



**SKAGIT COUNTY FOREST
ADVISORY BOARD**

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Minutes

12-13-17

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

Guest: Brenda Cunningham and Tim Manner

- I. Introductions: Guest introduced themselves and noted they were interested in forestry issues
- II. Minutes: Tim moved, and Paul seconded to approve the November minutes. Passed unanimous.
- III. Updates:
 - a. The federal bill HB 2936, concerning stewardship contracts was passed. It's an existing program that will continue. This allows for environmental projects to be completed on federal lands, which include harvesting and then the money stays on the forest - back to the program. It is hoped that there is some profit for the loggers. Many of these projects have margins so close that they don't get many requests. It may include things like culvert replacements etc. Al was going to offer more but is absent so will continue next meeting. The conversation has been that the DNR may take these over in hopes of better management. Paul gave the history of the program. He had utilized it on several occasions. It had been mentioned that Vaugen Bros has been supporting the DNR to help the USFS. Commissioner Franz has noted that she wants to help rural communities, and this may be an avenue and take this own.
 - b. County Supremacy was brought up by the guests and their concerns about the county contractor Bob Weidner. They wanted to get the FAB's input on Mr. Weidner and voiced their concerns about the politics he supports. Members and Kendra stated that he has been very helpful in getting appointments with federal legislators and working forest bills that are very beneficial to county revenues, specifically PILT and SRS. The conversation continued with questions and comments. Ms. Cunningham believes that the county should create a collaborative committee similar to what has been done in Darrington for the public to give input. Conversations continued regarding harvests on federal lands and healthy forests. They noted that all Audubon clubs are not alike in their philosophies for timber harvest.
 - c. FAB members have had their terms renewed.
- IV. RFI: The county staff has not had a chance to get this before the Planning Commission yet. It sounds like the DNR has not reviewed the County proposal. It was agreed at the last FAB meeting that this would be put forward in two phases. As noted it will probably be too late for this year's session to make proposed changes to legislations but now is the time to start working on it especially with the DNR staff.

- V. Marbled Murrelet Update: The BNR voted on the proposed alternatives and chose a new alternative prepared by DNR staff presented just before the meeting. It is very similar to Alt D with trying to lessen burden on the counties most affected by the set asides. Unfortunately, the DNR does not have any concrete numbers in order to do either financial or actual habitat projections. They said they will be working on this over the next year as more input will be allowed. They did not believe Alt B would satisfy the USWF service.
- VI. Blanchard: The new citizens committee met and were updated on the settlement agreement. The committee has been expanded with some of the original committee members from the agreement group to the last citizens committee included. The 5-year deadline has pasted without getting the funding required. There has been talk about land transactions, which were a no go with the original agreement, becoming the way of moving forward. A January meeting is scheduled.
- VII. 2018 workload: Due to time the FAB will spend time on this at their next meeting in January. RFI phase II will be a priority.
- VIII. Adjourn: 9:05 a.m.