

MINING DISTURBANCE ~1/10 of 1% OF HIGH VALUE FARMLAND IN THE WILLAMETTE VALLEY

Source: Department of Geology and Mineral Industries, Department of Land Conservation and Development and Department of Agriculture
Prepared for Aggregate Work Group 2013

The Willamette Valley consists of 7,350,000 million acres of land. 4,662,385 acres are zoned for forestry use, while 1,869,542 acres are zoned for exclusive farm use. The remainder of the Willamette Valley is mostly, as an example, zoned for urban use (444,595 acres), rural residential (257,133 acres), refuges (24,553 acres), parks (20,635 acres), wetland natural resource (9,355 acres), industrial (8,680 acres), airports (2,532 acres) and aggregate (2,375 acres). Within all these zones, there are 2,096,500 acres in crop production (farmed) and 2,812,232 acres classified as “high value” farm soils.

Currently, there are 10,211 acres in aggregate production (disturbed land) on all zones including agriculture, forest and urban zones. Of the 10,211 acres mined, there are 5,070 acres mined in the floodplain which are primarily alluvial deposits, and 5,140 acres mined upland which are primarily hard rock quarries for commercial or forest production. Of the 10,211 acres mined in the Willamette Valley, 2,270 acres are located on Class I and II soils located outside all urban growth boundaries, and 2,494 acres are located on Class I and II soils both within and outside urban growth boundaries.

The following table is instructive and gives a range of disturbance:

Total Acres	Mined Acres	Percent Mined
7,350,000 Willamette Valley	10,211 All Zones	0.14%
1,869,542 Zoned Agriculture	2,375 Zoned Aggregate	0.13%
2,812,232 “High Value” Soils	2,494 Class I and II	0.09%
2,096,500 Crop Production	2,270 Class I and II	0.11%
508,970 Within 100 Flood Plain	5,071 Within 100 Flood Plain	1%

The data provided by the Department of Geology and Mineral Industries, the Department of Land Conservation and the Department of Agriculture suggests that the amount of “high value” soils disturbed by the aggregate industry is insignificant to the agricultural land base, and represents a range of disturbed land between 0.09% and 0.13%. Moreover, between 1996 and 2011, the Department of Land Conservation and Development provided information to the legislative work group that stated that there have only been 280 acres of **newly** permitted Goal 5 mines on land zoned for exclusive farm use over all soil classes during this period of time.

The aggregate industry continues to argue that the premise advanced by the Oregon Farm Bureau overstates the significance of the disturbed land from mining on land zoned for farm use. Furthermore, the Oregon Farm Bureau fails to demonstrate that a sufficient conflict exists with the aggregate industry to warrant legislation that would essentially preclude further development of aggregate resources necessary to build Oregon’s roads, infrastructure and communities.