



DRAFT Agenda
Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee
December 15, 2010, 11:00 AM-4:30 PM

PLEASE NOTE: THIS MEETING IS LOCATED AT DNR’S NORTHWEST REGION OFFICE, 919 TOWNSHIP ST. SEDRO-WOOLLEY, WA

11:00 **NRCA Compensation Mechanism**– Clay Sprague, Deputy Supervisor of Uplands

12:00 *Break*

12:15 **Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee Business** - Kristen Ohlson-Kiehn

12:35 **Boundary Discussion** – Kristen Ohlson-Kiehn

1:20 *Break*

1:30 **Boundary Discussion**

2:15 *Break*

2:35 **Boundary Discussion**

3:20 **Summary of Recommendations**

4:00 **Next Steps**

Public Meeting

Commissioner of Public Lands response to recommendations

4:20 **Public Comment**

4:30 **Adjourn**

Public Comment: The Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee is created as a community-based entity to advise the DNR concerning proposals related to the implementation of the Blanchard Forest Management Strategies. The Advisory Committee evaluates DNR planned activities against the strategies to make consensus recommendations to DNR. DNR has final decision making authority. Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public. Your views for or against the location of the proposed NRCA boundary are invited by letter, representation and/or letter. Verbal comments can be made during the last ten minutes of this Advisory Committee meeting. Written comments can be sent to Kristen Ohlson-Kiehn, DNR, 919 North Township Street, Sedro-Woolley, WA. 98284, faxed to 360-856-2150, or emailed to kristen.ohlson-kiehn@dnr.wa.gov until 4:00pm, December 14th.

DRAFT

SUBJECT TO CHANGE

AUTHOR’S WORK

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee
Meeting Notes
October 26, 2010
Mount Vernon, WA

Group Attendance: **Member Present:** Mike McGlenn, Roy Bever, Scott Chalfant, David Goehring (resigned during meeting), Seth Cool, Tom Nelson, Mark Herrenkohl, Jon Knechtel, Bob Rose, Kendra Smith, Harold Mead

Members Absent: Molly Doran

Others Present: Charlie Maliszewski – RESources Board Member, Tom Wake – Chuckanut Conservancy, Keith Anderson – Conservation Northwest & Chuckanut Conservancy, Sara Bishop, Bob Simmons – Cross Cut.Com

DNR Staff present: Edie Gillis, Ben Cleveland, Laurie Bergvall, Jeff May, Rich Sluss, Kevin Killian, Kristen Ohlson-Kiehn, Christ Thomsen (12pm on)

0835 - Ben Cleveland – Advise the DNR on the implementation on the Blanchard Strategies. Today's meeting is a working meeting. Ben introduced new DNR

0840 - Minutes: Page 2 – Change to "Summer Land Road". Committee voted by consensus to approve the minutes.

0845 - Follow-up to the minutes:

- Updated Ground rules included in packet.
- MOU states "Therefore this agreement must be renewed by a written modification of the parties every ten (10) years starting ten years after its effective date."
 - Effective date of MOU is February 15, 2008. Therefore first review will be in 2018.
 - DNR's vision today is to convene representatives from parties' organizations and any individual signatories that DNR can contact, For those individuals who aren't available, group will select representatives to replace the members.
- BFAC proposal review process is on page 8 of the 9/30/10 minutes.
- NRCA proposed boundary. Comments due by November 15th. DNR will look at BFAC comments first, make any adjustments to the proposal that committee members have suggested and make sense to DNR, and then present potentially revised boundary to public at public meeting. That public meeting is not yet scheduled.
- Molly Doran is out of the country – the plan – Kristen will provide her with a summary of the discussion.
- WDFW has decided Jennifer Bohannon has to step down from the BFAC. They can still provide wildlife expertise. Mark has expressed interest in getting a wildlife person on the committee. DNR wildlife biologist also available for questions.
- Kristen adjusted agenda to discuss public input process.

- Was there a glitch on doodle voting?

0848 – Public Input - Kristen Ohlson-Kiehn

- In order to maximize limited meeting time for committee members and gather meaningful input from the public, DNR proposals that time is set aside after each proposal and before a decision has been made. Would this proposal work for the committee?
- Discussion:
 - Kendra - There needs to be a set time for public comment, for those members of the public who do not plan to stay for entire meeting.
 - Mike - If the public wants to talk – it's the last ten minutes of the day. Limit comments to two minutes.
- What about the concern that the committee may make decisions without public input?
 - Mark - At the beginning or at the end. Five on both ends.
 - Kendra - Caucusing during breaks could be arranged as well.
 - Kristen - Members of public could contact committee members as well to provide input.
 - Bob – If someone feels strongly, they could put in writing their thoughts.
 - Mark - Committee members should actively contact their constituents and inform them as to the purpose of the committee and the proposals that the BFAC is considering.
 - Seth – the earlier the people are involved, the more appropriate comments will be and the less complicated changes will be.

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- Dave – The majority of the population has been locked out of the process. Disagree with strategies. The economic study that DNR paid for shows that the majority of respondents in Skagit and Whatcom counties support limiting logging.
 - Bob – I think you need to be very careful about what you are stating, the study looked at recreational users on Blanchard.
 - Kristen – With regard to the economic study, the respondents' willingness to pay did not exceed the amount of revenue generated by timber sales. As far as the strategies go, DNR decided that the hard won process was the strategies and then the BFAC would implement those strategies.
 - Dave – I am not going to continue on with this committee. I have a real moral and ethical problem with it. I am stepping down. I don't want my name associated with this. I am personally stepping down, not my organization. (Later in the meeting Chuckanut Conservancy removed itself from the committee).
 - Kristen- I am sorry to hear that. We wish you would reconsider. We have good work to do here.

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- Kristen – I need to hear a little more from other committee members – is there going to be a set time at the end of the meeting – or a set time at the end at the end of each discussion?
 - Tom – Public comments need to be earmarked need to remain on point in a timely enough manners.
 - Mike – The comment needs to be on point in a timely enough manner.

- Seth – It is fine to have a public comment period at the end. But let’s make it really clear to them that they can also put their comments in writing.
- Proposal:
 - 10 minute period for public comment at the end of each meeting. Each comment will be limited to 2-3 minutes.
 - Before that set time, facilitator will read a statement that will talk about the function of the committee and issue being discussed.
 - Statement will be added to agenda that will encourage written comments and provide a date and time for those comments to be submitted.
 - Facilitator will forward comments to the BFAC before meeting.
 - Members of public encouraged to contact BFAC members who share similar values to discuss proposals.
 - ***Thumbs up by all committee members present.***
- Kristen will look into placing BFAC information on website.

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- With David Geohring leaving BFAC, is the Chuckanut Conservancy going to replace him? Ken Wilcox – No. We are not going to be part of this goofy process.
 - Kristen – Any comments from committee on David’s departure?
 - Seth – I feel like this was fairly clear to me this was an advisory committee to implement the strategies.
 - Jon – I agree with Seth – This is the committee – we are not standing in the way of the DNR, the strategies or the MOU.

0920 Sustainable Harvest and Blanchard Forest – Jeff May

- Review of Policy for Sustainable Forests “Definition of Sustainability for the Sustainable Harvest Calculation” (p. 28). (Please see the following like: http://www.dnr.wa.gov/ResearchScience/Topics/StateTrustLandsForestManagement/Pages/policy_for_sustainable_forests.aspx).
- DNR’s forest management policies and environmental commitments are factored into the Sustainable Harvest Calculation.
- The current sustainable harvest planning decade is 2005 – 2014.
- The statewide annual sustainable harvest level is 657 million board feet.
- Skagit County Trust lands are part of two sustainable harvest units:
 - Skagit County State Forest Transfer Lands – 32.6 million board feet per year.
 - Western WA federally granted trust lands – 16.1 million board feet per year.
- Blanchard Forest is part of the Skagit County State Forest Transfer Sustainable Harvest Unit
 - The Blanchard Forest block is calculated to provide ~1.2 million board feet per year of the mean annual 32.6 million board feet harvested from the Skagit County State Forest Transfer lands.
- The commitment by DNR is to achieve the sustainable harvest unit target of 32.6 million board feet per year. And then to hit the decadal goal.

- On Blanchard, DNR has only been able to harvest a small sale in 2005 comprised of 754,000 board feet called West View Thin.
- Kendra – Does this affect future generations if you cut in other parts of the county?
- Jeff – DNR is not over-cutting in Skagit County, instead DNR is shifting around the county. We never follow the model in lock step, since the model does not know about legal or access challenges. It just provides DNR with a large area to evaluate. DNR staff determine, through field verification, what can actually be harvested.

1000 – DNR Timber Sale Proposal: Blue Comet Timber Sale – Kevin Killian

- Variable Retention Harvest
- The location for Blue Comet was chosen DNR does not have a final NRCA boundary on Blanchard. So DNR staff selected an area to harvest that is farthest away from the proposed NRCA boundary.
- The stand is 70-year-old timber with mostly conifer and some hardwood patches.
- DNR foresters examine:
 - Stream locations,
 - Wildlife,
 - Wildlife habitats (balds, caves, cliffs, mineral springs),
 - Rain-on-snow areas - (1500-4000 feet) where we accumulate snow and then we have rain on top of snow where we can get flooding. We can plan timber sales, but we need to maintain 2/3 of our ownership in stands that are 25 years old.
 - Old growth – stands that originated that before 1850 and have structural complexity of older stands and multiple canopies.
 - Additional review areas – e.g. Area B
 - We screen for old growth. We have a map with all old-growth stands 5 acres or larger – for all timber sales we go out and verify no old-growth and marbled murrelet habitat. We didn't find any old-growth.
 - We also assess the area for any “cultural resources.” To do this, DNR staff looks at maps from 1917. Staff can consult with archeologist if we find something. Didn't find anything on this sale.
 - We have a database to verify wildlife and archaeology.
- We verified stream types on this sale per Habitat Conservation Plan commitments. We have LiDAR to help verify stream locations.
- Site Index buffer – as wide as the trees are at 100 years old. 190' wide for a type three stream. 100 year site index. 17 acres of buffer. HCP does allow some harvest of buffer if the harvest speeds the time it would get to older forest conditions. This stand is already on the trajectory so we are not going to thin the riparian buffer.
- Potentially unstable slopes – this area has been buffered out of the sale area.
- The timber sale area is comprised of two units. Unit 1 is 7 acres and unit 2 is 35 acres.

- In order to access the sale, the B-1000 will be reconstructed. DNR will require the road to be graded and 3" of resurfacing will be placed on it. Also, vegetation will be cut back ("brushed"). The sale will utilize an existing rock pit.
- In Unit 2, the southern portion overlaps with the high visual sensitivity zone. DNR considered several prescriptions for this area, including shelterwood (20 trees per acre left behind), thinning (100-120 trees per acre left behind), or small patch cuts, where DNR harvests in 1.5 to 5 acre patches. DNR's HCP requires that timber harvests leave 8 trees per acre behind throughout western Washington.
- Staff decided on shelterwood prescription. Painted 14 leave trees per acre in the highly visual sensitive area. Then 6.5 in the rest of the area. Left a patch around a snag to comply with Labor and Industry standards. Then left scattered trees throughout the rest of the unit.
- Will there be blowdown risk? Staff experience finds that large, healthy crowns tend to blow down less.
- Tom – Haven't you met DNR's HCP requirements for leave trees with the RMZs and potential NRCA? You have 1,700 acres next door. And the closest spotted owl habitat is more than approximately 2 miles away. Kevin – HCP addresses all threatened and endangered species, in addition to those who rely on uncommon habitats. In addition, any other objectives don't count for the leave trees. We cannot count riparian management zones (RMZs) for leave trees.
- DNR will replant the area with Western redcedar.
- Logging methods - <35% slope log with ground based methods – 6.5 acres – shovel logging. Shovel when it is logging. Loader when it is loading trucks. Unit 1A. Cable Logging, >35% slope.
- Why do you have two different methods? Cable where the ground is too steep and we would have too much ground disturbance. Create gullies, compaction, rutting. Ground based logging requires equipment that is tracked and therefore distributes the weight across a larger surface area, limiting soil compaction.
- Slash? Ground based – every twelve feet pile the slash and leave in place. Cable yarding area – tops and limbs stay out in the area. Limbs that come up to the landing – we give the purchaser the option – either burn it or starting to chip it. That might be a recommendation the committee wants to give us.
- West View Thin, Pecan, Shennandoah – All three sales they burned the piles. Just in the last couple of years they started to chip the piles.
- Tom – there are limitations to the potential to chip. Size of cut, type of cut, type of logging, there are several variables involved and a very tight margin for making chipping profitable.
- Roy – we do both – burn and chip – I like burning because it leaves more room for planting.
- There are no recreational trails in the sale area.
- **Blue Comet Summary** – 2 Units totaling 42 acres and 1.6 million board feet. Meets harvest volume target for decade. There are – RMZs on type 3 streams – no harvest in potentially unstable slopes – leave trees – HCP prescriptions applied to type streams and wetland/pond and potentially unstable slopes. General management zones – timber harvest in this zone is consistent with HCP prescriptions and management strategies. High Visual Sensitivity Zone – Shelterwood prescription in this zone will protect view shed from Chuckanut Drive.

- Mark – What will be done with the roads afterwards? Kevin – Roads into unit 2 (existing and new) will be abandoned. Road into the rock pit will be left open. Roads that are currently open will remain open. The gate will be kept shut.
- Bob – Are there going to be recreational opportunities post harvest? Currently the DNR is not looking at developing new opportunities. We are looking at maintaining what we currently have. We have no resources to develop new opportunities.
- Tom – whose 80 is that? Kevin – Goodyear Nelson – They have permanent access.
- Bob – recreational/interpretative opportunities for wetland opportunities.
- Is slash a fire hazard? Yes an attractive nuisance for fire – for parties.
- Ken Wilcox – I think the sale is just fine – consistent with the strategies. Done very well. Example of how to move through a sale – done well.
- **Kristen - First Question** – is the DNR proposal consistent with the Strategies?
- **Vote – The committee voted that the proposal is consistent by consensus that the Blue Comet Timber Sale is consistent with the Blanchard Strategies. The committee voted no changes to the Blue Comet Timber Sale. No further recommendations at this point.**

1115 – Timber Sales Timeline – Rich Sluss

- Sale needs to be in the office by December 16, 2010
- Reviewed the timeline for a timber sale to be processed

1140 – Logistics for Field Tour on November 2, 2010 – Kristen Ohlson-Kiehn

- 8-4:30
- 12 passenger van available
- Meet at the lower parking lot at 8am.
- Suggestions to go look at: trail area, unstable slope, new area for consideration, Lady Caroline Units, where to pull back, the finger area at the bottom, where it connects with Larrabee, old growth. Overlook – stop and see the design. Nobody is interested in seeing Blue Comet timber sale.

1230 – NOVA Grants – Christ Thomsen

- Three objectives today – 1. Information for recreation program. 2. Support for NOVA grants. 3. Maintenance activities – providing support.
- 65% of expenditures came from outside sources – grants and volunteers – 20% was volunteers.
- Might get some more money from the NOVA – Non-highway and off-road vehicle account. The roads on Blanchard are not maintained with vehicle funds. Drive off of a tax-maintained road onto a forest road. 5 months to get the NOVA Grants ready. NW will probably put in 9 applications – 3 for Blanchard.
- Non-motorized recreation grant, non-highway roads specific to Samish Overlook, and E&E grant (spend part of their time on Blanchard)

- Present in April – March 1st need letters of support to include in application. Committee scores and ranks them. Volunteer hours \$13/hour, horses get credit, to get the most points we need to match 50/50. Donations and volunteer efforts matter the most.
- Good to have a letter from the BFAC in support of NOVA Grants.
- Grants for trails, campgrounds, trailheads. This does not include new trail construction. On Blanchard there is a mix of user built and DNR built. Lilly and Lizard Lake, connector trail between Lilly and Lizard Trail and Alternate Incline – we do work on these. The other trails we partner with the others. We do trailhead maintenance and campground maintenance. Trailheads - Visit once a week during slow times. Twice a week during busy season. Campgrounds – monthly during busy time.

1255 – DNR NRCA Boundary Proposal – Kristen Ohlson-Kiehn & Kevin Killian

- Kevin reviewed what could be seen from Oyster Dome – 329 acres, 3 acres, 72 acres can be seen from Oyster dome outside of current NRCA proposal.
- What is the BNR policy for high use areas for visually sensitive areas? Policy for Sustainable Forests: “Policy on Visual Impacts – for Regional visual impacts the Department will develop additional strategies to mitigate impacts. The Department will assess the cost/benefit to the trust(s) of prudent expenditures to mitigate visual impacts in light of public concerns, and seek compensation where appropriate.” We are treating this as a regional visual impact.
- Kendra – one of the other things we talked about was the concept of a working forest. We wanted people to see a working forest.
- Kristen – The area of high visual sensitivity is the view shed from the Bow Post Office. Where people can see where people can see shelterwood and other harvest types. In the general management zone people can see standard harvests.
- Mike – recreation – trails – all of those are in the existing NRCA – if a trail is within an area where you are going to log. Every square foot you add we have to figure out how to pay for.
- Tom – If we are going to be consistent with the strategies – principle 3 in the MOU – the fourth and fifth paragraph – but my understanding was when the group met this core was going to be designated as a core, not an NRCA, while we went to get compensation. Hold everyone’s feet to the fire – take 1600 acres out of production, but we want to have it replaced in a certain way. But there is no real guarantee once you make it an NRCA. **Potential Recommendation:** After five years, if it’s a core and you don’t have compensation, we now have the ability to decide what to do with it now. Once you designate it as an NRCA, you have lost the ability to have options. You are short circuiting the agreement of the strategies. I am arguing it is not consistent with the strategies by making it an NRCA and not keeping it a core. It should still be managed as a core area – I am not saying anything should be different there.
- Mike – **Potential Recommendation:** From the time it was pointed towards an NRCA, the horse people for sure – NRCA has been exclusive of horses. I didn’t get an answer whether horses would be allowed or not. Historic uses are in the original agreement – by making it an NRCA it is going against what the original group voted to do. The group voted to make it a core, but to manage it like an NRCA. But not to have it be an NRCA.

- Bob – Tom’s and Mike’s point are meta questions – are the boundaries to be designated the right boundaries. What should be the proper boundaries? Should it be an NRCA or not?
Potential Recommendation: My sense is the Department has moved towards a more protective approach to an NRCA, as opposed to a low impact approach. I think we need to look at what historic uses have occurred on Blanchard. Given the way the policy has evolved for NRCA’s, we should take into account what the historic uses are on Blanchard and the recreational investments are on Blanchard and take that into account.
- Seth – **Potential Recommendation:** I like the NRCA idea – That is something our organization was interested in. Much easier to talk to the public about. It was hard to explain that before. Hard to explain there wasn’t going to be commercial logging before – sort of a backdoor threat of logging before. We need to be very respectful of the core. This core only exists if there is compensation for the trusts. Recreation was a big part of this originally. Thinning is still something that should still be pursued. I do like the boundaries of the core, better than the new proposal. I want to make sure the unstable slopes are still protected.
- 30-35% of our lands are off-base because of unstable slopes, riparian areas, and other areas we cannot operate in.
- Seth – I don’t mind the fingers. I am very intrigued by the other area – what the natural areas staff found interesting about the “new area”. See areas on map that Kevin drew.
- Harold Mead – I have a reaction about the unstable slopes – You are willing to take them into the other area. I think the likelihood of them being logged diminishes with the awareness of landslides. They are like a free bone if you believe they are going to be logged – they are unlikely to be logged.
- Harold Mead – I see the original core proposal as the melding of two – environmental protection and recreation. Bat caves – no one is going to be allowed in those caves regardless. NAP (Natural Areas Preserve) vs. NRCA (Natural Resource Conservation Area) –**Question:** Is the only mechanism to protect that proposed new area – do they have to include it in the NRCA area to protect it or are there are ways to protect it? **Answer:** The only way protect this area is through the Natural Areas program. The trust must be compensated to protect lands otherwise there is a fiduciary responsibility to the trust beneficiaries to generate revenue off of the lands the Department manages.
- Jon – Until we can reimburse the trail – it is going to be the way it is. As most of you know – PNT was designated a national scenic trail, only on federal lands. Nothing on private, state, county, city – this is going to be years in the future. This is going to take land acquisitions – this is going to take a long time. We have agreements in place to work on the trail, they can cancel them at any time. We just want to be able to have the trail. Until such time as land acquisitions can be made, easements can be made – you are looking at hundreds of millions of dollars. The government doesn’t have eminent domain they aren’t going to do that. The underlying interest – the trail is only designated on federal lands. Shifting boundaries shouldn’t affect the PNT.
- Mark – NRCA – researched it before I came into this group – I think it gives us a better chance to protect this area in the long run. A better chance to get the funding. I didn’t come away with as

many concerns – I am in support. I think we need to lay out our recreational uses. As far as the boundary itself. I reserve the right to change after the tour.

- Tom – I don't really have a problem with the boundary adjustments per se. It is the name as NRCA. It is not an NRCA until the trust gets compensated. There are probably some areas along the top where Kevin has made some adjustments along cutting lines that would be helpful to adjust for acreage – if we need to balance the acres that would be a pretty good area there to do that.
- Seth – nothing more to add
- Kendra – actually having an NRCA – when we were all up on Blanchard in September – when we worked on it we had a long discussion about it being an NRCA and there were a lot of reasons for it not being an NRCA. Three legged stool – robbing Peter to pay Paul. Leaving behind part of the history – it was a big deal to the County. Not consistent with the Strategies. As the core changes in size and shape. The thing we don't want to have happen is to have to it bigger areas – making sure there was compensation. The industry is out there. We are a resource county, maintaining that is very important to us.
- Scott – I am going to rely on the November 2 Tour. It seems like the NRCA would do that – the trail doesn't go through a general management zone, just through an NRCA.
- Kendra – Is it so wrong to have a trail go through an area that is managed? You harvest what? Every 50 or 60 years – you see a diverse landscape, different critters, a different view, - I just don't see what is wrong with that? What we went through on a trail on the east coast – was a variety of landscapes – farms, forests, etc.
- Jon – One of the things in the national scenic trail act – the trail should showcase the economy of local areas. Logging is essential to the local economy. Interpretation and education should be included.
- Roy – Boundary – I have no firsthand knowledge – County kept whole – value and other things they are trying to protect. Are you keeping the County whole? I have a hard time convincing myself the NRCA is consistent with the Strategies.
- Mike – Boundaries – 1600 acres plus or minus figure. Nobody knew for sure what it would be. It is the NRCA I have an issue with.
- Kendra – I don't think you can split out the two – boundary versus core. And Acres. I don't feel comfortable with the NRCA.
- Taking a step back – looking at Core, then talk about the NRCA boundary
- Seth – I don't think anyone is proposing creating an NRCA without compensation.
- Ben – the commissioner has made a call that this will be an NRCA.
- Tom – If the commissioner has made this call – then the commissioner is not consistent with the Strategies. I am sorry it is your boss who made the decision.
- Ben – That is where you need to capture that in your comments.
- Edie – The main question from the commissioner is what is the boundary and how do we make it as consistent as possible.
- Mark – is the NRCA consistent with the Strategies?

- Kristen – there are some people who think it is not consistent. For those who think it is not consistent – this is how it can be changed.
- Tom – connotation of an NRCA – that is troublesome.
- Kendra – compensation – 5 year timeline. Can anything occur up there until that money comes in to compensate the NRCA? Does the trust get compensated immediately for the NRCA?
- Kristen – not consistent with the strategies – that could be another recommendation – make it an NRCA as soon as the trust is compensated.
- **Recommendation - Support creation of the NRCA if it meets the spirit and intent of the Blanchard Strategies – specifically the recreational intent and compensation values and time limits stated in the Strategies. All those at the meeting support the recommendation with thumbs up.**
- Discuss the boundary on the second. Come to as much conclusion as possible. But any follow-up will continue on the email and Kristen will circulate on the email to the committee members.
- Tom Wake – animal corridors are important. It would be nice to buy the private timber land to make the connection to Larrabee.

Committee agreed to give Ken until 3:10 to do his presentation.

(Ken's equipment was not working so he was unable to start on time)

1505 – Ken Wilcox –

- Blanchard Mountain is worth fighting for
- Blanchard Strategies –
- I layout trail systems –
- You do not represent the public – you represent the people you represent – you have a right to do that
- I think it would be helpful to do that – the comments that were received at the public information meeting were your comments.
- Mark – we have heard all of this before – I thought you were going to give us something constructive to hear.
- Mike – I don't need to listen to this.
- Ben – You need to get to your point. You need to provide constructive ideas.
- Kristen – you need to summarize your point in the next minute or so and be done by 3:10 since your equipment didn't work and we are already staying past time to hear your presentation.
- Ken showed a video. Will be on You-Tube.

Meeting adjourned at 3:17

Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee
Field Trip Meeting Notes
November 2, 2010
Bow, WA

Group Attendance:

Member Present: Scott Chalfant, Seth Cool, Mark Herrenkohl, Mike McGlenn, Harold Mead, Bob Rose, Kendra Smith

Members Absent: Roy Bever, Molly Doran, Tom Nelson, Jon Knechtel

Others Present: Steven Harper, David Schneider

DNR Staff present: Laurie Bergvall, Kevin Killian, Jeff May, Kristen Ohlson-Kiehn, Christ Thomsen, Bud Wescott, Dave Wilderman

NRCA Compensation

Laurie - DNR is working on the issue of analyzing the most effective and efficient compensation mechanism for transferring trust land into NRCA status. Blanchard is unique for a variety of reasons, so a standard "trust land transfer" process will not be used, but we are currently working on it. We need the committee to be patient for a little while longer while we have internal discussions, let us figure this out internally, then we will let the BFAC know what the plan is. We are absolutely committed to getting compensation for the trust beneficiaries for the NRCA – it's the law and it cannot become an NRCA without compensation for the trusts. Clay has committed to meeting with the committee on this issue soon.

Committee requests a letter from the commissioner, making a commitment to allowing for recreation and timely compensation to the trust for NRCA designation of the core area on Blanchard.

1. What type of precedent does it set for NRCAs if DNR designates core area on Blanchard as an NRCA and allows for all of the same recreational uses as the core management zone?
2. How will junior taxing districts be compensated?
3. What is DNR's authority to create an NRCA with Trust 01 (state forest board Transfer) lands?

Stop 1: Old growth stand, unstable area, Lady Caroline proposed sale.

1. Slopes >70% are bounded out of a unit that was set up in 2006 that was never proposed for sale.
 - a. DNR has geologists evaluate these areas on Blanchard.
 - b. One of the considerations is balancing the acres; currently the NRCA proposal totals 1,674 acres.
2. Another unstable area – 70% is considered potentially unstable. Area total 7 acres. Of that 6.5 acres could not be harvested. .5 acres would not be commercially feasible to harvest.
 - a. Area includes buffer of a type 4 stream.
3. Old Growth – Stands that originated before 1850. Have multiple age classes, and multiple canopies.

- a. Marbled murrelet habitat protection under HCP still applies.
- b. The potential 9 acres for removal would not include any old growth, murrelet habitat, and any individual old trees would be left as leave trees.
- c. Definition of marbled murrelet habitat:
 - i. Conifer dominated stands
 - ii. 2 nesting platforms per acre, 7"DBH limbs, or mistletoe. Have to be 50' high in conifer trees. 5 acre minimum size for habitat blocks.
- d. Does old growth serve as marbled murrelet habitat? Not necessarily, but in this case it serves as both old growth and marbled murrelet habitat.
- e. If one tree has 10 platforms, that can be considered as habitat?
- f. If habitat is not occupied, it is not buffered. Only buffered if occupied MM Habitat.

Stop 4: 54-acre older stand

- 1. Clear cut logged, no real remnant old growth individuals
- 2. Origin date of stand is 1901-1918. (This information comes from the FRIS inventory, where they increment bore trees).
- 3. Dave Wilderman (Natural Areas Ecologist) – From the aerial photography, this is older forest, a bit (20-40 years) older than the rest of the forest, contiguous with the current boundary. Douglas-fir, sword fern, which is a common plant association but because it occurs mostly in lowlands there are relatively few areas of older, naturally regenerated stands remaining . Mostly lowland associated at 713' elevation. Second growth. Mature forest, naturally regenerated.
- 4. If this stand is not included in the NRCA, DNR would harvest it.
- 5. How would the stand be utilized as part of the NRCA?
 - a. No trails, not close to Larrabee
 - b. Not used by recreationalists.
 - c. Is there particular wildlife that would use it?
 - d. What is the ecological importance of the area?
 - e. Based on the map, 25-30 acres has the origin date of 1901. Half has the 1918 origin date. There isn't an obvious break between the two stands.
 - f. The stand with an origin date of 1938 would be mostly in the riparian management zone. Some will extend into this polygon.
 - g. We're talking about a difference of 10 years, how much growth can you see in 10 years?
 - i. In a natural stand you have an array of ages. The origin date is an estimate.
 - h. How would this be logged? Eight trees per acre left behind, ground based.
 - i. What would it take for this stand to be harvested as a shelterwood? Trust compensation, but then it wouldn't be consistent with the strategies.
 - j. Where does this fit into the whole system for NRCAs? Moderately significant in terms of size and plant communities.
 - k. There are only two options in the natural areas program, either NRCA designation or NAP. NRCA would be the only one that would work here. Not the best of the best , i.e. would not fit NAP criteria.

- l.
6. Core is 1,674 acres. Mike – from my standpoint we’re pretty close
7. Seth – I want to protect a stand that is more than 100 years old. Leaning towards the older stand and adding the 54 acres in.
8. How would this piece provide trail access?
9. This area fits better than some of the other areas for ecological reasons.
10. Mark – I’m leaning against this area.
11. Harold – worth considering for connector block for Larrabee-Chuckanut – one connector block
12. Kendra – Where into Larrabee are we trying to connect? Trails can be both in and outside of NRCA or core.
13. Scott – Great Western is open to it if not liable – not sure where it would be.
14. Bob – Is DNR interested in Great Western? Potentially.
15. Christ – Route is part of the Chuckanut Trails Master Plan. There are areas that are steep, there are streams to cross, and there are definitely some challenges. Trails do not have to be in the core. Challenge comes in after a timber sale. What do we do after? Do we relocate? There are benefits and challenges to building a sustainable trail. But we need to decide where you put the people so that you can protect other places.
 - a. Trails through a timber sale. Can close a section of trail or identify an area that goes around the timber sale. Or build a new trail before the timber sale starts. There are lots of ways to deal with it.
 - b. Trail doesn’t drive the boundary of the NRCA.
 - c. Segment uses of the trail in sections – may not be the best place for all uses.
 - d. Usually takes a couple of months to harvest a unit, once every sixty years.
 - e. Work with users. Is connecting with Larrabee a priority?

Stop – Additional Stop

1. On the northern edge of NRCA by Shenandoah timber sale.
2. 24 acres – that we could delete.
3. Followed topography to the ridge.
4. Also followed the cutting line.
5. Since it is a broad ridge, could move the NRCA boundary back to gain approximately 20 acres.
6. Can’t see the Lake from the ridge (60% slope). Others could see the reflecting water from a different point on the ridge and could also see the North Butte. Concerns about blowdown.
7. **Conclusion:**
 - a. Tradeoff. Add 54 acre polygon, some moderate ecological value. North Butte section of this area. Also see harvesting from Oyster Dome. Both of these areas are in General Management Area. Protected Area is surrounded by working forest.
 - b. Potentially take 16 or 20 acres of it, but not the full 24. Need to protect visibility from the lake.
 - c. Age class is the same as Lady Caroline.
 - d. This stand has less structure. Fewer large trees.
 - e. Maintain view shed of the lake.

- f. Trade this area.
8. Kevin had to leave at this point in the field trip.

Stop 6

1. Downhill cable logging. Age class 1939.
2. No visual impact from this area.
3. If the committee wanted to add in unstable areas to the proposal, they could.
4. Had to leave enough operational ground to make sense.
5. WRC, DF, big DF, BLM
6. No visual impact from this area – only people taking the loop trail would see this area.
7. More diverse understory than previous stand.
8. Tradeoff question: Is it worth taking this area out of the NRCA for the added confusion?
9. No objection to excluding from the NRCA.
10. Group was still leaning towards the ecological value of the 54 acre parcel.
11. Skagit County still wants 1600 acres.

Blanchard Overlook

1. 9 or 10 acres. Some were removed at this spot due to County covenants for the recreation area.
2. Original intention was to protect the murrelet habitat and big DF.
3. Kendra – add all unstable slopes and take out all the polygons, except the 24 at stop 6.
4. Seth. Take 1674 and add in unstable areas. Add in some of the 54 acres.
5. Kendra – 54-acre polygon not consistent with strategies.
6. Worried about trust compensation. Trails can go through any of these areas, and provide a range of experiences to the users. HCP will protect more than just the 1600 acres.
7. Seth – looked at areas. Area should have an extra 74 acres.
8. Mike – 54 acres should not be added. Larrabee is 2,683 acres and adjacent to DNR.
9. Kendra – shouldn't include it (agrees).
10. Bob – not sure
11. Seth very interested to know more about it. I feel like we've been given a good look at other stands. If I could I would add it and remove some of the areas that were added for their recreational values versus ecological values.
12. Harold – Skagit County will be compensated for the NRCA. The numbers of acres that we're discussing are statistically insignificant. We should add some portion of the 54 acres into the NRCA proposal.
13. Scott – If the County will be compensated, I support adding some of the 54 acres into the core.
14. Committee is not going to vote today.
15. Committee requested more information from Dave on the DF/sword Fern stand.

Christ's Review of the Blanchard Overlook Improvement Project.

1. Paved parking lot
2. Restrict vehicle access. Not losing any parking. Will park 23 vehicles.

3. Emergency vehicle turn around.
4. Remove riprap and replace collapsible bollards at launch accesses.
5. Viewing terrace with rock benches.
6. Eliminate the intra-site social trails and construct new intra-site trails.
7. Equestrian facility to the south of the bathroom.
8. No picnic tables.
9. Concrete stairways.
10. A design requirement is to minimize routine maintenance needs.

**BLANCHARD FOREST ADVISORY COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATIONS ON
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
PROPOSED BLUE COMET TIMBER SALE**

November 15, 2010

PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION:

The Blue Comet Timber Sale, located in the southeastern section of Blanchard Forest is comprised of two units, totaling an estimated 42 acres and approximately 1.6 million board feet. The proposal consists of reconstructing approximately 8,400 feet of existing road by applying 3" of new surface rock and grading the road. Approximately 700 feet of new road will be constructed within unit 2. An existing rock pit to the east of unit 1 will be utilized to supply rock for this work. The Blue Comet Timber Sale is anticipated to sell on June 13th, 2011. (For more detail on this proposal, please see Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee packet for the October 26, 2010 meeting).

FINDINGS:

1. The Department of Natural Resources presented the Blue Comet Timber Sale proposal to the Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee during the October 26, 2010 meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Blue Comet Timber Sale with no additional recommendations.

10/26/10 VOTE:

	Support	Oppose	Absent
Roy Bever	X		
Scott Chalfant	X		
Seth Cool	X		
Molly Doran			X
Mark Herrenkohl	X		
Jon Knechtel	X		
Michael McGlenn	X		
Harold Mead	X		
Tom Nelson	X		
Bob Rose	X		
Kendra Smith	X		
TOTAL	10	0	1

**BLANCHARD FOREST ADVISORY COMMITTEE
RECOMMENDATIONS ON
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
PROPOSED NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY ON
BLANCHARD MOUNTAIN**

November 15, 2010

PROPOSAL DESCRIPTION:

Proposal Part I & II. DNR proposes to change the designation of the core management zone into a Natural Resource Conservation Area, (Proposal Part I) and to adjust the boundaries of that area in several places, for a variety of purposes, to total 1,674 acres (Proposal Part II). The core management zone is an area defined in the Management Strategies for Blanchard Forest State Trust Lands. Before the NRCA boundary designation was proposed, the strategies contained a “core zone,” the boundaries of which are defined on the “Preliminary Map of Blanchard Forest Management Zones.” The strategies state that it is the intent of the Department of Natural Resources to create a core zone that is approximately 1,600 acres. They also state that DNR will develop a final map, for review and use with the future Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee. Finalizing this map would involve delineating the core “on the ground.” In lieu of delineating the core area, the DNR delineated a proposed NRCA, which involved boundary adjustments.

The majority of boundary shifts take place in the northwestern section of the core, in order to enlarge the proposed area so that it completely contains the potential “Larrabee connection trail.” Another adjustment occurred when the GPS coordinates for the trails on Blanchard were collected. The map that depicts the original core boundaries relied upon inaccurate GPS data for the hiking trails. The southeastern edge of the core was delineated around hiking trails, making that stretch of the boundary inaccurate as well. Once the actual data points were collected, the location of the trail, in particular Max’s shortcut trail, shifted approximately 500 feet east, making the core boundary shift accordingly. The remaining adjustments were made to follow logical boundaries in the field, for example cut lines, streams and roads.

Part III. In the process of delineating the NRCA, Kevin (local unit forester) identified a stand of 100-year-old Douglas fir trees on the northern-central edge of the proposed NRCA. DNR has now proposed this area, comprising 55 acres, to the Advisory Committee for their consideration in coming up with recommendations for the proposed NRCA.

FINDINGS:

1. On February 15, 2008, the Department of Natural Resources signed an MOU with the Blanchard Forest Strategies Group committing to adopt the Management Strategies for Blanchard Forest State Trust Lands.

2. The Management Strategies for Blanchard Forest State Trust Lands state that “It is the intent of the Washington State Department of Natural Resources to create a core zone that is approximately 1,600 acres in size.”
3. On February 24, 2010, Commissioner of Public Lands announced his intention of establishing a new Natural Resources Conservation Area at Blanchard Mountain.
4. The Department of Natural Resources proposed to designate the core management zone in Blanchard Forest as a Natural Resources Conservation Area and presented the Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee with a proposed boundary for the Natural Resource Conservation Area at the Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee’s September 30, 2010 meeting (Proposal Parts I & II).
5. The Department of Natural Resources presented the Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee with an additional 55-acres 100-year-old, Douglas-fir for consideration of adding into the proposed NRCA (Proposal Part III) at the Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee’s October 26, 2010 meeting.
6. Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee reviewed boundaries and the additional stand during the November 2, 2010 field trip.

RECOMMENDATION #1 (*Made on October 26th, 2010*): Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee recommends that DNR designate the core management zone in Blanchard Forest as a Natural Resource Conservation Area only if the designation and activities within the proposed area meet the spirit and intent of the Management Strategies for Blanchard Forest State Trust Lands – specifically the recreational intent, compensation values and time limits stated in the Strategies.

Background:

1. If approved by the Commissioner of Public Lands, once land within proposal has been compensated and designated as an NRCA, DNR stated in 09/30/10 meeting that agency will use the “Statewide Natural Resource Conservation Management Plan” to manage the future Blanchard NRCA in lieu of a management plan specifically for the Blanchard NRCA.
2. DNR will develop a management plan for the future Blanchard NRCA.
3. As a part of the process to develop a management plan for the future Blanchard Mountain NRCA, it is critical to Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee that this NRCA continue to allow all recreational uses that were allowed in the core zone of the Management Strategies for Blanchard Forest State Trust Lands. These include non-motorized, low impact recreation such as horseback riding, hiking, mountain biking and hang gliding.
4. The Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee wants to ensure that Skagit County is compensated for the full value of revenues that otherwise would be lost, and/or land value, from the area designated either as a core management zone, or as a Natural Resource Conservation Area. As stated in the strategies, the Advisory Committee

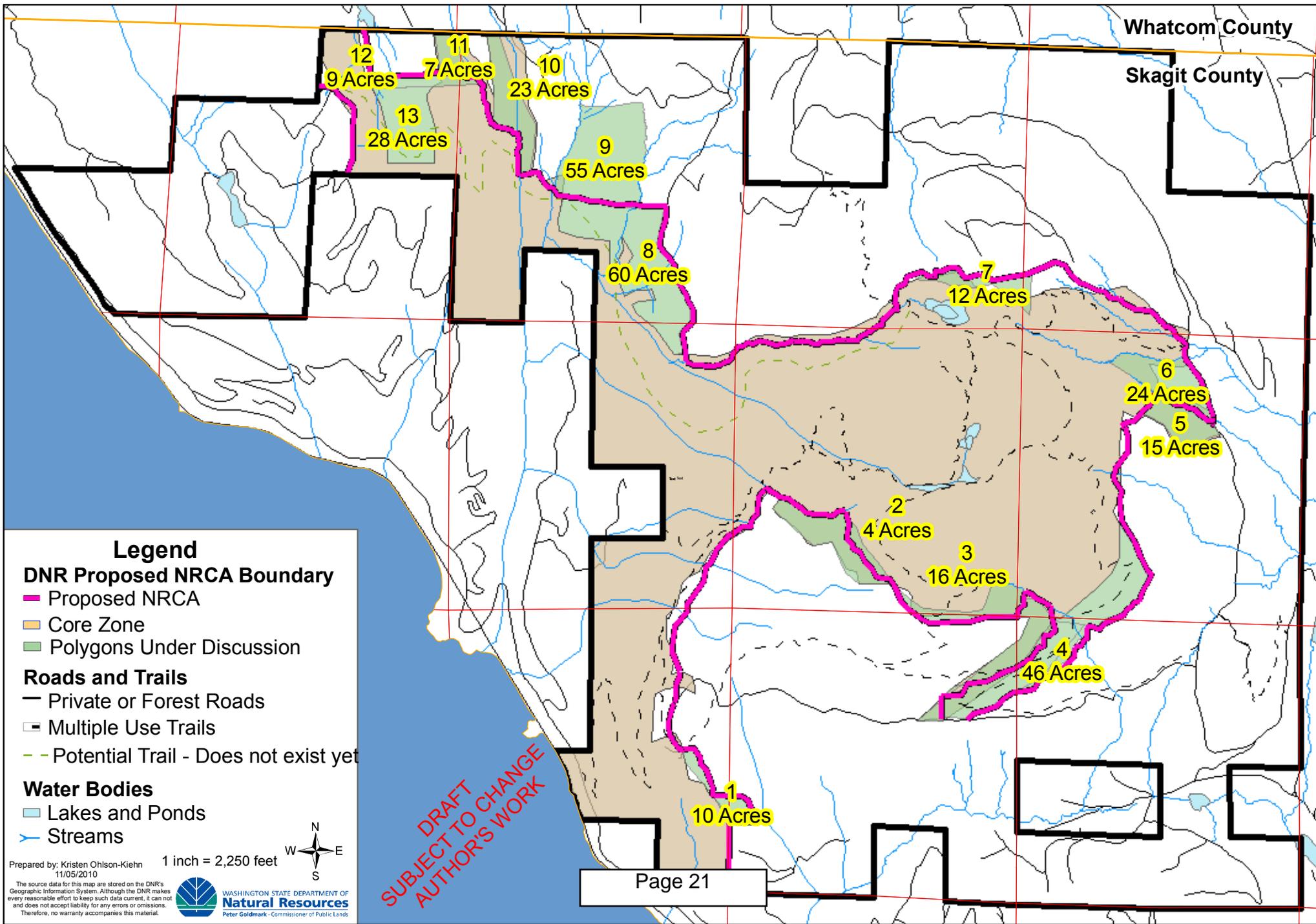
encourages DNR to work with Skagit County to “develop strategies to fully compensate the Skagit County State Forest Trust including the junior taxing districts that currently receive revenue from Blanchard forest, to replace revenues that would otherwise be lost from the core management zone.”

5. The Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee wants to ensure that Skagit County is compensated in a similar time frame as stated in the Management Strategies, “Develop contingency strategies for the core zone if milestones for compensation cannot be reached within 5 years.”
6. The Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee wants to ensure that the same options are made available to the DNR and BFAC, if compensation has not been achieved in five years. As stated in the Memorandum of Understanding between the members of the Blanchard Forest Strategies Group Regarding Principles and Objectives for the Management of Blanchard Forest was signed on February 15, 2008, “Five years from the date of this agreement, if any portion of the core has not been compensated for, then DNR, in collaboration with the BFAC, will review those areas to determine if: a) additional funding is likely, warranting continued inclusion in the core; b) the area should come out of the core and placed in the general management zone; or (c) the area should remain in the core with removal of other equal value areas from the core to compensate.”

VOTE:

	Support	Oppose	Absent
Roy Bever	X		
Scott Chalfant	X		
Seth Cool	X		
Molly Doran			X
Mark Herrenkohl	X		
Jon Knechtel	X		
Michael McGlenn	X		
Harold Mead	X		
Tom Nelson	X		
Bob Rose	X		
Kendra Smith	X		
TOTAL	10	0	1

Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee Recommendations on Department of Natural Resources Proposed NRCA Boundary



Inventory info for potential additions or deletions to proposed Blanchard NRCA
Prepared by Kevin Killian, 11/23/2010, for BFAC mtg on 12/15/2010.

Polygon numbers correspond to the attached map and decision matrix sent out earlier this month. In some cases, individual polygons were represented by more than one inventory unit. In these cases, I estimated average values for the polygons; except for polygon 8, which consists of 73 yr old timber and 15 yr old plantation. I separated this polygon into the two different stand types.

<i>Polygon</i>	<i>Origin date</i>	<i>% on base</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Species composition *</i>	<i>Timber vol/acre</i>	<i>50 yr site index</i>
1	1924-1942	100	10	DF-70%:WH-5%:RC-5%: RA-18%	45 mbf/acre	DF-107
2	1948		4	Df-70%:WH-14%:RC-5% RA-7%	49 mbf/acre	DF-111
3	1948		16	DF-66%:WH-15%:RC-6% RA-6%	47 mbf/acre	DF-120
4	1944-1948		46	DF-68%:WH-11%:RC-12% RA-7%	49 mbf/acre	DF-120
5	1935		15	DF-78%:WH-10%:RC-5% RA-7%	51 mbf/acre	DF-122
6	1939		24	DF-50%:RC-25%,WH-7% RA-16%	52 mbf/acre	DF-127
7	1938		12	DF-55%:WH-30%:RC-5% RA-16%	61 mbf/acre	DF-130
8-timber	1937		41	DF-24%:WH-5%:RC-2% RA-65%	47 mbf/acre	DF-123
8-plantation	1995		19	DF-95%:WH-3%:RC-2%	Na	DF-123
9	1901-1918		55	DF-80%:WH-9%:RC-2%: RA-3%	120 mbf/ac	DF-130
10	1937		23	DF-12%:WH-1%:RC-0%; RA-74%	34 mbf/acre	RA-85
11	1937		7	DF-12%:WH-1%:RC-0% RA-74%	34 mbf/acre	RA-85
12	1942		9	DF-33%:WH-12%:RC- 12%:RA-30%	43 mbf/acre	DF-132
13	1942		28	DF-33%:WH-12%:RC- 12%:RA-30%	43 mbf/acre	DF-132

*-key to species composition:
DF= Douglas fir
WH= western hemlock
RC= red cedar
RA= red alder

December 15, 2010

To whom it may concern,

The Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee (BFAC) is writing to express support for NOVA applications #11-1001 – Blanchard & Harry Osborne Non-motorized Maintenance '11 and #11-1002 – Samish Overlook NHR Maintenance '11, as proposed by the Northwest Region, Washington State Department of Natural Resources.

The BFAC was created as a community based entity to advise the DNR concerning site specific activities related to the implementation of the Blanchard Forest Management Strategies. In doing so, the BFAC assists DNRs operational decision making with recommendations for management of Blanchard Forest; including recreation management. These projects have been identified, by both the DNR and the BFAC, as crucial to maintaining recreation trails and facilities within the Blanchard Forest Block.

The BFAC is very pleased that the DNR recognizes the importance of the opportunities on provided on Blanchard and is taking on this maintenance project. Over the course of a year, many thousands of people will use and enjoy these trail systems. The maintenance provided by these projects will help ensure these recreationists continued access to significant recreational opportunities in our area.

Respectfully,

Roy Bever
Bloedel

Scott Shalfant, Park Supervisor
Larrabee State Park

Seth Cool
Conservation Northwest

Molly Doran, Executive Director
Skagit Land Trust

Mark Herrenkohl
Community Representative

Jon Knechtel, Director of Operations
Pacific Northwest Trail Association

Mike McGlenn
Backcountry Horsemen, Whatcom Chapter

Harold Mead
Friends of Blanchard

Tom Nelson, Washington Timberlands Manager
Sierra Pacific Industries

Bob Rose,
Agriculture and Forest Resources Consultant

Kendra Smith, on behalf of the Skagit
County Commissioners