

## Minutes

### Board of Natural Resources Meeting

December 3, 2024

Webinar, Natural Resources Building, Olympia, Washington

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#### **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

The Honorable Hilary Franz, Washington State Commissioner of Public Lands

The Honorable Lisa Janicki, Commissioner, Skagit County

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

Clare Ryan, Acting Director, School of Environmental and Forest Sciences, University of Washington

Wendy Powers, Dean, College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences, Washington State University

#### **BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

The Honorable Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction

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#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Hilary Franz called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m.

Board members provided self-introduction. A meeting quorum was confirmed.

Chair Franz thanked Acting Director Ryan for her time and commitment during her service on the Board.

#### **WEBINAR/SAFETY BRIEFING**

Kelli Pinchak, Board Coordinator, outlined how to view and participate in the combined webinar and in-person meeting.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 5, 2024 - *Action***

**MOTION:** Acting Director Ryan moved to approve the minutes as published.

**SECOND:** Mr. Cahill seconded the motion.

**ACTION:** The motion carried unanimously.

1           **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

2           **Lee First** invited several children to speak to the Board. Cohen said his family lives in a  
3 home near Capitol State Forest, which is a steep climb from his house. He visits the area  
4 often to enjoy the abundance of legacy forests. During the summer he spent the night in the  
5 forest and was able see many animals, such as deer grazing and bear and raccoon tracks by  
6 the river. He asked members to consider how devastating it would be for the animals if their  
7 home was cut down. They named the mountain *Mount Rocky Rock* and it is one of his  
8 favorite places to visit. Destroying that place would cause a great negative effect of pouring  
9 salt into the streams and making it nearly impossible for salmon to spawn. He asked the  
10 Board not to cut down the habitat. Gwynevere Smith said she is eleven years old and an  
11 Olympia School District student. She has lived her entire life next to a legacy forest and it  
12 would break her heart to see it cut down. She submitted a letter to members of the Board.  
13

14           **Kyle Krakow** commented that the state sets aside more forests than any other timber  
15 company in the world and it is never enough. It is a quote from DNR's Todd Welker in the  
16 *Seattle Times* and it captures two of the largest problems DNR faces when responding to  
17 criticism of its forest management practices. As DNR conserves more forests than other  
18 timber company, it is absurd to suggest that the public are overly demanding and wanting a  
19 livable future with more than a few old growth forests intact. The last few remnants of  
20 naturally regenerated forests on state lands have value beyond its timber. Unprotected legacy  
21 forests amount to specks on a map. Considering the scale of old growth that once blanketed  
22 the Pacific Northwest, the public is not asking for much. Just two decades ago, structurally  
23 complex forests accounted for nearly a quarter of DNR's managed forestlands. Today, less  
24 than seven percent remain. With each reckless timber sale approved, the need to protect those  
25 havens of biodiversity becomes much more urgent. Clearcuts such as Misty and Dabbler are  
26 the reason older forests have become so rare. If the goal posts appear to be moving it is  
27 because DNR will not stop cutting them down. Resolution #1645 is the latest example. It is a  
28 blatant attempt to justify what DNR has been doing for years – misinterpreting its own  
29 policies for the financial gain of DNR and other timber companies at the expense of wildlife,  
30 the public's collective well-being, and climate. Like most timber sales on the agenda, it needs  
31 to be rejected.  
32

33           **Nina Sarmiento, Port Angeles**, referred to the proposed timber sales and Resolution #1645.  
34 The resolution is garbage. She questioned how the resolution was created and presented to  
35 the Board, as it is illogical because it assumes Douglas-fir plantations as young as 50 years  
36 old can be managed to resemble old growth forests within the next 40 to 70 years. There is  
37 nothing in scientific literature to support that assumption. DNR has provided no evidence to  
38 support its assertion that unnatural Douglas-fir monocrops can be managed to resemble old  
39 growth forests in such a short period. DNR is simply assuming that stands that are already  
40 protected for other reasons will meet the targets of the 10%-15% land base of structurally  
41 complex mature forests. It would be helpful to receive a briefing from experts on endangered  
42 and threatened species that rely on older forests before passing a resolution. To comply with  
43 the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), DNR is shifting the responsibility to 100 years in the  
44 future and absolving itself of any responsibility to protect public land from corporate interests.  
45 Board member Ryan has a PhD in Natural Resource and Environmental Policy. She  
46 questioned how she could agree with the interpretation of the HCP. As it is her last meeting,

1 she asked Board member Ryan to do the right thing and vote against the resolution. When the  
2 timber sales packet was posted for the public for review, four of the legacy forests had not  
3 completed the SEPA comment period, which is inappropriate. She asked the Board not to  
4 approve the resolution or the timber sales.  
5

6 **Rod Fleck, City of Forks**, thanked members who voted to approve the November timber  
7 sales. He asked for continued approval of this month's proposed timber sales. It is interesting  
8 to hear the argument that timber sales should be paused or delayed for future elected officials  
9 to consider, which is not how the system operates. Equally challenging is the mistaken  
10 argument that there were no experts or detailed monthly and yearly efforts to consider the  
11 HCP and its requirements of various activities across all stands. Different approaches and  
12 processes are allowed as part of the adaptive management process embedded within the HCP.  
13 As the Board considers timber sales and the resolution, it is important to remember the  
14 amount of work, time, and effort all participants invested in the HCP, the Murrelet Long-  
15 Term Conservation Strategy, and the Policy for Sustainable Forests, which all serve as the  
16 guiding principles rather than the political whim or the motion of the day. Those documents  
17 guide the Board's decisions. Hopefully, a majority of the Board will approve the timber sales.  
18

19 **Heath Heikkila** said that during the November meeting, some of the tactics used and the  
20 threats conveyed were unacceptable. He is hopeful individuals and organizations that employ  
21 or condone those tactics will recognize the actions of those individuals. He would rather  
22 more young people attend the meetings rather than listening to threats of "we know where you  
23 live." He urged the Board to support the proposed timber sales and the resolution. The  
24 resolution is an important affirmation of the Board's position since the adoption of the HCP,  
25 Marbled Murrelet Long-Term Conservation Strategy, and recent sales approved by the Board,  
26 as well as the 2021 letter from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service confirming its  
27 understanding of the HCP. If the new Commissioner of Public Lands wants to change the  
28 approach as to how the state manages older forests, that action would be allowed through the  
29 Board by decisions rendered through an open, deliberative process to consider all impacts of  
30 any decision of setting aside more acres. Setting aside more acres will require funding from  
31 the Legislature. Last month, timber sales revenue totaled \$23 million. Setting aside  
32 thousands of acres of older forests would amount to millions of dollars if not billions of  
33 dollars in compensation. The Board should support the proposed sales.  
34

35 **Court Stanley, Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC)**, cited conflicting  
36 opinions over the last several years of meeting the targets of 10%-15% of older forests. The  
37 issue requires clarification and DNR stepping up and clarifying the issue. WSAC and the  
38 counties are supportive of the general silviculture strategies and policies designed to  
39 accelerate the development of older forest structures across the landscape, as well as  
40 supportive of Resolution #1645 because it provides much needed clarity to staff, the Board,  
41 and to the public. The Board should vote in favor of the resolution.  
42

43 **Matt Comisky, American Forest Resource Council (AFRC)**, thanked Dr. Clare Ryan and  
44 Dr. Wendy Powers for their service on the Board. At the November meeting, a member of  
45 the Board referenced a metered habitat issue in the 2019 Marbled Murrelet Long-Term  
46 Conservation Strategy. He cited information contained in presentation materials that was well

1 known by the Board at that time. HCP expected outcomes were based on implementation not  
2 on actual goals in terms of the 10%-15% target for “older” forests over time. The Science  
3 Team Report reflects that the P-stage for Douglas-fir is much older than many of the forests  
4 that have been the object of opposition for harvesting. The Solutions Table, an effort by  
5 Commissioner Franz to bring parties together to find solutions, failed because one party was  
6 unwilling to consider other positions and at the last moment attempted to pursue preservation  
7 of acres despite the Board’s decision not to include them in the plan. He is hopeful the  
8 proposed resolution helps to resolve any confusion. The process has been in effect since  
9 1997, and it is time to move forward. He thanked staff for their hard work and efforts.

10  
11 **Sally Keely** advised that the sign-in process for registering to speak was not working  
12 properly. She asked staff to fix ongoing problems with the Zoom sign-in system. The planet  
13 is facing a climate emergency, and structurally complex mature forests are the best natural  
14 climate defense. Forests mitigate climate chaos through natural carbon sequestration, are  
15 more wildfire resistant, efficiently manage rainwater reducing flooding and mudslides,  
16 naturally reduce soil erosion, and provide crucial biological diversity. The Board should  
17 place a complete moratorium on all timber sales until the new Commissioner of Public Lands  
18 assumes office and can assess the state of forestlands. It appears the Board is logging all  
19 forests left standing before the new Commissioner has an opportunity to represent the state  
20 that elected him. An example is Dabbler, which is a particularly vital forest that includes rich  
21 northern spotted owl habitat. To include the forest in the sales package meant using a  
22 loophole in the HCP. She urged the Board to stop the sale. Further, Resolution #1645 allows  
23 for the harvest of mature forests even before the 10%-15% targets for older forests have been  
24 achieved. This is counter to the Policy for Sustainable Forests. Resolution #1645 is a  
25 misinterpretation of the policy and is based on the false assumption that stream buffers and  
26 tree plantations can replace century old native forests. She urged the Board to vote against or  
27 abstain from voting on Resolution #1645.

28  
29 **Russ Pfeiffer-Hoyt, Washington State School Directors’ Association (WSSDA) Trust**  
30 **Lands Advisory Committee**, said the committee is comprised of elected school board  
31 members representing over one million schoolchildren across the state. He also serves as the  
32 President of the Mount Baker School Board. He urged the Board to approve the timber sales  
33 package. All sales are located on trust lands that were set-aside to provide timber revenue for  
34 trust beneficiaries including public schools. He is pleased with the November timber sales  
35 results as the Little Lilly timber sale will provide approximately \$450,000 for the Mount  
36 Baker School District enabling the district to meet the binding conditions imposed by the  
37 Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction because of the district’s budget shortfall. He  
38 thanked the Board and staff for their work in bringing the sale forward. He also thanked  
39 Commissioner Franz for her eight years of service at DNR. Since first elected, Commissioner  
40 Franz has had a good relationship with WSSDA and worked as partners to promote good trust  
41 management on behalf of beneficiaries. She has worked to manage DNR as a business  
42 seeking improved revenues in real estate and green energy while maintaining timber revenue.  
43 Her efforts to reduce wildfire made a real difference in the state. She was able to hire the  
44 right people and supported them in their positions. Commissioner Franz has been very  
45 effective in advocating for wildfire funding from the Legislature and using the funding  
46 wisely. Her work on wildfire is a good example of how government should function to solve

1 real problems. On behalf of WSSDA, he thanked Commissioner Franz for her service and  
2 wished her well in her next endeavors.  
3

4 **Bill Turner, Sierra Pacific Industries**, said the company has four sawmills and two biomass  
5 co-generation plants located in Aberdeen, Burlington, Centralia, and Shelton. The plants  
6 depend on a reliable and sustainable DNR timber sales program. The plants provide nearly  
7 1,000 jobs. In addition to community impacts, the company's subcontractors all depend on  
8 timber sales as well. People who work for subcontractors are members of rural communities.  
9 He encouraged the Board to accept all timber sales as well as adopting Resolution #1645  
10 because it will clarify what is included in existing policies that is often misunderstood. The  
11 actual statement in the Policy for Sustainable Forest states, "The Department will target 10%-  
12 15% of each Western Washington Habitat Conservation Plan planning unit for older forests  
13 based on structural characteristics over time." Often, "over time" is overlooked, which is  
14 clarified by the proposed resolution.  
15

16 **Nicole Robinson** addressed issues surrounding aquaculture. She provided the Board with  
17 binders of exhibits, tribal letters, agency letters, and scientist comments, etc. regarding  
18 aquaculture. She serves as the head of her family of four. For nearly 12 years, she worked in  
19 the aquaculture industry. She graduated from the Marine Technologies Program in 2012 and  
20 began her journey with American Gold Seafood shortly before her graduation. She fell in  
21 love with the job and the people. The company represented a family that continues today  
22 despite no longer working together. They celebrated life, cried over tragedy, and supported  
23 one another through thick and thin. As a nearly 43 year-old individual she has worked in  
24 marine industries and since leaving Cooke Aquaculture in September 2023, she has had four  
25 jobs and not one has come close to the camaraderie or the passion and respect of the industry  
26 she experienced while working at Cooke Aquaculture. Since 2017, she listened as  
27 Commissioner Franz spewed hate and spread unfounded and outright lies about the  
28 aquaculture industry completely disregarding facts and science to push a political agenda and  
29 leaving those within the industry in shambles. Not once did Commissioner Franz visit the  
30 facilities. The company jumped through each hoop she created, filled out every form,  
31 performed every test, and dotted each I and crossed every T since 2017. She asked whether  
32 they failed the tests and were the results outside the scope the company was supposed to  
33 achieve. The outcome was no, and still the Commissioner ripped the rug out from the  
34 company without the decency to tell the company personally. Rather, the company and its  
35 employees learned about it from an article in the *Seattle Times*. She urged the Board to step  
36 out from the DNR bubble of lies and read the facts and the science and not the information  
37 that someone dug up from 40 years ago. The aquaculture industry has evolved, made  
38 improvements, and cares for the environment because without a clean and healthy ocean, it is  
39 not possible to grow a clean and healthy product.  
40

41 **Lynn Fitz-Hugh** said the existing Policy for Sustainable Forests requires DNR to manage  
42 suitably structurally complex forests to achieve older forests structures across 10%-15% of  
43 each Western Washington HCP Planning Unit in 70 to 100 years. The proposed resolution  
44 would allow cutting of complex forests before the 10%-15% is achieved and would pretend  
45 that forests could somehow evolve in complexity in 70 years. It is clear it is an attempt to  
46 avoid numerous lawsuits for not following existing policy. The Board should vote against the

1 resolution or abstain. She asked why such a major policy change is necessary one month  
2 before the new Lands Commissioner assumes office. The action does not reflect any respect  
3 of the voters. None of the Thurston County Capitol Forest parcels were deemed qualified for  
4 Climate Commitment Act round one funds because they were not of sufficient size while  
5 Evergreen Gold, a 150-acre parcel that was divided and now renamed as Cake Walk was  
6 selected for Climate Commitment funding. DNR has indicated it would not discuss the action  
7 until January. Thurston County sent a letter indicating that Evergreen Gold is its Climate  
8 Commitment Act selection. The Board should remove Evergreen Gold and Cake Walk from  
9 the timber sales package. Thurston County provided the Board with a plan on October 1,  
10 2024 and the Board has never discussed the efforts by the Board of County Commissioners.  
11 The Board of County Commissioners has discovered that financial goals of junior taxing  
12 districts can be achieved by logging 47% plantation forests instead of legacy forests.  
13

14 **Dave Chamberlain, Skagit County**, said he is retired after managing timberlands in  
15 Northwest Washington for over 47 years. It has been heartening to observe that the hills are  
16 as green as ever after producing billions of board feet of timber used to provide much needed  
17 lumber and other forest products. This reality is truly the epitome of conservation and a  
18 testament to the professional management of a valuable resource. As a renewable resource,  
19 the management of private and state timberlands not only generates continuous economic  
20 returns but also simultaneously produces an important environmental benefit. Science and  
21 empirical observation have shown how managed stands are more productive, healthier, and  
22 fire resilient. He supports and encourages the Board to continue its fiduciary obligation to the  
23 various trusts. That responsibility is grounded in facts and the law. Good forestry is not the  
24 product of emotion, but the result of scientific study over many decades. State timber sales  
25 are meticulously prepared under HCP guidelines by professional foresters. Trust beneficiaries  
26 are depending on the revenues that are generated for the benefit of the communities. Despite  
27 the care employees complete to produce a timber sales package, it is possible during the  
28 process that something could be missing, as the system of checking before approving is a  
29 well-intended process designed to ensure accuracy and consistency. It is unfortunate that in  
30 the public forum, the Board is increasingly criticized for simply doing its job. He appreciates  
31 the Board's continued support for the trusts and is thankful for the diligence by DNR in  
32 preparing timber sales.  
33

34 **Jake Hambridge, Canyon Lumber Company**, said the company is a small family-owned  
35 sawmill located in Everett that has been in operation for over 100 years. Throughout those  
36 years, Canyon provided employment to people to raise and support families as well as  
37 contribute to the local economy. He urged the Board to approve the timber sales carefully  
38 developed by staff. Canyon employs approximately 50 individuals and specializes in cutting  
39 Douglas-fir timbers for architectural beams. The beams are used in residential and  
40 commercial building applications. The products provide a far more sustainable and climate-  
41 friendly product than alternatives, such as steel and concrete. Due to the size needed and the  
42 ring count to meet the select structural grade requirements, the company requires logs  
43 between 70 to 85 years old. The company sources most of its timber supply from DNR  
44 timberlands. The company plans to continue building on the history it has established in the  
45 area for future generations, but as with many others, is concerned about the impact of  
46 withdrawing more DNR working forests that are politically labeled as legacy forests. The

1 forest management practices by DNR are the most conservative in the world and help to  
2 ensure responsible and sustainable resources to lumber companies. The conservative forest  
3 management plan followed by DNR ensures healthy working forests and managed forests that  
4 add to the local economy, provides employment opportunities, provide far more climate-  
5 friendly building products, and store carbon in structures for decades. He thanked staff for the  
6 careful and thoughtful approach to ensure responsible forest management and for providing  
7 sustainable and responsibly sourced products to companies throughout the forestry sector.  
8

9 **Peter Janicki** said he represents the fourth generation in the industry and is a third-generation  
10 logger. His family has worked in the state on private, state, federal, and tribal timberlands for  
11 more than 60 years. His company pioneered roads from the western slopes of the Cascades to  
12 the eastern foothills enabling many people to access the mountains. They can drive to see still  
13 standing and prolific old growth forests that are dying and burning but are still protected. The  
14 roads were built by loggers. Loggers shaped the Pacific Northwest while DNR refined the  
15 technique. DNR employees are amazing from layout to compliance. However, they  
16 constantly face challenges. DNR staff work within the constraints of forest practices and  
17 invest much into timber sales only to have someone who resides in their wood house far away  
18 cry out, “save the trees.” Staff walk every inch of each timber sale, know the rules, and are  
19 forced to be conservative in the management techniques despite being never enough. They  
20 need someone to fight for them. Farm to table works for everyone except the timber industry.  
21 Where will the wood come from for the millions of homes needed? The United States  
22 increased direct Russian imports of finished products by over 50% in 2024. It appears the  
23 U.S. is funding both sides of the war. It is important to log in one of the most highly  
24 regulated forests in the world located within the state’s backyard. Log locally, support local  
25 jobs, reduce importing timber, and fund local schools.  
26

27 **Tim Rashko, Mount Vernon**, spoke as a private individual not representing any interest.  
28 For 15 years, he served on the Board of Trustees of Skagit County Public Hospital District No  
29 1. During those years, the hospital was able to operate at a profit. At that time, it was  
30 considered necessary to maintain a 5% profit margin for the hospital to invest and remain  
31 current and competitive in medical technology. During the COVID-19 pandemic, hospitals  
32 were ordered by the state to cease elective surgeries and outpatient procedures, which are  
33 major contributors to profit. The hospital had losses totaling \$43 million from 2020 to 2022.  
34 In 2023, the hospital had managed an operating profit of \$14 million or 2.3% profit margin,  
35 less than half the 5% required to remain competitive. Timber sales receipts have been a  
36 source of revenue for the hospital totaling approximately \$2 million for the last decade. The  
37 loss of any of those dollars at this time is detrimental. Public entities across Skagit County  
38 face financial challenges from schools, libraries, public roads, fire districts, mental health  
39 facilities, and cemetery districts. They were all supported by timber sales totaling \$67 million  
40 over the last decade. Many fear the revenue will eventually be zero. Nobody wants to pay  
41 additional taxes and there seems to be no reasonable suggestions on how to replace critical  
42 funding. Any ideas would be welcome.  
43

44 **Heather Pens** reported DNR asked Thurston County Board of County Commissioners to  
45 develop a plan as to how the county wanted the parcels in Capitol State Forest to be managed.  
46 There have been no discussions on the plan delivered on October 1, 2024. The lack of action

1 was disrespectful to Thurston County Commissioners. Approximately 47% of Capitol State  
2 Forest is comprised of plantation forest with sufficient timber to meet harvest goals for years  
3 while other solutions are worked out. She asked for the creation of a task force as requested  
4 by the Thurston County Commissioners. The 2024 Legislature provided Thurston County  
5 funds from the Climate Commitment Act since it survived the initiative. Thurston County  
6 Commissioners submitted a letter requesting the funds be used to save Evergreen Gold. She  
7 asked for the suspension of the sale to enable the action to move forward. DNR has plans to  
8 sell over 10% of Thurston County's legacy forests in the months of November and December.  
9 Washington voters have voted for a Lands Commissioner who is not in agreement with the  
10 proposed action. It is important to respect the voters of Thurston County and the state who  
11 clearly want different management of legacy forests. The State Legislature has invested \$2.5  
12 million in the DNR Forest Carbon Management Work Group to examine potential alternative  
13 management to enable the saving of older forests without harming wood supply and providing  
14 revenue for beneficiaries. The work group will render recommendations in June 2025, which  
15 is a reason for wait on the sales and use the results in future decisions.  
16

17 **Jamie Hilary, Merril & Ring**, reported the company owns and manages approximately  
18 66,000 acres of timberland in Western Washington. He also serves as the Chair of the Skagit  
19 County Forest Advisory Board. The Forest Advisory Board has existed for over 20 years  
20 with the primary role of providing recommendations to Skagit County Commissioners on  
21 forestry related issues that affect families and communities within the county. The Board  
22 represents over 300 years in the timber industry with most members having experience  
23 managing timberland for long-term sustainability. He urged the Board to approve current and  
24 future timber sales. The sales benefit junior taxing districts, schools, and communities.  
25 Managed forests with age and species diversity are beneficial to the environment and use of  
26 responsibly harvested timber for wood products is far more beneficial to the environment  
27 when compared to non-renewable alternatives that require more consumption of energy and  
28 resources from countries that are not practicing sound environmental processes. Further  
29 reduction in timber supply will continue to harm industry infrastructure and have  
30 compounding affects on the future. The land will have less value and encumber more risks  
31 for growing timber and more will be sold for development and not available for any other use  
32 including recreation. DNR's process for offering timber sales is based on science through an  
33 extensive timber sale vetting process than any other process in the world. He commended  
34 staff on their ongoing professionalism and dedication for meeting the state lands HCP while  
35 also having to struggle to meet fiduciary obligations. Those obligations are achieved with  
36 over 50% of the management land base already restricted for conservation, recreation, or  
37 protection for old growth.  
38

39 **Heath Curtiss, Hampton Lumber**, commented about implications that timber companies  
40 such as Hampton Lumber are nameless and faceless corporations. That is further from the  
41 truth, as Kris McCall, a forester was asked to drive to Olympia to speak to the Board. It  
42 would be helpful to understand the rules for signing up to testify, as he is concerned he would  
43 be unable to testify due to the time limitation for public comments. Resolution #1645  
44 accurately reflects the abundant and very conservative science under the HCP and the Marble  
45 Murrelet Long-Term Conservation Strategy. He is hopeful the Board will approve the timber  
46 sales.



1  
2 **Elaine O’Neil** said that as a Thurston County resident she is opposed to the Board of County  
3 Commissioners refusing over a million dollars of timber money with the expectation that they  
4 can backfill budget needs with hard earned tax dollars whether the funds come from the  
5 Legislature, which is unlikely given a \$5 billion budget deficit or through an arbitrary increase  
6 in property taxes. As she cited at the November meeting, Thurston County Commissioners  
7 have been captured by activist sentiments that do not reflect the needs and wants of the  
8 broader community. The Board should approve the timber sales to support county needs for  
9 schools, fire stations, roads, and other necessary services. Electricity is critical as 700,000  
10 Washingtonians learned a few weeks ago. The state’s electrical grid requires poles. Poles  
11 made from wood are environmentally friendly and produced in the state mostly from DNR  
12 lands augmented by poles from small forest landowners. She recognized Commissioner  
13 Franz for including pictures from the current regional tree farmers of year who harvest poles  
14 every five to seven years in a recent power pole story. She questioned the future of the  
15 market if DNR timber sales are no longer offered. What happens is a downward spiral away  
16 from the unique and much-needed products Pacific Northwest forests provide. Tall, straight  
17 poles and cross arms with unique specifications are only derived from 60 to 80-year old  
18 stands. DNR lands provide market stability and support services especially when the need to  
19 rebuild occurs after severe weather impacts experienced several weeks ago. Crossarms from  
20 DNR timber totaling 40 truckloads were sent to the Southeast to repair storm damage in North  
21 Carolina. Society needs timber to support the services it needs.  
22

23 **John Gold, Skagit County**, said the Board has heard a variety of opinions with many  
24 passionate about the direction DNR’s timber sales program should or should not take. As a  
25 recreation user of DNR lands he has been riding the trails on his mountain bike through the  
26 Junia timber sale area since 1993. He noted the phenomenal growth and popularity of the  
27 Galbraith Mountain trail system that has coexisted with extensive harvesting over the decades.  
28 The fact that Junia is an 80-year-old forest and contains some of the most popular trails in  
29 North America should not dissuade the Board from harvesting. He is grateful for the  
30 opportunity to recreate on DNR lands, such as Junia, the Capitol State Forest, North Fork  
31 Road, and Middle Fork Nooksack. He has confidence in the professional managers at DNR  
32 and that the HCP is science-based and will continue to sustain all the resources everyone cares  
33 about on public lands. It is a good plan, is balanced, and helps to provide forest products  
34 needed by society. He can tolerate 40 acres of stumps here and there and for that reason he  
35 supports the Board moving ahead with all proposed timber sales, as well as clarifying the  
36 Policy for Sustainable Forests through Resolution #1645.  
37

38 **Natasha Hays** commented that since the Trust 42 lands earmarked for timber harvest pay for  
39 the resource management cost account for Capitol State Forest it is likely the reason why  
40 Thurston County was denied its request for protection of its parcels proposed for sale in  
41 Capitol State Forest. She reminded the Board that Thurston County sent a letter advising the  
42 Board of receiving an award of funds under the Climate Commitment Act and requested DNR  
43 apply those funds to the Evergreen Gold parcel and not consider the auction of the Evergreen  
44 Gold timber sale. Several issues continue to puzzle her surrounding an audit due by 2030  
45 reflecting the amount of timber cut. Logging is not required to be completed until 2070 and  
46 she is unsure as to why there is a rush today especially since the audit has not been completed.

1 Additionally, the original loan of \$156 million should have been repaid given the value of  
2 logging of legacy forests. She asked the Board not to cut any more Trust 42 forests before an  
3 appropriate audit is completed. She added that she does not support aggressive or threatening  
4 tactics from any group, which is inappropriate. It is important the Board is aware that those  
5 who support retaining legacy forests do not approve of that type of behavior.  
6

7 **Ed Bowen, Clallam County**, said he was unable to provide comments at the last meeting as  
8 mentioned by other speakers. There appears to be some problems with the registration  
9 process for the public to speak via Zoom. He asked why the Alley Cat timber sale was pulled  
10 and plans for a future sale. He spoke to the Lightning Talk on the Road Program scheduled  
11 last month but deferred. Road systems on DNR lands are extremely important beyond  
12 recreation, timber harvesting, or for environmental reasons, as they are a major component of  
13 emergency management within the state. In Olympic National Forest during the last winter  
14 season, the road system served as a survival mechanism during extreme weather events. Last  
15 winter, the county experienced one serious bridge abutment in the entire region. The Olympic  
16 National Forest lost a major road in the fall. A recent weather event in the region spoke to the  
17 importance of the DNR road system. It is important the Board understands the role of the  
18 road system, management of the roads, and the overall purpose beyond just serving the  
19 primary purpose of the Board.  
20

21 **Brian Karnes, Cascade Hardwood and Port Angeles Hardwood**, said the company's  
22 employs 205 employees between two facilities in Washington and many indirect jobs in the  
23 areas of the Olympic Peninsula and Southwest Washington. He thanked Commissioner Franz  
24 and the Board for approving November timber sales. The sales completed multiple layers of  
25 review of some of the strictest forest regulations. The areas are available to harvest under the  
26 Sustainable Forest Plan and the HCP. The variety of sales produced by DNR is needed by  
27 hardwood mills, specialty softwood mills, and pole manufacturing companies. He is hopeful  
28 the Board approves all proposed timber sales. He thanked staff for developing fact sheets for  
29 each timber sale as the information outlines the benefits of the DNR timber sales program. It  
30 is also likely that as a member of the Board, it can be a thankless job and as such he thanked  
31 Commissioner Franz and the Board for their efforts and for trusting the professionals who  
32 work for DNR. He is hopeful the incoming Commissioner has the same trust and respect for  
33 DNR professionals.  
34

35 **Aubrey Stargell, Great Western Lumber Company, Everson, Washington**, said the  
36 company is the last remaining sawmill in Whatcom County. The company has been  
37 sequestering carbon since 1951. He recognized and thanked dedicated timber sales staff at the  
38 region level for their diligent efforts to plan, layout, and bring timber sales to harvest. Those  
39 efforts are completed in the face of increasing bureaucratic adversity. DNR region employees  
40 are professionals developing timber sales. The continued decline of the DNR Timber Sales  
41 Program is concerning. This trend echoes the U.S. Forest Service of decades ago leaving a  
42 legacy of unhealthy forests, increased wildfire risks, and gridlock. Global societal demand for  
43 forest products continues to increase. The state is blessed that forest products are renewable  
44 and sustainable. Even the most hardened advocates of forest preservation use a myriad of  
45 forest products on a daily basis. Given those facts, any debate regarding forest management  
46 must include consideration of where harvesting should occur. It is not realistic to stop

1 harvesting. Pacific Northwest forests are the most productive in the world and Washington  
2 Forest Practice Regulations are the most comprehensive in the world. Harvests should come  
3 from productive forests that are managed responsibly. It is arrogant and selfish to expect  
4 supply to come from somewhere else where the footprint would affect other people. Those  
5 places likely do not have wage parity, safety, or worker production equity. Those places  
6 certainly do not have equal environmental protections for the resources everyone purports are  
7 important. Over 70% of the forests in Whatcom County are excluded from harvesting with  
8 plenty of trees remaining because of increasingly declaring forests off limits to management  
9 creating a net negative to the environment due to unintended consequences. Wood has to  
10 come from somewhere and it should be from Washington State. Additionally, another mill  
11 recently closed in Everett.  
12

13 **Kris McCall** reported he is a seasoned forester and a resident of Skagit County. Upon  
14 officially becoming a state in 1889, U.S. Congress granted the state 3.1 million acres of  
15 federal lands to provide a continuous flow of revenue for trust beneficiaries. As a trust land  
16 manager, DNR has a duty to provide undivided loyalty and long-term financial support for  
17 schools, universities, and many other public services. It is not optional as it is law and a  
18 condition of the gift the state received from Congress. It is easy to focus on the fiduciary  
19 responsibility and dollars mandated to trust beneficiaries. It is a quantifiable number that can  
20 be forecasted and counted on. To some, it is their livelihood needed to keep doors and  
21 services open. To others it may not reflect much money, as numbers are easy to debate. It is  
22 the hundreds of thousands of family wage jobs that keep communities afloat. It is not just  
23 loggers or mill workers; it is also truck drivers, sales, retail, construction, recreation, and  
24 2,700 DNR employees. An active and viable timber sales program is a financial benefit to the  
25 state. DNR has been a poster child of multi-use under trust lands. It is an intricate balance of  
26 sustainable harvest for long-term timber production, recreation, conservation, and benefits for  
27 all Washingtonians. Today, everyone is starting to witness a swing of the pendulum in a push  
28 for preservation that is severely hurting communities. He asked the Board not to lose sight of  
29 the conditions of the gift or the other many benefits that come from a legacy of an active  
30 timber sales program.  
31

32 **Sheryl Ahlblad** thanked Mr. Cahill and Superintendent Reykdal for their wisdom and  
33 courage to delay the timber sales. There is a better way and what has been occurring is  
34 unsustainable. Now is not the time to cut Washington's older forests that are successional and  
35 on their way to being older. They will not regenerate if sprayed with Roundup. Citizens are  
36 calling for a change, a change to protect the last forests, the ones that possess 100 to 140-year  
37 old trees. Those successional forests are irreplaceable. She questioned why children should  
38 lose forestlands so that companies can make profit off wood products. Citizens are asking for  
39 a tiny fraction to remain standing. Mapping has been completed identifying the location of  
40 rare older stands. The Board should vote against the proposed timber sales.  
41

42 **Steve Tift** remarked about the professionalism of DNR's Northwest Region staff.  
43 Approximately 20,000 years ago, the state was in the throes of the last glacial advance. The  
44 climate started to warm and immigration started. Humans settled in the area and found shelter  
45 and food for medicine and managed the land with fire. Approximately 15,000 years ago, trees  
46 began growing of poplar and pine. Later, Douglas-fir and western hemlock appeared. In the

1 early 2000s, efforts began on fire suppression. In the late 1960s and early 70s, the state set-  
2 aside millions of acres from harvesting. Today, the state is suffering the consequences of  
3 overgrown stands, disease, and decay. He applauds staff for managing DNR lands. DNR  
4 employees are professionals and provide value to communities within the state.  
5

## 6 **LIGHTNING TALK**

### 7 **Northern Spotted Owl HCP Conservation Strategy**

8 **Allen Estep, Forest Resources Assistant Division Manager**  
9

10  
11 Mr. Estep briefed members on Northern Spotted Owl HCP Conservation Strategy.  
12

13 The HCP is a voluntary and legal agreement between an entity and one or both of the federal  
14 services with regulatory jurisdiction over federally listed species. Federal services include  
15 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric  
16 Administration or NOAA Fisheries. The federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) authorizes  
17 incidental take permits (ITP) to be issued for “take” of listed species, provided the ITP holder  
18 has a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). HCPs describe the anticipated effects of the  
19 proposed taking; how those impacts will be minimized or mitigated; and how the HCP is  
20 funded.  
21

22 The Act defines “take” as “. . . to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture,  
23 or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.” “Harm” includes significant habitat  
24 modification that actually kills or injures a listed species through impairing essential behavior  
25 such as breeding, feeding, or sheltering. HCPs describe the anticipated effects of the  
26 proposed taking, how those impacts will be minimized or mitigated, and how the HCP is to be  
27 funded. Mitigation for impacts to listed species may take the form of preserving habitat  
28 through an acquisition or a conservation easement, enhancing or restoring degraded or former  
29 habitat, creating new habitat, establishing buffer areas around existing habitat, modifying  
30 land-use practices, or restricting access to habitat.  
31

32 DNR currently has three HCPs, the Aquatic Geoduck HCP, Forest Practices Riparian HCP,  
33 and Trust Lands HCP. Other jurisdictions and private entities have also completed HCPs.  
34

35 In the early 1990s, several listings occurred that prompted DNR to consider developing a  
36 HCP. They included the federal listing of the Northern Spotted Owl as threatened in 1990,  
37 Marbled Murrelet listed as threatened in 1992, and numerous salmon species under review in  
38 1993 for listing. In 1995, DNR established a science team of state, federal, and independent  
39 scientists to address, owl, murrelet, and salmon conservation needs. Aided by  
40 recommendations from the federal spotted owl and murrelet draft recovery plans, the  
41 President’s NW Forest Plan, and the latest scientific reports, the science team provided the  
42 foundation of the HCP strategies.  
43

44 DNR’s HCP was adopted in 1997. The multi-species plan covers federally listed species  
45 regulated by USFWS and NOAA Fisheries. When signed, the HCP covered nine species  
46 regulated by USFWS, three of which has since been delisted and six salmon species regulated

1 by NOAA Fisheries. The HCP is a long-term land management plan covering 70 years with  
2 three, 10-year extensions for a maximum duration of 100 years. The HCP covers  
3 approximately 1.9 million acres within the range of the spotted owl including the eastern  
4 slopes of the Cascades.

5  
6 Trust Lands HCP Strategies include Riparian (implemented in Western Washington),  
7 Multispecies (implemented in Western Washington), Marbled Murrelet (implemented in most  
8 of Western Washington), and Northern Spotted Owl (NSO) (implemented on all HCP covered  
9 lands (Western WA & Eastern slopes of the Cascades).

10  
11 DNR's HCP conservation objective for the northern spotted owl is to provide habitat that  
12 makes a significant contribution to the following:

- 13 • Demographic support - refers to the contribution of individual territorial spotted owls  
14 or clusters of spotted owl sites to the stability and viability of the entire population
- 15 • Maintenance of species distribution - refers to supporting the continued presence of  
16 the spotted owl population in as much of its historic range as possible
- 17 • Facilitation of dispersal - is the movement of juvenile, subadult, and adult spotted owls  
18 from one sub-population to another

19 DNR achieves the objectives by providing habitat in specific management areas.  
20 Management areas are located in proximity to Federal Lands recovery areas. Management  
21 areas have specific habitat qualities and threshold amounts to achieve. Habitat thresholds are  
22 measured by geographic units. Spotted owl management units (SOMUs) vary in size  
23 depending on the management area.

24  
25 Geographic boundaries (SOMUs) are used to measure habitat thresholds and distributed  
26 habitat within a management area. Dependent upon the objective in the landscape, SOMUs  
27 may be based on watershed analysis units, landscape planning units, one-quarter townships, or  
28 modified versions.

29  
30 Nesting, Roosting & Foraging (NRF) management areas are designated in areas intermingled  
31 with and adjacent to federal lands designated within the NW Forest Plan Reserves and  
32 generally achieve and maintain 50% suitable NRF habitat within SOMUs. Habitat types  
33 qualifying as NRF habitat are generally higher quality and include snags, down wood, and  
34 larger trees.

35  
36 Nest Patches are identified within NRF management areas providing nesting structure to  
37 supplement roosting & foraging habitat of NRF. Nest patches are 500 acres in size and  
38 include a 300-acre core and a 200-acre buffer. Two nest patches have been identified for  
39 every 5,000 acres of NRF management areas. Nest Patches are long-term commitments to  
40 provide structure in NRF management areas and often overlap or are in proximity to known  
41 nest sites of spotted owls.

42  
43 Dispersal Management Areas are located in areas that facilitate dispersing owls and are often  
44 placed between federal landscapes. The objective is to achieve and maintain 50% dispersal  
45 habitat or better per SOMU. Dispersal habitat is generally a simpler stand structure because

1 of its dispersing objective.  
2

3 Mr. Estep displayed a map illustrating how NRF, dispersal areas, and nest patches intermingle  
4 with federal lands. The Olympic Experimental State Forest (OESF) has a two-tier habitat  
5 approach with SOMU threshold of 40% comprised of 20% old-forest habitat and 20% young-  
6 forest habitat or better.  
7

8 In areas where DNR is below its habitat threshold in a SOMU, stands were identified that are  
9 either non-habitat or lower quality habitat to be enhanced or to allow the stand to grow and  
10 achieve habitat conditions. Management of those stands can occur if management activities  
11 do not increase the amount of time that would be required for the habitat threshold to be  
12 reached. In areas where DNR is above its habitat threshold in a SOMU, DNR may harvest  
13 habitat as long as the total amount of habitat does not fall below the habitat threshold and does  
14 not reduce the amount and distribution of nest patches (in NRF).  
15

16 The USFWS reissued a biological opinion for the HCP in 2024 and concluded continued  
17 implementation of the HCP/ITP is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the  
18 spotted owl and is not likely to destroy or adversely modify designated critical habitat.  
19 Modification of the ITP was not required. Competition from the barred owl is now the  
20 primary driver behind spotted owl population declines, greatly overwhelming the impacts of  
21 habitat loss or degradation over the past 25 years.  
22

23 Mr. Estep invited questions.  
24

25 Mr. Estep was asked how the HCP connects with the revision of the Northwest Forest Plan.  
26 Mr. Estep responded that staff is monitoring progress with staff represented in efforts to revise  
27 the Northwest Forest Plan. Any revisions would not require DNR to modify its HCP.  
28

29 Mr. Cahill asked about the acreage associated with the DNR not achieving habitat threshold  
30 and the type of efforts to improve habitat in those areas to meet the thresholds. Mr. Estep  
31 advised that the thresholds are published in each SOMU each year in the HCP annual report  
32 available on the DNR webpage. He offered to provide the information to the Board. The  
33 legacy of forest management and detrimental events such as fire in some areas such as in the  
34 southern area of the state near the Columbia River contain snags and downed wood promoting  
35 the creation of habitat. In other areas that lack those components, it is more difficult to  
36 increase habitat. Often, DNR enhances sales using variable density thinnings. The  
37 Legislature funded more thinning in the budget proviso, which helps to enhance stands.  
38

39 *Chair Franz recessed the meeting at 10:48 a.m. for a break. Chair Franz reconvened the*  
40 *meeting at 11:07 a.m. A meeting quorum was confirmed.*  
41

#### 42 **TIMBER SALES - Action**

43 **Auction Results for November 2024, FY2025 Update, & Proposed Timber Sales for**  
44 **January 2025**

45 **Michael Sly, Acting Assistant Division Manager for Product Sales and Leasing Division**

46 Chair Franz announced an executive session following the Timber Sales presentation.

1  
2 Michael Kearney, Product Sales and Leasing Division Manager, expounded on the question  
3 from Mr. Cahill on thinning in owl habitat areas. Several months ago, the Department sold  
4 the Jeckle VRH & VDT timber sale with the thinning portion located in owl habitat. The sale  
5 is a good example of using thinning to improve habitat threshold. In January, the Board will  
6 consider a timber sale utilizing proviso funds from the Legislature for thinning in habitat  
7 areas. The sale is the first using the new source of funding.  
8

9 Mr. Sly reported November auctions totaled 12 sales of 51.8 mmbf for \$23.2 million for an  
10 average of \$448/mbf. Approximately 2.75 bids were received per sale.  
11

12 Mr. Sly reviewed the status of FY 2025 planned timber volume. The graphic depicted the  
13 current plan for auction volume, forecasted volume for the remainder of the year, sold  
14 volume, and reoffered volume from previous months. Another graphic reflected the average  
15 number of bidders for each auction, as well as overbids averaging 60%. Mr. Sly reviewed  
16 statistics of timber purchasers. Since FY 2019, DNR averaged 74 unique purchasers across  
17 all timber sales sold. Of that amount, 40 are wood product manufacturers and the remaining  
18 34 purchasers are small businesses who specialize in resale logs to local mills. Within DNR's  
19 Contract Harvest Program, 43 eligible and enrolled logging professionals compete at auctions  
20 for logging and road building projects. Within the local market, 105 approved log rollout-  
21 scaling locations provide purchasers with third-party log scaling professionals to measure logs  
22 using the standard Northwest Scaling Rulebook. Currently, the state has 799 individual  
23 master logging professionals representing 390 different companies across the industry. All  
24 the companies qualify under SFI standards as certified logging professionals and are eligible  
25 to conduct work on DNR timberlands. Based on purchase volume to date, DNR's top  
26 purchasers include Sierra Pacific Industries, Hampton Tree Farms LLC, Murphy Company,  
27 Harbor Timber, and Interfor US Timber Inc. Public comments from previous meetings have  
28 indicated DNR sells timber to companies, such as Weyerhaeuser, Hancock, Green Diamond,  
29 and Port Blakely, which is incorrect because those companies participate in the timber export  
30 market and are not legally allowed to purchase DNR timber. All DNR purchasers are subject  
31 to WAC 240-15 restricting the export of timber from public lands.  
32

33 Mr. Sly presented the proposed package of timber sales for January comprised of 14 sales  
34 totaling 76.1 mmbf at a minimum appraised delivered value of \$22.6 million. The delivered  
35 minimum is \$298 per mbf based upon appraisal analysis.  
36

37 Of the 13 westside sales proposed for auction, 2,801 gross acres were reviewed for harvest  
38 and approximately 37% of the original acres were conserved to protect unstable slopes,  
39 culture resources, riparian areas, and bound and marked minimum eight leave trees per acre.  
40 The net harvest area of the westside proposal is 1,752 acres or 63% of the original proposal.  
41

42 Mr. Sly reviewed the estimated percentage of revenue by trust generated by the sales.  
43

44 The Dabbler timber sale is located approximately 28 miles east of Woodland and is comprised  
45 of three VRH units and two right-of-way units in the Yacolt District of the Columbia Planning  
46 Unit. Staff evaluated 156 acres for harvest and identified 140 acres for harvest leaving 16

1 acres in long-term forest cover or 10% of the total area originally evaluated. An old growth  
2 assessment was triggered on the sale because of the proximity to one weighted old-growth  
3 index (WOGHI) point in Units 1 and 3. Field staff verified old growth to the northwest of  
4 Unit 1. During the assessment, field staff found no presence of old growth within the timber  
5 sale boundary and any legacy trees were marked for retention. Stand development stage  
6 assessment determined that all units fall within Maturation II stage of development and that  
7 the area was likely part of the Yacolt burn in 1902 ranging in age between 40 and 118 years.  
8 Although the area did not meet the Department's definition of old growth, field staff  
9 delineated the oldest trees in the unit. Additionally, the timber sale also carries a 60-inch  
10 diameter restriction clause.

11  
12 Douglas-fir in the timber sale will carry one of the highest Doug-fir stumpage evaluations  
13 across all sales in January. The cruise report identified 450,000 feet of poles. Doug-fir timber  
14 stumpage value on the sale is 422 mbf with overall stumpage appraised at 337 mbf due to the  
15 sales species composition and associated delivered log price differences between Doug-fir and  
16 western hemlock. The timber sale is well suited for transmission class poles and high-quality  
17 wood products.

18  
19 The Misty timber sale is located approximately two miles west of Porter. The sale consists of  
20 two VRH and two daylighting units in the Black Hills District of the South Coast HCP  
21 Planning Unit. Staff evaluated 194 acres for harvest and after identifying areas of  
22 conservation, 92 acres were identified for harvest leaving 102 acres in long-term forest cover.  
23 The area experienced a large fire in the late 1870s along with a harvest in the 1920s of areas  
24 not burned. Unit 1 contains multiple cohorts from past fire and earlier logging activities.  
25 Units 2-4 consist of younger planted stands. The overstory composition of Units 1 and 2  
26 consist primarily of Douglas-fir with western redcedar, western hemlock, red alder, and  
27 bigleaf maple present in areas of Unit 1. Roadwork associated with the sale includes existing  
28 road abandonment to remove an existing fish barrier, return the stream to natural grade, and  
29 restore upstream fish habitat. Additionally, an undersized culvert at an existing Type 4 stream  
30 will be replaced with a larger culvert to allow required storm flows.

31  
32 The timber sale includes 40-year old stands of younger trees in Unit 2 that fall within the  
33 biomass accumulation exclusion stage of development and represent 17.8% of the sales total  
34 acres and 9.3% of the volume. Public comments and suggestions often recommend focusing  
35 on younger available timber within Capitol State Forest. However, given that the sale  
36 contains both older and younger age classes, staff pursued a hypothetical alternative using  
37 volume of acres from Unit 2 of 24.6 mbf per acre and estimated that it would require a harvest  
38 area of additional 222 acres to account for the same volume compared to the current proposed  
39 116 acres. Mr. Sly reviewed the net value to the trust in relationship to the current proposed  
40 minimum bid value of \$2.3 million. A younger timber sale would be valued at \$2.35 million  
41 or \$280,000 less than the current proposed valuation. To account for the difference, staff  
42 would need to include an additional 30 acres adding 754,000 board feet of volume to account  
43 for the value difference. The analysis does not account for the doubling of silviculture costs  
44 required after harvest, added road cost due to larger footprints, more expensive and less  
45 productive logging, and added staff time to prepare a larger sale area. Inventory data suggests  
46 that the increase in sale acres would not be possible in proximity to the Misty timber sale



1 without encountering green-up issues limiting continuous acres to less than 100 acres  
2 requiring an expansion of the geographic area to acquire more stands for the alternative.  
3

4 The Evergreen Gold timber sale is located approximately nine miles west of Littlerock and  
5 consists of one VRH unit and two ROW units in the Black Hills of the South Coast HCP  
6 Planning Unit. Staff evaluated 87 acres for harvest and after identifying areas of  
7 conservation, 68 acres were identified for harvest leaving 18 acres in long-term forest cover.  
8 The sale is Maturation II and data indicated a stand origin of post-1910 with no old growth  
9 concerns associated with the sale. An old growth assessment was not conducted nor needed.  
10 Two fish passage pipes are associated with the sale that will be funded and completed by the  
11 contract. The proposed sale in conjunction with the Cake Walk timber sale was originally  
12 considered as one sale during the planning process. A combined final cruise volume was too  
13 high. Staff determined that in the best interests of the beneficiaries, the sale should be split  
14 for marketing purposes.  
15

16 The Cake Walk timber sale is comprised of two VRH units and four right-of-way and  
17 daylighting units within the Capitol State Forest. Staff evaluated 155 acres for harvest and  
18 after conservation, identified 82 acres for harvest leaving 70 acres in long-term forest cover.  
19 No old growth concerns were identified. The origin date of the VRH units, which dates from  
20 the decade following 1900 and 1910, was determined using field sampling and observations  
21 of early logging and a fire. The majority of the ROW and daylighting units consist of  
22 younger stands planted in 1990 or more recently. The overstory composition of Units 1 and 2  
23 consist primarily of Douglas-fir with areas of mature western redcedar as a member of the  
24 pioneering cohort. Both Cake Walk and Evergreen Gold timber sales are encumbered by an  
25 existing timber easement originating from 1942 between Mason County Logging and the  
26 State highlighting the long logging history specific to the area.  
27

28 Mr. Sly reviewed the collective FY 2025 Capitol State Forest timber package. Capitol State  
29 Forest is approximately 100,000 acres in size. The proposed harvest activities presented to  
30 the Board in November and December represent a combined harvest area of 696 acres spread  
31 throughout the forest. Another sale increases the total acreage to 886 harvest acres for FY  
32 2025 encompassing seven sales representing less than 1% of Capitol State Forest (.8%). Over  
33 the last six years, DNR sold an average of 753 acres per fiscal year in Capitol State Forest.  
34 Based on the Department's Sustainable Harvest Calculation (SHC), staff plans annually for  
35 approximately 56.1 mmbf per year in Capitol State Forest. FY 2025 harvesting totals  
36 approximately 45.2 mmbf.  
37

38 The Department harvests approximately 1% of forested DNR state land base acres per year.  
39 In Capitol State Forest, DNR averages 1% harvest levels on the landscape. The proposal in  
40 FY 2025 is consistent with historical trends for Capitol State Forest and is supported by  
41 DNR's HCP, Policy for Sustainable Forestry, and the Marbled Murrelet Long-Term  
42 Conservation Strategy.  
43

44 Based on the entire FY 2025 Capitol State Forest timber package using the same appraisal  
45 analysis for Misty, Evergreen Gold, Cake Walk, Cabbage Patch, Carrot, and Juno timber  
46 sales, the total harvest area was 696 net acres or approximately 39 mmbf of volume appraised

1 at \$15.7 million. Using the same logic as the Misty timber sale alternative of 24.8 mbf per  
2 acre breakdown for Misty Unit 2, staff estimates a requirement of 1,431 acres or more than  
3 double the acres to account for the same volume of 35.4 mmbf as proposed. The hypothetical  
4 volume has an estimated appraised value of \$13.5 million or \$2.2 million less than the current  
5 evaluation as proposed of \$15.7 million due to the difference in delivered log values on high  
6 quality and industrial logs. To account for the difference, DNR would need to include  
7 approximately 232 additional acres adding an additional 5.7 mmbf to account for the value  
8 difference between the two scenarios for total acres of 1,663 or 967 additional acres than the  
9 proposed timber sale acres or 238% more than the original proposal. The appraisal analysis  
10 assumes all costs, fees, and expenses for each sale but does not account for added costs  
11 associated with harvesting younger stands, larger road packages, added staff time, and  
12 additional silvicultural costs required for the additional acres.  
13

14 Commissioner Janicki said the summary speaks to more acreage required to achieve harvested  
15 volumes. Volumes speak to one aspect of the concerns in addition to public comments  
16 regarding the need for specific ages of timber to achieve product goals. She asked whether  
17 staff considers the marketability of timber harvests. Mr. Sly said the Department operates the  
18 timber sales program based on all available land, which entails a balance of achieving the  
19 SHC volume and marketing strategy. Younger stands often do not achieve the needs of some  
20 sawmills as conveyed previously by the speaker representing Canyon Lumber.  
21

22 Commissioner Janicki expressed appreciation for the explanation as to the actual number of  
23 harvested acres that are must less than she assumed based on public concerns surrounding  
24 Capitol State Forest timber sales.  
25

26 Mr. Sly reviewed other proposed timber sales. The Serendipity timber sale consists of four  
27 VRH units and three associated right-of-way units within the Hood Canal State Forest. Staff  
28 evaluated 178 acres for harvest and identified 118 acres for harvest leaving 60 acres in long-  
29 term forest cover. The sale area has an average DBH of 16 inches and is Maturation I or II  
30 within the approximate origin date of post-1930 with some individual old-growth remnants.  
31 Staff identified an occupied marbled murrelet site approximately 520 feet south of Unit 3.  
32 The proposal is outside the buffer of the occupied site and is compliant with Marbled Murrelet  
33 Long-Term Conservation Strategy. Due to forest health concerns, the sale will be replanted  
34 with a mix of native conifer species approximate for the site with 285 trees per acre of  
35 western white pine, 100 trees per acre of Douglas-fir, and 50 trees per acre of western  
36 redcedar in Unit 1.  
37

38 The Dungeness and Dragons timber sale is located in Clallam County approximately four  
39 miles south and west of Sequim off Lost Mountain Road. The sale consists of four variable  
40 retention harvest units, seven variable density thinning units, and four right-of-way harvest  
41 units located in the Straits HCP Planning Unit. Staff evaluated 111 acres for harvest and  
42 identified 69 acres for harvest after excluding acres for conservation areas leaving 39 acres for  
43 long-term forest cover. Units 3, 5, 11, and 12 are Maturation II stage of development with the  
44 remaining areas in biomass accumulation stem exclusion. All units are post-1920 origin date.  
45 The sale has a similar component as the Misty timber sale. An old growth assessment was  
46 triggered because of the presence of both high and moderate WOGHI points within two

1 previously planned units. Due to the delineation of 139 acres of old growth, two units were  
2 removed and excluded from the proposed sale. An old growth assessment of Unit 3 was  
3 triggered by forester field operations of large diameter trees combined with a GIS data layer  
4 indicating the possibility of larger trees. Based on the field assessments of the site, no policy-  
5 definable old growth stands were identified within the proposed unit.  
6

7 The Junia timber sale is located within the North Puget HCP Planning Unit. The proposed  
8 sale consists of one 42-acre Variable Retention Harvest (VRH) unit within a 50-acre parcel of  
9 state trust land surrounded by privately owned timberlands. Staff evaluated 48 acres for  
10 harvest and identified areas of conservation leaving a harvest area of 41.6 acres and 6.5 acres  
11 in long-term forest cover. The Board visited the proposed sale area during a tour in the fall of  
12 2022 while visiting communication lease sites on Galbraith Mountain. The stand is mostly a  
13 70-80 year old cohort of Douglas-fir with a co-dominant cohort of western redcedar.  
14 Approximately 12 acres of the timber sale are located within the Lake Whatcom watershed.  
15 The prescription for the timber harvest and road construction was applied in accordance with  
16 the Lake Whatcom Landscape Plan. The Galbraith Mountain trail system is comprised of  
17 over 65 miles of nonmotorized trails across 3,000 acres of privately and publicly owned land.  
18 The timber sale contract will protect trails by limiting equipment impacts during operations  
19 and rehabilitate trails by clearing debris following the harvest. New road construction and  
20 post-haul road maintenance will create and improve non-motorized routes within the trail  
21 system. NW region staff will work with the operator and Whatcom Mountain Bike Coalition,  
22 a non-profit trail management partner, to post signage and conduct public outreach regarding  
23 trail closures during harvest operations. Four communication tower lease sites are present  
24 within the timber sale area.  
25

26 Mr. Cahill referred to the Dungeness and Dragons timber sale and questioned why staff did  
27 not exclude Unit 3 to assist DNR in meeting older forest targets in that area.  
28

29 Bill Wells, Olympic Region Manager, replied that the roads for accessing the timber site are  
30 expensive and lacking the harvest of older timber, the Department would be unable to  
31 maintain or open roads for harvesting of any acres within the proposed timber sale.  
32

33 Mr. Cahill conveyed appreciation for thinning within the sale and indicated a need for more  
34 timber sales containing thinnings to help meet targets and achieve goals. Mr. Wells added  
35 that during the SEPA review process, the Department received a request for a field visit from  
36 the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe. The tribe completed substantial restoration work on the  
37 Dungeness River over many years and wanted to ensure the sale would not negatively impact  
38 the river. The tribe conveyed positive comments about the layout of the proposed sale and  
39 expressed a desire to utilize larger wood from the stand for their restoration efforts by either  
40 purchasing the sale or contracting with the purchaser of the sale.  
41

42 With no further questions from members, Mr. Sly requested approval of the proposed sales as  
43 presented.  
44

45 MOTION: Commissioner Ryan moved to approve the January timber sales as proposed.  
46

1 MOTION: Commissioner Janicki seconded the motion.

2  
3 The Board's proceedings were disrupted by an outburst from a member of the public.

4  
5 Mr. Cahill offered an amendment to the motion.

6  
7 MOTION: Mr. Cahill moved to amend the motion removing Evergreen Gold timber sale  
8 from the January timber sales package. The proposed amendment to the  
9 motion failed due to the lack of a second.

10  
11 Mr. Cahill expressed concerns for including the Evergreen Gold timber sale based on the  
12 receipt of a recent letter from the Thurston County Board of County Commissioners  
13 requesting inclusion of the Evergreen Gold timber sale within the Climate Commitment Act  
14 Protection Program. Although he is appreciative that the timber sale does not technically  
15 meet the requirements of the program as it included an approved timber sale prior to the date  
16 established in the budget proviso, he believes it is better to delay the sale until the meeting  
17 between DNR and Thurston County in January to discuss timber sales and potential areas in  
18 Capitol Forest that might be available for protection.

19  
20 ACTION: Motion passed 4/1.

21  
22 **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

23 Chair Franz recessed the meeting at 11:51 a.m. to an executive session to discuss with legal  
24 counsel active or potential litigation involving the Board of Natural Resources and DNR  
25 under RCW 42.30.110. The executive session will conclude at approximately 12:20 p.m.

26  
27 At 12:20 p.m. the executive session was extended for approximately 20 additional minutes.

28  
29 Chair Franz reconvened the meeting at 12:41 p.m. A meeting quorum was confirmed.

30  
31 **POLICY ON GENERAL SILVICULTURE STRATEGY - Action**  
32 **Resolution #1645**

33 **Duane Emmons, Assistant Deputy Supervisor for State Uplands**

34 Mr. Emmons advised that the presentation would cover the definition of older forests within  
35 the Policy for Sustainable Forests and a discussion on proposed Resolution #1645.

36  
37 The definition of older forests is included in the Policy for Sustainable Forests as is the  
38 definition for old growth. Old growth includes a specific age component. The old growth  
39 policy was developed by Dr. Jerry Franklin, Dr. Norm Johnson, and a number of other  
40 professionals in the field of old growth ecology in the Pacific Northwest. The Board adopted  
41 the definition of old growth and subsequent policies that protect old growth on the landscape.  
42 The age component of old growth is pre-1850 origin (pre-European settlement). Wide scale  
43 logging occurred after 1850 with true old growth no longer possible for creation because the  
44 natural process was disturbed by more intensive harvesting. Older forests are defined as  
45 forests that have completed the last stages of structural complexity. Within the general  
46 silviculture strategy, DNR will provide professional management of forested lands through

1 active management and stewardship of the greatest possible portion of those lands at the  
2 landscape level.

3  
4 Silviculture is defined as the art and science of cultivating forests to achieve objectives. It  
5 implies active management of the forested landscape. Policies focus on active management  
6 and balancing the economic, ecological, and social benefits, using intensive and innovative  
7 silviculture to produce structural diversity and revenue, targeting 10-15% for “older” forests  
8 over time, and using landscape assessments to identify suitable stands that help meet older  
9 forest targets in 70 to 100 years from the adoption of the Policy for Sustainable Forests.  
10 Implementation of the policies utilizes the strategies from existing policies to attain the  
11 desired forest condition. Assessments completed by the Department provide a path to set-  
12 aside stands to achieve the target as needed. Assessments to date have not revealed a need for  
13 setting aside additional forest stands from those already permanently conserved or deferred  
14 from harvest to meet the objectives.

15  
16 Other policies shaping current management include the Habitat Conservation Plan, Policy for  
17 Sustainable Forests, and the adoption of the Marbled Murrelet Long-Term Conservation  
18 Strategy (amendment to the HCP). The policies are designed to meet the objectives in the  
19 Policy for Sustainable Forests.

20  
21 Mr. Emmons invited questions regarding the framework. With no questions, Mr. Emmons  
22 reviewed provisions in the proposed resolution:

- 23  
24
- 25 • The Board interprets the General Silvicultural Strategy to mean that the Department  
26 will identify suitable forest stands that may be actively managed to achieve the desired  
27 10-15% of older-forest structure in each western Washington HCP planning unit  
28 within 100 years of the adoption of the PSF.
  - 29 • The Board interprets the General Silvicultural Strategy to direct the Department to  
30 identify structurally complex stands that are suitable to be managed toward older-  
31 forest targets over time.
  - 32 • The Board does not interpret the General Silvicultural Strategy to prohibit the  
33 Department from harvesting structurally complex stands until it has achieved 10-15%  
34 older-forest structure across each western Washington HCP planning unit.
  - 35 • The Board’s interpretation of the General Silvicultural Strategy as expressed is  
36 consistent with the PSF as a whole, the release of structurally complex stands for  
37 harvest resulting from the adoption of the Long-Term Conservation Strategy for the  
38 Marbled Murrelet and the 2019 Sustainable Harvest Calculation, DNR’s management  
39 over the past eighteen years, other Board adopted policy, and the Department’s  
governing law.

40 Mr. Emmons invited questions and discussion by the Board.

41  
42 For additional context for interpretation of the provisions, Mr. Emmons explained that should  
43 the Board interpret no harvesting of less structural complexity forests on the landscape until  
44 the 10-15% of older forests has been achieved, the action would reduce volume by  
45 approximately 100 mmbf per year with a financial impact of half a billion dollars each year.

1 The SHC is not based on a spatial model and would be unable to identify the location of  
2 impacts. However, in early 2021, an assessment was completed of pre-1900 stands.  
3 Disproportionate impacts affect Clallam, Jefferson, Whatcom, Skagit, Wahkiakum, and  
4 Skamania Counties. Some of the counties are often referred as “encumbered lands counties.”  
5 Mr. Emmons advised that he and Commissioner Franz are scheduled to meet with the House  
6 Capital Budget Committee about encumbered land counties and the encumbered lands  
7 program based on the higher degree of conservation for spotted owl and marbled murrelet.  
8 Since 2010, the Legislature has funded replacement lands for the Department to acquire for  
9 those counties. The Legislature recognizes the financial impact to those counties.

10  
11 Commissioner Janicki commented on the confusion when individuals interpret the 10-15%  
12 differently. However, adding “desired future condition” as the outcome to achieve by  
13 following the long-term plan may speak to impatience as the plan clearly states “over time.”  
14 In moving forward, it is important to note that 18 years ago a different Board adopted the  
15 Policy for Sustainable Forests and it speaks to the importance of ensuring the definition is  
16 clear. In the proposed timber sales package, a significant portion of older forests was  
17 identified in the Dungeness and Dragons timber sale that were set-aside. It is assumed that  
18 the set-aside increases the acreage as well as contributing to the 10-15% older forests  
19 objective. She asked whether the Department plans to continue with that type of a process  
20 and whether the Board would receive regular updates at some frequency on the status and  
21 location of older growth forests that are contributing to the desired future condition of 10-  
22 15%.

23  
24 Mr. Emmons advised that old growth is permanently conserved as staff identifies locations.  
25 Old growth cannot be identified through any remote sensing inventorying or simply viewing a  
26 stand because it requires sampling of the trees to identify whether the trees are pre-1850. In  
27 permanently conserved areas, the Department will continue to develop old forest structure to  
28 meet the objective. Anything identified that is additional increases the amount of old forest  
29 structure. The Department continually builds on the amount that is permanently conserved.  
30 The Department continually updates the landscape assessment to identify those areas. The  
31 Board receives an annual State Lands Report, which would afford an opportunity to provide  
32 an annual assessment.

33  
34 Chair Franz noted that staff would follow up on potential ways to provide regular updates on  
35 the status of different priority areas and conservation acres added each month.

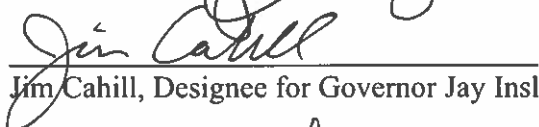
36  
37 Mr. Emmons added that a recent publication was released of the review of the HCP and  
38 implementation. A presentation was provided to the Board approximately two years ago on  
39 the draft publication. The findings demonstrated that the Department is experiencing a period  
40 of shifting the location of older forests and structurally complex forests on the landscape.  
41 Today, the Department is accelerating the growth of older forests across the landscape to  
42 benefit species.

43  
44 Mr. Cahill supported receiving additional updates as well as information on silviculture  
45 activities to provide a larger picture of the Department’s efforts.  
46



Approved this 7<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2025

  
Hilary S. Franz, Washington State Commissioner of Public Lands


  
Jim Cahill, Designee for Governor Jay Inslee

approved  
Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction

approved via webinar  
Lisa Janicki, Commissioner, Skagit County

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

  
Wendy Powers, Dean, College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences,  
Washington State University

  
Tami Kellogg, Board Coordinator