holds two work sessions with the Skagit County Planning Commission (PC) on the Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB) Code and Policy Recommendations for Agritourism.
- PC holds a public hearing on proposed draft language and an additional work session to address comments from the public.
- PC holds deliberations and recommends the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) adopt the Proposed AAB's Agritourism Code Changes.

2024 BoCC Issues a Moratorium on the Acceptance of Permit Applications for Certain and Activities on Ag-NRL Lands.

- Key findings were:
 - The regulations currently in effect do not adequately ensure the protection of Ag-NRL lands as agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance in Skagit County. Primarily the application of "Agricultural Accessory Use" and "Temporary Use" standards.

- Skagit County intends to develop permanent regulations to address the deficiencies in the current regulations.
- The six-month moratorium took effect immediately did not apply to applications vested before date of adoption (1/29/2024).
- The moratorium did not apply to activities in substantial and continuous operation before the date of adoption and activities were treated as existing non -conforming uses.
- The BoCC directed the Administrative Official (PDS Director) to develop a process that will allow landowners to document asserted existing non -conforming use through entry into a Voluntary Compliance Agreement (VCA). This process was established through Administrative Official Interpretation (AOI) 2024-01. The deadline to submit required documentation of existing activity is May 30, 2025.

June 2024 the BoCC passed a resolution remanding the proposed agritourism code changes to the Skagit County Planning Commission.

- Proposed amendments were remanded to PDS for additional work, study, review and refinement, including additional public comment and hearing and identified five areas.
- The BoCC requested that the PC hold an additional public written comment period, public hearing, and modify its recommendations on the Proposed Agritourism Code Amendments based on the findings from the PDS's additional study and review.
- The BoCC requested that the PC invite the AAB to comment on the proposed Agritourism Amendments.

July 2024 BoCC issues a revised moratorium

- The interim ordinance was similar to the first issued moratorium but clarified that permissible tourism-related activity on Skagit farmland does not include permanent businesses that conduct large events, such as weddings and concerts, and require businesses operating agritourism activities out of compliance with Skagit County regulations to enter into a voluntary compliance agreement (VCA) within one year.

January 2025 BoCC extends moratorium for an additional six months

- The expiration date is Monday, July 14, 2025.
- The ordinance and moratorium may be renewed for one or more six (6) month periods if a subsequent public hearing(s) is held, and findings of fact are made prior to each renewal.