

# Washington State Legislature

## 12.1 Introduction

In 1974 the Washington State Legislature passed the Forest Practices Act declaring that:

“...forest land resources are among the most valuable of all resources in the state; that a viable forest products industry is of prime importance to the state's economy; that it is in the public interest for public and private commercial forestlands to be managed consistent with sound policies of natural resource protection; that coincident with maintenance of a viable forest products industry, it is important to afford protection to forest soils, fisheries, wildlife, water quantity and quality, air quality, recreation, and scenic beauty...” (RCW 76.09.010).

The Act was the state's first comprehensive law addressing the impact of forest practices on the environment. The Act also created the Board which sets the specific standards that are the basis for the forest practices program.

Each year DNR monitors laws being passed by the Washington State Legislature for those that could impact the forest practices program. The table in section 12.2 describes the laws passed in the 2008 Washington State legislative session that could impact the forest practices program. There were no new laws that would result in a change in protection of habitat for the species covered in the FPHCP.

Periodically the Legislature requires DNR to submit reports to the legislative body describing the impacts or implementation of certain laws the Legislature passed. There are two reports required in December of 2008 regarding small forest landowners. One is a Demographic report required every 4 years and the other is a report concerning the extent of the small forest landowner RMAPs checklist.

The small forest landowner office and related demographic report was established as a requirement by the Washington State Legislature in 1999 to serve as a resource for small forest landowners. This report answers questions asked by the state Legislature regarding demographics on non-industrial private forests and woodlands and makes recommendations for incentives-based forest management policies that protect public resources on small forestlands. The report is submitted every 4 years. The last report was written and submitted in 2004 and the next report is due in December 2008. The 2008 report will be included in the 2009 FPHCP Annual Report.

An update report regarding small forest landowner checklists is due in 2008 and 2013. In 2003, the Legislature determined that small forest landowners no longer had to write and submit RMAPs for their entire lands to DNR by June 2006. The small forest landowner would instead be required to fill out a “checklist” regarding any forest roads that were being used as haul roads during a forest practice. The two reports due in 2008 and 2013 are to show the “extent” of the checklists. The 2008 report will be completed by December 31, 2008 and be included in the 2009 FPHCP Annual Report.

## 12.2 Provisions of Selected 2008 Washington State Laws

Selected 2008 Washington State Laws Affecting the Forest Practices Program A Report to U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries by Leonard Young, Forest Practices Division Manager May 28, 2008				
Bill #	Title ( "AN ACT relating to ..." )	Provisions	Status	Effect*
SHB 2525	... mitigating flood damage	- modifies HPA requirements and procedures for projects addressing "chronic danger" of flooding or erosion	passed House 87-8; passed Senate 47-2; Governor signed Mar 31	indirect
E2SHB 2624	... human remains	- clarifies responsibilities of persons discovering human remains - directs DAHP to appoint a state physical anthropologist and hire supporting staff - redefines "professional archaeologist" - directs DAHP to create and maintain a database of all known cemeteries and burial sites - creates the skeletal human remains assistance account - directs DAHP to report to the legislature - act is null and void if not funded by June 30, 2008	passed Senate 44-5, passed House 74-23; Governor signed Mar 31	indirect
SHB 2893	... the composition of the forest practices board	- adds a 13th Board member representing a timber products union - changes qualification for small forest landowner Board seat: "a small	passed House 90-4; passed Senate 48-1; Governor signed Mar 17	direct

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Bill #	Title ( "AN ACT relating to ..." )	Provisions	Status	Effect*
		forest landowner who actively manages his or her land"		
SB 6204	... water resource inventory area 14	- bifurcates WRIA 14 for planning purposes	passed Senate 43-0; passed House 94-0; Governor signed Mar 27	indirect
ESSB 6776	... state employee whistleblower protection	- expands the definition of improper governmental action to include any action which "prevents the dissemination of scientific opinion or alters technical findings without scientifically valid justification"; qualifies application of this definition.	passed House 95-0, passed Senate 46-0; Governor signed Mar 31	indirect
<p>*direct = changes Chapter 76.09 RCW (Forest Practices Act) or Chapter 43.21C RCW (State Environmental Policy Act); indirect = changes another law that intersects the Forest Practices program</p>				