

Forestry Advisory Board
Skagit County, Washington
Meeting #52, October 6, 2008
2021 E. College Way, Mount Vernon, WA

Members in Attendance:

Lisa Cassidy
Dave Chamberlain
Al Craney
Gordy Iverson
Paul Kriegel
Fred Loffer
Tom Nelson
Ken Osborn
Chuck Parker
Tim Raschko
Aubrey Stargell
Dick Whitmore

Guests:

Samantha Chang, US Forest Service
John Cooper, Skagit County Planning & Development Services
Bill Wallace, Department of Natural Resources
Thijs Jacobsen, Washington Alder

Staff:

Kendra Smith
Zoe Parsons

Call Meeting to Order

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

September Minutes

The September meeting minutes were approved with minor corrections. A copy of the corrected minutes will be distributed with the October minutes.

Introductions

Samantha Chang, John Cooper, Bill Wallace and Thijs Jacobsen were guest attendees.
(Thijs arrived after introductions were made.)

Business:

State Forest Practices versus Skagit County Critical Areas Ordinance

Tom Robinson, Program Manager for the Washington Association of Timber Counties made a presentation to the County Commissioners on September 23 and laid out RCWs. Dave Chamberlain and Kendra Smith both spoke. Dave reported that progress is being made but there is still a long way to go. Anyone wanting to hear the entire discussion can go to: skagitcounty.net and search for the September 23 hearing.

Some of the discussion looked at:

- If doing a conversion, the area of conversion would be administered under the County Critical Areas Ordinance
- Non-forestry conversions would be administered under Forest Practices.

On October 22, there will be a NW Regional Planners' Conference in Whatcom County. Tom Robinson has been invited to discuss the issue and the intent of the legislature's DNR.

It was noted that Clark County and King County are managing conversions well with Clark County as the model to emulate.

Ken Osborn asked about the legal perspective of the county because he feels there is a 'fuzzy' area that needs to be clarified. Tom Nelson suggested asking Bill Wallace to give the legal perspective. Bill responded by saying the DNR is concerned about regulating only those lands that have forest practices occurring and that it was his belief that what Tom Robinson said was correct.

Paul Kriegel pointed out that the Department of Natural Resources never intended to give up oversight of anything except conversions.

John Cooper stated that he will work with FAB by giving them Planning's draft plan once it has been approved by the Planning Department, but before it is finalized so their comments can be integrated. He is currently working on Version 7.

Gordy Iverson suggested FAB be careful of any language referring to 'stump removal.' John Cooper believes that the term 'areas' will be noted, not 'stump removal' verbiage.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

UGA Open Space (Gordy Iverson, Tom Nelson)

Paul Kriegel and Gordy Iverson developed the September 30, 2008 letter (handout) in support of the AG Advisory Board Subcommittee letter dated August 22 regarding the "Skagit County UGA Open Space Concept Plan."

It was pointed out that the final letter will be from the Forest Advisory Board and signed by Dave Chamberlain on behalf of FAB.

Some of the discussion was on whether to further clarify public use and the need to clarify restrictions, even if individual forest landowners want to allow trails.

It was agreed to change paragraph two from: “all have considered the recreational
TO “each has considered the recreational ... Paul Kriegel will incorporate the comments and distribute a second draft for approval.

DOT Highway Plans (Dave Chamberlain, Tom Nelson)

Kendra Smith reported that there is no new information but will keep the group informed of any updates. Gordy Iverson will contact Western Log Truckers for the number of logging trucks using the I5 corridor.

Adoption of Skagit County FPA Program

A subcommittee of Ken Osborn, Aubrey Stargell and Dave Chamberlain will meet and attempt to find out what the county proposes.

Forestry Data Collection (Al Craney, Samantha Chang, Kevin Zobrist)

Al reported that Kendra has his data for private forests.

Paul Kriegel suggested looking at what land would be considered for tax revenue. Samantha Chang suggested looking at ‘land available for production’. Ken Osborn added that we need to look at whether it is being considered for ‘long-term’ or for ‘thinning’. Samantha asked for help in defining the different categories to be considered. Bill Wallace will work with Kendra Smith on capturing DNR data and definitions.

After discussion, consensus was that this will be an on-going process. It was noted that Skagit County is to timber what Saudi Arabia is to oil.

As information is collected, it will be kept in a notebook in Kendra Smith’s office.

Reconveyance of Forest Board Trust Lands – Lake Whatcom

There are 8,400 acres to be converted into a park. Another meeting is scheduled for 9:30 am on October 7 to decide whether to proceed with the reconveyance to make Lake Whatcom a park. Opponents have requested an Environmental Impact Statement in order to challenge the process. Whatcom County Land Conservancy wants a four-member oversight group. Each member would be compensated \$50,000 annually.

It will be important to follow this for its possible effect on Skagit County.

Updates

Kendra Smith announced that there was nothing new from last month.

Dave Chamberlain reminded the FAB members to write letters to the Forest Practices Board asking that decisions on ‘Science-Based Adaptive Management’ be based on scientific facts, not policy based.

Climate Action and Sustainability Task Force

The County Commissioners signed a resolution to establish a task force on climate. Kendra Smith suggested a member of the Forest Advisory Board participate noting that this should be a quarterly advisory group. Gordy Iverson volunteered to represent FAB on this task force.

ACTIONS:

- John Cooper to give FAB Skagit County Planning & Development Services’ draft plan before it is finalized.
- Bill Wallace to be asked to outline the DNR’s legal perspective on State Forest Practices versus Federal Practices.
- Letter to Skagit County Planning & Development Services supporting the AG Advisory regarding “Skagit County UGA Open Space Concept Plan” to be revised and signed by Dave Chamberlain on behalf of the Forest Advisory Board.
- Gordy Iverson to report on the number of logging trucks affected by the DOT Highway Plan.
- Anyone having forestry data should send it to Kendra Smith to be collected in a centralized location.
- Kendra to submit Gordy Iverson’s name for the County task force on climate.

Next Meeting: Monday, November 10, 7:00 am – 9:00 am at 2021 E. College Way, 2nd Floor Conference Room.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm

Submitted by: Zoe Parsons