
Minutes
Board of Natural Resources Meeting
March 1, 2022
Webinar, Olympia, Washington

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

The Honorable Hilary Franz, Washington State Commissioner of Public Lands

The Honorable Bill Peach, Commissioner, Clallam County

The Honorable Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction

Jim Cahill, Designee for the Honorable Jay Inslee, Washington State Governor

Dan Brown, Director, School of Environmental and Forest Sciences, University of Washington

Dr. Richard Koenig, Interim Dean, College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource
Sciences, Washington State University

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hilary Franz called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

Boardmembers present provided self-introduction. A meeting quorum was attained.

WEBINAR FORMAT BRIEFING

Ms. Tami Kellogg, Board Coordinator, provided an overview for viewing and participating in a webinar meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Franz called for approval of the minutes for the February 1, 2022 Regular Board of Natural Resources meeting.

MOTION: Mr. Cahill moved to approve the minutes.

SECOND: Superintendent Reykdal seconded the motion.

ACTION: The motion carried unanimously.

LIGHTNING TALK

Shaded Fuel Break

Larry Leach, Assistant Region Manager, Southeast Region.

Mr. Leach briefed members on shaded fuel breaks, an experimental approach on the eastside of the state, employed after the Legislature provided funding to complete some fuel treatments to protect trust lands from wildfire. The treatments involve trimming branches up to 20 feet on trees and removing understory and smaller trees. Staff

1 identified some key locations for areas of shaded fuel breaks to help protect areas from
2 fire spread. The program has evolved over time.

3
4 A video featured some areas of shaded fuel breaks along well-traveled roads for
5 providing access to the areas. Shaded fuel breaks also provide respite areas for fire
6 crews. During the heat of summer, having sufficient resources to protect all homes in
7 forested areas can be questionable when fires are burning across the western states.
8 Stopping fire spread along a shaded fuel break could save 20 homes whereas if the fire
9 was burning freely a minimum of 20 fire engines would be required to protect those
10 homes. Adding fuel breaks in the forest enables fighting of fires with fewer resources
11 and prevents fire from reaching wildland urban areas where homes are located.

12
13 The Department experienced some success during the Jolly Mountain fire using shaded
14 fuel breaks as an anchor point to prevent the fire from spreading. During the Schneider
15 Springs fire last summer, several shaded fuel breaks combined with forest health thinning
16 helped stop the fire from expanding.

17
18 Superintendent Reykdal asked about the extraction process for disposal of material
19 cleared for creating shaded fuel breaks. Mr. Leach said the material is combined,
20 chipped, and redistributed along the forest floor for nutrient cycling.

21
22 Mr. Cahill said he assumes some trees are retained for shading, which is why the areas
23 are considered shaded fuel breaks. Mr. Leach affirmed that the process retains some trees
24 for shade as it helps lower fire intensity. The breaks function not only to save trees, but
25 to create microclimates to assist in firefighting efforts. During the creation of the fuel
26 breaks, Grand fir trees and understory are removed, as Grand fir trees tend to draw
27 moisture away from pine and Doug fir trees.

28
29 Dr. Brown asked about the extent of shaded fuel breaks on the landscape and whether the
30 Department plans to increase the number of shaded fuel breaks. Mr. Leach said
31 approximately 40 miles of fuel breaks have been completed within 275,000 acres of
32 forest land in the southeast. The Northeast Region has completed some fuel breaks as
33 well. New techniques have been developed to clear the areas easier and quicker. With
34 the addition of new firefighters because of recent legislation providing funding, those
35 crews will be available to complete much of the work.

36
37 Commissioner Franz added that recent legislation (House Bill 1168) was substantial
38 because it provided not only funding resources for state lands but also for private lands
39 affording the ability to build fuel breaks to protect communities. One of the main
40 challenges facing the nation is finding people to hire. Providing more shaded fuel breaks
41 is an element of the work to be completed as part of the Forest Health Plan. Work is also
42 occurring with respect to utility infrastructure and wildfires with state lands assuming a
43 leadership role in assisting and working closely with utility companies.

44 45 **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

46 Commissioner Franz commented on the recent challenging and concerning days for the
47 world with the Russia invasion of Ukraine. The last several days have demonstrated how

1 people of the world have more in common than differences. Humans are bound together
2 by humanity regardless of race, country of origin, and religion, and all people strive to
3 achieve the same thing – a safe place to sleep, to have shelter, food for the family, a good
4 education for the children, and a clean and healthy environment. DNR team members are
5 no different and want the same thing not just for themselves, but also for all people of
6 Washington. More than half of the agency's 1,500 employees put their lives on the line
7 every single year to protect forests, communities, and complete strangers facing danger.
8 Mr. Leach is an example of one such employee. She has witnessed him each year
9 fighting for the people of Washington and for the forests. Employees work hard for the
10 people of Washington and for the lands and the waters of Washington. They work hard
11 to listen to the public and to the communities to understand the issues, the problems, and
12 to help solve them. They reflect those commitments through compassion and care each
13 day for the environment and for the people today and tomorrow. She asked the public to
14 share their concerns, ideas, and recommendations but not attack employees who work
15 hard each day to improve the lives of people.
16

17 **Brel Froebe, resident of occupied Lummi-Nooksack Territory of Bellingham,**
18 **Washington,** thanked members and staff for their service to the state. Previous
19 comments from timber industry lobbyists opposing the protection of legacy forests imply
20 that advocates for legacy forests want to eliminate logging in the state. That argument is
21 not accurate. A common talking point speaks to how protecting legacy forests would
22 increase imports of lumber into the state from countries with less stringent environmental
23 regulations. That talking point is not relevant as it speaks to only a small fraction of
24 approximately 5% of DNR managed lands in Western Washington. To imply the
25 protection of legacy forests would somehow have a significant impact on net imports
26 ignores the fact that subsidized Canadian timber floods the US lumber market and is one
27 of the primary reasons why US imports of timber are so high. Mill owners argue how
28 Canadian subsidiaries are by far among the biggest threats to their economic viability.
29 Slightly reducing harvests on DNR state lands would have virtually no impact on
30 imports. Timber prices are set by the market based on international prices. Importing
31 softwood lumber from any country other than Canada is not economically viable. The
32 argument that cheap imports from countries, such as Russia and China would flood the
33 softwood market because of the protection of legacy forests is misleading. The Board
34 should consider an older forests policy that protects all legacy forests naturally
35 regenerated prior to 1945.
36

37 **Rob Lewis** thanked the Board for its service and for acknowledging local concerns by
38 suspending the Bessie timber sale. During the January meeting, Commissioner Peach
39 observed that the agency is managing change. Perhaps nothing is changing more than the
40 understanding of forests. Professor Suzanne Simard has revolutionized the understanding
41 of forest ecology by elucidating how trees interact and communicate using below-ground
42 fungal networks rather than a collection of trees competing for sunlight. Forests are in
43 fact, a community intricately linked and interdependent. Another change is arising via
44 new fire research using satellite data with a growing body of evidence showing how
45 young plantation forests burn hotter and more readily than older, more complex forests.
46 This speaks to land change as a driver of climate change. It has been known for centuries
47 that when landscapes change, climate changes. That is how the Middle East became a

1 desert. The UN Environmental Program indicates the continued destruction of forests,
2 deterioration of soils, loss of soil water storage, and the reduction of water retention
3 capability are causing major changes in precipitation leading to droughts in many areas of
4 the world. Citizens are largely unaware forests are being managed as commercial
5 properties via the trust mandate. This would likely be the biggest change confronting the
6 Board as more citizens become aware of and concerned about the health of forests.
7

8 **Susan Kane-Ronning, resident of Bellingham**, thanked the Board for removing the
9 Bessie Sorts sale. She owns property in Chelan and was raised in Eastern Washington.
10 She was protected by firefighters and evacuated twice during fires. She agreed it is
11 important to respect those who protect the land. Speakers opposed to specific timber
12 sales, such as the Bessie Sorts sale are not speaking in opposition because their land
13 should be preserved but because 1,200 acres of the watershed in Whatcom County are
14 being readied for logging with roads currently under construction. The watershed is
15 being hit hard by DNR logging. The request is to preserve old growth. Unit 2 of Bessie
16 Sorts is part of 1,200 acres of a contiguous stand of old growth timber. If Unit 2 is
17 logged it will disrupt the contiguous stands across the mountain. The United Nations has
18 declared climate change has accelerated so quickly, it may not be possible to reverse the
19 impacts. Protecting old growth forests is important at this time to make positive steps to
20 combat climate change.
21

22 **Daniel Harm** commented on his knowledge of the old growth forest of the Upper
23 Rutsatz and its existence for thousands of years. He is in awe of the misinformation
24 conveyed to the public because it is untrue environmental policies protecting forests are
25 the main culprit of timber industry job losses. Rather, machines costing hundreds of
26 thousands of dollars and greed are the primarily culprits. He is not against logging, but is
27 against destroying the last native older ecosystems that exist on earth. The timber
28 industry should invest in machines that can employ large teams of employees who use
29 innovation, elegant engineering, and respect for the land. They should be paid well as
30 timber should not be cheap. America, as a culture, needs to respect its resources. Rural
31 communities do not need to rely on the timber industry. Ironically, rural communities
32 will be the most negatively affected by climate disasters as clearly demonstrated in
33 British Columbia and North Puget Sound last fall. Leaders claiming to be
34 environmentalists put timber cash into their pockets. For Bessie and the Upper Rutsatz, it
35 is unnecessary to clear-cut 100-year old and 130-year old native forests to give
36 Washington State University funds to build buildings when a percentage of student
37 tuition is dedicated to offsetting carbon. The entire reason science exists is to continually
38 come closer to truth. Ideal science disproves its own theories as more information is
39 obtained. It is ineffective science to believe a conservation plan written in 1997 is the
40 gold standard for issues facing the state in 2022. To claim otherwise dishonors every
41 future generation. Citizens need to be actively involved in the future of the forest. In his
42 case, the forest is located behind his home. No one wants DNR to fail, but instead to be
43 leaders using sound science, honor for the land, and care for the future of the world.
44

45 **Alexander Harris, resident rural Whatcom County**, said he appreciates the
46 opportunity to testify and hopes the Board will continue to accommodate public
47 testimony at future meetings. As a 30-year old, he thinks about climate change on a

1 regular basis similar to others of his generation as this is the world his generation is
2 inheriting. Last year was a very clear example of future years to expect. In 2021, the
3 state experienced the most significant heat wave every recorded in Western Washington.
4 In the South Fork Nooksack River valley, temperatures were recorded of 108°. A few
5 months later, the region experienced the largest flood event every recorded in Whatcom
6 County causing millions of dollars of damage and flooding of hundreds of homes. Those
7 types of events are expected to increase in future years. The Climate Impacts Group at
8 the University of Washington has documented what the science is projecting for future
9 climate impacts and the group should be invited to present information to the Board.
10 Scientific literature clearly documents how structurally complex native forests are more
11 resilient to climate change impacts and help buffer communities against those impacts.
12 The Board should permanently remove the Upper Rutsatz and Bessie timber sales from
13 harvest.
14

15 **Sarah Gardam, resident of Whatcom County**, said she is speaking as a concerned
16 citizen and supports exclusion of the Bessie timber sale from consideration. She thanked
17 DNR staff members involved in that decision. DNR's leadership may have observed that
18 the word is out and that the people of Bellingham are not going to support that timber
19 sale. She encouraged DNR to save face with the public by officially canceling the sale
20 immediately. During a trip to Mt. Baker recently, she unexpectedly encountered large
21 cedars at least 10 to 12 feet across. Western red cedars can grow up to 50 feet in
22 diameter when conditions are right. As she walks through Puget Sound lowland forests,
23 most of which have been reduced to sticks, she tries to imagine what it would be like to
24 walk through a forest full of massive old growth trees. The forest cannot speak at this
25 meeting or march into court to explain away poor logic, but for those who take time to
26 visit the forest, they can offer testimony. She refuses to keep silent on the issue. It bears
27 repeating that the forests are not DNR's to destroy, as forests were here long before
28 humans and working to create conditions that make life on earth possible. The notable
29 absence of ethical argumentation in the existing discourse best highlights the bankruptcy
30 of current policies and practices. Borrowing against the future in ways not possible to
31 afford, the state will continue to barrel towards a utopia that has already begun to arrive.
32

33 **Andy Zahn** called for the Board to adopt a moratorium immediately on all DNR
34 managed timber sales in older forests naturally regenerated prior to 1945. Such sales in
35 older forests include Cassner Creek and South Jumbo Sorts sales. DNR forest practices,
36 in general are outdated and damaging to forests and other plants. DNR should be
37 managing lands to preserve older forests and old growth characteristics by ending
38 monoculture plantings, clearcutting, and other destructive practices. The Board should
39 pursue other revenue sources, such as carbon credits in addition to reforming logging
40 practices, and to make low impact recreation a priority. Over the last several months,
41 extreme weather events have occurred in the state. Another flooding event is affecting
42 communities. The increase in the frequency and severity of extreme weather events can
43 be largely attributed to worsening climate crisis. Logging is a significant factor in
44 emissions and it makes the planet more vulnerable to extreme weather. Preserving
45 forests in Western Washington, particularly older forests, is key to addressing the climate
46 crisis and moderating regional weather. It is imperative to preserve the forests.
47

1 **Laura Weiss, resident of Bellingham**, urged the Board to consider how now is the time
2 for a new approach to manage state lands because the climate crisis not just knocking on
3 the door, but it is also kicking down the door and ransacking the planet. State lands
4 containing older forests should be managed for biodiversity, habitat, and carbon storage.
5 Logging of mature legacy forests on public lands is simply unacceptable in this day and
6 age. Older forests are powerhouses for storing carbon and it is important to preserve
7 those forests to keep carbon safely stored. The Board should adopt an older forests
8 policy that protects forests that are structurally complex and naturally regenerated rather
9 than simply choosing an arbitrary age as criteria for protection. When older forests are
10 clearcut they are gone forever and the loss is impossible to measure. She asked the Board
11 to cancel the Bessie Sort timber sale in the Lake Whatcom watershed, the drinking water
12 source for over 100,000 people in Whatcom County. Logging and development have
13 created numerous water quality issues in the lake, which is why a growing number of
14 local residents are speaking out about the timber sale. Parts of Bessie are estimated to be
15 120 years old, making it one of the oldest forests left in the watershed. Mature trees and
16 legacy forests provide many benefits not least of which is keeping drinking water safe
17 and clean. She is grateful for the Board's courage in challenging policies that no longer
18 make sense in this time of climate crisis.

19
20 **Brian Karnes** said he works for Cascade Harbor Group as a forester and log buyer. The
21 company is a family-owned business employing 221 people between two facilities and
22 contributing to many indirect jobs in the Olympic Peninsula and southwest Washington.
23 Hardwood logs from DNR timber sales comprise approximately 20% of the volume the
24 company cuts annually. It is important to have consistency in the supply of hardwood
25 logs from DNR's timber sales program. DNR timber sales run the mills for over two
26 months out of a year. The mills have the capacity to handle more hardwood timber and
27 have been told by DNR that hardwood timber will be increasing. Raw materials needs
28 require planning, scheduling, and consistent flow to remain effective and competitive.
29 The company is concerned DNR is not going to achieve its annual harvest for the year.
30 The company is questioning how DNR plans to catch up. DNR timber sales staff work to
31 ensure each timber sale is offered for auction and while the company appreciates those
32 efforts to bring sales to market, it is hoped DNR continues to present sales to the Board
33 for approval as long as the sales follow current policies.

34
35 **Mary Jean Ryan, resident of Jefferson County**, thanked Commissioner Franz and the
36 Board for pulling the Bessie timber sale from consideration. The sale is located in a
37 legacy forest that should be conserved. Factors involved in the Bessie sale offer a good
38 case study of structural diversity, natural regeneration, watershed context, carbon
39 sequestration, and the need to consider factors beyond just stand age. Over the last
40 several months, many items have been removed from the Board's agenda and public
41 comment has been reduced. She is hopeful the next month's meeting will be different
42 and that Commissioner Franz will present a recommendation for a strong older forest
43 policy, one that honors the older forest target commitments in the Habitat Conservation
44 Plan (HCP) and boldly addresses the climate crisis and takes care of rural counties. It is
45 important to end false choices and it can be possible by ensuring presentation of a
46 comprehensive proposal. She urged Commissioner Franz to invite independent forest
47 scientists and the public to review the details of the older forest policy proposal and

1 hopes the Board would suspend any timber sales of legacy forests until the new policy is
2 adopted.

3
4 **Jessica Randall, resident of Jefferson County**, thanked Mr. Brodie and staff for hosting
5 a conversation last month. Although most of the time was spent by the community
6 voicing positions, she hopes more conversations can continue in the future because the
7 future of forests is dire with glaciers melting, young trees struggling to survive hot
8 summers, and streams becoming too warm for salmon reproduction. Floods, landslides,
9 fires, and other serious climate-related events are increasing. Conversations will be
10 necessary with science that is not industry-biased. The HCP is not geared to meet this
11 climate emergency and forest practices are outdated. New rules should be established
12 quickly for the region to survive. All older trees should be conserved at this point and
13 Washingtonians will need financial assistance to convert from logging. Many state
14 departments, such as Fish and Wildlife, Commerce, and Ecology are extremely
15 concerned about the future and know what is coming. It is not just radical activists who
16 are concerned, it also professors, scientists, students, the public, and state employees.
17 Although it may be fair to ask the timber industry to weigh in on the conversation about
18 the future of Washington's forests, their time has passed, as the industry has been front
19 and center in all choices over the last 200 years that has not turned out very well. Today,
20 a crisis is facing the state largely caused by the industry and she believes the needs of
21 industry can be respected but not coddled when deciding the state's future.

22
23 **Carly Lloyd** commented that she is a college student. She conveyed gratitude to the
24 Board for removing the Bessie timber sale. She voiced opposition to clearcut logging of
25 all mature unplanted forest on public lands. The Board should choose climate resiliency
26 over profit. She and her friends recently visited the Bessie timber sale site. She
27 described what they encountered in the forest. The Board should formally adopt a
28 permanent moratorium for all DNR managed timber sales naturally regenerated prior to
29 1945.

30
31 Staff read a statement from **Rod Fleck, City Attorney, Forks, Washington**, who
32 experienced connection difficulties. Mr. Fleck reiterated the need for certainty of timber
33 volume today and in the future as it has been a constant refrain for the community for
34 decades. Today, the Board may hear the public asking for the set aside of more trees,
35 stands, and/or acres based on the age of those trees or "natural regeneration" of trees as
36 recent as 1946. This additional political demand for conservation of such trees, stands,
37 and/or acres under the banner of legacy forests should be rebuffed. Further, the argument
38 that such trees would address carbon release needs to be countered. Rural communities
39 have borne the brunt of all conservation demands that DNR has had to adopt as addressed
40 in the HCP. During development of the HCP, urban corridors in the state have
41 experienced unprecedented growth in buildings, people, and traffic. The argument that
42 rules rural Washington should be the carbon mitigation bank for urban Washington rings
43 extremely hollow and needs to be rebuffed and refuted. If the Board wants to establish
44 additional conservation policy, then it should assess what dates make sense upon
45 Washington's forest history. Further, the impacts of the deferment of timber sales need
46 to be assessed at a different valuation that incorporates both revenue and the loss of local
47 rural jobs that have not been replaced.

1
2 **Paul Butler** reported that as a small forest land owner in western Thurston County, he
3 plans to travel to his land later in the day to plant trees including ponderosa pine. He
4 completed a commercial thin of 16 acres in the fall of 2019 and replanted in February
5 2020. After last summer's record high temperatures with three months of essentially no
6 rain, he has many trees to replant. He acknowledged DNR Webster Nursery for selling
7 western seed source ponderosa as the species was not available when he planted in 2019.
8 He added ponderosa to his existing species because of its tolerance to drier summers and
9 resistance to laminated root rot. Climate change is now a given and DNR obviously
10 recognized that fact by growing western seed source ponderosa. Adjusting species mix is
11 just one tool for adapting to climate change. Another is management of existing stands.
12 Legacy forests have faced much adversity over the past century and yet they continue to
13 thrive. Their value for overall forest health has been passionately and persuasively
14 articulated by the majority of those commenting over the last nine months. He was
15 pleased DNR recently suspended the Upper Rutsatz timber sale and delayed the Bessie
16 timber sale. The current timber sale list does not include any stands up for bid in Western
17 Washington with an average age greater than 80 years. Those are steps in the right
18 direction for permanent protection of legacy forests. Until DNR establishes a new policy
19 on older forests, the Board should place a moratorium on timber sales in Western
20 Washington with a stand origin older than World War II.

21
22 **Ronald Richards** said the Lightning Talk presentation was enlightening and a forceful
23 argument for preserving old growth forests. The presenter explained how shade is so
24 helpful in preventing the spread of wildfire and how it is essential not to cut all trees from
25 a fire break. By making that argument, the presenter conceded clearcuts, at least for
26 several years after the clear-cut, can contribute significantly to the spread of wildfire. He
27 also explained how cutting the lower limbs off trees left remaining on a shaded fire break
28 were helpful in preventing the spread of wildfire. Old growth forests provide the best
29 shade available and the trees left intact and naturally limbed far up their trunks produce
30 the ultimate shaded firebreak as described by Mr. Leach. DNR cannot have it both ways.
31 The presentation admitted how dangerous clearcuts are for spreading wildfires and how
32 essential old growth forests are for preventing wildfires.

33
34 **Robert Mitchell** questioned the possibility of placing an export restriction on private
35 Washington timber harvests as a way to address concerns about importing timber, which
36 is unlikely because imports are not that big of an issue. He cited provisions in the Public
37 Open Meetings Act that speak to people of the state not yielding their sovereignty to the
38 agencies which serve them. The people and delegating authority do not give their public
39 servants the right to decide what is good for the people to know and what is not good for
40 them to know. The people of the state insist on remaining informed so that they may
41 retain control over the instruments they have created. Provisions in the state constitution
42 speak to the right of petition that shall never be abridged. He asserted that DNR's recent
43 change in public comments has been abridged. He encouraged DNR to continue
44 engaging the public and provide an opportunity to self-express and learn from the public.
45 He asked about the possibility of a establishing a message board or a forum and offered
46 to set up a private message board for the public. He reminded conservationists that
47 revenue is a key input for the Board and some other alternative revenue plan would be

1 required for the Board to meet its fiduciary duties. It is possible to petition the State
2 Legislature, seek revenue from federal COVID funds, or increase timber prices.
3

4 **Weston Persons** voiced opposition to clearcut logging in mature and unplanted forests
5 on public lands. More specifically, he opposes the decision to clearcut the Bessie forest
6 or Unit 2 on Anderson Mountain, as well as the Upper Rutsatz forest. Bessie forest is
7 located upland of Lake Whatcom, which serves as the source of drinking water for over
8 100,000 residents in Whatcom County. He supports previous comments by
9 Commissioner Franz that spoke to everyone wanting the same things. Two things
10 humans need is fresh water to drink and clean air to breathe. Clearcutting forests will
11 result in the loss of those two natural resources. Trees remove carbon dioxide and
12 produce oxygen during the photosynthesis process. Clearcutting forests prevent that
13 natural process. The Board should reevaluate its decision to clearcut public lands.
14

15 **Ruby Spring, a small business owner in Bellingham**, opposed clearcut logging of all
16 mature unplanted forests on public lands. Older forests are disappearing from the state
17 and there are numerous reasons it should not be occurring. Air quality, natural water
18 filtration, flora and fauna diversity, public education, and enjoyment are just a few of the
19 valuable resources improved by old forests. Destroying those forests also destroys those
20 resources. The entire state of the climate crisis depends upon decisions as the state needs
21 as many of the older forests as possible to thrive and to afford a chance of living in a
22 comfortable and beautiful world. The need for old hardwood timber sales will likely
23 result in no timber jobs or sales in the future if the state continues to cut old forests. The
24 Board should formally adopt a permanent moratorium on all DNR-managed timber sales
25 that have naturally regenerated prior to 1945 and create an older forests policy based on
26 scientific research that protects forests that are structurally complex, naturally
27 regenerated, and important to watersheds, wildlife, habitat, and biodiversity. At the very
28 least, DNR should pause all timber sales in older forests to allow the Board to work with
29 DNR staff and the community to assess how the agency can meet its obligations to trust
30 beneficiaries while also complying with commitments to protect old mature forests on
31 state land.
32

33 **Ed Bowen**, resident Clallam County, expressed concerns about the Trust Land Transfer
34 Workgroup and the lack of a process within Phase 2 for the public to participate, discuss,
35 engage, or comment. Based on the timeline, he is concerned with critical aspects of
36 Phase 2 on prioritization criteria and the potential impacts to taxing districts. He does not
37 understand why impacted tax districts are not able to participate or have representation.
38 The proposed timber sales are concerning as only three sales are proposed. Clallam
39 County is not included nor was it included last month. He questioned how his taxing
40 district would receive any revenue from the fiduciary responsibility of the Board. A large
41 retailer in the state is selling a sheet of OSB for \$43 up from \$7 a sheet with a 2'x4'x8'
42 board selling at \$7 up from \$2.50. Something is amiss with supply and demand. It is
43 concerning the Board continues to defer and not obligate the release of timber sales the
44 Board obligated to pursue in 2019.
45

46 **Matthew Edwards** commented that no amount of money proposed by representatives of
47 the state would justify the sales and subsequent destruction of any old growth forests. On

1 average, according to current data, humans are enjoying the longest life spans ever in the
2 U.S. averaging 79 years. Douglas fir, if not harvested, lives beyond 500 years and some
3 live to be over 1,000 years old if allowed to flourish. Western red cedar trees have been
4 confirmed to live over 1,450 years. It should be alarming to everyone that old growth
5 existing in Whatcom County is considered old at a paltry 75 to 125 years old. Those
6 trees are still children and children should have a long life. No one knows exactly what a
7 sustainable forest economy looks like. It is important to create a better legacy as giant
8 trees are a gift and a resource and not just for humans. In Washington alone, there are at
9 least 73 other species that call forests their home and an estimated 300 species of birds.
10 The forests are the backyards and serve as homes to Washingtonians. The Board should
11 be courageous and set a precedent other states can follow. He urged the Board to visit the
12 forest before finalizing any sales.

13
14 **Matt Comisky, American Forest Resource Council**, said he was raised in the City of
15 Seattle, which is now the largest static carbon producer in the state whereas rural
16 communities bear the burden of urban Washington's carbon problem. He cited former
17 Commissioner Jennifer Belcher's cover letter within the 1997 HCP conveying how the
18 HCP would provide certainty, stability, and flexibility to both the trust and wildlife. The
19 trust beneficiaries gave up approximately 42% of trust assets in exchange for certainty
20 and stability, yet today there is little if any certainty or stability. Last year, the Board was
21 presented with a fiscal year 2022 sales plan of 518.9 mmbf to be sold in Western
22 Washington. Year-to-date, DNR has offered 226.8 mmbf or approximately 44% of the
23 planned target. The current proposed sales packet would increase that total to 232.2
24 mmbf or 45% of the goal leaving a target of 55% to be sold in the next three months.
25 That equates to 95 mmbf per month when the average month has only been 54 mmbf.
26 Certainty and stability continue to be lacking. The HCP, Policy on Sustainable Forests,
27 Forest Practices Rules, and RCWs governing management of trust lands for the
28 beneficiaries are all based on science and on fiduciary obligations. He asked the Board to
29 restore certainty and stability of the beneficiaries and affirm existing policies and statutes
30 guiding trust management moving forward.

31
32 **Erik Steinhoff** expressed appreciation to staff to ensure the smooth operation of
33 meetings, as well as for the work completed by all rank and file DNR employees. He
34 conveyed appreciation to Commissioner Franz for her passionate words. He has not
35 heard a single attack on any DNR staff member. Commissioner Franz mentioned that the
36 public is invited to share personal concerns. Those concerns are not personal they are
37 public and the public is inviting DNR not to a game of chess in which each plays against
38 each other, rather the public is inviting DNR and the team to play chess against a climate
39 crisis together. The community needs the help and leadership of DNR, as well as vision
40 and collaboration. He asked about the maps requested by Director Brown at a meeting
41 last year showing the location of the 10%-15% forests to be preserved according to the
42 HCP. He asked about the timber harvest reports and the mill survey as they have ceased
43 being produced after Commissioner Franz assumed office. Those documents help the
44 public understand the import/export balance in Washington State. He asked how many
45 voices were excluded from the February Board meeting and how many voices will be
46 excluded from this meeting due to the new public comment format.

1 **Devon Cummiskey** voiced opposition to clearcut logging of mature unplanted forests on
2 public state lands. Legacy forests have proven to play a larger role in mitigating climate
3 change than tree plantations. Preliminary Lidar analysis suggests unprotected legacy
4 forests comprise less than 5% of DNR managed lands on the westside. She questioned
5 why irreplaceable stands continue to be destroyed. Climate change threatens everyone's
6 future especially her generation and knowingly condemning her generation with archaic
7 unsustainable resource extraction practices is unfathomable and crushing. Personally, her
8 life and livelihood have already been affected by climate fluctuation and the things she
9 loves most are at stake. Globally, vulnerable populations are and will continue to
10 experience devastation. Each decision made by every extractive entity impacts lives.
11 Here in the global north with scientific data and policy changing power, the state has a
12 moral responsibility to combat this. She asked the Board to adopt a permanent
13 moratorium for all DNR managed timber sales of naturally regenerated timber prior to
14 1945 and to consider the significance of every legacy forest as an individual irreplaceable
15 resource and a vital piece in the fight for a livable and enjoyable for her generation and
16 those that follow.

17
18 **Edward Chadd, resident of Clallam County**, referred to a February letter the Board
19 received from State Legislature Natural Resource Committee chairs and minority leads.
20 He was stunned by the letter's lack of vision and understanding of the alarming risks that
21 civilization is facing. He referred to the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate
22 Change (IPCC) Report and the UN Secretary General's comments about the atlas of
23 human suffering and damning indictment of failed climate leadership. The letter from
24 the committee cites climate-friendly wood products, which is a patent falsehood refuted
25 by hundreds of the country's most prominent scientists. Elected officials who truly seek
26 to protect the public should find another way to protect timber communities, taxing
27 districts, and future generations. The elements of this solution are clear. There needs to
28 be legislative budgetary leadership action, an expansion of the encumbered lands steering
29 community to include all areas of the state, and there should be intervention with the
30 federal government to re-invert the true carbon sequestration from forests at the social
31 cost of carbon. There is a way to ensure stability for taxing districts, timber communities,
32 and for people. Jobs in the forest can be available based on restoration and resiliency that
33 would protect everyone for years.

34
35 **Bill Turner, Washington Timber Procurement Manager, Sierra Pacific Industries**,
36 referred to recent comments opposing the harvesting of older and larger trees. Dependent
37 upon the commenter, there has been a sliding scale in the definition of those trees. The
38 HCP has been in force for 25 years. Stands harvested earlier are now in mid-life for
39 managing on a sustained yield basis over the long-term. It has been unfortunate not to
40 work in those forests and to view many of the stands because of the presence of big, older
41 trees. A minimum of eight trees per acre were required to remain when the stands were
42 harvested and replanted. DNR management over the last 25 years when forecasted over
43 the life of the HCP would leave 1.3 million acres on the west slope of the Cascades with
44 a landscape filled with big, older trees and not just set-aside lands, but also on lands
45 considered the working forest. The marbled murrelet long-term strategy passed in 2019
46 recognizes that large older trees were being released for harvesting. Harvesting of those
47 stands is nothing new or extreme. Those are not old growth stands but were stands

1 previously preserved. One section in Sustainable Forests is a policy on local economic
2 vitality that states the Department may take action in support of local economic vitality
3 when it is compatible with or directly supports trust objectives. The timber sales DNR is
4 withholding from the market were designed to meet the trust objectives and forest
5 practice standards. Withholding them negatively affects the local economic vitality of
6 the trust beneficiaries and timber-dependent communities.

7
8 **TIMBER SALES (Action)**

9 **Auction Results for February 2022 & Proposed Timber Sales for April 2022**

10 Tom Heller, Acting Assistant Division Manager, Product Sales & Leasing Division

11
12 Mr. Heller reported on the results of the February 2022 auctions. The Department
13 offered eight sales totaling 33.7 mmbf. All sales sold totaling \$17.4 million for an
14 average of \$516 per mbf with an average of 3.1 bidders per sale. The prices were
15 extremely good with average price per thousand board feet value nearly \$100 higher than
16 previous months. The increased interest in sales in February resulted in the purchase of
17 sales by one new bidder.

18
19 Mr. Heller invited questions from the Board.

20
21 Mr. Cahill asked about the comparison of February prices versus prices over the last
22 several years. Mr. Heller replied that there is an expectation for higher prices during the
23 timeframe of February, March, and April of each year; however, sales in February were
24 higher than prices received by DNR for the last several decades.

25
26 Commissioner Peach commented on the good results of the timber sales. In terms of
27 volume, he asked about the status of budgeted dollars in sales to date. Mr. Heller advised
28 that staff plans to address the third quarter results while acknowledging volume is less
29 than projected. Prices are higher than anticipated and that help to balance the difference
30 between lower volume and the value delivered while acknowledging the importance of
31 selling more volume during higher market prices.

32
33 Duane Emmons, Division Manager, Product Sales and Leasing Division, briefed the
34 Board on the proposed timber sales for April. Staff is offering only three timber sales
35 because of a combination of factors. The primary factor is attributed to the national labor
36 market and volume of resignations all industries are experiencing across the country.
37 DNR, as a large employer has not been exempt and has experienced constraints in the
38 ability to recruit and retain staff. The forest products industry is no different. The
39 industry is actively recruiting for employees with DNR losing staff to a number of
40 business partners over the last several months as well as the loss of staff to promotions
41 into other vacant positions within the Department. The timber sales program and other
42 revenue-generating programs are experiencing vacancy rates that are unusually high with
43 some regions experiencing vacancy rates as high as 40%, such as the Southeast Region.
44 Another factor is the complexity of sales offered to the market requiring due diligence for
45 areas of older forests to ensure sales offered adhere to current policies.

1 Mr. Emmons reported the proposed timber sales total 13.6 mmbf with an average of \$343
2 mbf. One sale received a SEPA comment from the Center for Sustainable Economy that
3 was similar to other comments the Department has received from the organization about
4 climate change and the perceived need to address and complete a full accounting of
5 carbon and climate during the SEPA review. As shared by staff at previous meetings, the
6 Sustainable Harvest and the murrelet long-term strategy both address climate and carbon
7 within the analysis. Nothing in the comments created a need for the Responsible Official
8 to change the SEPA Determination. The proposed three timber sales are presented for
9 approval as they represent the best interests of the trust and meet all policies and
10 obligations under DNR's statutory framework. Mr. Emmons invited questions from the
11 Board.

12
13 There were no questions or comments by the Board. Commissioner Franz requested
14 approval of the proposed sales.

15
16 MOTION: Commissioner Peach moved to approve the proposed sales.

17
18 SECOND: Dean Koenig seconded the motion.

19
20 ACTION: The motion was approved unanimously.

21
22 **ADJOURNMENT**

23 With no further business, Chair Franz adjourned the meeting at 10:33 a.m.
24
25

Approved this, ^{TTA} 5 day of April, 2022


Hilary S. Franz, Washington State Commissioner of Public Lands


Jim Cahill, Designee for Governor Jay Inslee

Absent

Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction


Bill Peach, Commissioner, Clallam County


Absent

Dr. Richard Koenig, Interim Dean, College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource
Sciences, Washington State University

approved via Webinar

Dan Brown, Director, School of Environmental and Forest Sciences, University of Washington

Attest:


Tami Kellogg, Board Coordinator