



SKAGIT COUNTY FOREST ADVISORY BOARD

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Feb 11, 2013

Present: Chuck, Al, Dave, Steve, Fred, Gordy, Aubrey, Paul, Tom

Absent: Lisa, Ken, Tim

Guest: Samantha Chang (USFS), Paul Wagner (Forester), Doug Couvelier (Upper Skagit Tribe)

- I. Meeting opened at 7:02 a.m. Welcome to guest.
- II. Minutes. Fred moved and Gordy approved to accept the January minutes. Passed unanimous.
- III. Public Comment:
Paul Wagner reported that the Finny AMA Project in the Mt. Baker Snoqualmie National Forest. His review of the project shows that only 35% of is allowable to be harvested with the proposed thinning. This is a thinning project since it is within the LSR (late sessional reserve). In other USFS forests the harvests are taking 85% of the allowable. It should be noted that the allowable is far less then what had been previously harvested within the USFS lands. He also noted that the USFS has no budget to put their folks into the field to set up sales and due to fears of environmental appeals any sales that are put up are drastically reduced to the point that most folks won't bid on the sales since there is no profit.
- IV. Discussion Items:
 - a. Forest Practice/county code:
 - Type F dispute resolution has resulted in the commitment to have a charter established by the end of June. The Charter will be the questions to identify what the specific issues are that need to be addressed. Coming to consensus on those issues is highly not likely.
 - Type N discussions have resulted in confirming that there appears to not be an average distance that can be used for the wet season as a default. It therefore looks like the NW region will need to come up with some sort of alternative plan to use in this area. Tom and Steve will meet and discuss and try to pull Curt V from Skagit Systems into the conversation. FFP has identified Sept as the final date to pull any information together so that it can be taken to the Forest Practice Board by Nov meeting.
 - No word on the Planning Dept. work plan.
 - b. Timber management on FS land: Samantha Chang added the following details about the Finny thinning: It is a variable density thinning in the adaptive management area (ADA), it is 60 year old on 60 acres of Late Successional Reserve (LSR). Some decommissioned roads will be re-opened and then closed again. There will b e some road decommissioning after this project is completed. This is AMA so it is experimental trying to obtain the following goals: NSO and Marbled Murrelet habitat, variable density stands, grow bigger trees faster, providing nesting and habitat, branch habitat for platforms, lower the understory and see if it can produce economic returns while addressing the ecological objectives. Because there are no conditions for salmon in the Finny Project Area this has made it easier to work with the USFWS.

The FAB responded by saying that it was a shame that the agenda of a few individuals can actually make a project become so small that it is no longer feasible to even bid on the sale. They want to see more implementation in the NW Forest Plan (NWFP) as it was intended.

The FAB moved by Aubrey and seconded by Paul to recommend to the BoCC that they write a letter of support of the preferred alternative for this project. The comment period concludes on February 19, 2013.

Final comments: it is now time to re-start the talks about asking for a pilot project in the Mt Baker Snoqualmie National Forest. Dave noted that in a conversation with Commissioner Dahlstedt that he said he had ties to the Governor and wanted to look at this - so may be good timing. The person behind the NWFP was Jerry Franklin and he is currently actively promoting more of what was intended as far as harvesting in the USFS. Al will send his paper tot the FAB.

Green Mt. Lookout. A historic lookout in what has now been designated 'wilderness' needed some repair and a helicopter was used to fly in materials for restoration. There is now an appeal to remove the historic building since property approvals were not given in the 'wilderness area'. It was noted that areas are being put into wilderness that don't fit the definition of wilderness and then incidents like this happen.

c. Leg Actions: HB 1600 for the small landowners. The FAB is supportive of this bill though it was reported that there was no support from State agencies and that will probably die. Rick Dunning has been promoting it. FAB noted that relief was suppose to be given to the small landowners as a result of TFW negotiations and they have not received that. This keeps resurfacing and there is going to have to be some help for them. The other bill is the agency streamlining bill. It puts the Dept of Ecology in charge of about everything and eliminates other agencies being used for consultation. Streamlining is good, but not when the agency in charge has their own agenda or is not fully informed on issues.

d. Agenda priorities: Due to time will continue next meeting. Next meeting March 11, 2013.

V. Adjourn. 9:04 a.m.