Alternate Plans
Riparian Open Space Program

7.1 Introduction
This chapter provides information about two areas of interest to the Services - alternate plans and the Riparian Open Space Program (ROSP). Alternate plans are forest practices plans that deviate from standard forest practices rules but provide public resource protection equal in overall effectiveness as the standard rules. ROSP is an incentive program provided to landowners for trees left unharvested in the channel migration zone.

7.2 Alternate Plans
An alternate plan is a tool forest landowners can use to develop site-specific management plans for forest practices regulated under the Forest Practices Act. An alternate plan may deviate from the standard forest practices rules, as long as the plan provides public resource protection at least equal in overall effectiveness to the protections afforded by the Act and rules. WAC 222-12-0401 describes the alternate plan process, including the review by interdisciplinary teams.

The following table shows the number and status of forest practices applications submitted that included an alternate plan during the period from July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008:

Landowner Type	Status of Forest Practices Applications with Alternate Plans				Total
	Approved	Disapproved	In Review	Closed Out	
Large	76	3	0	1	80
Small	17	1	0	2	20
Total	93	4	0	3	100

7.3 Riparian Open Space Program
Like the Forest Riparian Easement Program, ROSP was a product of the 1999 Forests and Fish Law (Engrossed Substitute House Bill 2091). It has been codified in the Forest Practices Act (chapter 76.09 RCW) and adopted as a rule in chapter 222-23 WAC. ROSP is administered through DNR Asset Management and Protection Division. ROSP differs from the FREP program in that it is available to all forest landowners, not just small forest landowners. ROSP ensures the long-term conservation of aquatic resources by acquiring a fee interest in, or easement on, lands and timber within a specific type of channel migration zone known as an “unconfined avulsing channel migration zone.” A CMZ is the area where the active channel of a steam is prone to move. Unconfined avulsing CMZs are areas where abrupt shifts in stream or river location occur, resulting in a complex floodplain environment. These areas typically have very high ecological value as spawning and rearing habitat for salmon and other fish species. Under the forest

practices rules, no timber harvesting or road construction may occur within CMZs due to their ecological importance. ROSP provides financial compensation for owners of unconfined avulsing CMZs who voluntarily sell the land to DNR or place a permanent conservation easement on the trees, land or both. DNR screens applications, prioritizes qualifying applications and acquires lands based on available funding. Applications are prioritized based on the order received, the ecological value of the land(s) and the immediacy of need on the part of the landowner.

Following is the budget allocated by the Washington Legislature for ROSP and acres purchased since program inception.

ROSP Budget and Acres Purchased

Fiscal Year	Budget Allocated	Acres Purchased
01-03	$1,000,000	387
03-05	$1,000,000	197
05-07	$2,000,000	0
07-09	$2,200,000	#s not yet available

The table shows that there were no acres purchased in the 05-07 fiscal year. There are several reasons the ROSP program has limited public participation.

1) There is a need for outreach.
2) Funds are not available to manage fee acquisitions. Funds have only been available to accept easement interest in qualifying property.
3) Landowners may feel the compensation on qualifying lands is not sufficient to offset the perpetual easement requirement of the fee owner.
4) Qualifying lands are limited to avulsing channel migration zones.
5) Fee acquisition compensation is not appraised at fair market value.

DNR continues to offer compensation through ROSP. Currently there is one application that is in the negotiation process in Jefferson County.