



**SKAGIT COUNTY FOREST
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Minutes

2/12/19

Present: Gordy, Steve, Dave, Ken and Chuck. Absent: Tim, Tom, Aubrey, Al, Lisa, Fred, Paul. Dan Berentson from PW and Guest: Tom Westergreen via phone.

Minutes: December, and January minutes were moved and seconded by Gordy and Ken for approval. Approved.

Discussion: The agenda was set around a discussion on the Small Landowner (SLO) Template with Tom Westergreen as our guest. Tom has been part of Farm Forestry and the small landowner membership. He has worked with those who drafted the template and in conversations about how to present the SLO proposals to the Forest Practice Board.

Tom gave some background information regarding TFW and the promises to the small landowners years ago. In 2013, the SLO stated preparing a template (as provided for under the RCWs and in WAC) in response to the promise. They developed it using approved alternative plans, had it reviewed and supported by a CMER scientist. The template was to help simplify the rules and allow some additional timber removal due to the lesser impact the SLO have given the size and location of their harvests (disproportionally effected by the rules on riparian buffers). This is only meant for SLO not industry. The template has over 60 prescriptions (which has made it too difficult for most other caucus to accept as a one-size action) that have had at least one alternative plan done per prescription (also not enough for many of the caucus to accept as a template). SLO don't want to continue using the Alternative Plan approach because of cost and time. Harvests are very small and usually not more than 1 per lifetime (rotations 50+ years). All caucus have acknowledged the desire to not loose SLO (especially to other land uses that have far more environmental impacts and there is a large percentage of SLO wood that goes to the mills annually – the majority actually). Funding for the SLO office has been cut as well as programs, thus making a workable template essential. Basically, smaller impact so smaller buffers.

The SLO Template was reviewed by a science consultant hired by the DNR (Cramer Fish). Their review found much agreement with the science used behind the template development. Several caucus did not agree and asked for another review by the University of Washington ISPR (independent science review panel). That review has not been completed. Regardless DOE believes the Clean Water Act should trump anything and the Tribes don't want any reductions. Conservation caucus is with the Tribes.

Template is based on stream widths. For those less than 5' and 25' buffer 5-15' wide a 50' buffer and greater than 15' a 75' buffer. They are also looking for variable widths for situations where a road or something may exist. For No-fish perennial streams (Np) it would be a 25' buffer total distance with some tree removal.

The SLO have the 20-acre exemption. They would use one ort the other or over time with a 5 year green up.

Tom said he'd make himself available if there were more questions and appreciated the FABs comments.

Adjourn 9:00 a.m.