

8.19.09 Meeting Summary
33663 Weyerhaeuser Way, Federal Way

FOREST PRACTICES BOARD POLICY WORKING GROUP
WASHINGTON STATE NORTHERN SPOTTED OWL

Members Present

Ken Berg	USFWS
Shawn Cantrell	Seattle Audubon
Mark Doumit	WFPA
Kevin Godbout	Weyerhaeuser
Don Halabisky	Sierra Club
Chris Lipton	Longview Timber
Robert Meier	Rayonier
Vic Musselman	WFFA
Miguel Perez-Gibson	Audubon
Tom Robinson	WSAC
Chuck Turley	DNR
David Whipple	WDFW

Absent

Paula Swedeen	Seattle Audubon
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Also Present

Lois Schwennesen	Facilitator
Cindy Mitchell	WFPA
Tami Miketa	DNR
Lenny Young	DNR
Duane Evans	Port Blakely Tree Farms
Court Stanley	Port Blakely Tree Farms
Jim Michaels	USFW
Martha Wehling	Attorney General's Office
Kara Whittaker	WFLC
Jennifer Cook	Schwennesen & Assoc.

This is a summary of the fifteenth meeting of the Forest Practices Board's Policy Working Group (PWG).

Updates

David Whipple and Lenny Young reported on new appointments within DNR. Bridget Moran's position has been filled by Anna Jackson. David Whipple will continue to sit on the Group at least through a transition period, as DNR wants to provide continuity within the Group.

Kevin Godbout summarized some of Weyerhaeuser's recent land transactions, including one parcel that is a potential candidate for pursuing an ecosystem services package.

Mark Doumit is using the founding documents of the Group as an example to a Forest Collaborative meeting later in the month.

Letter on Barred Owls to USFWS

Since the previous meeting, Lois Schwennesen has taken members' input and revised the draft barred owl letter so that members can sign on behalf of their constituencies. David Whipple presented a second draft letter as an option for discussion, and explained his reasoning behind the changes he suggested. After discussion, a consensus was reached about the content and wording of the letter, and a final version was printed and signed by the members.

Strawman Package

Action Item #6, regarding the use of scientists and scientific information was discussed and accepted by consensus with minor edits.

Action Items #7 regarding decertification was discussed in detail. Language will be developed by a subgroup to define the long term vision of a new approach, the steps of a transition process to this change, and how the decertification policy and procedures might be applied during the

transition. The subgroup, composed of Shawn Cantrell, Kevin Godbout, Chuck Turley, Vic Musselman and Miguel Perez-Gibson, will develop more detailed draft language for Group consideration at the next meeting.

Port Blakely Briefing

Court Stanley and Duane Evans were welcomed to the Group, and gave a presentation on the issues, process, outcomes and lessons learned from their experience developing a recently completed 27,000 acre combination Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), Safe Harbor, CHIA, and LLP with the USFWS and WA State agencies. The speakers shared details of the interests addressed in the HCP, which abuts Federal land and included no circle centers. Recently finalized, they worked jointly with State and Federal representatives entities to establish a mutually beneficial arrangement allowing more flexible land management (including thinning) and safe harbor from USFWS and WDFW in the event endangered species return to restored habitat. Complications and benefits of the process and possible incentives applicable to a wider range of landowners were explored by the Group.

The HCP maintains 25% of the property as dispersal habitat (Federal standard), provides for commercial thinning at 30-40 years with snag generation, and maintains an average rotation of 60 years for the life of the plan for all 27,000 acres. It includes contingency plans to insure net conservation benefit. The key benefit for Port Blakely is regulatory certainty. The company agreed to cooperate with research efforts by the state and others, but is not required to do surveys for owls or habitat, and has minimal monitoring costs.

East Side Thinning Demonstration Project

In July, each caucus considered their tasks as agreed in the strawman, as well as criteria and goals to potentially be included in a pilot program based on thinning. The forest products caucus and conservation caucus compiled briefing papers as a basis of discussion. The Group is interested in further developing the approach. Paula Swedeen and Chris Lipton were asked to take the next steps in assessing landowner needs and conservation criteria to determine if there is sufficient overlap between the two to proceed with a potential demonstration project. They will report back at the next meeting.

Flagship Incentives Program

Kevin Godbout noted that Weyerhaeuser might have a parcel that could be up for discussion as a west side demonstration project. He will continue to discuss it within Weyerhaeuser and report developments at future meetings.

Bob Meier provided emerging information about Federal payments for forestry activities through a conservation stewardship program, possibly a source of incentive funds to be assessed.

Scheduling

An additional a half-day meeting was scheduled for October 7.

Meeting Adjourned