

CHAPTER 282

TAX-FORFEITED LAND SALES

282.01 Tax-forfeited lands; classification, sale.
282.04 Timber sales; land use, lease, partition,
easement.

282.241 Repurchase after forfeiture.

282.01 TAX-FORFEITED LANDS; CLASSIFICATION, SALE.

Subdivision 1. Classification as conservation or nonconservation. It is the general policy of this state to encourage the best use of tax-forfeited lands, recognizing that some lands in public ownership should be retained and managed for public benefits while other lands should be returned to private ownership. Parcels of land becoming the property of the state in trust under law declaring the forfeiture of lands to the state for taxes must be classified by the county board of the county in which the parcels lie as conservation or nonconservation. In making the classification the board shall consider the present use of adjacent lands, the productivity of the soil, the character of forest or other growth, accessibility of lands to established roads, schools, and other public services, their peculiar suitability or desirability for particular uses and the suitability of the forest resources on the land for multiple use, sustained yield management. The classification, furthermore, must encourage and foster a mode of land utilization that will facilitate the economical and adequate provision of transportation, roads, water supply, drainage, sanitation, education, and recreation; facilitate reduction of governmental expenditures; conserve and develop the natural resources; and foster and develop agriculture and other industries in the districts and places best suited to them.

In making the classification the county board may use information made available by any office or department of the federal, state, or local governments, or by any other person or agency possessing pertinent information at the time the classification is made. The lands may be reclassified from time to time as the county board considers necessary or desirable, except for conservation lands held by the state free from any trust in favor of any taxing district.

If the lands are located within the boundaries of an organized town, with taxable valuation in excess of \$20,000, or incorporated municipality, the classification or reclassification and sale must first be approved by the town board of the town or the governing body of the municipality in which the lands are located. The town board of the town or the governing body of the municipality is considered to have approved the classification or reclassification and sale if the county board is not notified of the disapproval of the classification or reclassification and sale within 60 days of the date the request for approval was transmitted to the town board of the town or governing body of the municipality. If the town board or governing body desires to acquire any parcel lying in the town or municipality by procedures authorized in this section, it must file a written application with the county board to withhold the parcel from public sale. The application must be filed within 60 days of the request for classification or reclassification and sale. The county board shall then withhold the parcel from public sale for six months. A municipality or governmental subdivision shall pay maintenance costs incurred by the county during the six-month period while the property is withheld from public sale, provided the property is not offered for public sale after the six-month period. A clerical error made by county officials does not serve to eliminate the request of the town board or governing body if the board or governing body has forwarded the application to the county auditor. If the town board or governing body of the municipality fails to submit an application and a resolution of the board or governing body to acquire the property within the withholding period, the county may offer the property for sale upon the expiration of the withholding period.

[For text of subd 1a, see M.S.2000]

Subd. 1b. Conveyance; targeted neighborhood lands. (a) Notwithstanding subdivision 1a, in the case of tax-forfeited lands located in a targeted neighborhood, as

defined in section 469.201, subdivision 10, and section 473.121, subdivision 2, the commissioner of revenue shall convey by deed in the name of the state any tract of tax-forfeited land held in trust in favor of the taxing districts, to a political subdivision that submits an application to the commissioner of revenue and the recommendation of the county board.

(b) The application under paragraph (a) must include a statement of facts as to the use to be made of the tract, the need therefor, and a resolution, adopted by the governing body of the political subdivision, finding that the conveyance of a tract of tax-forfeited land to the political subdivision is necessary to provide for the redevelopment of land as productive taxable property. Deeds of conveyance issued under paragraph (a) are not conditioned on continued use of the property for the use stated in the application.

Subd. 1c. Deed of conveyance; form; approvals. The deed of conveyance for property conveyed for a public use must be on a form approved by the attorney general and must be conditioned on continued use for the purpose stated in the application.

Subd. 1d. Reverter for failure to use; conveyance to state. If after three years from the date of the conveyance a governmental subdivision to which tax-forfeited land has been conveyed for a specified public use as provided in this section fails to put the land to that use, or abandons that use, the governing body of the subdivision may, with the approval of the county board, purchase the property for an authorized public purpose at the present appraised value as determined by the county board. In that case, the commissioner of revenue shall, upon proper written application approved by the county board, issue an appropriate deed to the subdivisions free of a use restriction and reverter. The governing body may also authorize the proper officers to convey the land, or the part of the land not required for an authorized public use, to the state of Minnesota. The officers shall execute a deed of conveyance immediately. The conveyance is subject to the approval of the commissioner and its form must be approved by the attorney general. A sale, lease, transfer, or other conveyance of tax-forfeited lands by a housing and redevelopment authority, a port authority, an economic development authority, or a city as authorized by chapter 469 is not an abandonment of use and the lands shall not be reconveyed to the state nor shall they revert to the state. A certificate made by a housing and redevelopment authority, a port authority, an economic development authority, or a city referring to a conveyance by it and stating that the conveyance has been made as authorized by chapter 469 may be filed with the county recorder or registrar of titles, and the rights of reverter in favor of the state provided by subdivision 1e will then terminate. No vote of the people is required for the conveyance.

Subd. 1e. Notice and declaration of reversion. If the tax-forfeited land is not either purchased or conveyed to the state in accordance with subdivision 1d, the commissioner of revenue shall by written instrument, in form approved by the attorney general, declare the land to have reverted to the state, and shall serve a notice of reversion, with a copy of the declaration, by certified mail upon the clerk or recorder of the governmental subdivision concerned. No declaration of reversion under this subdivision shall be made earlier than 60 days after the expiration of the three-year period described in subdivision 1d. The commissioner shall file the original declaration in the commissioner's office, with verified proof of service. The governmental subdivision may appeal to the district court of the county in which the land lies by filing with the court administrator a notice of appeal, specifying the grounds of appeal and the description of the land involved, mailing a copy of the notice of appeal by certified mail to the commissioner of revenue, and filing a copy for record with the county recorder or registrar of titles, all within 30 days after the mailing of the notice of reversion. The appeal shall be tried by the court in like manner as a civil action. If no appeal is taken as provided in this subdivision, the declaration of reversion is final. The commissioner of revenue shall file for record with the county recorder or registrar of titles, of the county within which the land lies, a certified copy of the declaration of reversion and proof of service.

[For text of subs 1f to 1l, see M.S.2000]

History: *1Sp2001 c 5 art 3 s 59-63*

NOTE: The amendment to subdivision 1d by Laws 2001, First Special Session chapter 5, article 3, section 62, is effective August 1, 2001. For deeds existing on the effective date, the three-year limitation begins on August 1, 2001, except no deed issued prior to August 1, 2001, shall have a limitation of less than five years. Laws 2001, First Special Session chapter 5, article 3, section 62, the effective date.

282.04 TIMBER SALES; LAND USE, LEASE, PARTITION, EASEMENT.

Subdivision 1. **Timber sales; land leases and uses.** (a) The county auditor may sell timber upon any tract that may be approved by the natural resources commissioner. Such sale of timber shall be made for cash at not less than the appraised value determined by the county board to the highest bidder after not less than one week's published notice in an official paper within the county. Any timber offered at such public sale and not sold may thereafter be sold at private sale by the county auditor at not less than the appraised value thereof, until such time as the county board may withdraw such timber from sale. The appraised value of the timber and the forestry practices to be followed in the cutting of said timber shall be approved by the commissioner of natural resources.

(b) Payment of the full sale price of all timber sold on tax-forfeited lands shall be made in cash at the time of the timber sale, except in the case of oral or sealed bid-auction sales, the down payment shall be no less than 15 percent of the appraised value, and the balance shall be paid prior to entry. In the case of auction sales that are partitioned and sold as a single sale with predetermined cutting blocks, the down payment shall be no less than 15 percent of the appraised price of the entire timber sale which may be held until the satisfactory completion of the sale or applied in whole or in part to the final cutting block. The value of each separate block must be paid in full before any cutting may begin in that block. With the permission of the county administrator the purchaser may enter unpaid blocks and cut necessary timber incidental to developing logging roads as may be needed to log other blocks provided that no timber may be removed from an unpaid block until separately scaled and paid for.

(c) The county board may require final settlement on the basis of a scale of cut products. Any parcels of land from which timber is to be sold by scale of cut products shall be so designated in the published notice of sale above mentioned, in which case the notice shall contain a description of such parcels, a statement of the estimated quantity of each species of timber thereon and the appraised price of each specie of timber for 1,000 feet, per cord or per piece, as the case may be. In such cases any bids offered over and above the appraised prices shall be by percentage, the percent bid to be added to the appraised price of each of the different species of timber advertised on the land. The purchaser of timber from such parcels shall pay in cash at the time of sale at the rate bid for all of the timber shown in the notice of sale as estimated to be standing on the land, and in addition shall pay at the same rate for any additional amounts which the final scale shows to have been cut or was available for cutting on the land at the time of sale under the terms of such sale. Where the final scale of cut products shows that less timber was cut or was available for cutting under terms of such sale than was originally paid for, the excess payment shall be refunded from the forfeited tax sale fund upon the claim of the purchaser, to be audited and allowed by the county board as in case of other claims against the county. No timber, except hardwood pulpwood, may be removed from such parcels of land or other designated landings until scaled by a person or persons designated by the county board and approved by the commissioner of natural resources. Landings other than the parcel of land from which timber is cut may be designated for scaling by the county board by written agreement with the purchaser of the timber. The county board may, by written agreement with the purchaser and with a consumer designated by the purchaser when the timber is sold by the county auditor, and with the approval of the commissioner of natural resources, accept the consumer's scale of cut products delivered at the consumer's landing. No timber shall be removed until fully paid for in cash. Small amounts of timber not exceeding \$3,000 in appraised valuation may be sold for not less

than the full appraised value at private sale to individual persons without first publishing notice of sale or calling for bids, provided that in case of such sale involving a total appraised value of more than \$200 the sale shall be made subject to final settlement on the basis of a scale of cut products in the manner above provided and not more than two such sales, directly or indirectly to any individual shall be in effect at one time.

(d) As directed by the county board, the county auditor may lease tax-forfeited land to individuals, corporations or organized subdivisions of the state at public or private vendue, and at such prices and under such terms as the county board may prescribe, for use as cottage and camp sites and for agricultural purposes and for the purpose of taking and removing of hay, stumpage, sand, gravel, clay, rock, marl, and black dirt therefrom, and for garden sites and other temporary uses provided that no leases shall be for a period to exceed ten years; provided, further that any leases involving a consideration of more than \$12,000 per year, except to an organized subdivision of the state shall first be offered at public sale in the manner provided herein for sale of timber. Upon the sale of any such leased land, it shall remain subject to the lease for not to exceed one year from the beginning of the term of the lease. Any rent paid by the lessee for the portion of the term cut off by such cancellation shall be refunded from the forfeited tax sale fund upon the claim of the lessee, to be audited and allowed by the county board as in case of other claims against the county.

(e) As directed by the county board, the county auditor may lease tax-forfeited land to individuals, corporations, or organized subdivisions of the state at public or private vendue, at such prices and under such terms as the county board may prescribe, for the purpose of taking and removing for use for road construction and other purposes tax-forfeited stockpiled iron-bearing material. The county auditor must determine that the material is needed and suitable for use in the construction or maintenance of a road, tailings basin, settling basin, dike, dam, bank fill, or other works on public or private property, and that the use would be in the best interests of the public. No lease shall exceed ten years. The use of a stockpile for these purposes must first be approved by the commissioner of natural resources. The request shall be deemed approved unless the requesting county is notified to the contrary by the commissioner of natural resources within six months after receipt of a request for approval for use of a stockpile. Once use of a stockpile has been approved, the county may continue to lease it for these purposes until approval is withdrawn by the commissioner of natural resources.

(f) The county auditor, with the approval of the county board is authorized to grant permits, licenses, and leases to tax-forfeited lands for the depositing of stripping, lean ores, tailings, or waste products from mines or ore milling plants, upon such conditions and for such consideration and for such period of time, not exceeding 15 years, as the county board may determine; said permits, licenses, or leases to be subject to approval by the commissioner of natural resources.

(g) Any person who removes any timber from tax-forfeited land before said timber has been scaled and fully paid for as provided in this subdivision is guilty of a misdemeanor.

(h) The county auditor may, with the approval of the county board, and without first offering at public sale, grant leases, for a term not exceeding 25 years, for the removal of peat from tax-forfeited lands upon such terms and conditions as the county board may prescribe. Any lease for the removal of peat from tax-forfeited lands must first be reviewed and approved by the commissioner of natural resources if the lease covers 320 or more acres. No lease for the removal of peat shall be made by the county auditor pursuant to this section without first holding a public hearing on the auditor's intention to lease. One printed notice in a legal newspaper in the county at least ten days before the hearing, and posted notice in the courthouse at least 20 days before the hearing shall be given of the hearing.

[For text of subd. 1a, see M.S.2000]

Subd. 2. **Rights before sale; improvements, insurance, demolition.** Before the sale of a parcel of forfeited land the county auditor may, with the approval of the county board of commissioners, provide for the repair and improvement of any building or structure located upon the parcel, and may provide for maintenance of tax-forfeited lands, if it is determined by the county board that such repairs, improvements, or maintenance are necessary for the operation, use, preservation and safety of the building or structure. If so authorized by the county board, the county auditor may insure the building or structure against loss or damage resulting from fire or windstorm, may purchase workers' compensation insurance to insure the county against claims for injury to the persons employed in the building or structure by the county, and may insure the county, its officers and employees against claims for injuries to persons or property because of the management, use or operation of the building or structure. The county auditor may, with the approval of the county board, provide for the demolition of the building or structure, which has been determined by the county board to be within the purview of section 299F.10, and for the sale of salvaged materials from the building or structure. The county auditor, with the approval of the county board, may provide for the sale of abandoned personal property. The sale may be made by the sheriff using the procedures for the sale of abandoned property in section 345.15 or by the county auditor using the procedures for the sale of abandoned property in section 504B.271. The net proceeds from any sale of the personal property, salvaged materials, timber or other products, or leases made under this law must be deposited in the forfeited tax sale fund and must be distributed in the same manner as if the parcel had been sold.

The county auditor, with the approval of the county board, may provide for the demolition of any structure on tax-forfeited lands, if in the opinion of the county board, the county auditor, and the land commissioner, if there is one, the sale of the land with the structure on it, or the continued existence of the structure by reason of age, dilapidated condition or excessive size as compared with nearby structures, will result in a material lessening of net tax capacities of real estate in the vicinity of the tax-forfeited lands, or if the demolition of the structure or structures will aid in disposing of the tax-forfeited property.

Before the sale of a parcel of forfeited land located in an urban area, the county auditor may with the approval of the county board provide for the grading of the land by filling or the removal of any surplus material from it. If the physical condition of forfeited lands is such that a reasonable grading of the lands is necessary for the protection and preservation of the property of any adjoining owner, the adjoining property owner or owners may apply to the county board to have the grading done. If, after considering the application, the county board believes that the grading will enhance the value of the forfeited lands commensurate with the cost involved, it may approve it, and the work must be performed under the supervision of the county or city engineer, as the case may be, and the expense paid from the forfeited tax sale fund.

[For text of subs 3 and 4, see M.S.2000]

Subd. 4a. **Private easements.** (a) A county board may convey a road easement across unsold tax-forfeited land to an individual requesting an easement for access to private property owned by the individual if:

(1) there are no reasonable alternatives to obtain access to the individual's property; and

(2) exercising the easement will not cause significant adverse environmental or natural resource management impacts.

(b) The county auditor shall require an individual applying for an easement under paragraph (a) to pay the appraised value of the easement. The conveyance must provide that the easement reverts to the state in trust for the taxing district in the event of nonuse.

[For text of subd 5, see M.S.2000]

History: 2001 c 164 s 1,2; 1Sp2001 c 5 art 7 s 23

282.241 REPURCHASE AFTER FORFEITURE.

Subdivision 1. **Repurchase requirements.** The owner at the time of forfeiture, or the owner's heirs, devisees, or representatives, or any person to whom the right to pay taxes was given by statute, mortgage, or other agreement, may repurchase any parcel of land claimed by the state to be forfeited to the state for taxes unless before the time repurchase is made the parcel is sold under installment payments, or otherwise, by the state as provided by law, or is under mineral prospecting permit or lease, or proceedings have been commenced by the state or any of its political subdivisions or by the United States to condemn the parcel of land. The parcel of land may be repurchased for the sum of all delinquent taxes and assessments computed under section 282.251, together with penalties, interest, and costs, that accrued or would have accrued if the parcel of land had not forfeited to the state. Except for property which was homesteaded on the date of forfeiture, repurchase is permitted during one year only from the date of forfeiture, and in any case only after the adoption of a resolution by the board of county commissioners determining that by repurchase undue hardship or injustice resulting from the forfeiture will be corrected, or that permitting the repurchase will promote the use of the lands that will best serve the public interest. If the county board has good cause to believe that a repurchase installment payment plan for a particular parcel is unnecessary and not in the public interest, the county board may require as a condition of repurchase that the entire repurchase price be paid at the time of repurchase. A repurchase is subject to any easement, lease, or other encumbrance granted by the state before the repurchase, and if the land is located within a restricted area established by any county under Laws 1939, chapter 340, the repurchase must not be permitted unless the resolution approving the repurchase is adopted by the unanimous vote of the board of county commissioners.

The person seeking to repurchase under this section shall pay all maintenance costs incurred by the county auditor during the time the property was tax-forfeited.

Subd. 2. **Alternative computation of repurchase amount.** A county board may by resolution establish an alternative method of computing the repurchase amount under this subdivision for property homesteaded at the time of forfeiture that has been in forfeited status for more than ten years. Equivalent taxes, penalties, interest, and costs for each year the property was in forfeiture status must be computed using the simple average of the assessor's estimated market value at forfeiture and the assessor's current estimated market value multiplied by the class rates under current law and applying the current tax, penalty, and interest rates. Those amounts, plus any unpaid special assessments reinstated and included in the purchase price under section 282.251, including the penalties and interest that accrued or would have accrued on the special assessments, computed under current rates, are the repurchase price. The county assessor shall determine the current market value and classification of the property.

History: 1Sp2001 c 5 art 3 s 64