



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
Natural Resources
Doug Sutherland - Commissioner of Public Lands

Proposed Management Strategies for Blanchard Forest State Trust Lands A WORKING FOREST IN AN URBAN SETTING

I. Manage Blanchard Forest according to Four Management Zones and Two Management Overlays with appropriate management emphasis (See Preliminary Map of Management Zones, and Map Addendum).

A. Management Zones

1. **Core zone** managed in a similar manner to a permanently protected Natural Resource Conservation Area with emphasis on wildlife habitat, older forest conditions, vistas, and maintenance of forest ecosystem health; while allowing non-motorized, low impact recreation such as horseback riding, hiking, mountain biking, and hang gliding.
2. **Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) areas** managed consistent with the goals, objectives, and conditions of the HCP regarding ecologically sensitive areas and protected species and habitat requirements.
3. **High visual sensitivity zone** managed for visual impact mitigation as guided by the Board of Natural Resources new Policy for Sustainable Forests through the use of visually sensitive management prescriptions.
4. **General management zone** managed for revenue production for trust beneficiaries consistent with the trust mandate, the HCP and other applicable laws, regulations, and policies.

B. Management Overlays (to all zones)

1. A future recreational overlay will be developed for trails and other recreational uses that provide multiple recreational experiences in each of the management zones but does not reduce the net area available for timber production within the general management or high visual sensitivity zone.
2. A future demonstration working forest overlay will be developed that emphasizes natural resource stewardship, the role of State Forest trust lands and the enduring values of a working forest in an urban setting.

II. Support maintaining working forests and securing sustainable timber supply in Skagit and Whatcom Counties using a variety of tools consistent with local Growth Management policies (RCW 36.70A).

- A. Support state acquisition of private timber lands from willing landowners in proximity to Blanchard State Forest
- B. Support an array of tools, such as purchase of development rights and conservation easements to permanently conserve timberlands as working forests and to prevent conversion of additional forest lands.
- C. Develop and implement strategies to conserve and stabilize private industrial timber supply while exploring ways to encourage sustainable timber production from non-industrial forest landowners.
- D. Form public and private partnerships to work with the U.S. Forest Service on implementing federal land management plans on the Mount Baker - Snoqualmie National Forest. The initial focus will be the Finney Adaptive Management Area.¹
- E. Seek support from Washington's congressional delegation and the U. S. Department of Agriculture for the objectives in II(D).

III. Provide Skagit County Trust Compensation

- A. 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. These strategies should include the acquisition of in-holdings in and around Blanchard Forest and other holdings in and adjacent to DNR-managed forest lands in Skagit County for general forest management.
- B. Develop contingency strategies for the core zone if milestones for compensation funding cannot be reached within 5 years.

IV. Ensure Long-term Durability of Blanchard Management Agreement

- A. The parties of the "Blanchard **Forest** Strategies Group" agree to fully support these recommendations and to speak and act in their support in order to ensure the future vision of Blanchard Forest as a working forest in an urban setting.
- B. Design a mechanism that ensures the long-term durability of the management of Blanchard Forest and all the recommendations of this proposal.

¹ The Northwest Forest Plan created the Finney Adaptive Management Area to encourage innovative and creative resource management approaches, with a management objective of restoring late-successional and riparian habitat components.