



**SKAGIT COUNTY FOREST
ADVISORY BOARD**

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September, 13, 2010

Present: Dave, Gordy, Paul, Steve, Lisa, Tim, Chuck, Aubrey, Al,

Absent: Tom , Ken and Fred

Guest: Commissioner Wesen, Samantha, John Cooper

I. Minutes: Next meeting

II. Discussion Items:

- a. San-Fi Property- The Skagit Land Trust has proposed trying to obtain a grant from the U.S. Dept of Ag Forest Legacy Program to purchase the development rights off this property and allow it to remain as working forest lands. The Planning Department supported this proposal. The Board of County Commissioners wanted to know what the FAB thought of the idea. The FAB was unanimously in favor of pursuing the grant and felt it was a win-win situation where the land owner would be fairly compensated for their development rights in an area that some interest groups felt it was important to extinguish them. Though the majority of the FAB believes that practicing forestry and having homes are not necessarily incompatible. If there are cases where it is important to extinguish development right then compensation rather than purely taking away the rights is the correct avenue. Paul raised a concern that there are some involved in Evison 2060 that want to remove all development rights in the forest lands and therefore, more avenues like this need to be explored. Dave acknowledged this and noted that this is why the FAB committee working on conversions is critical information to get out. The FAB voted unanimously to support this and write a letter of support to the Department of Ag letting them know so.
- b. Illabot Road Closure- Paul Wagner had sent information to the FAB regarding the Forest Services' intention to close road that allows many users access to the backcountry beauty that would not otherwise be able to see the area. (That is due to the existing road going about 15 miles up into this area.) Samantha from the USFS said the decision had been made due to slides on the road and the cost of trying to keep it open. Their program is too small now to keep roads like this open. It does not pose a high enough fire risk either. She said there really wasn't much timber available for harvest in the area and that this is not in matrix land. Members of the FAB discussed how this is one more example of what happens when the Forest Service decided to stop timber sales that would otherwise pay for the road and recreational opportunities. Paul commented that this really is another way of gaining more roadless areas and ultimately putting more lands out of forest management. This also puts more pressure on the private industry from folks wanting to have areas for recreation. The industry then gets a bad name for keeping people off their lands (this is done primarily because of vandalism). This is open until Mid-October for comments. There are 3 alternatives to comment on: 1. Close last 10 miles; 2. No Action (do nothing); and 3. Maintain road and keep the access. Tim

suggested that there should be a look at the Comp Plan because this is just a quick fix, like the boy with the finger in the dike.

- c. Forest Indicator Outline- AI prepared an outline helping to pull all of the information together. The FAB will discuss in depth at the next meeting. The FAB was very appreciative of AI's work.
 - d. Board of Nat'l Resources/FFP- Kendra gave an update of her presentation of the BoCC letter to the BNR regarding the proposed Stinson Green land transfer. This was being proposed as part of the Blanchard Mt Strategic Plan agreement to purchase lands to offset the loss of the core area. The concern was that this property was not only NOT on Blanchard (strategic plan was to keep conversions from occurring on Blanchard) but also outside of the BE school district. Policy- Tom Robinson will be leaving at the end of September due to budget cuts. This may affect the timber counties and how they are represented. The RMAPs will be continued and there is very little money to do the necessary work to keep up to where the conservation caucus feels Policy should be (and this is true for the industry as well).
- III. Next Meeting- Furlough day for County so will need to change the date. The date will be Oct 18th.
- IV. Adjourn 9:04