

Forestry Advisory Board
Skagit County, Washington
July 7, 2008

Present: Al, Aubrey, Dave, Dick, Fred, Gordy, Lisa, Paul, Tom
Staff: Kendra, Zoe

Meeting Place: 2021 East College Way, Mount Vernon

Meeting Time: 7:00 A.M., July 7, 2008

Minutes:

The meeting was called to order at 7:12 am.

Zoe Parsons was introduced as Kendra's new staff assistant. Zoe will be distributing future minutes.

Due to a mix up, June's minutes were not available for review and approval. They will be forwarded to board members for their approval with the July minutes at next month's meeting.

Rural Forestry Initiative

The Rural Forestry Initiative language has been approved with a few additions. Ken Osborn submitted replacement language for the opening paragraph. Ken's paragraph was approved with a slight change in language from "RFI is designed to remove disincentives to grow trees while protecting the environment ..." to "RFI is designed to remove disincentives to grow and harvest trees while protecting the environment"

Discussion continued with the following proposed additions to be added:

- Above reference "to grow and harvest trees while protecting the environment
- Note to reference intent for access to private forestry property
- Clarify that forestry activities do not constitute a development activity whereby CAO's are directed toward development
- On parcels five acres or less, the applicant is required to fill out a checklist indicating that they are following the forest practice rules...this is primarily as a reminder to those who are not use to doing forest practices.

Paul made a motion that the Rural Forest Initiative as amended above be approved. The motion was seconded by Dick and unanimously approved.

Action: Dave to update language with above changes and send to Kendra.

Forest Practices Update

It was the consensus of the group that a forester should be doing this. It was recommended that a part-time forest contractor be hired. Kendra will forward the Class IV Conversions ordinance she and Aubrey worked on for discussion at the August Advisory Board meeting.

Action: Kendra to send advisory board copy of draft ordinance for review.

Forest Practices Fees

The topic of fees was discussed noting that the current income from Forest Practices is:

\$50 Forest Practices fee
Excise tax

It was felt no additional fees should be levied for non-critical areas which do not need a review. For critical areas (streams, wetlands) a minimal fee should be charged but no more than the current state structure for forest practices. The intent is to keep forestry on-going and not milk it dry.

UGA Open Space

Geraldine and Tom attended the AG Advisory Board to discuss open spaces. The AG shares similar concerns as the Forestry Advisory Board

Action: Gordy and Paul (FAB) will talk to Randy (AG) and see if they can all prepare a draft letter expressing mutual concerns.

Finney AMA Follow-Up

On Saturday, August 2 there will be a public meeting and field trip with approximately 50-60 expected.

DOT Highway Plans

Highway designs need to include easy access for lumber and logging trucks which are currently difficult. Areas of concern: lo-boys, pole trucks, back upon Cook Rd. radius around round-a-bouts and lumber trucks with axils.

Action: Dave, Tom, and Kendra to write a letter of concern to DOT. Gordy will provide the current tax dollars that a logging truck annually pays the state.

Forest Practices Update:

Kendra gave an update on policy.

Paul recommended a letter be drafted asking for no rule changes within 12-18 months of an election.

Currently everyone on Policy has a vote and consensus is difficult to reach.

Tom recommended the need to follow state rules and not have separate regional rules.

Nothing is currently happening with wetlands.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 am. The next Board meeting will be August 4, 2008.
(Note: The September Board meeting will need to be rescheduled due to Labor Day.)