



**SKAGIT COUNTY FOREST  
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**Minutes**

**April 6, 2024**

Present: Jamie, Kris, Gordy, Chuck, Steve, Dave, David, Peter, Aubrey, John, Absent: Tim, Al Guests:  
Commissioner Janicki, Commissioner Wesen, Matt Comisky

- I. Minutes: Dave moved Kris seconded to approve. Passed unanimous.
- II. Updates/Correspondence: AFRC annual meeting this week and TFW training workshop/None
- III. Collaboratives: Matt gave a presentation sharing the work of numerous collaboratives around the State (9 formal and others less so) and how the operative (some are 501c's). There was a discussion on the pros and cons of belonging to a collaborative as well as potentially joining in on the Darrington Collaborative. Matt noted that there are Big C's and Little c's. The big are the goals of the USFS stewardship program, the Little are the shared goals with an operating outline and more formal with the USFS so can act as a stewardship plan. The pros are 1. the ability to get some sales through for harvest if the collaborative agrees on its goals, 2. Stewardship projects accomplished, 3. Open and transparent. The cons include 1. Only stewardship projects, 2. Snohomish, Whatcom and Skagit counties don't necessarily have the same goals for forest management, 3. Farm Bill has a proposal for the USFS to work directly with individual counties, 4. Membership of collaborative. The FAB also noted that the County would need to designate time and funding for a participant. A participant would have to understand the background.
- IV. State Lands/Court ruling/Letter to BNR: Commissioner Janicki commented on 6 sales pulled right before the BNR meeting due to a ruling of a King County judge. The judge said SEPA did not review each individual site. Discussion on the continued arrearage and the upcoming SHC. Kendra gave an update on Carbon workshop. Kendra gave an overview of the ruling on the Carbon/ SEPA lawsuit filed by AFRC and several counties (including Skagit). Judge ruled in favor of the DNR and Intervenors noting that the DNR can determine a short comment period with no appeal, rely on past studies for addressing carbon even if it was only mentioned, it was ok that site specific sites for the project were not reviewed (note that this appears to be in conflict to what King County judge ruled) and that public services paid for by timber sales like fire trucks, hospitals, schools, roads don't count for SEPA review because they are provided for by revenues. Noting that if a public service in place was impacted like utility line it would be different. The FAB discussed what should be in the letter they are to send to the BNR. They noted the following: income and jobs at stake affecting the economic

impacts to the rural area. Good to look at other revenues but need to consider the highest return for the investment ESG is not. Intergenerational equity required by statute.

Supporting healthy forest for carbon, economics and impacts to neighboring communities in the case of fire. Commissioner Janicki said it should be brief and also noted that the FAB should sign up to make comments. Peter Janicki provided the FAB with information on sequestered by various management approaches, i.e. landowner, DNR, Federal. Federal being the lowest amount and with 40% of the land base there is a loss of potential for more sequestration.

- V. Education: FAB was to look at what would be acceptable language in a conservation easement on forest lands for small landowners who want to keep the land in forestry in perpetuity. RCO has a forest conservation fund. FAB is still considering what would be appropriate considerations for an easement that will encourage management.

- VI. Adjourn: 6:15 p.m.