

COMMISSIONER'S ORDER

201226

NUMBER

STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
PETER GOLDMARK, Commissioner of Public Lands

COMMISSIONER'S ORDER
FOREST HEALTH HAZARD WARNING DESIGNATION
EASTERN OKANOGAN COUNTY
FERRY COUNTY

1. Recitals

The Washington State Legislature has established that the state faces serious forest health problems, primarily in eastern Washington, where forests are overcrowded or trees lack sufficient resilience to insects, diseases, wind, ice storms, and wildfires (RCW 76.06.140). Under state law, the Commissioner of Public Lands is responsible for serving as the state's lead on all forest health issues and may initiate actions to manage threats to forest health, including:

Encouraging landowners and managers to maintain their forest lands in a healthy condition in order to meet their individual ownership objectives, protect public resources, and avoid contributing to forest insect or disease outbreaks or increasing the risk of uncharacteristic fire (RCW 76.06.040), and

Addressing forest health issues by a tiered system of authorities (RCW 76.06.160), and

Appointing a forest health technical advisory committee to advise the Commissioner of Public Lands on remedial actions when it is determined that forest lands in any area of the state appear to be threatened by a forest health condition (RCW 76.06.170), and

Having considered the committee's findings and recommendations, issuing a Forest Health Hazard Warning to address an existing threat to forest health or to manage the development of such a threat (RCW 76.06.180), and

Coordinating, supporting and assisting in establishing cooperative forest health projects to address outbreaks, and prioritizing available assistance in areas under a Forest Health Hazard Warning (RCW 76.06.030, 160).

2. Forest Health Hazard Warning Established

In accordance with such authorities, and as per statutory requirements, having received recommendations from the forest health technical advisory committee on July 2, 2012; having consulted with county governments, forestland owners and managers, consulting foresters, and other interested parties; and having on July 18 and 19, 2012, held public meetings in the affected area, I, Peter Goldmark, hereby ORDER and DECLARE a Forest Health Hazard Warning including recommended voluntary actions for all federal, state, tribal and private lands within the boundary described below and depicted in Exhibit A, and for the applicable causes and forest conditions described herein:

That portion of Ferry County bounded by the United States-Canadian border to the north, extending south to the Columbia River, and by the Ferry County borders to the east and west, and

That portion of Okanogan County bounded by the United States-Canadian border to the north, extending south to the Columbia River, by the Okanogan Watershed Resource Inventory Area boundary to the west, and by the County border to the east.

The Warning area boundary contains portions of forested land managed by federal agencies and sovereign Indian tribes, including: the Colville National Forest and the Okanogan Wenatchee National Forest which are administered by the USDA Forest Service; the Colville Indian Reservation which is governed by the Colville Confederated Tribes; scattered forest parcels managed by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management.

3. Cause for the Warning and Applicability

The causes and applicability of the Forest Health Hazard Warning declared herein are as follows:

For Douglas-fir and mixed coniferous forests in the dry forest environment that are experiencing or contain susceptible conditions for damage from the western spruce budworm, wherever they may occur throughout the Warning area, and

For ponderosa pine and mixed coniferous forests in the dry forest environment that are experiencing or contain susceptible conditions for damage from pine bark beetles, principally mountain pine beetle and western pine beetle, wherever they may occur throughout the Warning area, and

For lodgepole pine forest in the dry forest environment that is experiencing or contains susceptible forest conditions for damage from mountain pine beetle, in the portion of the Warning area bounded by the United States-Canadian border to the north, the Columbia River to the south, the Okanogan Watershed Resource Inventory Area boundary to the west, and U.S. Highway 97 to the east.

4. Description of Susceptible Forest Conditions

Any parcel located within the warning area boundary is subject to the voluntary actions recommended under this order, if it contains the following forest stand conditions constituting host suitability for the causal and applicable insects:

For western spruce budworm, Douglas-fir and mixed coniferous stands in the dry forest environment containing greater than thirty percent Douglas-fir or grand fir trees, and containing two or greater strata of the forest canopy, and exhibiting a stand density of eighty percent forest canopy closure or greater, and containing trees of an average age ninety years or greater, and

For pine bark beetles, ponderosa pine and mixed coniferous stands in the dry forest environment containing greater than fifty percent ponderosa pine, and containing trees of an average diameter equal to or greater than ten inches at breast height, and exhibiting a stand density of one hundred twenty square feet of tree basal area per acre or greater, and

For mountain pine beetle, lodgepole pine stands in the dry forest environment containing greater than twenty five percent lodgepole pine trees, and containing trees of an average diameter 8 inches or greater at breast height and of an average age eighty years or greater, and exhibiting a stand density of eighty square feet of tree basal area per acre or greater.

5. Recommended Actions

Forest landowners and managers are advised to consider the following actions:

Seek the assistance of a professional forester to evaluate site-specific risks and management objectives, and

Within existing local, state and federal requirements, pursue hazard reduction activities which address the susceptible forest conditions outlined in Paragraph 4 above, including but not limited to tree thinning, harvest, protecting or reestablishing site-adapted tree species, and controlled burning as discussed in the July 2, 2012 recommendations of the forest health technical advisory committee. Committee recommendations are posted on the DNR website: www.dnr.wa.gov, and

Focus these activities, to the extent compatible with landowner and land manager objectives, on the highest priority forest types and restoring benchmark forest conditions specified in the July 2, 2012 recommendations of the forest health technical advisory committee.

6. Tribal Government-to-Government Consultation

Consistent with Commissioner's Order No. 201029, DNR has initiated government-to-government consultation with the Colville Confederated Tribes in establishing the Forest Health Hazard Warning area. Colville tribal forest management is recognized as exemplary in identifying and quickly addressing forest health hazards. There is a shared concern for the spread

of insect damage onto the Colville Reservation originating from adjacent lands. Therefore, IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the DNR State Forester and the Tribal Relations Manager shall continue consultation efforts to implement the Forest Health Hazard Warning with such personnel as the Colville Business Council (informally called the "tribal council") may designate as their representative.

7. Implementation by DNR staff

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that DNR staff shall prioritize technical assistance, project funding, and project coordination services within all designated Forest Health Hazard Warning areas, consistent with statutory authority and other requirements of applicable law, available resources, and existing deliverables.

DNR staff shall identify to their appropriate Deputy Supervisor such additional resources and capacity as may be necessary to adequately address forest hazards.

DNR staff shall engage other land management, regulatory, and technical assistance agencies, and interested landowners and stakeholders, in order to develop and evaluate 1) Near-term options for priority projects with the Warning area boundary, and 2) Long-term action strategies to prevent or reduce the severity of future outbreaks, and their attendant negative consequences for environmental and economic forest values.

DNR staff shall coordinate with the technical advisory committee in developing a system to monitor progress and results of activities pursuant to RCW 76.06.170(2)(d), recognizing that implementing committee recommendations across the scope and scale of identified forest conditions will require sustained effort over an extended period of time.

DNR staff shall maintain employee and public safety when implementing projects designed to improve forest health conditions and protect public and trust resources.

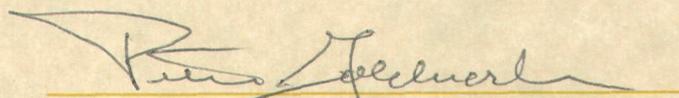
8. Forest Health Management Plan.

Any landowner or manager subject to this Warning may make a written request for review of a forest health management plan, which DNR may certify as adequate to address the subject of the Warning pursuant to RCW 76.06.180(9). The submittal of all proposed plans should be sent to the attention of:

Karen Ripley
Forest Health Program Manager
Washington State Department of Natural Resources
1111 Washington St. SE
MS 47001
Olympia, WA 98504

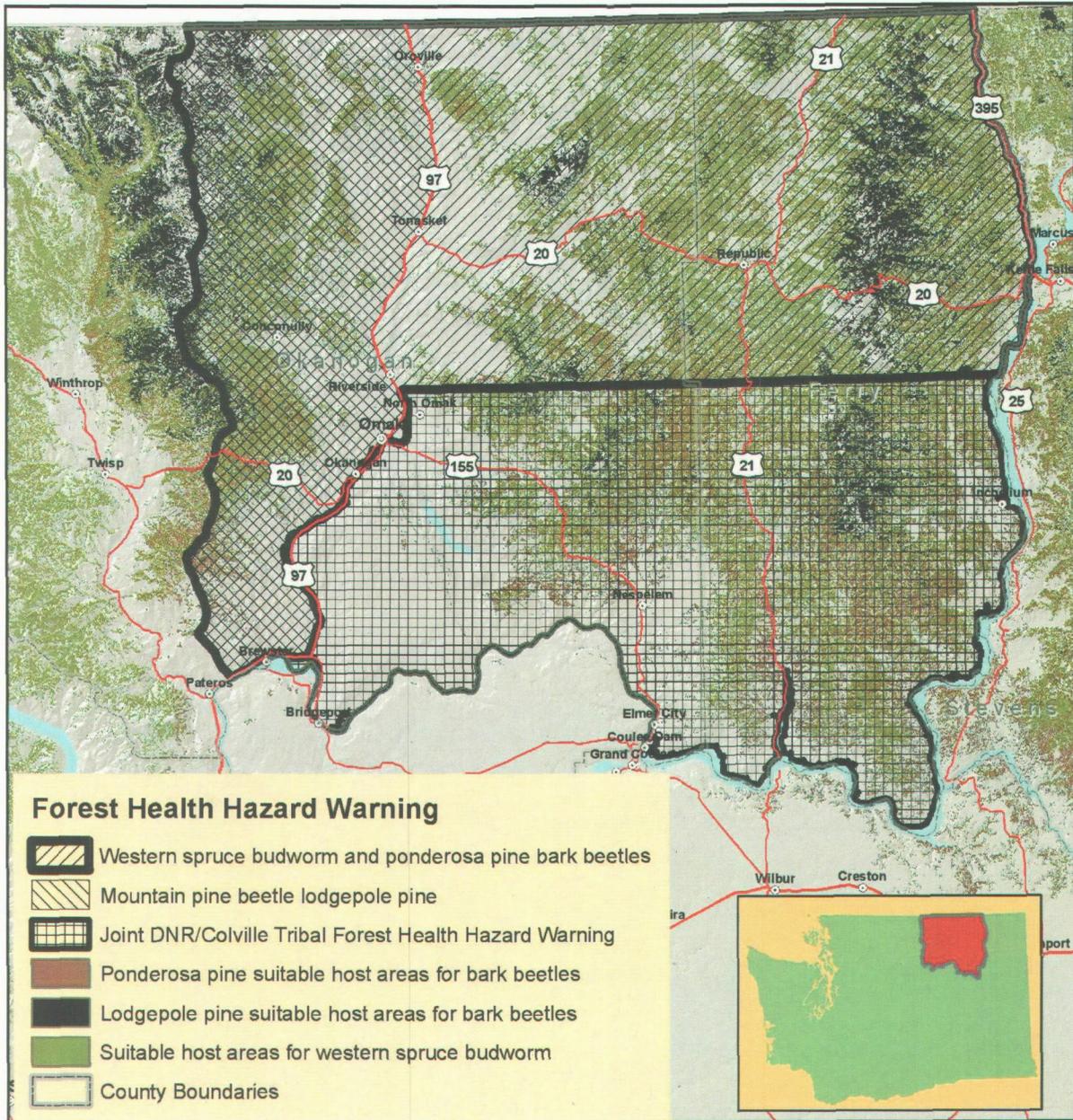
IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 22nd DAY OF AUGUST, 2012.

STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



PETER GOLDMARK
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS

EXHIBIT A



Data sources:

Suitable host area for WSBW created from a query of GNN layer mr1_spsz00; downloaded from LEMMA. Query of GNN layer based on the following attributes:
 -FIR_BA_PCT >= 40% (ABGR, ABLA and PSME)
 -IMAP_LAYERS >=2
 -BAA_GE_3 >= 11.14 sq m (120 sq ft)

Suitable host area for pine bark beetles created from a query of GNN layer mr1_spsz00; downloaded from LEMMA.
 -Lodgepole or ponderosa pine comprised 30% or more of total stand basal area.
 -Quadratic mean diameter of 8 inches or greater.
 -Total stand basal area of 120 square feet or greater.



**WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
Natural Resources**
 Peter Goldmark - Commissioner of Public Lands

