

**From: Yakima County Farm Bureau**

**To: Klickitat County Board of Equalization (KCBE)**

**Date: 02-06-20**

**RE: Equalization of the Assessed Values in the Wheat Lands Category in Klickitat County**

**This correspondence is from the Yakima County Farm Bureau (YCFB). YCFB is a grass roots organization with 2700 members consisting of farmers and ranchers with operations both large and small as well as other folks with interest in agriculture affairs in Yakima and Klickitat Counties.**

**The Yakima/Klickitat County Farm Bureau has become aware of a case decided by the Board of Tax Appeals for the State of Washington (West Ranch LLC vs. Crista Schroder-Klickitat County Assessor) which was found in favor of West Ranch LLC.**

**Quoting from the decision: “The Owner has met it’s burden to produce clear, cogent, and convincing evidence that the Assessor erred in calculating the current–use value for the subject properties” & ..... “ the Assessor did not follow the law for assessment year 2017”.**

**It is our understanding that the same un-law-full process was used to determine the assessed value of all parcels in the Wheat Lands category of agricultural current use classification. Therefore, the YCFB believes that it is incumbent upon the KCBE to EQUALIZE the assessed values of all property in that classification to re-establish fairness and legality.**

**The Dept. of Revenue (DOR) (Rikki Bland, 360-534-1383 [rikki@dor.wa.gov](mailto:rikki@dor.wa.gov)) has indicated this EQUALIZATION has a narrow window of opportunity and must be completed within that time limit.**

**Since the DOR code requires at least 5 years averaging for current use values, a failure to correctly calculate assess value would create distorted impacts for years to come and cause an undue shift of tax burden upon the owners of those parcels. The YCFB believes that a failure to expeditiously correct this problem would be most unwise and lack fairness towards the other affected landowners.**

**In order to restore the condition of just taxation in Klickitat County, the YCFB joins our members and other land owners in Klickitat County to urge the KCBE to EQUALIZE all the lands within the Wheat Lands classification during the specific allotted time.**

**Respectfully,**

**Mark Herke**

**President, Yakima County Farm Bureau**