



**SKAGIT COUNTY FOREST
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January 12, 2009

Present: Al, Dave, Aubrey, Paul, Gordy, Tim, Tom, Chuck, Fred, Ken, Lisa.

Guests: Samantha Chang USFS, Ben Cleveland DNR, John Copper PDS and Chuck Parker forester.

- I. December Minutes moved by Fred seconded by Ken approved.
- II. RFI and County taking over Class IV Forest Practices- Dave gave an update. He has now attended 3 meetings, two before the BoCC one during the CAO adoption. The BoCC has made it clear that they believe forest practice rules apply to forest practices and the CAO to conversions and development activity. They told the PDS to come up with a timeframe to work with the FAB in getting the codes to read correctly. The BoCC emphasized expediency.
 - a. County takes over Class IV Forest Practices: John C stated that when working on the ordinance for the County to take over forest practices (this is different from the FAB's RFI request and is a State requirement) the issue was to figure out who is to assume jurisdiction of large parcels. A draft of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been sent to legal and the DNR for review. The draft has some new language different from the one in place today with some additions for forest roads. It basically has the DNR doing the work (because they know forest practices). Ben C added that he bounced the draft off folks in Olympia and they don't think it is legal. It was believed that there needs to be state-wide MOU.
 - b. Kendra reported on the progress of the proposed bill to eliminate 'lands platted after 1960' from automatic local jurisdiction review when a forest practice application is submitted. Several meetings in Olympia to get all of the parties on board. Right now it looks good. Trying to get it to the Counties Legislative session so that WSAC can drop the bill. There was some discussion on the proposal as to the size limit of 2.5 acres. Many felt this was arbitrary because they could not see a reason for coming up with that number. It was believed that there should be no limit. Kendra explained the reasoning. John C. said that it now costs applicants about \$2,000 to obtain County permits on those lands. That is one reason land owners choose not to stay in forestry but rather to convert.
 - c. Ken went back to John's proposal and noted to add parcels where no conversions take place
 - d. Dave explained that the process with the RFI and the County taking over forest practices is a 2 prong approach. It was firmly believed amongst the FAB that the County should not take over forest practices. It will be costly to train and manage and this is something the DRN has had experience with for decades and should continue.
 - e. John C said the PDS wanted to get GMA compliant before making any more moves and after the 'lands platted after 1960' got sorted out with the legislature then PDS and everyone could take a look at the RFI proposal again to understand how everything would fit together. John commented

- that the RFI would be part of the whole packet for consideration for when the county adopts an ordinance to take over the Class IV forest practices.
- f. **Kendra to send the draft platted lands proposal to the FAB. –

III. Forest land Data- Al has sent a good deal of time collecting very useful data and has been aided by Samantha, Kevin Zobrist from WSU ext. and the DNR. He shared the data to date and when finished a chart will be available for everyone. Kevin is coming up with how all this relates to the job market and there has been a rough estimate on the costs to the watershed and what forestry actually gives back. Al noted that with all of the budget constraints it may be very difficult for Kevin to keep his job...he has done a fantastic job. Al will e-mail is draft chart to the FAB.

IV. Sub committees – no discussion...hold to next meeting

V. Other updates:

- a. Alternative Futures- Paul. This is to look out 50 years and determine what the County wants to have taking place. Not sure how the whole thing is going to go given make up of the group. There is a specific component for a Ag future plan.
- b. Some news articles were shared. Tim noted one in Seattle paper on Wild Sky
- c. Next meeting ideas send to Dave
- d. Blanchard- lawsuit, but request from the strategies group to still try and get the \$4,000,000 from the leg this session.

Adjourn 9:14