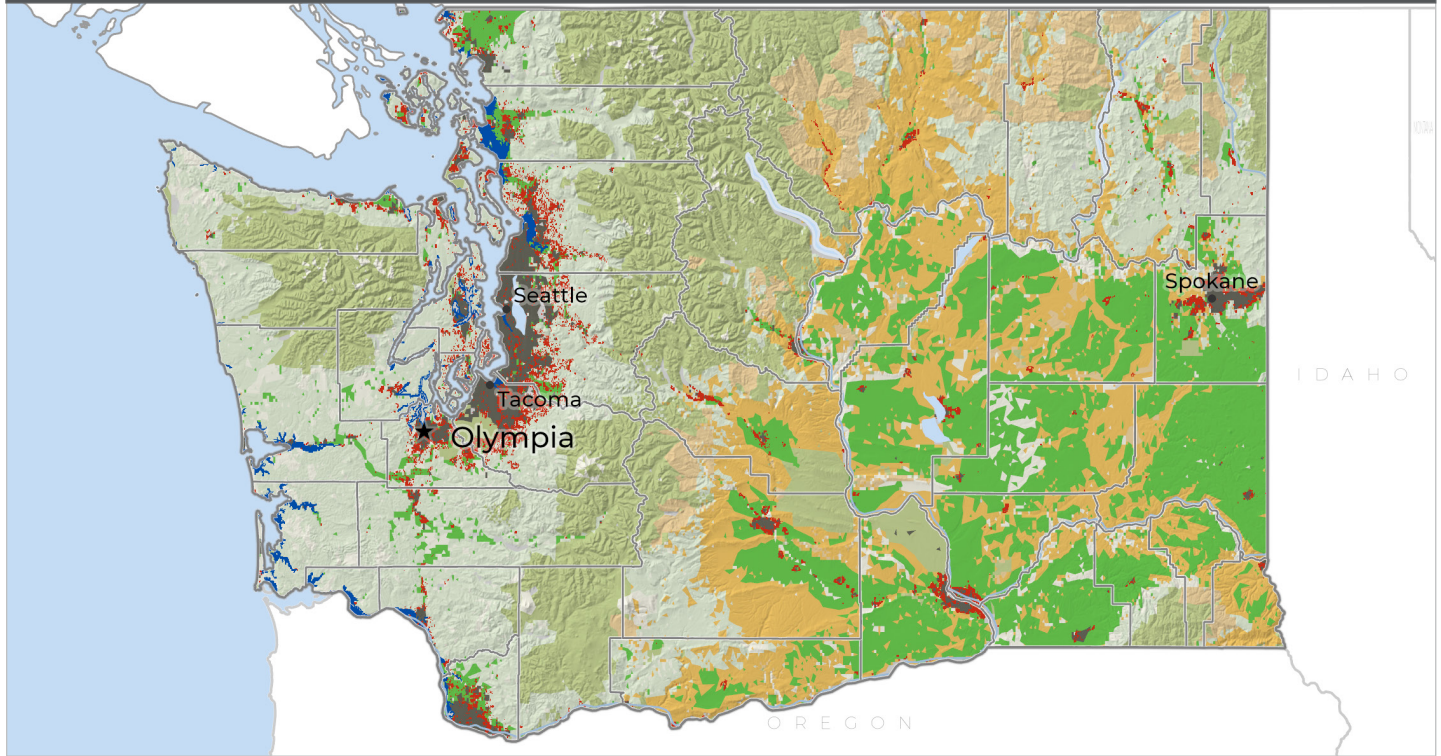




# 2040 Future Scenarios Washington

**Farms Under Threat 2040: Choosing an Abundant Future** mapped three scenarios of development between 2016 and 2040. If recent trends continue, **192,300 acres** of Washington's farmland and ranchland will be paved over, fragmented, or converted to uses that jeopardize agriculture. Washingtonians can slash conversion, save farmland, and safeguard the future of agriculture and the environment by choosing compact development.

## PROJECTED AGRICULTURAL LAND CONVERSION 2016-2040



### Projected agricultural land conversion from 2016-2040 in the *Business as Usual* scenario.

#### Projected Conversion and Flooding (2040)

- Urban and highly developed (UHD) and low-density residential (LDR)
- Coastal flooding

#### Land Cover (2016)

- Farmland\*
- Rangeland
- Forestland
- Federal (no grazing)
- Federal (grazing)
- Other lands
- Urban areas
- Water

\*Farmland is composed of cropland, pastureland, and woodland associated with farms.

## On recent trends, from 2016 to 2040:

Washingtonians will pave over, fragment, or compromise

**192,300 acres**  
of farmland and ranchland.

**58%** of the conversion will occur on Washington's best land.<sup>1</sup>

That's the equivalent of losing

**3,000 farms,**  
**\$178 million**

in farm output, and  
**7,500 jobs**  
based on county averages.<sup>2</sup>

Hardest-hit counties:

- ▶ **Spokane**
- ▶ **Pierce**
- ▶ **Snohomish**

<sup>1</sup> Freedgood et al. 2020  
<sup>2</sup> Census of Agriculture 2017

## WHICH FUTURE WILL WE CHOOSE?

How Washingtonians choose to develop will shape the future of farming. The scenarios in **Farms Under Threat 2040** show the impacts:



**Business as Usual:** Development follows recent patterns. Poorly planned development and low-density residential sprawl continue to rapidly convert farmland and ranchland.



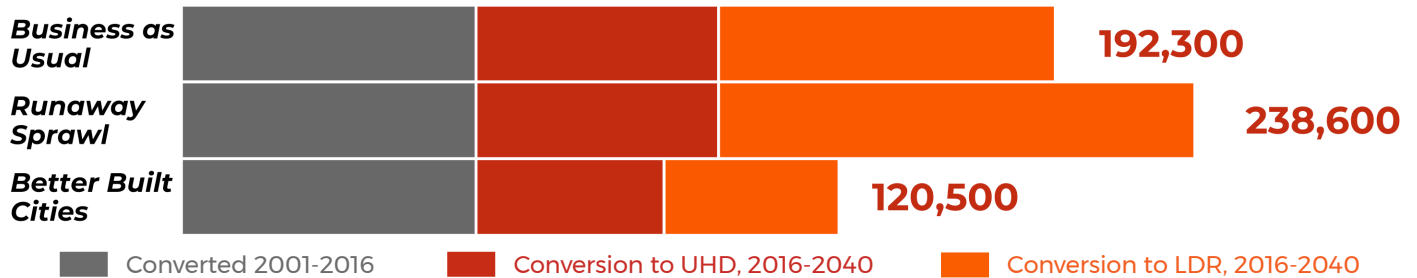
**Runaway Sprawl:** Development becomes even less efficient than in *Business as Usual*. Low-density housing sweeps across the countryside, displacing farmers and ranchers.



**Better Built Cities:** Policymakers and land-use planners promote compact development and reduce sprawl, saving irreplaceable farmland and ranchland from conversion.

## COMPACT GROWTH CAN SAVE FARMS

### Acres of Projected Conversion 2016-2040



### Washington's farmland and ranchland will be converted to:

**Urban and highly developed (UHD)** land use includes commercial, industrial, and moderate-to-high density residential areas.

**Low-density residential (LDR)** land use includes scattered subdivisions and large-lot housing, which fragment the agricultural land base and limit production, marketing, and management options for the working farms and ranches that remain.

### LDR PAVES THE WAY FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Agricultural land that was in LDR areas in 2016 is

**48 TIMES MORE LIKELY**

to be converted to UHD by 2040, compared to other agricultural land.

### DEVELOPMENT CHOICES MATTER

By choosing the *Better Built Cities* scenario instead of *Runaway Sprawl*, Washingtonians can save

**118,100 acres**

of farmland and ranchland.

That's the equivalent of saving

**1,700 farms,**

**\$102 million**

in farm output, and

**4,400 jobs**

based on county averages.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Census of Agriculture 2017

## COASTAL FLOODING



By 2040, 39,300 acres of agricultural land may be affected by rising seas due to climate change.

## WHAT POLICYMAKERS CAN DO

- **Encourage compact development** to minimize sprawl.
- **Permanently protect our best farmland** with voluntary conservation easements.
- **Forge a path to success** for a new generation of farmers.



**Farms Under Threat** is American Farmland Trust's multi-year initiative to document the status of and threats to U.S. farmland and ranchland and to identify policy solutions to protect and conserve America's diverse agricultural landscape. For questions and to access the data, please contact AFT's Farmland Information Center: [www.farmlandinfo.org](http://www.farmlandinfo.org) or (800) 370-4879.

Explore our interactive maps and read the full report at

[www.farmland.org/farmsunderthreat](http://www.farmland.org/farmsunderthreat)

