



October 25, 2022

To: Commercial Aviation Coordinating Commission

From: Thurston Conservation District Board of Supervisors

RE: Opposition of Proposed Thurston County Airport

Dear Commissioners,

Thurston Conservation District opposes the greenfield airport proposed for Thurston County

Thurston County is only 774 mi<sup>2</sup> in size, yet it is home to thriving agricultural lands, numerous endangered species, and rich cultural history. Thurston Conservation District has invested public funds in numerous habitat and on-farm conservation enhancements in this area.

The rate of agricultural land loss in Thurston County is alarming, and a 'no net loss' of agricultural lands is already a policy adopted by the local governing jurisdictions and a promise for food security for our residents' future.

**The 'Central Thurston' location disrupts production agriculture on some of the best soils in our nation. [American Farmland Trust: Farms Under Threat Report <https://csp-fut.appspot.com/>]**

Dwindling prairie habitat in Thurston County is home to ESA-listed species, such as the Mazama Pocket Gopher, and others.

**The 'Central Thurston' location is proposed in prime pocket gopher habitat and decreases our sensitive prairie habitat, placing further responsibility for the survival of these species on surrounding private lands and Joint Base Lewis McChord.**


Our county is the current and ancestral home of the native communities of the Chehalis Basin Indian Tribe, Squaxin Island Tribe, and Nisqually Tribe.

**The 'Central Thurston' location proposed has environmental impacts that degrade natural resources, including sensitive habitats, including those that have been stewarded by our tribal communities since time immemorial.**

For these reasons and many others, the Board of the Thurston Conservation District (TCD) urges the removal of the Central Thurston greenfield location from consideration by the CACC. Please help us ensure a thriving future for our fragile ecosystems, regional food production, and the cultural significance of our area. TCD can provide additional information about this geographic area upon request.



Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:  
  
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TJ Johnson, Board Chair

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Helen Wheatley, Board Vice-Chair

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David Iyall, Board Auditor

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Doug Rushton, Board Member

DocuSigned by:  
  
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Betsie DeWreede, Board Member

cc

The Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation  
Nisqually Indian Tribe  
Squaxin Island Tribe  
2<sup>nd</sup> Legislative District  
20<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
22<sup>nd</sup> Legislative District  
35<sup>th</sup> Legislative District  
Town of Bucoda  
City of Lacey  
City of Olympia  
City of Rainier  
City of Tenino  
City of Tumwater  
City of Yelm  
Thurston Board of County Commissioners  
Washington Association of Conservation Districts  
Washington State Conservation Commission

