



**SKAGIT COUNTY FOREST
ADVISORY BOARD**

Dave Chamberlain, Chairman
Lisa Cassidy Ken Osborn
Al Craney Chuck Parker
Gordon Iverson Tom Nelson
Paul Kriegel Aubrey Stargell
Tim Raschko Dick Whitmore
Fred Loffer
Kendra Smith, Staff

**Minutes
October 5, 2009**

Present: Tim, Ken, Paul, Lisa, Dave, Gordy, Al and Tom

Absent: Aubrey, Fred, Chuck

Guest: Commissioner Wesen, Samantha USFS, Sandra Starbuck USDA/FSA
and John Cooper PDS

- I. Minutes:
- II. Forest Practice Rules: Dave discussed how he was concerned with about how the Forest Practice Rules were written because there would be lots of confusion over whether Class IVs were to have the Counties take the whole permitting over. He had learned it was the intent to have this happen but was fearful that other parties would try to interpret it that way. All were in agreement that this was not a good thing to have happen and that clarification needed to be made. Dave then asked Commissioner Wesen what should be the proper action to fix this. Commissioner Wesen said to get our powerful Representatives in our area on this. FAB asked if the BoCC would write a letter asking for this to occur. Commish Wesen agreed.
- III. PDS amendments: John commented that PDS staff said that they were tabling any amendments to the code that would prohibit building a house in Secondary Forest (SF) and Rural Resource designations. He also said that the FAB's proposed RFI was also being tabled.
 - a. Al mentioned Grandson Road. He noted that a forest stewardship plan should be required. It would be stewardship (evaluating all resources and enhancing those resources) verses forest management plan (done for tax benefit). This plays into property rights.
 - b. Samantha noted a survey that had been done by USFS showing that the younger foresters can't get a start up. The cost is prohibitive to acquire land, plant and maintain. They essentially can't live and operate. Need to be able to live on their land. Tom commented that this verges on the edge of being illegal because it is taking value away and how would the banks respond to that. It would be a problem if they are holding a loan and the value just dropped out it. They would also hesitate to loan any more with this type of uncertainty. This would be a big problem for the County as well on taxes. Doesn't make sense that buffers for Industrial Forest (IF) for homes is less than what this new proposal offered.
 - c. Ken said he worked on the formation of the SF designation and the intent was to have a buffer and not to have a high density next to IF. He suggested that the code needs to through out using fire districts as a means of stopping development and find a better indicator. He also said that development rights should be retained in SF. Lisa agreed that it will have an affect on borrowers and they will be re-appraised, lowering the lending ability.

- d. John said he wanted something solid to take back to Gary. Gordy said that as a forester they want lands to stay in forestry but you can't keep putting more regulations down or it will drive the industry to finding an alternative way to make a living and means of reinvesting in their operations. If the Rules had not taken such a large percentage of the forested lands out of production by way of buffers then this problem would not be an issue. New regulations now take 25% and up of the land out of production. This type of proposal will eliminate forest landowners like C and G. It almost feels like trying to protect neighboring properties from forestry operations.
 - e. Ken said he is willing to trade his IF development right to keep what he has...feels like he is being put in a spot of having to negotiate what he has. Dave said this whole thing is complex but the FAB is united on this issue. They are not pro-development, but PDS can not take their development rights away. John was asked not to change anything right now and take that message back to Gary.
- IV. Biomass conversion Facility; Sandra USDA/NRCS farm services spoke to the FAB about the 2008 Farm bill. The bill will authorize the hauling of materials to co-gen plants. People need to come into her office to sign up. They are offering \$45.00 per ton to haul and this is intended to help cost share and make it more feasible (it will double the feasibility of getting fuel to the plants). \$25,000,000 was authorized nationwide. Only 5 in the nation a month ago and now there are pages of listed facilities. 2 year maximum time limit.
- V. Adjourned 9:02

Next meeting November 9, 2009...same place.