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PRESS RELEASE

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SUBJECT: OPEN SPACE AND DESIGNATED FOREST LAND APPLICATION DEADLINE

Marsha Weyand, Kittitas County Assessor, reminds county property owners that the deadline is nearing for applying for current use assessment under either the Open Space Act (RCW 84.34) or Designated Forest Land Act (RCW 84.33). New applications for Current Use Agriculture, Designated Forest, Current Use Open Space Land or Timber Land, along with application fees, must be submitted to the Assessor's Office by 5:00 p.m., Thursday, December 30, 2010. Applications postmarked by December 31, 2010 will be accepted. Approved applications will be for reduced assessments in 2011 for taxes payable in 2012.

If land that has been approved for open space or designated forest land is involved in an ownership transfer or sale, notice must be given to the Assessor's Office in advance of the transaction. A review of the property will be completed by the Assessor's Office to determine if the land qualifies for continuance as open space or designated forest land. Request for Continuance forms are available on the Kittitas County Website at <http://www.co.kittitas.wa.us/assessor/forms.asp>.

In addition to review of the land upon sale, statutory authority is given to the Assessor's Office to audit land use for all property approved for open space or designated forest land. Land that no longer meets the statutory requirements must be removed from the special use program and removal tax will become payable.

Application forms and information concerning the open space and designated forest land may be obtained at the Assessor's Office in the County Courthouse at 205 West Fifth Avenue, Suite 101, Ellensburg, WA 98926 or call (509) 962-7501.