CHAPTER 473H

METROPOLITAN AGRICULTURAL PRESERVES

473H.01 CITATION; POLICY; PURPOSE.
473H.02 DEFINITIONS.
473H.03 REQUIRED SIZE OF PARCEL; EXCEPTIONS.
473H.04 AUTHORITY MUST CERTIFY ELIGIBLE PRESERVE LANDS.
473H.05 APPLICATION; COVENANT AGREEMENT.
473H.06 NOTIFICATION.
473H.07 COMMENCEMENT OF PRESERVE.
473H.08 DURATION.
473H.09 EARLY TERMINATION.
473H.10 AD VALOREM PROPERTY TAXES.
473H.11 LIMITATION ON CERTAIN PUBLIC PROJECTS.
473H.12 PROTECTION FOR NORMAL FARM PRACTICES.
473H.14 ANNEXATION PROCEEDINGS.
473H.15 EMINENT DOMAIN ACTIONS.
473H.16 CONSERVATION.
473H.17 LAND USE.
473H.18 TRANSFER FROM AGRICULTURAL PROPERTY TAX LAW TREATMENT.

473H.01 CITATION; POLICY; PURPOSE.

Subdivision 1. **Citation.** Sections 473H.02 to 473H.17 may be cited as the "Metropolitan Agricultural Preserves Act."

Subd. 2. **Policy; purpose.** It is the policy of the state to encourage the use and improvement of its agricultural lands for the production of food and other agricultural products. It is the purpose of sections 473H.02 to 473H.17 to provide an orderly means by which lands in the metropolitan area designated for long-term agricultural use through the local and regional planning processes will be taxed in an equitable manner reflecting the long-term singular use of the property, protected from unreasonably restrictive local and state regulation of normal farm practices, protected from indiscriminate and disruptive taking of farmlands through eminent domain actions, protected from the imposition of unnecessary special assessments, and given such additional protection and benefits as are needed to maintain viable productive farm operations in the metropolitan area.

History: *1980 c 566 s 1*

473H.02 DEFINITIONS.

Subdivision 1. **Terms.** For purposes of sections 473H.02 to 473H.17 the terms defined in this section shall have the meanings given them.

Subd. 2. **Agricultural preserve or preserve.** "Agricultural preserve" or "preserve" means a land area created and restricted according to section 473H.05 to remain in agricultural use.

Subd. 3. **Agricultural use.** "Agricultural use" means the production for sale of livestock, dairy animals, dairy products, poultry or poultry products, fur-bearing animals, horticultural or nursery stock, fruit, vegetables, forage, grains, or bees and apiary products. Wetlands, pasture and woodlands accompanying land in agricultural use shall be deemed to be in agricultural use.

Subd. 4. **Authority.** "Authority" means the unit of government exercising planning and zoning authority for the land specified in an application as provided under section 473H.05 and pursuant to sections 394.21 to 394.37 or 462.351 to 462.364, or Minnesota Statutes 2020, sections 366.10 to 366.181. Where both a county and a township have adopted zoning regulations, the authority shall be the unit of government designated to prepare a comprehensive plan pursuant to section 473.861, subdivision 2.

Subd. 5. **Certified long-term agricultural land.** "Certified long-term agricultural land" means land certified pursuant to section 473H.04 as eligible for designation as agricultural preserves.

Subd. 6. **Covenant.** "Covenant" means a restrictive covenant initiated by the owner and contained in the application provided for in section 473H.05 whereby the owner places the limitations on specified land and receives the protections and benefits contained in sections 473H.02 to 473H.17.

Subd. 7. **Long-term agricultural land.** "Long-term agricultural land" means land in the metropolitan area designated for agricultural use in local or county comprehensive plans adopted and reviewed pursuant to sections 473.175, and 473.851 to 473.871, and which has been zoned specifically for agricultural use permitting a maximum residential density of not more than one unit per quarter/quarter.

Subd. 8. **Metropolitan area.** "Metropolitan area" has the meaning given it in section 473.121, subdivision 2.

Subd. 9. **Owner.** "Owner" means a resident of the United States owning land specified in an application pursuant to section 473H.05, and includes an individual, legal guardian or family farm corporation as defined in section 500.24, having a joint or common interest in the land. Where land is subject to a contract for deed, owner means the vendor in agreement with the vendee.

Subd. 10. **Quarter/quarter.** "Quarter/quarter" means one quarter of one quarter of any section in the rectangular land survey system.

Subd. 11. MS 1998 [Repealed, 1999 c 11 art 1 s 72]

History: *1980 c 566 s 2; 1982 c 523 art 32 s 1,2; 1999 c 11 art 1 s 8; 2023 c 25 s 183*

473H.03 REQUIRED SIZE OF PARCEL; EXCEPTIONS.

Subdivision 1. **40 acres or more.** Long-term agricultural land comprising 40 or more acres shall be eligible for designation as an agricultural preserve.

Subd. 2. **If noncontiguous.** Noncontiguous parcels may be included to achieve the minimum acreage requirement in subdivision 1, provided that each parcel is at least ten acres in size and provided that all separate parcels are farmed together as a unit.

Subd. 3. **35-acre exception.** The minimum acreage requirement in subdivision 1 may be reduced to 35 acres provided the land is a single quarter/quarter parcel and the amount less than 40 acres is due to a public road right-of-way or a perturbation in the rectangular survey system resulting in a quarter/quarter of less than 40 acres.

Subd. 4. **20-acre exception.** Contiguous long-term agricultural land comprising not less than 20 acres and surrounded by eligible land on not less than two sides shall be eligible for designation as an agricultural preserve provided the authority by resolution determines that: (i) the land area predominantly comprises Class I, II, III, or irrigated Class IV land according to the Land Capability Classification Systems of the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the county soil survey; (ii) the land area is considered by the authority to be an essential part of the agricultural region; and (iii) the parcel was a parcel of record prior to January 1, 1980, or the land was an agricultural preserve prior to becoming a separate parcel of at least 20 acres.

Subd. 5. **Two or more authorities.** Contiguous long-term agricultural land meeting the total acreage requirements of this section but located in two or more authorities so that the minimum acreage requirement is not met in one or more of the authorities shall be eligible by joint resolution of the affected authorities.

Subd. 6. **Owner's adjoining preserve parcel.** Contiguous long-term agricultural land not meeting the total acreage requirements of this section but under the same ownership as an agricultural preserve adjoining it on at least one side shall be eligible for designation as an agricultural preserve.

History: *1980 c 566 s 3; 1989 c 313 s 9; 2015 c 21 art 1 s 109*

473H.04 AUTHORITY MUST CERTIFY ELIGIBLE PRESERVE LANDS.

Subdivision 1. **With maps; published notice.** Each authority in the metropolitan area having land classified agricultural pursuant to section 273.13 shall certify by resolution using appropriate maps which lands, if any, are eligible for designation as agricultural preserves. Maps shall be in sufficient detail to identify eligible lands by property boundaries. At least two weeks before the resolution is to be adopted, the authority shall publish notice of its intended action in a newspaper having a general circulation within the area of jurisdiction of the authority. No additional lands shall qualify for designation as agricultural preserves until the authority certifies qualification.

Subd. 2. **When eligibility ends.** Land shall cease to be eligible for designation as an agricultural preserve when the comprehensive plan and zoning for the land have been amended so that the land is no longer planned for long-term agricultural use and is no longer zoned for long-term agricultural use, evidenced by a maximum residential density permitting more than one unit per 40 acres. When changes have been made, the authority shall certify by resolution and appropriate maps which lands are no longer eligible. At least two weeks before the resolution is to be adopted, the authority shall publish a notice of its intended action in a newspaper having a general circulation within the area of jurisdiction of the authority.

Subd. 3. **Maps to Met Council.** The authority shall provide the Metropolitan Council with suitable maps showing any lands certified eligible pursuant to subdivision 1 or decertified pursuant to subdivision 2. The Metropolitan Council shall maintain maps of the metropolitan area showing all certified long-term agricultural lands.

History: *1980 c 566 s 4; 1982 c 523 art 32 s 3,4*

473H.05 APPLICATION; COVENANT AGREEMENT.

Subdivision 1. **Before June 1 for next year's taxes.** An owner or owners of certified long-term agricultural land may apply to the authority with jurisdiction over the land on forms provided by the commissioner of agriculture for the creation of an agricultural preserve at any time. Land for which application is received prior to June 1 of any year shall be assessed pursuant to section 473H.10 for taxes payable in the following year. Land for which application is received on or after June 1 of any year shall be assessed pursuant to section 473H.10 in the following year. The application shall be executed and acknowledged in the manner required by law to execute and acknowledge a deed and shall contain at least the following information and such other information as the commissioner deems necessary:

(a) legal description of the area proposed to be designated and parcel identification numbers if so designated by the county auditor and the certificate of title number if the land is registered;

(b) name and address of owner;

(c) an affidavit by the authority evidencing that the land is certified long-term agricultural land at the date of application;

(d) a statement by the owner covenanting that the land shall be kept in agricultural use, and shall be used in accordance with the provisions of sections 473H.02 to 473H.17 which exist on the date of application

and providing that the restrictive covenant shall be binding on the owner or the owner's successor or assignee, and shall run with the land.

Subd. 2. **May be fee.** The authority may require an application fee, not to exceed $50, to defray administrative costs.

Subd. 3. MS 1998 [Repealed, 1999 c 11 art 1 s 72]

Subd. 4. **Reenrolling.** If an owner's property was initially granted agricultural preserve status under subdivision 1 but the owner filed an agricultural preserve termination notice on that property, the owner may reenroll the property in the program as provided in this subdivision. In lieu of the requirements in subdivision 1, the county may allow a property owner to reenroll by completing a one page form or affidavit, as prepared by the county. The county may require whatever information is deemed necessary, except that approval by the city or township, in which the property is located, shall be required on the form or affidavit.

The county may charge the property owner a reenrollment fee, not to exceed $10, to defray any administrative cost.

Reenrolling property under this subdivision shall be allowed only if the same property owner or owners wish to reenroll the same property under the same conditions as was originally approved under subdivision 1.

History: *1980 c 566 s 5; 1982 c 523 art 32 s 5,6; 1986 c 444; 1994 c 587 art 5 s 24; 1999 c 11 art 1 s 9; 2010 c 389 art 1 s 24*

473H.06 NOTIFICATION.

Subdivision 1. **Application.** Upon receipt of an application, the authority shall determine if all material required in section 473H.05 has been submitted and, if so, shall determine that the application is complete. When used in this chapter, the term "date of application" means the date the application is determined complete by the authority. Within five days of the date of application, the authority shall forward the completed and signed application to the county recorder, and copies to the county auditor, the county assessor, the Metropolitan Council, and the county soil and water conservation district.

Subd. 2. **Recording; memorialization.** The county recorder shall record the application containing the restrictive covenant and return it to the applicant. If the land is registered, the registrar of titles shall memorialize the application containing the restrictive covenant upon the certificate of title. The authority shall be notified by the recorder or registrar of titles that the application has been recorded or memorialized.

Subd. 3. **Taxes.** The county auditor, for taxes payable in the following year and thereafter for the duration of the preserve, shall determine local tax rates, assessments and taxes involving the preserve according to the provisions of section 473H.10.

Subd. 4. **Validation, assessment.** The county assessor, for taxes payable in the following calendar year and thereafter for the duration of the preserve, shall value and assess the agricultural preserve according to section 473H.10.

Subd. 5. **Maps; reports.** The Metropolitan Council shall maintain agricultural preserve maps, illustrating (a) certified long-term agricultural lands; and (b) lands covenanted as agricultural preserves. The council shall make yearly reports to the Department of Agriculture and such other agencies as the council deems appropriate.

Subd. 6. **Monitoring.** County auditors shall maintain records of the taxes assessed and paid on agricultural preserves in a manner prescribed by the commissioner of revenue for the orderly monitoring of the program.

Subd. 7. **Conservation problem statements.** The county soil and water conservation district may prepare an advisory statement of existing and potential conservation problems for the agricultural preserve land. The statement shall be forwarded to the owner of record and a copy of the statement shall be forwarded to the authority.

History: *1980 c 566 s 6; 1981 c 356 s 242,248; 1982 c 523 art 32 s 7-9; 1983 c 289 s 115 subd 1; 1987 c 312 art 1 s 26 subd 2; 1988 c 719 art 5 s 84; 1Sp1989 c 1 art 2 s 11; 1993 c 163 art 1 s 33; 1999 c 11 art 1 s 10,11*

473H.07 COMMENCEMENT OF PRESERVE.

A land area shall be deemed an agricultural preserve and subject to all the benefits and restrictions of sections 473H.02 to 473H.17 commencing 30 days from the date of application.

History: *1980 c 566 s 7*

473H.08 DURATION.

Subdivision 1. **Till expiration started.** Agricultural preserves shall continue until the landowner, the authority, or a state agency or governmental unit initiates expiration as provided in this section.

Subd. 2. **Expiration by landowner.** A landowner may initiate expiration by notifying the authority on a form provided by the commissioner of agriculture. The notice shall describe the property for which expiration is desired and shall state the date of expiration which shall be at least eight years from the date of notice. The notice and expiration may be rescinded by the owner at any time during the first two years following notice.

Subd. 3. **Expiration by authority.** The authority may initiate expiration by notifying the landowner by registered letter on a form provided by the commissioner of agriculture, provided that before notification (i) the comprehensive plan and the zoning for the land have been officially amended so that the land is no longer planned for long-term agriculture and is no longer zoned for long-term agriculture, evidenced by a maximum residential density permitting more than one unit per quarter/quarter, and (ii) the authority has certified such changes pursuant to section 473H.04, subdivision 2. The notice shall describe the property for which expiration is desired and shall state the date of expiration which shall be at least eight years from the date of notice.

Subd. 3a. **Expiration for park and trail purposes.** (a) An agricultural preserve expires immediately when a state agency or other governmental unit purchases the property or obtains an easement over the property for the purpose of creating or expanding a public trail or public park. This subdivision applies only to the portion of the agricultural preserve acquired for trail or park purposes, and any portion of the property not acquired for trail or park purposes shall remain an agricultural preserve, even if the total acreage is reduced below 40 acres.

(b) The acquiring state agency or governmental unit shall give notice to the authority as provided in subdivision 4. The notice must specify the portion of the property being removed from the agricultural preserve and the date on which that portion expires.

Subd. 4. **Notice to others.** Upon receipt of the notice provided in subdivision 2 or 3a, or upon notice served by the authority as provided in subdivision 3, the authority shall forward the original notice to the

county recorder for recording, or to the registrar of titles if the land is registered, and shall notify the county auditor, county assessor, the Metropolitan Council, and the county soil and water conservation district of the date of expiration. Designation as an agricultural preserve and all benefits and limitations accruing through sections 473H.02 to 473H.17 for the preserve shall cease on the date of expiration. The restrictive covenant contained in the application shall terminate on the date of expiration.

History: *1980 c 566 s 8; 1982 c 523 art 32 s 10; 1999 c 11 art 1 s 12; 1Sp2019 c 6 art 4 s 27-29*

473H.09 EARLY TERMINATION.

Subdivision 1. **Public emergency.** Termination of an agricultural preserve earlier than a date derived through application of section 473H.08 may be permitted in the event of a public emergency upon petition from the owner or authority to the governor. The determination of a public emergency shall be by the governor through executive order pursuant to sections 4.035 and 12.01 to 12.46. The executive order shall identify the preserve, the reasons requiring the action and the date of termination.

Subd. 2. **Death of owner.** (a) Within 365 days of the death of an owner, an owner's spouse, or other qualifying person, the surviving owner may elect to terminate the agricultural preserve and the covenant allowing the land to be enrolled as an agricultural preserve by notifying the authority on a form provided by the commissioner of agriculture. Termination of a covenant under this subdivision must be executed and acknowledged in the manner required by law to execute and acknowledge a deed.

(b) For purposes of this subdivision, the following definitions apply:

(1) "qualifying person" includes a partner, shareholder, trustee for a trust that the decedent was the settlor or a beneficiary of, or member of an entity permitted to own agricultural land and engage in farming under section 500.24 that owned the agricultural preserve; and

(2) "surviving owner" includes the executor of the estate of the decedent, trustee for a trust that the decedent was the settlor or a beneficiary of, or an entity permitted to own farm land under section 500.24 of which the decedent was a partner, shareholder, or member.

(c) When an agricultural preserve is terminated under this subdivision, the property is subject to additional taxes in an amount equal to 50 percent of the taxes actually levied against the property for the current taxes payable year. The additional taxes are extended against the property on the tax list for taxes payable in the current year. The additional taxes must be distributed among the jurisdictions levying taxes on the property in proportion to the current year's taxes.

Subd. 3. **Approval of authority.** Termination of an agricultural preserve earlier than the date derived through the application in section 473H.08 may be requested by the owner eight years after commencement of the preserve. An owner seeking termination under this subdivision must provide notice to the authority exercising planning and zoning authority for the land on a form provided by the commissioner of agriculture. The notice must describe the property for which termination is desired and the date of termination. Termination of the agricultural preserve and covenant pursuant to this subdivision shall become effective only upon approval by a majority vote of the authority.

History: *1980 c 566 s 9; 1Sp2017 c 1 art 2 s 38; 1Sp2019 c 6 art 4 s 30*

473H.10 AD VALOREM PROPERTY TAXES.

Subdivision 1. **Valuation, assessment.** Real property within an agricultural preserve shall be valued and assessed pursuant to chapter 273, except as provided in this section.

Subd. 2. **No nonagricultural factors.** All land classified agricultural and in agricultural use, exclusive of buildings, shall be valued solely with reference to its appropriate agricultural classification and value, notwithstanding sections 272.03, subdivision 8, and 273.11. In determining the value for ad valorem tax purposes the assessor shall not consider any added values resulting from nonagricultural factors.

Subd. 3. **Computation of tax; state reimbursement.** (a) After having determined the market value of all land valued according to subdivision 2, the assessor shall compute the net tax capacity of those properties by applying the appropriate classification rates. When computing the rate of tax pursuant to section 275.08, the county auditor shall include the net tax capacity of land as provided in this paragraph.

(b) The county auditor shall compute the tax on lands valued according to subdivision 2 and nonresidential buildings by multiplying the net tax capacity times the total local tax rate for all purposes as provided in paragraph (a).

(c) The county auditor shall then compute the tax on lands valued according to subdivision 2 and nonresidential buildings by multiplying the net tax capacity times the total local tax rate for all purposes as provided in paragraph (a), subtracting $1.50 per acre of land in the preserve.

(d) The county auditor shall then compute the maximum ad valorem property tax on lands valued according to subdivision 2 and nonresidential buildings by multiplying the net tax capacity times 105 percent of the previous year's statewide average local tax rate levied on property located within townships for all purposes.

(e) The tax due and payable by the owner of preserve land valued according to subdivision 2 and nonresidential buildings will be the amount determined in paragraph (c) or (d), whichever is less. The state shall reimburse the taxing jurisdictions for the amount of the difference between the net tax determined under this paragraph and the gross tax in paragraph (b). Residential buildings shall continue to be valued and classified according to the provisions of sections 273.11 and 273.13, as they would be in the absence of this section, and the tax on those buildings shall not be subject to the limitation contained in this paragraph.

The county may transfer money from the county conservation account created in section 40A.152 to the county revenue fund to reimburse the fund for the tax lost as a result of this subdivision or to pay taxing jurisdictions within the county for the tax lost. The county auditor shall certify to the commissioner of revenue on or before June 1 the total amount of tax lost to the county and taxing jurisdictions located within the county as a result of this subdivision and the extent that the tax lost exceeds funds available in the county conservation account. Payment shall be made by the state on December 26 to each of the affected taxing jurisdictions, other than school districts, in the same proportion that the ad valorem tax is distributed if the county conservation account is insufficient to make the reimbursement. There is annually appropriated from the Minnesota conservation fund under section 40A.151 to the commissioner of revenue an amount sufficient to make the reimbursement provided in this subdivision. If the amount available in the Minnesota conservation fund is insufficient, the balance that is needed is appropriated from the general fund.

History: *1980 c 566 s 10; 1984 c 593 s 41; 1985 c 300 s 26; 1986 c 398 art 28 s 4; 1986 c 444; 1987 c 396 art 7 s 4; 1988 c 719 art 5 s 84; 1989 c 329 art 13 s 20; 1Sp1989 c 1 art 2 s 11; art 9 s 78; 1990 c 604 art 3 s 42; 1992 c 511 art 2 s 40; 1993 c 375 art 3 s 44; 2014 c 308 art 10 s 12*

473H.11 LIMITATION ON CERTAIN PUBLIC PROJECTS.

Notwithstanding chapter 429, construction projects for public sanitary sewer systems and public water systems benefiting land or buildings in agricultural preserves shall be prohibited. New connections between land or buildings in agricultural preserves and sanitary sewers or water systems shall be prohibited. Public

sanitary sewer systems, public stormwater sewer systems, public water systems, public roads, and other public improvements built on, adjacent to, or in the vicinity of agricultural preserves after August 1, 1993, are deemed of no benefit to the land and buildings in agricultural preserves.

For purposes of this section, "public stormwater sewer systems" means any wholly or partially piped system which is owned, operated, and maintained by the authority, that is designed to carry stormwater runoff, surface water, or other drainage primarily for the benefit of land which is not in agricultural preserves.

History: *1980 c 566 s 11; 1993 c 141 s 1*

473H.12 PROTECTION FOR NORMAL FARM PRACTICES.

Local governments and counties shall be prohibited from enacting or enforcing ordinances or regulations within an agricultural preserve which would, as adopted or applied, unreasonably restrict or regulate normal farm structures or farm practices in contravention of the purpose of sections 473H.02 to 473H.17 unless the restriction or regulation bears a direct relationship to an immediate and substantial threat to the public health and safety. This section shall apply to the operation of farm vehicles and machinery in the planting, maintenance and harvesting of crops and in the care and feeding of farm animals, the type of farming, and the design of farm structures, exclusive of residences.

History: *1980 c 566 s 12; 1993 c 141 s 2*

473H.13 MS 1980 [Repealed, 1982 c 512 s 17]

473H.14 ANNEXATION PROCEEDINGS.

Agricultural preserve land within a township shall not be annexed to a municipality pursuant to chapter 414, without a specific finding by the chief administrative law judge of the state Court of Administrative Hearings that either (a) the expiration period as provided for in section 473H.08 has begun; (b) the township due to size, tax base, population or other relevant factors would not be able to provide normal governmental functions and services; or (c) the agricultural preserve would be completely surrounded by lands within a municipality.

This section shall not apply to annexation agreements approved under proceedings authorized by chapter 414 prior to creation of the preserve.

History: *1980 c 566 s 14; 1982 c 523 art 32 s 11; 2003 c 2 art 5 s 13; 2008 c 196 art 2 s 11; 2025 c 39 art 2 s 68*

473H.15 EMINENT DOMAIN ACTIONS.

Subdivision 1. **Follow procedures here.** Any agency of the state, any public benefit corporation, any local, county or regional unit of government, or any other entity possessing powers of eminent domain under chapter 117, shall follow the procedures contained in this section before (1) acquiring any land or easement having a gross area over ten acres in size within agricultural preserves; or (2) advancing a grant, loan, interest subsidy or other funds for the construction of dwellings, commercial or industrial facilities, or water or sewer facilities that could be used to serve nonfarm structures within agricultural preserves.

Subd. 2. **Notice of intent to EQB.** At least 60 days prior to an action described in subdivision 1, notice of intent shall be filed with the Environmental Quality Board containing information and in the manner and form required by the Environmental Quality Board. The notice of intent shall contain a report justifying the proposed action, including an evaluation of alternatives which would not require acquisition within agricultural preserves.

Subd. 3. **EQB review.** The Environmental Quality Board, in consultation with affected units of government, shall review the proposed action to determine the effect of the action on the preservation and enhancement of agriculture and agricultural resources within the preserves and the relationship to local and regional comprehensive plans.

Subd. 4. **EQB order.** If the Environmental Quality Board finds that the proposed action might have an unreasonable effect on an agricultural preserve or preserves, the Environmental Quality Board shall issue an order within the 60-day period for the party to desist from such action for an additional 60-day period.

Subd. 5. **Hearing.** During the additional 60-day period, the Environmental Quality Board shall hold a public hearing concerning the proposed action at a place within the affected preserve or otherwise easily accessible to the preserve upon notice in a newspaper having a general circulation within the area of the preserves, and individual notice, in writing, to the municipalities whose territory encompasses the preserves, the agency, corporation or government proposing to take the action, and any public agency having the power of review of or approval of the action, in a manner conducive to the wide dissemination of the findings to the public.

Subd. 6. **Joint review.** The review process required in this section may be conducted jointly with any other environmental impact review conducted by the Environmental Quality Board.

Subd. 7. **AG may sue to enjoin.** The Environmental Quality Board may request the attorney general to bring an action to enjoin any agency, corporation or government from violating the provisions of this section.

Subd. 8. **Does not apply to emergency.** This section shall not apply to an emergency project which is immediately necessary for the protection of life and property.

Subd. 9. **EQB suspension.** The Environmental Quality Board shall be empowered to suspend any eminent domain action for up to one year which it determines to be contrary to the purposes of sections 473H.02 to 473H.17 and for which it determines there are feasible and prudent alternatives which have less negative impact on the agricultural preserves.

Subd. 10. **When agricultural preserve ends.** The agricultural preserve designation and all benefits and limitations accruing through sections 473H.02 to 473H.17 for the preserve and the restrictive covenant for that portion of the preserve taken, shall cease on the date the final certificate is filed with the court administrator of district court in accordance with section 117.205.

History: *1980 c 566 s 15; 1982 c 523 art 32 s 12; 1Sp1986 c 3 art 1 s 82*

473H.16 CONSERVATION.

Subdivision 1. **Unsound conservation practices described.** Land within an agricultural preserve shall be farmed and otherwise managed according to sound soil and water conservation management practices. Management practices which are not sound shall be any use of the land resulting in wind or water erosion in excess of the soil loss tolerance for each soil type as found in the United States Natural Resources Conservation Service, Minnesota Technical Guide.

Subd. 2. **Enforcement.** The authority shall be responsible for enforcing this section. Upon receipt of a written complaint stating the conditions or land management practices which are believed to be in violation of this section, the authority shall consult with the county soil and water conservation district. The district shall determine the average soil loss in tons per acre per year for each field cited in the complaint according to the universal soil loss equation and the wind erosion equation, and shall return to the authority a report showing the average soil loss in tons per acre per year for each field and a list of alternative practices that

the landowner can use to reduce the soil loss to the limit allowed in subdivision 1. After consultation, and if in the judgment of the authority the land is not being managed properly as required by this section, the authority shall adopt a resolution to this effect and shall seek corrective measures from the owner. At the request of the landowner, the district shall assist in the planning, design and application of the practices selected to reduce the soil loss to an acceptable level and shall give such landowners a high priority for providing technical and cost share assistance.

Subd. 3. **Civil penalty.** Any owner who fails to implement corrective measures to the satisfaction of the authority within one year of notice from the authority shall be subject to a civil penalty of not more than $1,000. The authority may recover the penalty by a civil action in a court of competent jurisdiction.

Subd. 4. **Costs.** Costs incurred by the authority in the enforcement of this section may be charged to the property owner. Charges not timely paid may be placed on the tax rolls and collected as a special assessment against the property.

History: *1980 c 566 s 16; 1982 c 523 art 32 s 13; 2015 c 21 art 1 s 109*

473H.17 LAND USE.

Subdivision 1. **For agricultural production.** Land within an agricultural preserve shall be maintained for agricultural production. The average maximum density of residential structures within an agricultural preserve shall not exceed one unit per 40 acres. The location of any new structure shall conform to locally applicable zoning regulations. Commercial and industrial uses shall not be permitted except as provided in subdivision 2 after the user is issued a permit by the authority. The authority shall be responsible for enforcing this section.

Subd. 1a. **Allowed commercial and industrial operations.** (a) Commercial and industrial operations are not allowed on land within an agricultural preserve except:

(1) small on-farm commercial or industrial operations normally associated with and important to farming in the agricultural preserve area;

(2) storage use of existing farm buildings that does not disrupt the integrity of the agricultural preserve;

(3) small commercial use of existing farm buildings for trades not disruptive to the integrity of the agricultural preserve such as a carpentry shop, small scale mechanics shop, and similar activities that a farm operator might conduct; and

(4) wireless communication installments and related equipment and structure capable of providing technology potentially beneficial to farming activities. A property owner who installs wireless communication equipment does not violate a covenant made prior to January 1, 2018, under section 473H.05, subdivision 1.

(b) For purposes of paragraph (a), clauses (2) and (3), "existing" means existing on August 1, 1987.

Subd. 2. **Density restriction after subdivision.** When a separate parcel is created for a residential structure, commercial, or industrial use permitted under subdivision 1, the parcel shall cease to be an agricultural preserve unless the eligibility requirements of section 473H.03 are met. However, the separate parcel shall remain under the maximum residential density restrictions in effect for the original preserve at the time it was placed into the preserve until the agricultural preserve status for the original parcel ends.

History: *1980 c 566 s 17; 1987 c 396 art 7 s 5-7; 1Sp2017 c 1 art 2 s 39*

473H.18 TRANSFER FROM AGRICULTURAL PROPERTY TAX LAW TREATMENT.

When land which has been receiving the special agricultural valuation and tax deferment provided in section 273.111 becomes an agricultural preserve pursuant to sections 473H.02 to 473H.17, the recapture of deferred tax and special assessments, as provided in section 273.111, subdivisions 9 and 11, shall not be made. Special assessments deferred under section 273.111 shall continue to be deferred for the duration of the preserve. For purposes of this section, "deferred special assessments" shall include the total amount of deferred special assessments under section 273.111 on the property, including any portion of the deferred special assessments which have not yet been levied at the time the property transfers to the agricultural preserves program under this chapter. All special assessments so deferred shall be payable within 90 days of the date of expiration unless other terms are mutually agreed upon by the authority and the owner. In the event of early termination of a preserve or a portion of it under section 473H.09, all special assessments accruing to the terminated portion plus interest shall be payable within 90 days of the date of termination unless otherwise deferred or abated by executive order of the governor. In the event of a taking under section 473H.15 all special assessments accruing to the taken portion plus interest shall be payable within 90 days of the date the final certificate is filed with the court administrator of district court in accordance with section 117.205.

History: *1982 c 523 art 32 s 14; 1Sp1986 c 3 art 1 s 82; 1994 c 587 art 5 s 25*