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## Appendix G.

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# Appendix H.

## Response to Comments on the Draft EIS

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### **INTRODUCTION**

On April 15, 2005, the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* was released for public comment. Six public hearings were held across the state which provided the public with an opportunity to give their input through oral testimony. The official comment period closed on May 16, 2005. Prior to that date, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) received a few written requests for an extension and an extension was granted for those requestors until May 31, 2005. During the comment period, comments were received from 32 separate commenters, through letters, e-mails, and oral testimony at the public hearings. Copies of these documents are included at the end of this Appendix. Names of persons who submitted written comment or oral testimony are shown below in Table 1.

Each comment received by DNR was provided to each Board of Natural Resources member in its original, unedited form prior to the Board of Natural Resources meeting held on July 29, 2005.

Following an initial review of the comments and a general analysis of the issues, the individual issues were identified, categorized into subject areas, responses were prepared for each of the issues, and appropriate changes were incorporated into this Final EIS.

The policy subject areas and issues by which comments were summarized and responded to and page numbers for each subject area are shown in Table 2. The following policy subject areas received no comments: Acquiring Rights of Way; Granting Rights of Way; SEPA Review; and Implementation, Reporting and Modification of the Policy for Sustainable Forests (formerly “Implementation, Reporting and Modification”).

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**Table 1.** List of Commenters Who Submitted Comments on the Draft EIS

<b>Comment No.</b>	<b>Commenters</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Format</b>
1	Leigh McKeirnan	Private Citizen	Written
2	Mike Davis	Hampton Tree Farms	Oral
3	Bob Dick	American Forest Resource Council	Oral
4	Jim Buck	Washington State Representative	Oral
5	Rod Fleck	City of Forks	Oral
6	Bob Lynette	Private Citizen	Oral
7	Carol Johnson	North Olympic Timber Action Committee	Oral & Written
8	Bob Dick	American Forest Resource Council	Oral
9	Mark Baugh	Hampton Tree Farms	Oral
10	Kris McCall	Hampton Tree Farms	Oral
11	Leigh McKeirnan	Private Citizen	Oral
12	Mike Davis	Hampton Tree Farms & Private Citizen	Oral
13	Bob Dick	American Forest Resource Council	Oral
14	John Links	Private Citizen	Oral
15	Al McKee	Skamania County	Oral & Written
16	Stewart Wechsler	Washington Native Plant Society	Oral
17	Joe Monks	Private Citizen	Oral
18	Valerie Holland	Sequim Elk Habitat Committee	Written
19	Bill Howard	Boise Cascade	Oral
20	Bob Dick	American Forest Resource Council	Oral
21	Alan Dragoo	Private Citizen	Written
22	Michael Marsh	Washington Native Plant Society	Written
23	Jeremy Sage	Point No Point Treaty Council	Written
24	Ian Kanair	Snoqualmie Tribe	Written
25	Bob Dick	American Forest Resource Council	Written
26	Chama Archimede	Private Citizen	Written
27	Paula Swedeen	Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife	Written
28	Sue Chickman	Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society	Written
29	Dan Cothren	Washington State Association of Counties	Written
30	Lisa McShane	Northwest Ecosystem Alliance	Written
31	Becky Kelley and D. Eric Harlow	Washington Environmental Council and Washington Forest Law Center	Written
32	Paul Kriegel	Private Citizen	Written

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**Table 2.** Subject Areas, Comment Summaries, Responses, and Copies of Original Comments Received During the Draft EIS Process

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<b>Starting Page</b>	<b>Policy Subject Areas</b>
5	General Comments
6	Relationship to Sustainable Harvest Calculation
8	Range of Alternatives
10	Policy Objectives
11	Major Policy Categories
12	Legal and Regulatory Framework
12	Trust Mandate
13	Cumulative Impacts
14	Financial Diversification
17	Financial Assumptions
18	Harvest Deferral Designations (formerly “Land Classifications”)
20	Forest Health
22	Catastrophic Loss Prevention (formerly “Wildfire and Catastrophic Loss Prevention”)
25	Genetic Resource
27	Special Ecological Features
29	Old-Growth Stands in Western Washington (formerly “Older Forests and Old Growth”)
35	Wildlife Habitat
46	Watershed Systems
50	Riparian Conservation (formerly “Riparian Management Zones” and “Wetlands”)
59	Public Access and Recreation
60	Cultural Resources
61	Visual Impacts (formerly “Visual Management”)

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**Table 2.** Subject Areas, Comment Summaries, Responses, and Copies of Original Comments Received During the Draft EIS Process

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<b>Starting Page</b>	<b>Policy Subject Areas</b>
63	Local Economic Vitality
65	Forest Land Planning (formerly “Forestland Planning”)
68	General Silvicultural Strategy
73	Forest Land Transactions
74	Forest Roads (formerly “Roads”)
76	Research
76	External Relationships
77	Comments Received Directed Toward a Particular Preference or Concern
80	Other: Within DNR’s Responsibility, but Outside the Purview of the Draft EIS and the Final EIS
81	Copies of Original Comments Received on the Draft EIS

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## SUBJECT AREAS, COMMENT SUMMARIES, RESPONSES, AND COPIES OF ORIGINAL COMMENTS RECEIVED ON DRAFT EIS

### Subject Area: General Comments

#### Comment Summary:

Fully analyze any changes or revisions to the *Forest Practices Habitat Conservation Plan* (Forest Practices HCP) with respect to the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and incorporate by reference comments submitted May 12, 2005, on the Forest Practices HCP.

#### Response:

The Forest Practices HCP and the *Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* are two independent agency proposals by two separate lead agencies: the Forest Practices Board (Forest Practices HCP) and Department of Natural Resources (*Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*). Although there are similar natural resource issues addressed by these separate initiatives, they exist independent of one another and meet different objectives. However, new information regarding the significant impacts to the elements of the environment common to each proposal may be relevant and require consideration.

The Forest Practices HCP and the comment incorporated by reference dated May 11, 2005 have been reviewed for any significant information with respect to the *Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*. There appears to be no information in the Draft Forest Practices HCP or the comment letter dated May 11, 2005, which would change the analysis of the alternatives in the *Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*.

#### Comment Summary:

DNR should analyze existing forest plan policies related to the recently completed sustainable harvest calculation, upcoming Eastern Washington analysis and future sustained yield projects for impacts to future generations, e.g., effects of various ownership groupings, future harvest flow controls, and current non-Board approved Northern Spotted Owl habitat treatments.

#### Response:

Policies dealing with ownership groupings and harvest flow controls were not included in the scope of this proposal. During its forest health planning efforts over the next several years, as well as future sustainable harvest calculations in

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either Eastern or Western Washington, DNR will analyze the relationship between existing Board of Natural Resources' policies, all legal and contractual agreements, and harvest levels and revenue flow to current and future generations of beneficiaries.

**Comment Summary:**

Extend comment period for those not having enough opportunity to comment during the initial comment period.

**Response:**

The comment period was extended for a period of 14 days on the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* to those who submitted requests that additional time was needed for their review and comment.

**Comment Summary:**

Policies should address the uniqueness of Eastern Washington forests.

**Response:**

The uniqueness of Eastern Washington forests is recognized in many of DNR's initiatives and in the proposed policies. All of the policies have been developed in consideration of both Eastern and Western Washington forests. Latitude, flexibility, and in several instances, specific requirements are contained in the policies so that issues distinctly associated with Eastern Washington forests can be addressed and that the value of Eastern Washington forests is maintained as an important trust asset, e.g., Forest Health and Riparian Conservation.

**Subject Area: Relationship to Sustainable Harvest Calculation**

**Comment Summary:**

Good inventory and sustained yield information are the base for intensive forest management. DNR should begin the Eastern Washington sustained yield analysis as soon as practicable.

**Response:**

Currently, DNR's ability to carry out an Eastern Washington calculation is limited by quality forest inventory information. DNR is taking steps to improve this information in preparation for completing an Eastern Washington sustainable harvest calculation in the next five years.



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**Comment Summary:**

Since these policies cover the same logging levels as were set by Sustainable Harvest for Western Washington, there is a concern that these policies are not driven by science but a need to “fill in the blanks.”

**Response:**

It is correct that the Board’s Preferred Alternatives to date do not appear to affect the Western Washington sustainable harvest level. However, the policies once adopted will guide the management of forested state trust lands for the entire state with regard to both meeting the current harvest level, as well as all the other outcomes identified in Board policy.

As DNR moves forward with implementation of the policies in the *Policy for Sustainable Forests*, integration with harvest levels will occur. If, during this implementation and integration, potential changes to the sustainable harvest level are necessary, the Board of Natural Resources will be briefed and potential changes discussed. This process will be consistent with direction in the Board’s Preferred Alternative for Implementation, Reporting and Modification of the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* policy which directs DNR to report to the Board of Natural Resources annually on implementation, and with DNR’s adaptive management approach for the policies.

**Comment Summary:**

Why was sustainable harvest the first step in revising the *Forest Resource Plan*? And why if the sustainable harvest calculation was initially required in Western Washington, why isn’t a sustainable harvest calculation for Eastern Washington required prior to the *Policy for Sustainable Forests*?

By focusing on the Western Washington harvest calculation first, DNR started at the middle level of planning, and is now trying to plan “up” (*Policy for Sustainable Forests*), “down” (sustainable harvest calculation implementation plans), and “sideways” (Eastern Washington harvest calculation).

Why have decisions been timed as they have and how does the Eastern Washington sustainable harvest calculation fit into the decision-making process?

**Response:**

Recalculation of the sustainable harvest and update of Board of Natural Resources policies can occur at different times based on changing circumstances and new information.

The Board of Natural Resources’ decision to recalculate the sustainable harvest level was driven by the change in management and circumstances that had occurred over the past 10 years. This included development of better forest inventory information in Western Washington and the adoption of DNR’s HCP in 1997. While this effort was based on the policies in the 1992 *Forest Resource*

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*Plan* at the time, it was designed to assess any changes needed in Board of Natural Resources policy so that they could be included in the update of the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. Recalculation of the Western Washington sustainable harvest was not a requirement for updating Board of Natural Resources policy, but an opportunity to update certain policies directly related to the calculation due to better information as anticipated in both the *Forest Resource Plan* and now in the new proposed *Policy for Sustainable Forests*. When better forest inventory information is developed in Eastern Washington, the DNR can undertake a sustainable harvest calculation based on the policies in place at that time. As with the proposed 2004 sustainable harvest calculation for Western Washington, some policies may be updated based on better information as a result of that effort.

Moreover, if the Board of Natural Resources makes different policy choices in the future, either as a result of the development of the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* or modifications to policies as a result of new information, the Board of Natural Resources may amend the harvest level as needed.

Please also see additional responses under Relationship to Sustainable Harvest Calculation.

### **Subject Area: Range of Alternatives**

#### **Comment Summary:**

DNR needs to analyze an alternative for other than maximizing revenue, i.e., maximizing and protecting water quality, wildlife habitat, and recreation opportunities.

Washington's trust lands are unique in the nation and nothing in our constitution or in law requires DNR to maximize revenue, while some sustainable logging occurs to restore lands degraded by historic logging practices that focused on generating revenue.

#### **Response:**

The development of the policies and the policy alternatives analyzed within the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* are guided by the 10 policy objectives established by the Board of Natural Resources for this process. "Maximization" of any of the benefits provided from the management of state forested trust lands is not identified as a goal of any of the objectives, purpose and need, nor is it identified in any of the proposed policies.

Refer also to the response to comments relating to the Trust Mandate for a discussion of the need to balance trust income, environmental protection and other social benefits from four perspectives.

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### **Comment Summary:**

There are multiple ways of achieving the purpose, and alternatives should consider the reasonable methods of achieving the purpose. However, the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* relies on one set of policy objectives to achieve the purpose and relates the alternative analyses to this one set of policy objectives. This approach does not meet SEPA intent for a range of alternatives. There may be other management objectives that meet the purpose more effectively, which need to be evaluated. Each alternative could have a different suite of policy objectives that could meet the purpose; however, the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* limits alternative consideration to a small range of options that meet the policy objectives.

### **Response:**

SEPA requires the analysis of a range of alternatives that can reasonably meet the objectives of a proposal, specifying the purpose and need to which the proposal is responding. The development of the policies and the policy alternatives analyzed within the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* are guided by the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources in defining the purposes to be accomplished in fulfilling the need to update the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. The Board of Natural Resources' policy objectives set necessary parameters on updating the policies in the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan* and cannot be divorced from the statements of purpose and need. Finalizing the objectives, purpose and need was one of the primary functions and goals of the SEPA scoping process and was identified as such at that time in order to provide the necessary sideboards for developing reasonable alternatives. In some instances, several objectives were met by the development of a range of policy alternatives for a specific policy subject. In other instances, a specific policy subject area was developed to fulfill a specific policy objective. The aggregate of the policies and alternatives analyzed in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* have been narrowed to meet the aggregate of the policy objectives, including the purpose and need for updating the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*.

The *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* was amended to reflect which alternatives were rejected and why. Very few specific suggestions for different alternatives were introduced during the scoping and *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* process in any of the policy subject areas.

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## **Subject Area: Policy Objectives**

### **Comment Summary:**

DNR lacks budget to support an outcome-based approach through monitoring and research.

### **Response:**

Even with the numerous legal requirements and contractual obligations that govern the management of forested state trust lands, there are ample opportunities to achieve many outcomes not specified in law or contracts.

The Board's Preferred Alternative policies in this document describe many outcomes. DNR is already engaged in a significant research and monitoring program as a major component of the DNR's *Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)*. The Board of Natural Resources has also directed DNR to employ a structured monitoring and reporting program to the Board of Natural Resources on implementation of the policies and the progress towards achieving the outcomes described in these policies.

Budget dollars are limited, and must be spent in a prudent manner on behalf of the trusts. However, DNR intends to work to assure that sufficient budgetary resources are made available to meet the research and monitoring obligations of DNR's HCP and Board of Natural Resources policy.

### **Comment Summary:**

Managing as much land base as possible may conflict with meeting other requirements of laws, the HCP and the trust mandate.

### **Response:**

Actively managing as much of the land base as possible will occur in a manner consistent with all legal requirements, and DNR's HCP. Specifically, DNR's management includes:

- Evaluating all stands and silviculturally intervening in stands that can be accelerated toward meeting economic, ecologic and social objectives;
- Evaluating, but not intervening (no action) silviculturally because stands are already on track to meet objectives;
- Continual evaluation and stewardship of stands to meet objectives, that may or may not lead to management activities;
- Not always transferring stands out of trust status where they are meeting ecological objectives, or contain special ecological features, where protection doesn't require it or it is not in the best interest of the trusts to do so; and
- Complying with all laws and commitments.

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The Board of Natural Resources and DNR believe that active management of forested state trust lands, under these terms, serves both present and future beneficiaries by preserving and protecting the asset base while making it productive both today and into the future.

**Comment Summary:**

To suggest that any lands that cannot be actively managed must be transferred out of the trust would be a large step backwards in DNR's vision of forest stewardship.

**Response:**

DNR will not always transfer areas out of trust status. See response to previous comment.

Many stands currently contribute to HCP and other ecological objectives in their current condition and will continue to be retained in trust ownership within harvest deferral status. That said, properties that no longer further trust objectives have always been good candidates to transfer out of trust status, and will likely continue to be in the future.

**Subject Area: Major Policy Categories**

**Comment Summary:**

Concerns that four major categories are reductionistic and do not allow for recognition under several categories.

Prefer linking policies to particular steps DNR takes in managing the forests.

**Response:**

This comment was also stated during the scoping process. Refer to DNR's response in the scoping summary (see Appendix E).

DNR is using the updated major policy categories for document organizational purposes. The policies in the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* will be considered as a whole and implemented collectively. DNR recognizes that there is overlap between the categories, and this overlap will be addressed in the introduction section of the *Policy for Sustainable Forests*, as well as throughout the document.

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## **Subject Area: Legal and Regulatory Framework**

### **Comment Summary:**

Since the Sustainable Forests Policy references the HCP, it appears that other laws which are applicable to and referenced in the HCP should apply here (Section 3.4) as well, including the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).

### **Response:**

The *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* covers a broad range of policy proposals. Each one of these policy subject areas has identified other laws that affected the development of the policy alternatives for the particular policy subject area. Although the NHPA is adhered to when triggered by a DNR action, it does not help to define the scope of policy development for any of the listed policies in Section 3.4. Moreover, NEPA is a federal law that applies to the decisions of federal agencies; SEPA is a state law that applies to the decisions of agencies in Washington State, like the DNR. For clarification, it is the DNR's proprietary HCP that is being referred to in the *Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*, not the Forest Practices' *Federal Assurances Forest Practices Habitat Conservation Plan*.

## **Subject Area: Trust Mandate**

### **Comment Summary:**

Managing the trust lands for all the people and public values such as clean water, wildlife habitat, safety from landslides, and recreation should take precedence over timber production and maximizing revenue to the trust beneficiaries.

### **Response:**

Although economic performance is one of the four key policy categories in the proposed *Policy for Sustainable Forests*, it does not stand alone but works in conjunction with the other three major policy categories to fulfill the purpose and need in meeting the ten objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources. One of the key objectives is Objective No. 2 "*Balance trust income, environmental protection and other social benefits from four perspectives: the prudent person doctrine; undivided loyalty to and impartiality among the trust beneficiaries; intergenerational equity; and not foreclosing future options.*" This objective is key to all four major policy categories: Economic Performance, Forest Ecosystem Health and Productivity, Social and Cultural Benefits, and Implementation. This objective, along with the strong "stewardship" and "sustainability" emphasis in managing the forest lands, establish a policy framework that integrates the protection and use of public lands and its benefits along with providing revenue to the trust beneficiaries. Nowhere in the proposed *Policy for Sustainable Forests*

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or in this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* is the concept of “maximizing revenue” discussed or proposed in meeting DNR’s forested state trust land management obligations.

**Comment Summary:**

Need to define compensation to the trusts.

**Response:**

Compensation to the trusts is defined in the Federal Enabling Act, which created Washington State, and the Washington State Constitution as full market value.

**Subject Area: Cumulative Impacts**

**Comment Summary:**

The actions which will result from the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* will not occur in a vacuum, and the effects will not be limited to state lands. The cumulative impacts of actions correlated to this plan include downstream effects in combination with other watershed activities. This includes effects which should be analyzed in the framework of the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, NEPA, NHPA, and other applicable state and federal laws, regulations and Executive Orders.

**Response:**

The analysis of the environmental impacts of the proposed policies in the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* is done within the context of understanding the existing conditions of the resources potentially impacted by the proposed *Policy for Sustainable Forests* policies, independent of jurisdictional and ownership boundaries, where the affect of these policies may result in a cumulative impact to the resources of concern. The assessments of impacts and conditions are made with regard to the protection and risks inherent in these policies as well as those inherent in other laws and policies that address the same elements of the environment potentially impacted by the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* policies.

Further, the individual actions that result from the general policies will be subject to project-level SEPA review, which allows for a more detailed and specific consideration of cumulative impacts based upon the physical setting of the area, including factors such as soil types, slope, erosion history, stream types, conditions, and gradients, etc., as well as other localized conditions arising from non-state ownerships.

See also other responses that address cumulative effects: Financial Diversification, Harvest Deferral Designations, Catastrophic Loss Prevention, Special Ecological Features, Old-Growth Stands in Western Washington,

**Subject Area: Financial Diversification**

**Comment Summary:**

The cumulative effects analysis is inadequate under SEPA since it does not even attempt to analyze the impacts of the proposed policy in conjunction with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions. It also fails to analyze the alternatives individually.

In addition, reasonably foreseeable impacts such as global warming and effects on forest health and water production from forested watersheds are not addressed or analyzed.

**Response:**

It would have been easier to respond to this concern if the comment had noted any specific, significant adverse environmental impacts that would result from the proposed policy, in conjunction with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions. Had such an impact been noted in the comment, DNR could have considered making modifications in the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* to analyze the impact.

The same is true regarding global warming, forest health, and water production. The comment did not note any impacts from this policy or the various alternatives, related to these concerns.

Alternative 1 (No Action) maintains DNR's special forest products program. Because of the low impact nature of the activity, the low level of frequency, and the dispersed nature of the activity, DNR believes the impacts from this program, including cumulative impacts, are not significant. In addition, Alternatives 2 through 4 and the Board's Preferred Alternative propose future emphasis in financial diversification on relatively unknown and unproven market opportunities for both timber and non-timber forest products and other social and ecological services. The decision to pursue these markets is being considered from a financial risk perspective. The environmental impacts of this range of alternatives cannot be anticipated with a degree of certainty required for meaningful analysis at this level of policy decisions.

Although it is not anticipated that these policy alternatives will have any impact on long-term climate trends, long-term climate trends could impact the forest environment and the future opportunities for financial diversification. Future department decisions regarding implementation of the proposed Financial Diversification policy will consider all reasonably foreseeable potential impacts of those decisions in terms of social, economic and environmental considerations consistent with the aggregate of policies in the *Policy for Sustainable Forests*.



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### **Comment Summary:**

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives.

### **Response:**

SEPA requires the analysis of a range of alternatives that can reasonably meet the objectives of a proposal, specifying the purpose and need to which the proposal is responding. The development of the policies and the policy alternatives analyzed within the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* are guided by the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources in defining the purposes to be accomplished in fulfilling the need to update the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. The Board of Natural Resources' policy objectives set necessary parameters on updating the policies in the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan* and cannot be divorced from the statements of purpose and need. Finalizing the objectives, purpose and need was one of the primary functions and goals of the SEPA scoping process and was identified as such at that time in order to provide the necessary sideboards for developing reasonable alternatives. In some instances, several objectives were met by the development of a range of policy alternatives for a specific policy subject. In other instances, a specific policy subject area was developed to fulfill a specific policy objective. The aggregate of the policies and alternatives analyzed in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* have been narrowed to meet the aggregate of the policy objectives, including the purpose and need for updating the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*.

For example, an alternative was suggested for analysis that emphasized maximizing and protecting water quality, wildlife habitat, and recreation opportunities. This alternative was not analyzed because it did not meet the purpose, need and objectives of the policy for Sustainable Forests. For additional discussion, refer to the Range of Alternatives subsection in this Appendix.

Another suggestion was to include a policy or goal statement that promotes balanced age class and species distribution in the primary (forestland) trust asset. These are important considerations in meeting the objectives of sustainable trust management and as such will be considerations of implementing several of the policies, e.g. Financial Diversification, Forest Health, and General Silvicultural Strategy.

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**Comment Summary:**

Include a policy or goal statement that promotes balanced age class and species distribution in the primary (forestland) trust asset.

**Response:**

Balanced age class and species distribution can be important considerations in meeting objectives of sustainable trust management. Both are considerations in meeting long-term economical and ecological trust objectives. The Board of Natural Resources' policies on Forest Health and General Silvicultural Strategy, in addition to Financial Diversification, are two areas where, although not explicitly stated, analysis of age class and species distribution will be a key part of implementation.

**Comment Summary:**

Amend Alternative 4 with elements of Alternative 3 that focus on social and ecological benefits of trust lands, since these will become increasingly valuable in the future.

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative now recognizes the economic potential of providing social and ecological services.

**Comment Summary:**

Need stronger customer orientation influence in policy, i.e., log sort sales contracts.

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative for External Relationships recognizes the importance of working with stakeholders/purchasers on operational issues. The policy directs DNR to collaborate with stakeholders in carrying out department activities.

**Comment Summary:**

Recognize tourism value.

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative directs DNR to consider future revenue opportunities from forest lands. Tourism may be one of those future businesses.

**Comment Summary:**

Add FSC certification.

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**Response:**

In 2005, DNR-managed forested state trust lands in Western Washington were “green certified” under the American Forest & Paper Association’s *Sustainable Forestry Initiative*® Program. DNR will continue to evaluate and consider forms of certification for all forested state trust lands in addition to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Program, and their potential benefits to the trust beneficiaries.

**Comment Summary:**

Consideration should be given to scale and tonnage sales as an appropriate vehicle to market and sell thinnings, partial cuts, salvage sales as a result of blowdown, and fire and insect mortality.

**Response:**

DNR will continue to consider and evaluate different mechanisms for selling forest products to assure the best returns for trust beneficiaries, including scale and tonnage sales.

**Comment Summary:**

Begin looking for alternative ways to fund these crucial public needs in consultation with the state Legislators. Time for a big change in the way the DNR is mandated to do business. Pressure needs to be taken off the land. The state has a responsibility to its citizens to try and preserve natural landscapes and habitats.

**Response:**

Several of the policies in the *Policy for Sustainable Forests*, especially Special Ecological Features and Old-Growth Stands in Western Washington, direct DNR to seek compensation to the trusts or to manage them to meet trust obligations to provide long-term conservation of those areas that provide unique or special ecological benefits to the citizens of Washington.

Working with state Legislators on DNR’s statutory mandates is beyond the scope of this proposal, which concerns the Board of Natural Resources’ policy directives to DNR, based upon existing statutory directives.

**Subject Area: Financial Assumptions****Comment Summary:**

Include “net present value” (NPV) in the policy objectives and the three financial performance alternatives.

Additional language is recommended to specify that the review in regards to Financial Assumptions will occur at least once per year.

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**Response:**

DNR is currently using many financial tools to evaluate options when making decisions. Some of these tools are bare land value, internal rate of return and of course, net present value (NPV). As long as financial analysis is used to help make decisions, the form it takes should fit the decision that is being considered.

DNR does review its financial assumptions periodically. Some assumptions such as those used for appraisal are reviewed and changed monthly; others are changed less frequently, such as those used for evaluating stand management alternatives. The Board's Preferred Alternative has been amended to require review at least once per year.

Additional discussion related to net present value and its importance in the policy subject has been added to this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*.

**Subject Area: Harvest Deferral Designations (formerly “Land Classifications”)****Comment Summary:**

Changing status from off-base to short and long-term deferral with no significant probable adverse impacts is unjustified and unsupported by the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*.

The cumulative effects analysis is inadequate under SEPA since it does not even attempt to analyze the impacts of the proposed policy in conjunction with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions. It also fails to analyze the alternatives individually.

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives.

Careful not to set a precedent of “short-term” deferrals turning into “long-term” deferrals, i.e., 15,000 acres old-growth research reserves and may conflict with assumptions used in the Westside sustainable harvest calculation.

**Response:**

Changing the definitions for lands not available for harvest from off-base status to short and long-term deferral status in no way affects the disposition of lands in regards to their availability or likelihood of timber harvest. As is discussed in the *Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*, this is purely a change in nomenclature that allows a more comprehensive and efficient sustainable harvest analysis through a direct

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acknowledgement and identification of short and long-term deferrals and their contribution to meeting the array of obligations and objectives set out by the aggregate of policies contained within the *Policy for Sustainable Forests*. This policy change will result in no change in management on the ground. It is merely reflecting an evolution of thought about how DNR classifies lands that meet varying short and long term objectives. There are no impacts from this action, even in aggregate with other past present or future policy decisions. The comment did not note any significant adverse environmental impacts from this change in nomenclature, whether direct, indirect, or cumulative.

SEPA requires the analysis of a range of alternatives that can reasonably meet the objectives of a proposal, specifying the purpose and need to which the proposal is responding. No other alternatives were suggested for the Harvest Deferral Designations (formerly “Land Classifications”) policy subject area in scoping or during the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* comment period and DNR is not aware of any other reasonable alternatives that needed consideration.

The development of the policies and the policy alternatives analyzed within the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* are guided by the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources in defining the purposes to be accomplished in fulfilling the need to update the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. The Board of Natural Resources’ policy objectives set necessary parameters on updating the policies in the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan* and cannot be divorced from the statements of purpose and need. Finalizing the objectives, purpose and need was one of the primary functions and goals of the SEPA scoping process and was identified as such at that time in order to provide the necessary sideboards for developing reasonable alternatives. In some instances, several objectives were met by the development of a range of policy alternatives for a specific policy subject. In other instances, a specific policy subject area was developed to fulfill a specific policy objective. The aggregate of the policies and alternatives analyzed in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* have been narrowed to meet the aggregate of the policy objectives, including the purpose and need for updating the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*.

**Comment Summary:**

This policy [Special Ecological Features] is an example of a conflict with the Harvest Deferral Designations (formerly “Land Classifications”) policy, as more land will be managed as ‘on-base’ without any meaningful protection provided.

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**Response:**

The Harvest Deferral Designations (formerly “Land Classifications”) policy simply reflects a structure to classify lands. It does not direct the conditions under which any given piece of land is designated a special ecological feature or any other sensitive resource land. It states that once a parcel has been reserved from harvest, it will be considered either in a short term deferred status or a long-term deferred status (including indefinite deferral) for the purposes of land management.

See responses above under Harvest Deferral Designations (formerly “Land Classifications”) and Policy Objectives.

**Subject Area: Forest Health****Comment Summary:**

Policy needs to address the impacts of global warming.

**Response:**

The Affected Environment and Cumulative Impacts subsections for the Forest Health policy subject area in Chapter 3 of this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* have been amended to include a general discussion of the potential forest health impacts related to both the warmer and wetter summer scenario and the warmer and drier summer scenario. The Board of Natural Resources will always retain the ability to modify this policy as they determine is necessary, including to address impacts associated with global warming, once those impacts are more certain. At this time, the analysis shows that the Board of Natural Resources’ Preferred Alternative is appropriate based on current knowledge of the changes that may occur due to changes in climate.

**Comment Summary:**

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives.

**Response:**

No other alternatives were introduced for discussion or analysis during the scoping and Draft EIS process.

SEPA requires the analysis of a range of alternatives that can reasonably meet the objectives of a proposal, specifying the purpose and need to which the proposal is responding. The development of the policies and the policy alternatives analyzed

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within the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* are guided by the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources in defining the purposes to be accomplished in fulfilling the need to update the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. The Board of Natural Resources' policy objectives set necessary parameters on updating the policies in the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan* and cannot be divorced from the statements of purpose and need. Finalizing the objectives, purpose and need was one of the primary functions and goals of the SEPA scoping process and was identified as such at that time in order to provide the necessary sideboards for developing reasonable alternatives. In some instances, several objectives were met by the development of a range of policy alternatives for a specific policy subject. In other instances, a specific policy subject area was developed to fulfill a specific policy objective. The aggregate of the policies and alternatives analyzed in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* have been narrowed to meet the aggregate of the policy objectives, including the purpose and need for updating the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*.

**Comment Summary:**

Modify policy to ensure retention of old-growth trees and stands of any size, and large snags and down wood.

Even-aged, densely-stocked, structurally-uniform, young managed plantations should be a priority for treatment with careful thinning to restore structural and species diversity.

Definition of healthy forests is too narrow. For a discussion of this topic, please see: [http://www.prm.nau.edu/PRM346/forest\\_health\\_article.htm](http://www.prm.nau.edu/PRM346/forest_health_article.htm).

Amend policy so that desired future condition will reflect a natural composition and how that will be achieved.

Take care during implementation to preserve valuable habitat trees/snags and to replant.

Don't sacrifice a healthy biodiverse forest for a healthy commercial forest.

Continue to address forest health problems in Eastern Washington early and often because it will get worse before it gets better.

**Response:**

DNR disagrees that the definition of healthy forests is too narrow to meet the policy objectives. A complete discussion of healthy forests and how DNR identifies the relative health of forests is included in the Forest Health section. The two primary controlling factors, species composition/age and stocking levels, are the primary influences on a forest's ability to resist infestation from insects,

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disease, and catastrophic fires. This in turn results in protection of key elements of the natural environment, e.g. water quality and quantity, plants and animals (habitat), and earth.

The Board's Preferred Alternative for old growth in Western Washington retains or defers from harvest all old-growth stands. During the 2006 legislative session, ESSB 6384 section 189 was put in place to direct DNR to conduct an inventory of old growth forests located on state lands east of the crest of the Cascade mountains. This inventory is to be completed in two phases. The first phase, to be completed by July 1, 2007, will identify reference stands for various plant associations; while the second phase, to be completed by December 15, 2007, will use the definition to produce an inventory of old growth forests. This information will then be used in the Eastern Washington sustainable harvest calculation. In addition, until this inventory is complete, DNR is not cutting or removing any Douglas-fir, ponderosa pine or larch trees 160 years of age or older and a diameter of 28 inches or more. In Eastern Washington, DNR is currently retaining structures that may be important elements of historic old-growth forests. Along the east slope of the Cascades, in the range of the northern spotted owl, DNR is maintaining and developing submature and mature owl habitat that is expected to develop into older-forest stands. In the Klickitat HCP planning unit, DNR is retaining an average of six to 12 trees per acre of the largest diameter classes as part of its forest health and HCP strategies. Snags are also left where they do not present operational safety violation. DNR is also developing late successional forest as part of its *Loomis State Forest Final Landscape Plan* (June 1996). In addition, DNR retains large diameter trees as part of its land management activities across all of Eastern Washington.

The Board's Preferred Alternative for Forest Health also directs DNR to manage stands, particularly on the eastside, to mimic historic species composition and stocking levels. This should make the stand more resilient and resistant to major insect infestations, disease outbreaks and catastrophic fire (see Catastrophic Loss Prevention). DNR agrees that historic forest conditions on the eastside, particularly in the ponderosa pine zone, had developed larger, more widely spaced trees. These are the conditions the Forest Health policy directs DNR to try and recreate.

**Subject Area: Catastrophic Loss Prevention (formerly "Wildfire and Catastrophic Loss Prevention")**

**Comment Summary:**

Carefully weigh the potential impacts of salvage logging and incorporate into the policy statement under Alternative 2.

Analyze cumulative effects of salvage logging and global warming on the frequency and pest outbreaks on adjacent private and federal lands.



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The cumulative effects analysis is inadequate under SEPA since it does not even attempt to analyze the impacts of the proposed policy in conjunction with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions. That there would be no cumulative impacts under Alternative 2 is unsupported by any analysis. There could be substantial direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts from increased salvage logging as well as increased fire frequency and pest outbreaks on adjacent private and federal lands due to global warming.

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives.

**Response:**

The following changes have been incorporated into the Board's Preferred Alternative to address the concern for weighing the potential impacts of salvage logging.

The Board's Preferred Alternative is qualified by requiring that the salvage/no-salvage decision be made based upon the best interests of the trust(s) and has been amended to reflect that all salvage operations will be in compliance with state and federal law and Board policy.

Timber salvage can have positive or negative impact, depending on the size of the affected area, magnitude of the disturbance, desired future condition of the affected area, soil type and soil damage sustained, slope, role of this disturbance in an appropriately functioning forest ecosystem, and the forest management activities that take place. Potential positive effects of timber salvage include reducing fuels or pest habitat in order to reduce the threat of additional disturbance, protecting the forest floor with slash, breaking up hydrophobic soil layers and facilitating management activities that promote forest regeneration. Potential negative effects of timber salvage include accelerated erosion, especially in areas with steep slopes, highly erodable soils, and severely burned watersheds; short-term increases in fuel loads; and loss of desirable habitat or site features such as abundant snags and surviving trees that provide seed, and shade. Salvage operations will be planned and carried out to consider these elements.

The potential for cumulative adverse impacts from management activities that encourage the development of fire-resistant stands over time and encourage salvage and rehabilitation activities after disturbance will be mitigated by forest practices rules and other policy subject areas in this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*. Because the effects of any particular salvage operation are governed by so many localized factors, such impacts are best assessed at the project level. Most project-level salvage operations will receive additional SEPA review. Moreover, DNR has averaged

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300 acres of salvage per year over the past six years. The impacts of such infrequent salvage operations are local in nature.

No other alternatives were introduced for discussion or analysis during the scoping or Draft EIS process. SEPA requires the analysis of a range of alternatives that can reasonably meet the objectives of a proposal, specifying the purpose and need to which the proposal is responding. The development of the policies and the policy alternatives analyzed within the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* are guided by the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources in defining the purposes to be accomplished in fulfilling the need to update the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. The Board of Natural Resources' policy objectives set necessary parameters on updating the policies in the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan* and cannot be divorced from the statements of purpose and need. Finalizing the objectives, purpose and need was one of the primary functions and goals of the SEPA scoping process and was identified as such at that time in order to provide the necessary sideboards for developing reasonable alternatives. In some instances, several objectives were met by the development of a range of policy alternatives for a specific policy subject. In other instances, a specific policy subject area was developed to fulfill a specific policy objective. The aggregate of the policies and alternatives analyzed in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* have been narrowed to meet the aggregate of the policy objectives, including the purpose and need for updating the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*.

**Comment Summary:**

Recommend adding some form of “cost-minimization analysis” – least-cost-plus-loss (LC+L) model to determine resource allocations for fire suppression and prevention or cost plus net value change (C+NVC) to recognize the beneficial effects of fire; account for net-benefit changes resulting from all action. Also consider the use of LC&NL curve allowing for an efficient level of fire suppression to be determined based on the cost associated and the damages averted at varying levels of intervention.

Define “reasonable effort.”

**Response:**

It is likely that implementation will involve a cost/benefit analysis mechanism to help determine when and what type of catastrophic loss prevention strategies will be used. As implementation occurs, cost/benefit mechanisms will be considered.

The term “reasonable effort” is part of the language in RCW 76.06.040 and is not used in the context of this policy.

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**Comment Summary:**

Amend policy to account for significant impact of global warming on forest health and the fire frequency.

Retain large woody material on site when applying aggressive silvicultural treatments to restore open stands of appropriate species in eastside forests.

Don't use the threat of fire and fuels for an excuse to clearcut more land.

**Response:**

The discussion and analysis has been amended to address the relationship of the policy alternatives to the potential effects from long-term changes in climate. The Board of Natural Resources will always retain the ability to modify this policy as they determine is necessary, including to address impacts associated with global warming, once those impacts are more certain. At this time, the analysis shows that the Board of Natural Resources' Preferred Alternative is appropriate based on current knowledge of the changes that may occur due to changes in climate.

The focus of this policy subject area is development of fire-resistant stands by mimicking historic species composition and stocking levels. Such strategies will involve retention of appropriate species at appropriate levels where they currently exist. Where large woody debris was part of the historic stand conditions, it may be retained.

The purpose of the Catastrophic Loss Prevention policy is not "an excuse to clearcut more land," but to improve the health of forests to prevent catastrophic loss due to fire and insects. Forest health treatments will carefully consider historic stand conditions and seek to recreate those conditions over time through active management, while retaining important structures.

**Subject Area: Genetic Resource****Comment Summary:**

Ban bio-engineered plants or animals in our forests.

**Response:**

It may not be wise to have a policy banning particular technologies. If a devastating exotic disease impacts DNR forests, as happened with Chestnut Blight on the east coast, bioengineering might be a key to saving a species. Keeping options open appears prudent.

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**Comment Summary:**

Concern that Alternative 3 approach for a “gene garden” would not allow a seed from another “micro habitat” to exhibit the potential that it would have in the place of origin.

**Response:**

DNR’s primary approach to gene conservation is through responsible management of seed supply. Gene pool reserves or special gene conservation plantations function not as a primary strategy, but as insurance policies. As such, DNR is not trying to evaluate the potential that any one seed or tree has, but assemble a representative backup collection of the natural genetic variation in a way that is affordable with the resources that are available.

**Comment Summary:**

Support maintenance of native populations and gene pools not only for economic, but for future evolution of these trees as elements of northwest forests.

**Response:**

DNR agrees, and in fact the economic viability cannot be separated from the ability to adapt to changing conditions when considered over the long-term. Maintaining adaptation is necessary to remain economically viable, and economically valuable species give people an incentive to invest in long-term conservation of those species.

**Comment Summary:**

Encourage more selective cutting and greater diversity in the species replanted and those allowed to self-seed.

**Response:**

DNR often conducts partial or selective harvest where it meets other objectives, but those practices are not substitutes for protecting the gene pool by other means. DNR plants a variety of species, and continues to work on maintaining a genetically appropriate seed supply to support this activity. Where good seed crops allow self-seeding to occur, it does contribute to regeneration, even in areas where planting is used to assure successful regeneration. This may or may not be helpful to the genetic diversity and adaptation of the new stand, depending on the genetic makeup of the older trees.

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## **Subject Area: Special Ecological Features**

### **Comment Summary:**

Supportive, but some concern when Alternative 2 leads to increased state ownership of lands within counties with a high level of state and federal ownership and, therefore, a diminished private land tax base.

### **Response:**

DNR will continue to work closely with counties to address concerns in those areas where DNR proposes to acquire lands on behalf of the trusts or the natural areas program.

### **Comment Summary:**

The DEIS fails to describe impacts of this policy on rare plants and sensitive species nor does it describe how such areas would be protected, other than by being transferred out of trust management.

### **Response:**

The impacts to rare plants and sensitive species are presumed to be reduced under Alternative 2 and the Board's Preferred Alternative.

Alternative 2 and the Board's Preferred Alternative provides increased protection over Alternative 1 in two ways. First, Alternative 2 and the Board's Preferred Alternative specifically states that "special ecological features" will be protected. Alternative 1 does not explicitly make such a statement. Second, Alternative 2 and the Board's Preferred Alternative provides more options to the trust managers to provide protection than does Alternative 1. Under Alternative 1, the only option is transferring the land with the special ecological feature out of trust ownership. Under Alternative 2 and the Board's Preferred Alternative, other options are available.

Under Alternative 1, a limited number of trust sites have been transferred out of trust status to achieve their protection. The number of sites transferred has been limited by a number of factors, including availability of dollars to compensate the trusts and the difficulty in finding appropriate lands to acquire as replacement lands.

Alternative 2 and the Board's Preferred Alternative, on the other hand, provide an opportunity to provide protection to special ecological features without always having to transfer the lands out of trust status. By providing more conservation tools, the end result will be protection that can be provided to a greater number of special ecological features than under Alternative 1.

### **Comment Summary:**

Policy is vague, undefined and unenforceable.

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**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative has more specific language about how these lands will be protected.

**Comment Summary:**

The cumulative effects discussion fails to include actions on other land ownerships and the discussion/analysis contradicts regulatory framework statements that special ecological features receive "little protection."

**Response:**

It should be noted that there are both direct and indirect protections provided to special ecological features. The protections provided by the federal Endangered Species Act are specifically directed toward individual species that are listed. The ecosystems that are included under this policy as "special ecological features" are, however, not specifically identified as the targets of the protections provided by any regulations. Rather, these ecosystems are indirect beneficiaries of efforts to protect wetlands, riparian areas, etc.

All of the policy alternatives rely on the *Natural Heritage Plan* to provide the framework for defining "special ecological features." By relying on the *Natural Heritage Plan*, the list of special ecological features under this policy will be reviewed and revised every two years. The review and analysis takes into account factors that affect the statewide conservation status of each of the special species and ecosystems. Positive factors, such as protection efforts, and negative factors, such as declining populations or increased threats, are both considered. And because the *Natural Heritage Plan* is designed to provide a statewide view, positive and negative factors are assessed across all categories of land ownership (federal, state and private). As a result, the list of special ecological features is regularly revised to account for cumulative effects from activities across all ownerships in the state.

**Comment Summary:**

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives.

**Response:**

No other alternatives were introduced for discussion or analysis during scoping and the Draft EIS process. SEPA requires the analysis of a range of alternatives that can reasonably meet the objectives of a proposal, specifying the purpose and need to which the proposal is responding. The development of the policies and the policy alternatives analyzed within the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact*

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*Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* are guided by the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources in defining the purposes to be accomplished in fulfilling the need to update the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. The Board of Natural Resources' policy objectives set necessary parameters on updating the policies in the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan* and cannot be divorced from the statements of purpose and need. Finalizing the objectives, purpose and need was one of the primary functions and goals of the SEPA scoping process and was identified as such at that time in order to provide the necessary sideboards for developing reasonable alternatives. In some instances several objectives were met by the development of a range of policy alternatives for a specific policy subject. In other instances, a specific policy subject area was developed to fulfill a specific policy objective. The aggregate of the policies and alternatives analyzed in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* have been narrowed to meet the aggregate of the policy objectives, including the purpose and need for updating the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*.

**Subject Area: Old-Growth Stands in Western Washington (formerly “Older Forests and Old Growth”)**

**Comment Summary:**

Need to map to show impacts to junior taxing districts.

Analyze detrimental effects of the old-growth definition on trust beneficiaries.

**Response:**

In June 2005, DNR published a report as directed by the Legislature on the location of potential old growth on state forested trust lands in Western Washington. This report was directed by Legislative Bill ESHB 2573, Section 905, and has included the methodology for identifying potential old growth, as well as maps of its possible location. This report is available online on DNR's website at [www.dnr.wa.gov/htdocs/fr/sales/sustainharvest/sustainharvest.html](http://www.dnr.wa.gov/htdocs/fr/sales/sustainharvest/sustainharvest.html).

Old growth as defined by the Board's Preferred Alternative is captured within and is a subset of old forests as defined and discussed in the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on Alternatives for Sustainable Forest Management of State Trust Lands in Western Washington*. That FEIS fully analyzed the role of old forest, which includes old growth stands as is now defined by the Board's Preferred Alternative for old growth in the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*, in meeting HCP commitments, regulatory requirements and the Board of Natural Resources' policies, and in calculating the harvest level for each trust beneficiary. In other words, the role of old growth as defined in the Board of Natural Resources' policy was captured by definition in the old forest analysis and calculation of harvest levels for each trust beneficiary.

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**Comment Summary:**

The *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* lacks technical and supporting scientific documentation for 80-acre stand size minimum.

**Response:**

The *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* reference the “United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, 1986, Old-Growth Definition Task Group, Interim definition for old-growth Douglas-fir and mixed-conifer forests in the Pacific Northwest and California, Research Note PNW-447, USDA Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station, Portland, OR” which provides the supporting scientific documentation for the 80-acre standard minimum for ecologically functioning old growth.

This *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* has been amended to clarify that “while stands of less than 80 acres are often influenced by edge conditions and are not expected to provide interior fully functioning old growth forest conditions, the forest structures may still play important ecological roles within a landscape context.”

**Comment Summary:**

Analysis does not include failure to implement the *Forest Resource Plan* and HCP planning policy and, therefore, reliance on experimental management of old growth in the Olympic Experimental State Forest (OESF) is problematic, except for controlled experiments under the adaptive management program.

**Response:**

DNR disagrees with the commenter’s remarks regarding the implementation of past planning policies.

The March 2006 Settlement Agreement prohibits any harvest activity in old growth stands for any reason, including research purposes, until 2014 or the establishment of a new sustainable harvest level, whichever is later. In addition, the agreement directs proceeding with the Olympic Experimental State Forest land plan second in line behind the South Puget Sound Forest Land Plan and it will include all elements of the landscape planning process required by the HCP.

**Comment Summary:**

Cumulative effects analysis is inadequate. Also, it fails to analyze the alternatives individually.

**Response:**

The difference in the potential for cumulative impacts among the alternatives is negligible, because of the very small percentage of the old growth that: 1) exists



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on forested state trust lands, and 2) would actually be available for harvest. However, any potential impact from the harvest of old growth is virtually eliminated under the Board's Preferred Alternative. Harvest of any old growth outside the OESF is not allowed and harvest of old growth for research purposes in the OESF could not occur until at least 2014. After 2014, any harvest of old growth in the OESF for research purposes would be subject to SEPA and consideration of significant environmental impacts identified at that time. Please refer to the Affected Environment subsection of the Old-Growth Stands in Western Washington policy subject area for a discussion of the larger context of land ownerships as it relates to protection of the Northern Spotted Owl.

**Comment Summary:**

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives.

**Response:**

A suggestion was made that old growth should be protected down to 5 and 10-acre stands. The Board's Preferred Alternative has been amended to defer harvest of old growth for stands 5 acres and larger that originated naturally before the year 1850.

SEPA requires the analysis of a range of alternatives that can reasonably meet the objectives of a proposal, specifying the purpose and need to which the proposal is responding. The development of the policies and the policy alternatives analyzed within the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* are guided by the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources in defining the purposes to be accomplished in fulfilling the need to update the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. The Board of Natural Resources' policy objectives set necessary parameters on updating the policies in the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan* and cannot be divorced from the statements of purpose and need. Finalizing the objectives, purpose and need was one of the primary functions and goals of the SEPA scoping process and was identified as such at that time in order to provide the necessary sideboards for developing reasonable alternatives. In some instances, several objectives were met by the development of a range of policy alternatives for a specific policy subject. In other instances, a specific policy subject area was developed to fulfill a specific policy objective. The aggregate of the policies and alternatives analyzed in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* have been narrowed to meet the aggregate of the policy objectives including the purpose and need for updating the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*.

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**Comment Summary:**

Does the policy comply with the Skamania decision where there's a reliance on "social and cultural" interests in determining future actions? Policy should include "obligation to the trust beneficiaries" as primary.

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative includes active transfer of old-growth stands with compensation when it is in the trusts' best interest to do so. Old-growth stands deferred from harvest for social or cultural reasons, and not for other trust-related reasons, will be a priority for transfer out of trust status when full compensation to the trust(s) is secured.

**Comment Summary:**

Policy should direct what happens to small acreages of old growth as they blow down, burn, insect infestation, etc.

Policy should address old growth salvage of blowdown, fire, damaged and those affected by insects and disease.

**Response:**

If an old-growth stand suffers blowdown, fire, etc., such that it no longer retains the structure that makes it old growth, it would no longer be subject to the old growth policy statements. The stand would then be managed according to other Board of Natural Resources' policy, legal and contractual obligations, including the possibility of being protected, salvaged, or retained as a special ecological feature.

**Comment Summary:**

Recommend protection extend to <80 acres down to 5 and 10-acres for significant stands, especially those comprised of underrepresented plant communities.

Criteria too vague for where old growth, other than that which contributes to HCP objectives, will be subject to management activities leading to future conflicts over old growth.

Recommend permanent protection of all mature and old growth forests and biological legacies (e.g., large trees, down woody material).

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative defers from harvest old-growth stands down to five acres in size. Please also refer to other responses below regarding transfer of old growth out of trust status for protection of large trees and a response in the Catastrophic Loss Prevention section regarding retention of large woody material.

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**Comment Summary:**

Recommend using Old Growth Scientific Committee definition approach, rather than the HCP.

**Response:**

DNR is now using the Old Growth Scientific Committee's Weighted Old Growth Habitat Index (WOGHI) approach rather than the HCP definition as a first screen as to where old growth may be on forested state trust lands. Final determination of a stand as old growth will be dependent on field or other means of verification.

**Comment Summary:**

Clarify "old forest conditions."

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative for General Silvicultural Strategy identifies stands in the niche diversification and fully functional stages of stand development as contributing to the 10-15 percent older or "old" forest target for each HCP planning unit.

**Comment Summary:**

Clarify how policy will treat stands that are on an advanced developmental trajectory to an older-forest condition when the 10-15 percent is not met. Recommend they (niche diversification), even those that have been managed, not be harvested until 10-15 percent of older forest is achieved.

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative for General Silvicultural Strategy directs DNR to identify suitable structurally complex forests to be managed to meet older-forest targets (10-15 percent of each HCP planning unit) over time, through assessing landscape conditions. These assessments will be used to determine which structurally complex stands, other than old growth (which are all deferred to help meet older-forest targets) should be managed to meet targets, based on current conditions in the HCP planning unit. More detail as to the assessment process and criteria for identifying suitable stands to manage for older-forest targets will be developed through implementation.

**Comment Summary:**

Clarify guidance for eastside old growth in the absence of Board of Natural Resources policy.

**Response:**

During the 2006 legislative session, a provision was added to the 2006 supplemental capital budget (ESSB 6384 Section 189) to direct DNR to conduct

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an inventory of old growth forests located on state lands east of the crest of the Cascade Mountains. This inventory is to be completed in two phases. The first phase, to be completed by July 1, 2007, will identify reference stands for various plant associations; while the second phase, to be completed by December 15, 2007, will use the definition to produce an inventory of old growth forests. This information will then be used in the Eastern Washington sustainable harvest calculation. Until research helps identify old growth in Eastern Washington, DNR is retaining structures that may be important elements of historic old growth forests. Along the east slope of the Cascade Range, in the range of the northern spotted owl, DNR is maintaining and developing submature and mature owl habitat that is expected to develop into older forest stands. In the Klickitat HCP planning unit, DNR is retaining an average of six to 12 trees per acre of the largest diameter classes as part of its forest health and HCP strategies. DNR is also developing late successional forest as part of its *Loomis State Forest Final Landscape Plan* (June 1996). In addition, DNR retains large diameter trees as part of its land management activities across all of Eastern Washington. Finally, on forested state lands east of the Cascade crest, as required by ESSB 6384 Section 189 (passed by the Legislature in 2006), DNR is retaining all Douglas-fir, ponderosa pine, and larch trees 160 years in age or older with a diameter of 28 inches or more.

**Comment Summary:**

Clarify whether old growth will be transferred out of the trust under Alternative 2 and under what circumstances.

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative defers harvest of all old growth stands defined as those stands five acres and larger that are in the most structurally complex stage of stand development and have an origin date prior to 1850. The Board's Preferred Alternative makes it an immediate priority to seek transfer of all old-growth stands not protected for other reasons, i.e., HCP requirements related to habitat, out of trust status with compensation. The Board's Preferred Alternative directs DNR to retain very large diameter structurally unique trees as described in the HCP to meet HCP requirements for very large structurally unique trees. These trees are also often referred to as "old growth remnants."

**Comment Summary:**

Explore a trade of 15,000 (OESF) with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for land that can be managed.

**Response:**

DNR has had numerous conversations with the U.S. Forest Service over the last 10-20 years regarding potential land exchanges, with very limited results. However, DNR will continue to look at opportunities, like the one suggested, to improve the position of the trust.

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**Comment Summary:**

Concerned about the definition of old growth and the management within older forests on thousands of acres fitting this category on the Peninsula and the corresponding detrimental affects on trust beneficiaries.

**Response:**

The Board of Natural Resources' Preferred Alternative does not defer old growth in the Olympic Experimental State Forest from harvest, but does limit harvest operations in old growth to activities directly tied to research. However, the Board of Natural Resources entered into a Settlement Agreement in March 2006. Under the terms and for the length of the Agreement, DNR will not authorize or conduct any harvest in old-growth stands in the Olympic Experimental State Forest identified as "old forest" as part of that agreement. Most, if not all, of the old growth as defined by the Board's Preferred Alternative is not available for harvest due to HCP commitments, although some experimental harvest is allowed. However, the March 2006 Settlement Agreement further restricts or eliminates the option for experimental harvest at least until 2014.

**Subject Area: Wildlife Habitat****Comment Summary:**

Actions to obtain specified harvest levels should raise alarm given recent lack of success in spotted owl recovery expectations.

The *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* should consider recent/current information, e.g., recent owl studies showing declines in populations and recommend increasing habitat rather than decreasing habitat for owls and salmon.

**Response:**

None of the policy changes analyzed in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* propose specific harvest levels. Over the next ten years, harvest levels on west-side department trust lands will be based on the recently adopted sustainable harvest level policies (*Final EIS on Alternatives for Sustainable Forest Management on State Trust Lands in Washington*, DNR, 2005) and on the Settlement Agreement entered into by the Board of Natural Resources in March 2006.

None of the policy choices alter or change DNR's requirements under its HCP and Forest Practices rules to protect and increase wildlife habitat on forested state trust lands. In other words, none of the alternatives knowingly decrease habitat for owls or salmon.

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More recent owl information (Courtney, et al., 2004) and (Pierce, et al., 2005) has been considered in this Final EIS in regards to policy alternatives in several policy subjects, including Wildlife, Forest Health, Catastrophic Loss and Old Growth Stands in Western Washington.

Alternative 3 and the Board's Preferred Alternative propose a biodiversity approach. This approach will be emphasized in strategic locations that provide the most benefit to the species, i.e. spotted owl conservation areas, the Olympic Experimental State Forest, and owl areas as described in the March 2006 Settlement Agreement.

**Comment Summary:**

On what proportion of DNR ownership will “biological diversity” management techniques be implemented? Analysis should show over what proportion of DNR ownership Alternative 3 would be implemented in order to analyze the impacts of the alternative.

Suggest more specific policy guidance on implementing “biological diversity” to ensure public’s confidence that this approach will work.

If DNR believes that managing for biodiversity is the underpinning for sustainable forestry, what justification does it have for not employing these techniques on some portion of trust lands?

Better define “biological diversity” to require consistency with trust objectives.

Policy should address maintaining or enhancing habitat connectivity to minimize the effects of fragmentation.

**Response:**

As discussed in the *Draft and Final EIS on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and as directed by the Board of Natural Resources in Resolution No. 1134, in Western Washington, biodiversity management is to be applied with a priority for habitat management areas (such as the Olympic Experimental State Forest; nesting, roosting, foraging; and dispersal management areas, riparian, and marbled murrelet management areas), other upland areas with specific objectives (such as areas of potential slope instability, visual areas) and then uplands with general management objectives. The prioritized areas (habitat management areas, riparian, and uplands with specific objectives) represent approximately 74 percent of the forested state trust land base in Western Washington (pg. 4-17, Table 4.2-9, *Final EIS on Alternatives for Sustainable Forest Management of State Trust Lands in Western Washington*).

However, biodiversity may be applied at both the landscape and stand levels and at various intensities. DNR will deliberately manage for various levels of biodiversity on all of our harvestable lands. To that end, DNR utilizes “cohort management” where multi-rotational, or legacy cohorts co-exist with one or more rotational, commercial cohorts within the same forest management unit. While

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legacy cohorts are managed to achieve environmental forest management unit (FMU) objectives (such as wildlife and mycorrhizal habitats), one or more commercial cohorts within the same FMU are managed to achieve the economic FMU objective.

By creating a mosaic of interconnected forest patches in varying stages of structural development, the biological diversity management approach promotes habitat connectivity across the landscape. The resulting network of forest patches consisting of adjacent multi-rotation and commercial cohorts, provides a range of habitat characteristics capable of supporting a greater diversity and abundance of wildlife species. This approach effectively reduces the number of small isolated patches of mature forest, which often lack the ecological functions of larger patches and can act as a barrier for species moving across the landscape. By encouraging the development of contiguous forest stands that offer varying levels of canopy cover (e.g., multi-rotational cohorts), the biodiversity pathways approach would reduce the effects of habitat fragmentation associated with habitat loss and the isolation of less mobile species.

DNR's objective of a "biodiversity pathways" approach to silviculture is for simultaneous increases in both habitat and income (Board of Natural Resources Resolution No. 1134) through the creation of more structural diversity across the landscape. The use of biodiversity pathways to accomplish habitat objectives will be done in a manner that fulfills trust objectives, e.g. under HCP obligations that require certain types of habitat, in exchange for benefits to the trusts.

In Eastern Washington, the primary emphasis on uneven aged management techniques that improve forest health across landscapes through selective harvesting and other techniques are intended to produce stands and forests that mimic the historical forest ecology. These are consistent with the outcomes targeted in the biodiversity conservation approach.

In addition, it is anticipated that biodiversity approaches will be modeled during the Eastern Washington sustainable harvest calculation to determine the best way to achieve the intent of the Board's Preferred Alternative for wildlife habitat.

**Comment Summary:**

To what extent will uncommon habitats be protected under Alternative 3?

**Response:**

Management of uncommon habitats and unique habitat features on DNR trust lands is provided under DNR's HCP for Western Washington trust lands within the range of the northern spotted owl. The HCP is an agreement between DNR and the federal agencies to ensure that activities conducted on DNR lands will comply with all mandates related to species and habitat protection specified under the Endangered Species Act. Conservation strategies for salmonids, spotted owls and marbled murrelets afford protection to many unlisted species, but primarily those associated with late-successional forests and riparian ecosystems. For

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species that rely on uncommon habitats or habitat elements, the HCP includes provisions for the protection of eight types of uncommon habitats in Western Washington including talus, caves, cliffs, oak woodlands, large snags, large and structurally unique trees, balds (grass- or moss-dominated forest openings), and mineral springs. However, protection is limited to where these habitats have been identified and small patches (e.g., cliffs less than 25 feet high and below 5,000 ft elevation, talus slopes less than 1 acre) receive no specific protection (page IV-152-154, HCP, DNR 1997).

Currently, there is no direction provided in DNR's HCP for the management of uncommon habitats on lands outside Western Washington, except for what is provided through the existing and proposed Special Ecological Features policy, as they are defined by the *Natural Heritage Plan* and the Board's Preferred Alternative Riparian Conservation policy. By relying on the *Natural Heritage Plan*, the list of special ecological features are reviewed and revised every two years. The review and analysis takes into account factors that affect the statewide conservation status of each of the special species and ecosystems. Positive factors, such as protection efforts, and negative factors, such as declining populations or increased threats, are both considered. And because the *Natural Heritage Plan* is designed to provide a statewide view, positive and negative factors are assessed across all categories of land ownership (federal, state and private). As a result, the list of special ecological features is regularly revised to account for cumulative impacts from activities across all ownerships in the state.

Most forested state trust lands are covered under DNR's forest practices rules and the recently adopted Forest Practices HCP; however they do not include provisions for the protection of uncommon habitat types or unique habitat features. However, the Board's Preferred Alternative for Riparian Conservation policy directs use of riparian and wetland management zones to protect key non-timber resources associated with riparian and wetland areas in Eastern Washington.

Alternatives 2 and 3 evaluated in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* would achieve greater protection of uncommon habitats than Alternative 1, because they emphasize protection of non-listed species, many of which use uncommon habitats (e.g., larch salamanders, bats, golden eagles). Therefore, it is likely that through voluntary participation on initiatives related to protection of non-listed species, uncommon habitats would receive greater protection than under Alternative 1, which limits voluntary participation to efforts related to listed species. Although Alternative 3 emphasizes landscape level, biodiversity management, it does not eliminate efforts focused on individual species. Appropriate clarifications to wording for the Board's Preferred Alternative have been incorporated into this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*.

**Comment Summary:**

Concerns over lack of analysis and the lack of more specific language in the policy regarding Eastern Washington.



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*Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* should recognize the geographical limits of protection provided under DNR's HCP and the *Northwest Forest Plan*, thus does not address many east side forest-dependent species that occur outside of the range of the owl.

**Response:**

While eastside forest-dependent species that occur outside of the range of the northern spotted owl are not covered by the *Northwest Forest Plan* or DNR's HCP, protection on federal lands is afforded to these species through individual forest plans (e.g., Colville, Wenatchee, and Okanogan National Forests). These plans provide standards and guidelines for conducting activities on federal forestlands that work to protect these species and habitats. On eastside state trust lands, state forest practices rules provide protection to listed species through specific habitat requirements (e.g., leave tree requirements, riparian buffers, etc). The Forest Practices HCP, which provides protection to riparian associated species, covers eastside lands, but focuses on riparian and aquatic habitats. For unlisted forest-dependent species not specifically addressed by forest practices rules or the Forest Practices HCP, DNR will voluntarily work on issues of local, regional or statewide concerns. For example, the DNR has had a Lynx Habitat Management Plan in place since 1996. A statement clarifying the area covered by these policies has been added to this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*.

In Eastern Washington, the primary emphasis on uneven aged management techniques that improve forest health across landscapes through selective harvesting and other techniques are intended to produce stands and forests that mimic the historical forest ecology. These are consistent with the outcomes targeted in the biodiversity conservation approach.

In addition, it is anticipated that biodiversity approaches will be modeled during the Eastern Washington sustainable harvest calculation to determine the best way to achieve the intent of the Board's Preferred Alternative for wildlife habitat.

See response to uncommon habitats comment summary above for additional protection provided under the existing and proposed Special Ecological Features policy, as they are defined by the *Natural Heritage Plan* and the proposed Riparian Conservation policy.

**Comment Summary:**

Draft EIS needs to show/analyze the potential impacts of less protection on state trust lands vs. those on federal lands.

**Response:**

Modifications to Policy No. 23 under the Board's Preferred Alternative include direction for DNR to voluntarily participate in efforts to recover and restore endangered and threatened species to the extent that such participation is

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consistent with trust obligations, and to voluntarily participate with federal and state agencies and other organizations or governments on initiatives related to non-listed species and habitat, also when consistent with trust objectives. The Board's Preferred Alternative emphasizes landscape level biodiversity management, however the commitment to the protection of individual species, both listed and non-listed, would continue. The discussion for the Board's Preferred Alternative has been modified to reflect this.

While both DNR and the federal government manage forest lands in Washington, they do so under different statutory goals and requirements. An important example of this difference is that the federal public lands are not held in trust managed for the long-term financial gain of specific beneficiaries, as are DNR-managed forested trust lands. The framework governing which policy options are reasonable for DNR are established through the policy objectives for the *Policy for Sustainable Forests*, which incorporate many of the Board of Natural Resources and DNR's fiduciary obligations concerning these lands.

A discussion of differences in protection afforded on federal and state lands has been added to the cumulative impacts section of this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*.

**Comment Summary:**

Cumulative effects discussion needs to include impacts from global warming, the Draft Forest Practices HCP and other efforts to conserve endangered species, salmonids in particular.

**Response:**

Changes to wildlife habitat due to global climate change are too speculative to allow for meaningful analysis of the relationship of the policy alternative to changes in climate. A brief discussion of potential cumulative impacts of long-term climate change on Pacific Northwest forests has been added to the cumulative impacts section of this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*. Impacts of the proposed alternatives on the effort to conserve endangered species addressed by the proposed Forest Practices HCP, which is directed toward aquatic and riparian ecosystems, has also been incorporated into this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*.

**Comment Summary:**

Inaccurate to state on page 3-61 that state or federally listed species not covered under DNR's HCP or forest practices rules are all associated with late-successional or riparian habitats. To say that these species "may" be protected under the provisions of DNR's HCP or forest practices rules is unsubstantiated.

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**Response:**

The statement that occurred on page 3-61 in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* has been amended in the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* as follows:

There are a number of state or federally-listed vertebrates and invertebrates, as well as numerous non-listed species, present on state trust lands but not specifically covered under either the state lands DNR's HCP, the Forest Practices HCP, or current Forest Practices Act and state forest practices rules. However, of these species, those associated with ecosystem elements protected under DNR's HCP and the Forest Practices HCP, riparian ecosystems, and wetlands, including late successional forest as well as riparian and wetland areas, will receive protection. Additional protection of these species is afforded through a combination of federal and state laws and voluntary agreements with other agencies directed towards issues of local concern. These include, but are not limited to, individual forest plans in Eastern Washington for national forests on which these species also occur, Bureau of Land Management policies, and HCPs entered into by private companies.

**Comment Summary:**

Alternative 3 lacks the commitment to recover and restore endangered and threatened species that is included in Alternatives 1 and 2.

**Response:**

The policy statements under all the alternatives include the intention to voluntarily participate in additional efforts beyond those required by state and federal law and contractual commitments to recover and restore endangered and threatened species (*Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* pages 3-65 to 3-67) when consistent with trust objectives. The policy statement under Alternative 3 includes an added emphasis on the conservation of biodiversity in DNR's voluntary conservation efforts, however it maintains the species-specific approach to conservation present under the other alternatives.

**Comment Summary:**

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives.

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**Response:**

SEPA requires the analysis of a range of alternatives that can reasonably meet the objectives of a proposal, specifying the purpose and need to which the proposal is responding. The development of the policies and the policy alternatives analyzed within the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* are guided by the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources in defining the purposes to be accomplished in fulfilling the need to update the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. The Board of Natural Resources' policy objectives set necessary parameters on updating the policies in the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan* and cannot be divorced from the statements of purpose and need. Finalizing the objectives, purpose and need was one of the primary functions and goals of the SEPA scoping process and was identified as such at that time in order to provide the necessary sideboards for developing reasonable alternatives. In some instances, several objectives were met by the development of a range of policy alternatives for a specific policy subject. In other instances, a specific policy subject area was developed to fulfill a specific policy objective. The aggregate of the policies and alternatives analyzed in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* have been narrowed to meet the aggregate of the policy objectives, including the purpose and need for updating the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*.

A comment was made that “if DNR believes that managing for biodiversity is the underpinning for sustainable forestry, what justification does it have for not employing these techniques on some portion of trust lands?” Biodiversity may be applied at both the landscape and stand levels and at various intensities. DNR will deliberately manage for various levels of biodiversity on all of our harvestable lands. To that end, DNR utilizes “cohort management” where multi-rotational, or legacy cohorts co-exist with one or more rotational, commercial cohorts within the same forest management unit. While legacy cohorts are managed to achieve environmental forest management unit (FMU) objectives (such as wildlife and mycorrhizal habitats), one or more commercial cohorts within the same FMU are managed to achieve the economic FMU objective.

DNR's objective of a “biodiversity pathways” approach to silviculture is for simultaneous increases in both habitat and income (Board of Natural Resources Resolution No. 1134) through the creation of more structural diversity across the landscape. The use of biodiversity pathways to accomplish habitat objectives will be done in a manner that fulfills trust objectives, e.g. under HCP obligations that require certain types of habitat, in exchange for benefits to the trusts.

**Comment Summary:**

Ask that DNR withdraw the proposal to return certain northern spotted owl habitat circles to harvestable status due to further jeopardizing declining populations and destruction and disturbance of mature and old-growth forest.

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**Response:**

DNR's role in supporting northern spotted owl populations is well defined in the HCP. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife both agree that DNR's HCP remains an appropriate conservation strategy for forested state trust lands affecting the northern spotted owls in Washington State. Neither the Board of Natural Resources nor DNR believe it is necessary or appropriate for DNR to change what is already outlined in the HCP for northern spotted owls. Alternative 3 and the Board's Preferred alternative are expected to result in the greatest amount of additional suitable spotted owl habitat in strategic locations that provide the most benefit to the species, i.e. spotted owl conservation areas, the Olympic Experimental State Forest, and owl areas as described in the March 2006 Settlement Agreement.

**Comment Summary:**

Stay within the "obligations" of the trust mandate rather than the "interests" of the trusts. Need to clarify how participation in wildlife enhancement and protection is a benefit to the trusts through a thorough analysis of such proposals.

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative states "consistent with trust objectives," rather than "interests of the trusts."

Participation in voluntary wildlife enhancement and protection is a prudent action on behalf of the trusts when it:

- Prevents losses of ecological function, which may cause the listing of additional species as threatened or endangered;
- Avoids or resolves legal challenges to site-specific management activities in a reasonable and cost-effective manner;
- Avoids circumstances likely to lead to public demand for ever-increasing, restrictive regulations on forest practices; and
- Avoids the resulting contract disputes, uncertainty and loss of the ability to manage trust lands for their primary purpose.

All of the above are considered by DNR prior to entering into voluntary agreements.

**Comment Summary:**

Does participation in efforts to protect habitat include other organizations or agencies? How will cooperation and participation be determined and does it include land exchanges and lands adjacent to other agencies' and organizations' lands?

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**Response:**

Yes, but it does not always require participation with other organizations or agencies. Policies and guidelines related to land transactions comes from the *Asset Stewardship Plan* and DNR's Asset Management Council. The new *Policy for Sustainable Forests* document will contain a discussion regarding land transactions and these other documents.

Participation can be with either organizations or other agencies. How and when such participation occurs will depend on the circumstances and the relationship to land management strategies. Land transactions are often used as a tool to protect certain habitat and compensate the trust or acquire lands better managed by the trust.

The Board's Preferred Alternative directs DNR to voluntarily work with other agencies and organizations on initiatives related to listed, as well as non-listed, species and their habitats when consistent with trust objectives.

DNR believes this policy direction allows DNR to utilize species-specific management approaches, when consistent with the broader goal of managing for ecosystem sustainability and trust objectives.

**Comment Summary:**

Amend Alternative 3 to specify the use of "variable density thinning" vs. evenly spaced, standard commercial thinning.

**Response:**

The discussion on the Board's Preferred Alternative has been amended to reflect these changes.

**Comment Summary:**

Policy should allow for things such as phased clearcutting of forests to protect habitat when warranted.

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative gives DNR the flexibility to employ a variety of strategies and silvicultural practices, to restore and recover listed species and their habitats, as well as initiatives related to unlisted species and their habitats, when consistent with trust objectives.

**Comment Summary:**

Concerns over lack of analysis and the lack of more specific language in the policy regarding Eastern Washington.

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**Response:**

The policy alternatives as proposed apply to both Eastern and Western Washington. The analyses and criteria used to identify and disclose the impacts of the alternatives include Eastern as well as Western Washington. The availability of the sustainable harvest model coupled with better forest inventory data in Western Washington has allowed DNR, through the Western Washington sustainable harvest calculation, to be more explicit and clear on the strategies used to meet wildlife habitat objectives and requirements.

In Eastern Washington, development of strategies to meet the Board's Preferred Alternative for Wildlife Habitat will occur over time as part of implementation through DNR's forest land planning efforts and the Eastern Washington sustainable harvest calculation.

**Comment Summary:**

Recommend DNR work with Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife to develop species and habitat management plans rather than relying on existing protections, such as the riparian strategy.

**Response:**

Working with the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife to develop the plans that protect wildlife is possible under language in Alternatives 2, 3 and the Board's Preferred Alternative.

Alternatives 2, 3 and the Board's Preferred Alternative allows DNR to voluntarily participate with other agencies, which may include the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, in efforts to protect listed species and their habitats.

**Comment Summary:**

No specific attention is afforded to species of cultural significance to the Tribes.

**Response:**

In addition to the Wildlife Habitat policy, the Board's Preferred Alternative for Cultural Resources directs DNR to actively communicate and promote collaboration with the Tribes to address culturally significant areas. Under the Cultural Resources policy, DNR could be made aware of wildlife species of special cultural significance to a Tribe and its relationship to forested state trust lands and department activities.

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## **Subject Area: Watershed Systems**

### **Comment Summary:**

Forest practices rules are not adequate to prevent impacts from forestry and related cumulative effects.

DNR's HCP planning unit scale is not an adequate scale to address cumulative effects.

Alternative 1 if applied as intended would meet all of the policy objectives better than the other alternatives. The assertion that Alternative 3 is just as effective is not supported by any evidence or scientific analysis.

DNR's watershed analysis program should be re-invigorated to ensure that cumulative impacts of multiple landowners logging in watersheds does not impact the right of the people to clean drinking water and wildlife habitat.

Landscape planning should include the watershed scale analysis to address cumulative effects.

### **Response:**

The forest practices rules are not at issue here. At issue is the Board of Natural Resources' policy for addressing cumulative impacts of watershed systems as they relate to water quality and quantity.

The HCP planning unit is the right scale for analysis because it is the geographical planning unit scale that is most used under current Board of Natural Resources policy and implementation of Board of Natural Resources policy, such as DNR's HCP. As stated in the Board's Preferred Alternative for Forest Land Planning, there is flexibility to conduct this planning and assessment at different scales and intensity to address unique circumstances. In no way does the Board's Preferred Alternative prevent analysis of potentially significant cumulative impacts on a watershed scale or at an intensity similar to regulatory watershed analysis. To do so is obviously necessary when addressing potentially significant cumulative impacts to watershed systems. Additionally, the expanded forested state trust lands SEPA checklist reviews a proposed activity within the larger context of watershed and other natural processes across the landscape.

Alternative 1 has been misinterpreted to mean "regulatory" watershed analysis. In this misunderstood manner, the policy is infeasible because the DNR cannot afford the cost of initiating watershed analysis under the forest practices rules for each watershed in which it owns land. The Board's Preferred Alternative clarifies the confusion and allows for a flexible approach to assessing the potential for cumulative impacts. The forest practices watershed analysis process is still available as one of several options for analyzing cumulative impacts.

The Board's Preferred Alternative will not adversely affect people's ability to obtain clean drinking water, or their access to wildlife habitat because the policy



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is limited to a discussion of the types of approaches available to DNR and the opportunity for DNR to address cumulative impacts.

**Comment Summary:**

Cumulative effects analysis is inadequate, since it doesn't analyze the impacts of the proposed policy in conjunction with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future and fails to address impacts from global warming, Forests and Fish HCP, and other efforts to conserve aquatic habitat and the cumulative impacts of multiple management strategies on adjacent private and federal lands.

**Response:**

The analysis of the environmental impacts of the proposed Watershed Systems policies is done within the context of understanding the existing regulations for addressing cumulative impacts in watershed systems. The assessments of impacts and existing conditions in this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* are summarized by the protection and risks inherent in the proposed policies in the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* when combined with other laws and policies that address the same elements of the environment, i.e., impacts related to water quantity and water quality. It isn't clear what additional analysis is being requested, since no specific present, past or reasonably foreseeable future impacts were identified for inclusion in this cumulative impacts analysis.

The Watershed Systems section of the *Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* does not discuss climate change for good reasons. As explained in the Affected Environment section, the state of Washington has extreme diversity in climate and hydrologic regimes. The Board's Preferred Alternative is designed to address management of forest resources throughout the state. Therefore, it has the flexibility to accommodate climate changes if and when they occur. The *Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* also allows for adaptive management to respond to a changing environment. Because climate change is most likely a relatively gradual process, it will be more effective to adjust policy to address actual climate changes, rather than speculate on what changes may occur in the future. DNR is not aware of, nor has it been informed of, any meaningful methods to analyze future changes nor the impacts of these changes to the environment.

**Comment Summary:**

Question the statement, "The principle means of transporting sediment to water bodies is landslides." That may be true, but most of that sediment stays in one place. The principle method of adding sediment to the water column is soil disturbance by humans.

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**Response:**

The statement was describing sediment transport in the context of undisturbed forest conditions. On a volume basis, the statement is true. It is common for landslides to reach stream channels. After the sediment is delivered to the channel, stream flow becomes the significant means of transport. DNR does not dispute that human soil disturbances can increase the level of sedimentation in streams. The influences of soil disturbance on sediment delivery to water bodies are discussed in the Watershed Systems policy subject area in Chapter 3 of this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*.

**Comment Summary:**

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives. That said, Policy Objectives 1, 2, 8 and 10 should also apply. (Note that our statement that these policy objectives should apply is a SEPA concern—that the policy statements are supposed to satisfy the policy objectives—rather than a statement of support for the objectives; see concerns with objectives, described above).

**Response:**

Comments were submitted that the HCP planning unit scale is not adequate to address cumulative effects and also that landscape planning should include the watershed scale analysis to address cumulative effects. The Board's Preferred Alternative for Watershed Systems provides for cumulative impacts analyses to be conducted at different scales, including the watershed scale.

SEPA requires the analysis of a range of alternatives that can reasonably meet the objectives of a proposal, specifying the purpose and need to which the proposal is responding. The development of the policies and the policy alternatives analyzed within the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* are guided by the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources in defining the purposes to be accomplished in fulfilling the need to update the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. The Board of Natural Resources' policy objectives set necessary parameters on updating the policies in the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan* and cannot be divorced from the statements of purpose and need. Finalizing the objectives, purpose and need was one of the primary functions and goals of the SEPA scoping process and was identified as such at that time in order to provide the necessary sideboards for developing reasonable alternatives. In some instances, several objectives were met by the development of a range of policy alternatives for a specific policy subject. In other instances, a specific policy subject area was developed to fulfill a specific policy objective. The aggregate of the policies and alternatives analyzed in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the

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*Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* have been narrowed to meet the aggregate of the policy objectives, including the purpose and need for updating the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*.

The Watershed Systems policy subject works in conjunction with other policy subjects to fulfill the need and purpose of the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* in meeting the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources.

Although the Watershed Systems policy alternatives primarily addressed Policy Objectives 3, 5 and 6, we also took Policy Objectives 1, 2 and 10 into consideration in developing these alternatives by having the policy meet state and federal laws, trust obligations and contractual commitments; by having the policy balance income, protection and other social benefits from the four perspectives listed in Policy Objective 2, not the least of which are intergenerational equity and not foreclosing future options; and by providing annual reports and a five-year assessment of the effectiveness of this policy as well as other policies in the *Policy for Sustainable Forests*. Policy Objective 8 is met by other policy subject areas, e.g., Special Ecological Features, Old Growth Stands in Western Washington, Visual Impacts, and Cultural Resources.

It is also possible to identify watershed systems that fit within the criteria of Policy Objective 8. However, this would be a subsequent consideration to the primary intent of the Watershed Systems policy to assess the potential for cumulative impacts related to water quality and quantity.

**Comment Summary:**

Include a provision for compensation to the trust(s) for watershed mitigation.

**Response:**

Any mitigation developed would address identified potential significant environmental impacts as defined by SEPA. In the event mitigation was proposed to address issues, real or perceived, other than potential significant environmental impacts, the cost/benefit to the trusts would have to be considered, as well as opportunities for compensation.

**Comment Summary:**

Elimination of the 100-acre maximum for clearcuts is an ecological threat because a clearcut could exceed 100 acres by continuing a clearcut from one watershed to another.

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative for Watershed Systems retains the 100-acre limit on the size of even-aged harvest units. In addition, the forest practices rules require "green-up" of even-aged harvest units before carrying out another even-aged harvest adjacent to the previously harvested unit, if it involves the same landowner.

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**Comment Summary:**

Recommend including criteria for action triggers, e.g., monitoring of stream sediment load and water temperatures.

**Response:**

Use of triggers for developing mitigation is a concept that may have application during implementation of the *Policy for Sustainable Forests*. As strategies are developed for implementation, appropriate criteria will be considered.

**Subject Area: Riparian Conservation (formerly “Riparian Management Zones” and “Wetlands”)****Comment Summary:**

Cumulative effects are inadequate since they don’t analyze the impacts of the proposed policy in conjunction with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions and fails to address impacts from global warming, Forests and Fish HCP, and other efforts to conserve habitat and multiple management strategies on adjacent private and federal lands.

**Response:**

The *Final EIS for the Proposed Issuance of Multiple Species Incidental Take Permits or 4(d) Rules for the Washington State Forest Practices HCP* (January 2006) represents the current Washington forest practices rules with the assurances of an HCP. The cumulative effects analysis in this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* considers the current forest practices rules. The foundation of the *Forest Practices Habitat Conservation Plan* and current forest practices rules is adaptive management. The *Forest Practices Habitat Conservation Plan* poses no increased potential for adverse cumulative effects than those analyzed and incorporated by reference in this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*. Over time, it is anticipated that the potential for adverse cumulative effects will decrease due to Forest Practices rule changes and increased protective measures initiated by the adaptive management process. Various plans, including federal forest management plans (*Northwest Forest Plan*), state and private landowner HCPs, local watershed planning, and individual conservation and management efforts, “reflect a substantial wide-spread effort and financial commitment to improve water quality, putting listed species on a positive trend towards recovery and providing substantial protection for other aquatic and riparian-associated species across the State” (*Draft EIS for the Proposed Issuance of Multiple Species Incidental Take Permits or 4(d) Rules for the Washington State Forest Practices HCP* pages 5-37). Although the cumulative impacts will vary from watershed to watershed, the impacts should diminish statewide over time as the various plans and regulations are implemented.

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“Climate change may affect temperature and precipitation patterns, which in turn will affect snow pack levels, soil moisture, and natural disturbance regimes such as fire, insects, and wind throw” (Climate Impacts Group, 2004). Cumulative impacts from global warming will vary from ecoregion to ecoregion and are currently not reasonably foreseeable in terms of providing meaningful analysis of the combined impacts of changes in climate with the proposed policies. The Board’s Preferred Alternative for Riparian Conservation is designed to address management of forest resources throughout the state. It has the flexibility to accommodate climate changes if and when they occur. The *Draft* and *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* relies on adaptive management to respond to a changing environment.

**Comment Summary:**

The *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* states that a “moderate to high risk of adverse impacts to several functions of Type 5 waters exists under Alternative 1, primarily in Eastern Washington” and continues with “the analysis for Alternative 3 is identical to the analysis for Alternative 1.” Alternative 3 provides no additional protection to some Type 4 and 5 streams in Eastern Washington over Alternative 1, which is inconsistent with Policy Objectives 1, 2, 3, 5 and 8.

The Board of Natural Resources should consider a policy that mirrors forest practice standards, if federal assurances are secured in Forest and Fish process; not aware of credible science that supports the need of leaving timber along some seasonal non-fish bearing waters.

**Response:**

It is accurate to say that a moderate to high risk of adverse impacts to several functions of non-fish bearing waters exists for Eastern Washington under Riparian Management Zone Alternative 3 and the Board’s Preferred Alternative for Riparian Conservation in this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*. The *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* analysis have highlighted the importance of the implementation phase of this policy proposal under the Board’s Preferred Alternative in achieving the objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources in meeting the purpose and need of the *Policy for Sustainable Forests*. In the past and currently, DNR is complying with Alternative 1 by placing riparian management zones along all non-fish perennial streams and along some non-fish seasonal streams when its deemed necessary to protect key non-timber resources. However, DNR has identified the need for additional implementation direction to ensure consistent approaches to non-fish streams in Eastern Washington and to ensure DNR fully meets the intent of the Board’s Preferred Alternative. The Board’s Preferred Alternative states that DNR will establish riparian management zones along seasonal non-fish bearing waters when necessary to protect key non-timber resources, such as water quality, fish, wildlife habitat and sensitive

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riparian and wetland plant species. Implementation direction should be in place upon adoption of the policy or shortly thereafter (within six months) and may either be procedural or substantive (requiring SEPA analysis), but in either case the intent is to ensure that the policy is achieved.

The addition of “riparian” and “wetland” plant species in the Board’s Preferred Alternative is intended to place greater attention in the policy to the plant species and habitats of greatest importance to these geographic locations on the landscape.

Alternatives 1, 3 and the Board’s Preferred Alternative provide more protection of Type 4 and 5 streams in Eastern Washington than current forest practices rules to help ensure long-term productivity of riparian areas in Eastern Washington. Clearly these alternatives meet Policy Objective 1. The higher level of protection associated with these alternatives is intended to help balance environmental protection and trust income (Policy Objective 2).

Alternative 3 and the Board’s Preferred Alternative use updated language to be consistent with current terminology, a direct result of Policy Objective 3.

Alternative 3 and the Board’s Preferred Alternative also direct DNR to identify and protect key non-timber resources associated with all riparian areas including seasonal non-fish bearing waters and through the establishment of wetland management zones in Eastern Washington. Direction will be needed as discussed above to accomplish this based on professional judgment, best available science, and sound field forestry (Policy Objective 5). As stated, implementation will be key in accomplishing the outcomes described in Alternative 3 and the Board’s Preferred Alternative.

Finally, Alternatives 1, 3 and the Board’s Preferred Alternative for Riparian Conservation, as well as the Board’s Preferred Alternative for other policy subjects (Special Ecological Features), clearly are designed to meet Policy Objective 8.

The Board’s Preferred Alternative provides the policy language to achieve the objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources. The Board’s Preferred Alternative, in conjunction with the Implementation, Reporting and Modification of the Policy for Sustainable Forests will provide the ongoing direction and any correction needed to ensure the objectives of this policy are met.

Alternative 2, which relies more strictly on just the state forest practices rules and the HCP, was considered by the Board of Natural Resources.

**Comment Summary:**

Inappropriate to rely on future plans or tentative adaptive management programs for mitigation.

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**Response:**

The *Policy for Sustainable Forests* will help to ensure that policies are in place that will guide DNR's management in achieving the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources. The discussion about adaptive management and other efforts, such as the Type 5 riparian strategy, are requirements of other laws and policies that DNR is currently aware of or undertaking that will provide critical information on whether the Board's Preferred Alternative for Riparian Conservation is being met. As such, they need to be discussed, and will provide relevant information regarding the effective implementation of the Riparian Conservation policy.

**Comment Summary:**

The assumption is that "some of the areas are buffered, so some of the plants will be protected" is inadequate.

**Response:**

The discussion in this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* under the Significant Impacts and Mitigation Measures subsection in Chapter 3 for Riparian Conservation assumes because of the predominance of clumped distribution patterns for rare and sensitive species along riparian areas, that where riparian management zones are left, conservation needs will be met. The *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* acknowledge that conservation of these plants under the proposed policy will depend on appropriate placement of and management within riparian management zones, with the greatest risk remaining along Type 5 or seasonal non-fish bearing waters. DNR considers any sensitive plant species that are included in the Natural Heritage Program's database. The Board's Preferred Alternative commits DNR to establish riparian management zones along these waters as needed to protect sensitive riparian plant species, in addition to other resources. These issues are identified and reviewed under SEPA as site-specific proposals for management activities are made.

**Comment Summary:**

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives. That said, Policy Objectives 1, 2, 7, 8 and 10 should also apply.

**Response:**

SEPA requires the analysis of a range of alternatives that can reasonably meet the objectives of a proposal, specifying the purpose and need to which the proposal is responding. The development of the policies and the policy alternatives analyzed

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within the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* are guided by the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources in defining the purposes to be accomplished in fulfilling the need to update the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. The Board of Natural Resources' policy objectives set necessary parameters on updating the policies in the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan* and cannot be divorced from the statements of purpose and need. Finalizing the objectives, purpose and need was one of the primary functions and goals of the SEPA scoping process and was identified as such at that time in order to provide the necessary sideboards for developing reasonable alternatives. In some instances, several objectives were met by the development of a range of policy alternatives for a specific policy subject. In other instances, a specific policy subject area was developed to fulfill a specific policy objective. The aggregate of the policies and alternatives analyzed in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* have been narrowed to meet the aggregate of the policy objectives including the purpose and need for updating the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*.

Policy Objectives 1, 2, 7, 8 and 10 were considered as each policy subject area was discussed. The *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* have identified the policy objectives that were the most instrumental in guiding the particular policy subject. Objective 1 applies to several policies and is especially met by the Board's Preferred Alternative for Riparian Conservation, which for Western Washington relies on implementation of DNR's HCP. Objective 2 applies to several policy subjects and is also strongly considered in the Board's Preferred Alternative for Riparian Conservation to provide riparian and wetland protection of key non-timber resources. Objective 7 applies to several policy subjects, including Riparian Conservation, and will continue to apply as methods are developed to achieve the outcomes described by the policy for protection of key non-timber resources. Objective 8 was also an important consideration and is met by the Board's Preferred Alternative for Riparian Conservation that focuses protection to sensitive species. The Board's Preferred Alternative for Special Ecological Features has been expanded and clarified to allow for protection without compensation to the trusts when other trust objectives can be met. Objective 10 applies to all policy subjects in that they will all be subject to the Board's Preferred Alternative for Implementation, Reporting and Modification of the Policy for Sustainable Forests.

The Board's Preferred Alternative for Riparian Conservation incorporates or works in conjunction with other policy subjects to fulfill the need and purpose of the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* in meeting the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources.

**Comment Summary:**

Change Alternative 1 "when necessary" to "when advisable."



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**Response:**

DNR believes the phrase “when necessary” better conveys the intent of the policy. “When advisable” doesn’t convey the urgency of providing riparian management zones “when necessary” to protect key non-timber resources.

**Comment Summary:**

Larger stream buffers could benefit stream stability, fish habitat and water quality.

**Response:**

In Eastern Washington, DNR recognizes that in some cases, simply increasing the size of stream buffers could benefit streamside stability, habitat and water quality. Also refer to response above in this section regarding protection of Type 4 and 5 waters (Np and Ns) in Eastern Washington.

**Comment Summary:**

Only careful treatments designed to develop old forest characteristics in even-aged, densely stocked, structurally uniform, young, managed plantations should be allowed in riparian areas.

Hard to see how more harvesting in riparian management zones, including patch cutting, will improve habitat.

**Response:**

Foresters have used thinning techniques to allow the trees remaining in the forest to grow bigger and more quickly for decades. “Active management” in this context is merely applying known silvicultural techniques to achieve more rapid gains in habitat development. In Western Washington, active management in riparian areas will be carried out to meet the habitat objectives of the HCP. Such management will also be tailored to site-specific conditions.

Active management can change tree species composition and accelerate the development of larger trees within riparian areas over the long-term. Analysis contained in the *Final EIS on Alternatives for Sustainable Forest Management of State Trust Lands in Western Washington* shows that there are demonstrated long-term habitat benefits associated with such management.

DNR and the Federal Services have agreed upon a Western Washington riparian procedure to implement DNR’s HCP Riparian Conservation Strategy. This procedure is called the Riparian Forest Restoration Strategy and governs management in Western Washington riparian areas to achieve habitat objectives for salmonids and many other riparian obligate species. This riparian management strategy will primarily use stand thinnings to accelerate the development of riparian stands towards a mosaic of structurally complex riparian forests and restore riparian habitat functions, while not appreciably reducing

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riparian ecosystem benefits in the short-term. In particular, this restoration strategy focuses on growing large, site-adapted conifer trees, contributing down woody debris and instream large woody debris to the riparian habitat, initiating canopy layering where appropriate, and protecting existing structural components, such as snags. The Riparian Forest Restoration Strategy also has monitoring and adaptive management components designed to study and respond to any adverse impacts as needed.

**Comment Summary:**

Does policy assume created wetlands are equivalent to naturally occurring wetlands? Does policy allow wetlands to be replaced regardless of differing qualities? What is the acreage ratio of replacement and what drives decisions about size of created wetlands?

Lacks accountability of preservation of “quality wetlands” versus marginal, when policy only guides towards acreage.

**Response:**

Wetland quality is inextricably related to wetland function, and wetland mitigation is always a site-specific process. DNR’s mitigation policy recognizes that wetland function is as important as wetland acreage. It is understood that, in creating an artificial wetland to replace acreage and/or function of a natural wetland, specific functions must be reproduced. Where functions are unique or irreplaceable, creation of a new wetland is not an option. For instance, DNR cannot replace a bog, because bog hydrology cannot easily be artificially created. If the wetland in question is habitat for rare species, and that habitat function cannot be reproduced artificially, DNR is obligated to protect that function. For this reason, creation of artificial wetlands is available as a last resort, and can be employed only in very limited circumstances.

The forest practices rules state that mitigation, where creating an artificial wetland is required “generally will require creation of more acres of wetlands than those filled or drained to ensure establishment of adequate function.” While the acreage ratio of natural to artificial wetlands is not specified, it is implicit in the rules that adequate replacement of function drives the decision on how many acres of artificial wetland are required to replace any given wetland.

**Comment Summary:**

Lacks a wetlands definition.

**Response:**

The forest practices wetland definition is given in the Wetlands policy subject area in Chapter 3 of this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*.

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**Comment Summary:**

Following forest practices is inconsistent with the proposed policy in that no protection for wetlands < ¼ acre in size.

Policy is unenforceable without accurate delineation and monitoring.

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative does not rely on forest practices alone for protecting wetlands, but requires no net loss of wetland acreage and function. This policy subject, as well as all policies in the *Policy for Sustainable Forests*, will be monitored to determine their effectiveness. The results of which will be presented to the Board of Natural Resources annually and during five-year assessments consistent with the Board's Preferred Alternative for Implementation, Reporting and Modification of the *Policy for Sustainable Forests*.

**Comment Summary:**

Wetland policies should be consistent with Forest and Fish requirements.

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative for Riparian Conservation states no net loss of wetland function or acreage and is consistent with the Forest and Fish requirements.

**Comment Summary:**

Cumulative effects analysis is inadequate since it doesn't analyze the impacts of the proposed policy in conjunction with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future activities, and it fails to address the cumulative impacts of multiple management strategies on adjacent private and federal lands within the same watershed or wetland.

**Response:**

There were no comments that identified any specific cumulative impact that was not addressed by this EIS.

The analysis of the environmental impacts of the proposed policies in the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* is done within the context of understanding the existing conditions of the resources potentially impacted by the proposed *Policy for Sustainable Forests* policies, independent of jurisdictional and ownership boundaries, where the affect of these policies is consequential to the cumulative impact on the resources of concern. The assessments of impacts and conditions are made with regard to the protection and risks inherent in these policies, as well as those inherent in other laws and policies that address the same elements of the environment potentially impacted by the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* policies.

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The Cumulative Impacts section under Riparian Conservation in Chapter 3 of this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* has been amended to provide additional clarification.

**Comment Summary:**

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives, rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives. That said, Policy Objectives 1, 2, 7, and 8 should also apply to the analysis.

**Response:**

SEPA requires the analysis of a range of alternatives that can reasonably meet the objectives of a proposal, specifying the purpose and need to which the proposal is responding. The development of the policies and the policy alternatives analyzed within the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* are guided by the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources in defining the purposes to be accomplished in fulfilling the need to update the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. The Board of Natural Resources' policy objectives set necessary parameters on updating the policies in the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan* and cannot be divorced from the statements of purpose and need. Finalizing the objectives, purpose and need was one of the primary functions and goals of the SEPA scoping process and was identified as such at that time in order to provide the necessary sideboards for developing reasonable alternatives. In some instances, several objectives were met by the development of a range of policy alternatives for a specific policy subject. In other instances, a specific policy subject area was developed to fulfill a specific policy objective. The aggregate of the policies and alternatives analyzed in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* have been narrowed to meet the aggregate of the policy objectives including the purpose and need for updating the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*.

The Board's Preferred Alternative for Riparian Conservation works in conjunction with other policy subjects to fulfill the need and purpose of the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* in meeting the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources.

By integrating the Riparian Management Zone policy subject with the Wetlands policy subject to make up the Board's Preferred Alternative for Riparian Conservation, several other Policy Objectives are met including Policy Objectives 1, 2 and 7 by clearly distinguishing between lands managed according to the HCP and lands not managed according to the HCP. Policy Objective 8 is met by the increased emphasis on identifying and protecting sensitive "riparian" plant species.

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## **Subject Area: Public Access and Recreation**

### **Comment Summary:**

Prefer Alternative 3. Support of spending money to enhance experience, if spending extra money is to enhance tourism potential under the Financial Diversification policy subject area.

### **Response:**

To the extent that appropriate funding sources are available (i.e., State-General Fund and grants), DNR uses these funds to help provide access and recreational opportunities to the general public, compatible with trust obligations, including environmental protection and public safety.

### **Comment Summary:**

DNR continually recognizes the increasing recreational demand being placed on its lands. However, the recommended policy does absolutely nothing to address the growing need for active management of recreation to ensure compatibility with other uses and wildlife.

Amend policy to better reflect economic, ecological and social by providing more opportunities for recreation to meet the public demand. Prefer Alternative 3.

Don't start logging for recreation and access the way we used forest fires as an excuse to log the Olympic Rain Forest, which only became drier after logging.

### **Response:**

By statute, public access and recreation on forested state trust lands must be compatible with trust land management. The Board's Preferred Alternative seeks to accommodate and provide a level of public access and recreation that is compatible with the environmental conditions of the trust lands involved, public and employee safety, and the economic objectives of the trusts.

To allow or provide levels of public access and recreation beyond those that ensure the trust objectives are met would compromise the trust's environmental and economic obligations, as well as endanger the recreating public, DNR employees, contractors, lessees and volunteers.

The Board of Natural Resources' Preferred Alternative is designed to represent the appropriate balance between the Multiple Use Concept and trust obligations.

### **Comment Summary:**

Need clear reference to RCW 46.09 requiring that public use of state lands "... may be permitted only if there is compensation to the trusts."

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**Response:**

Additional discussion has been added to the Public Access and Recreation policy subject area in Chapter 3 of this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* to highlight the requirements for trust compensation contained in RCW 79.10.120, which is the appropriate statutory reference. Chapter 46.09 RCW does not contain the quoted language.

**Comment Summary:**

Motorized use should be closely monitored and not allowed near areas where people reside. Permits should be required and paid for, and strict regulations on times of year it is allowed.

Provide adequate funding for enforcement to mitigate many of the illegal and unsafe activities occurring on trust lands (i.e., target shooting, lead contamination, dumping). In addition, there are too many incompatible recreation activities occurring in the same locations, and there are ever-growing environmental problems associated with off road vehicle (ORV) use. ORVs cause habitat degradation in the form of stream bed damage, loss of wildlife, loss of rare vegetation, the spread of invasive weeds, and erosion.

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative is intended to address incompatible uses of forested state trust lands in collaboration with the public, users and neighboring landowners to address public access and recreational uses of forested state trust lands that are incompatible with trust ecological and economic objectives. Incompatible uses include those uses that are causing environmental damage as well as those that impact employees and public safety. The Board's Preferred Alternative also allows prudent use of trust management funds to address incompatible uses so that trust assets may be protected.

**Subject Area: Cultural Resources****Comment Summary:**

Need further consultation with Snoqualmie Tribe to prepare a more detailed response to conform to the level of discussion contemplated through the Centennial Accords.

Rights of access and resources need to be protected.

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative and the Commissioner's Order directs DNR to actively communicate with Tribes on any and all issues the Tribes may have related to forested state trust lands. DNR welcomes the opportunity to engage in discussion with the Snoqualmie Tribe on this policy, as well as any other issues.

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**Subject Area: Visual Impacts (formerly “Visual Management”)****Comment Summary:**

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives.

**Response:**

No other alternatives were introduced for discussion or analysis during scoping and Draft EIS process. SEPA requires the analysis of a range of alternatives that can reasonably meet the objectives of a proposal, specifying the purpose and need to which the proposal is responding. The development of the policies and the policy alternatives analyzed within the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* are guided by the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources in defining the purposes to be accomplished in fulfilling the need to update the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. The Board of Natural Resources’ policy objectives set necessary parameters on updating the policies in the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan* and cannot be divorced from the statements of purpose and need. Finalizing the objectives, purpose and need was one of the primary functions and goals of the SEPA scoping process and was identified as such at that time in order to provide the necessary sideboards for developing reasonable alternatives. In some instances, several objectives were met by the development of a range of policy alternatives for a specific policy subject. In other instances, a specific policy subject area was developed to fulfill a specific policy objective. The aggregate of the policies and alternatives analyzed in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* have been narrowed to meet the aggregate of the policy objectives including the purpose and need for updating the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*.

The Visual Impacts policy subject area works in conjunction with other policy subjects to accomplish the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources.

**Comment Summary:**

The policy needs to address more clearly compensation to the trust beneficiaries of transferring value to others from aesthetic set asides; needs to be limited to minimal or short-term impacts, financial impacts to the trusts. The issue of compensation again is referenced in the policy and it does not necessarily address the fair market compensation.

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**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative allows for compensation to the trusts for mitigation strategies to address regional visual impacts, including transfer out of trust status when possible, with full market value compensation.

Full fair market value compensation is defined in the State Constitution and the federal Enabling Act.

**Comment Summary:**

Trust lands should not be burdened with visual management requirements under the proposed policy that says DNR generally will mitigate visual impacts. The statement is unnecessarily broad and could reduce trust revenue. The Board of Natural Resources should heed the Forest Practices Board's lead which denied a petition to have aesthetics and visual quality designated as a public resource. The policy lacks mention of compensation to the trust for potential in-between mitigation, e.g., Blanchard Mountain.

**Response:**

Issues related to potential visual impacts are often raised around department activities everywhere in the state. Lack of Board of Natural Resources direction on this subject has led to a variety of operational mechanisms and strategies to address these issues, that aren't always consistent. Board of Natural Resources policy is needed to provide a consistent approach to address visual impact issues.

The Board's Preferred Alternative provides for compensation to the trust(s) for mitigation strategies for regional visual issues.

**Comment Summary:**

Support Alternative 4, but should be amended to transfer visually significant lands without compensation to the trust.

**Response:**

Any transfer of trust land out of trust status, when possible, for any reason legally requires full, fair market value compensation.

**Comment Summary:**

Cost/benefit needs to recognize benefits to local economics from aesthetically pleasing landscapes.

**Response:**

As directed by the Board's Preferred Alternative for Local Economic Vitality, DNR may take actions in support of local economic vitality, when they are compatible with or directly support trust objectives.



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## **Subject Area: Local Economic Vitality**

### **Comment Summary:**

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives.

### **Response:**

No other alternatives were introduced for discussion or analysis during scoping and Draft EIS process. SEPA requires the analysis of a range of alternatives that can reasonably meet the objectives of a proposal, specifying the purpose and need to which the proposal is responding. The development of the policies and the policy alternatives analyzed within the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* are guided by the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources in defining the purposes to be accomplished in fulfilling the need to update the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. The Board of Natural Resources' policy objectives set necessary parameters on updating the policies in the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan* and cannot be divorced from the statements of purpose and need. Finalizing the objectives, purpose and need was one of the primary functions and goals of the SEPA scoping process and was identified as such at that time in order to provide the necessary sideboards for developing reasonable alternatives. In some instances, several objectives were met by the development of a range of policy alternatives for a specific policy subject. In other instances, a specific policy subject area was developed to fulfill a specific policy objective. The aggregate of the policies and alternatives analyzed in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* have been narrowed to meet the aggregate of the policy objectives including the purpose and need for updating the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*.

### **Comment Summary:**

Consistent annual benefits/production (harvesting) to taxing districts is a concern.

### **Response:**

The legal and direct annual financial support of taxing districts is a result of an identified sustainable harvest calculation process which determines lands by specified sustainable harvest units. The focus of this policy subject is those indirect benefits to local economies that result from access to and activities on forested state trust lands.

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**Comment Summary:**

Policy needs to consider how DNR handles growing recreational demands in addition to the simple forest management activities.

**Response:**

Public access and recreation on forested state trust lands must be compatible with trust land management and asset management objectives. The Board's Preferred Alternative for Public Access and Recreation seeks to accommodate and provide a level of public access and recreation that is compatible with the environmental conditions of the trust lands involved, public and employee safety, and the economic objectives of the trusts.

To allow or provide levels of public access and recreation beyond those that ensure the trust objectives are met would compromise the trust's environmental and economic obligations, as well as endanger the recreating public, DNR employees and contractors.

The Board's Preferred Alternative for Public Access and Recreation is designed to represent the appropriate balance between the Multiple Use Concept and trust obligations.

Recreation on forested state trust lands can be a significant economic contributor to some local economies. The Board's Preferred Alternative recognizes that there is a relationship between forest management activities and recreation and local economies, and that DNR actions can be influential.

**Comment Summary:**

Policy needs to consider economic benefits of ecological services to local communities – clean water, healthy forests, and thriving wildlife populations, including jobs associated with restoration – use full cost accounting.

Never forget to include trust land benefits to rural economics in calculations and conversations regarding the goods and services provided by trust lands. The focus must be on all the revenues derived from these lands, not just the revenue to the beneficiaries.

Need to consider the importance/significance of the social and economic link in small communities and rural areas with the timber communities.

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative recognizes the relationship between activities on forested state trust lands and local economic vitality and that DNR actions can be influential.

As directed by the Board's Preferred Alternative for Local Economic Vitality, DNR may take actions in support of local economic vitality, when they are compatible with or directly support trust objectives.

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This includes the influence of DNR actions, activities on trust lands, as well as the mere presence of these lands. As this is new policy direction that was not part of the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*, DNR will explore and develop strategies to achieve the intent of this policy as part of implementation.

A suggestion was made to use full cost accounting to consider the economic benefits of ecological services to local communities. Whether full cost accounting is an appropriate approach to achieving the intent of this policy can be considered during implementation. DNR will explore and develop strategies to achieve the intent of this policy as part of implementation. The intent of Board of Natural Resources policy is to describe outcomes for DNR to achieve in managing forested state trust lands. Consequently, the policy statements do not describe or include directives on how to achieve those outcomes.

### **Subject Area: Forest Land Planning**

#### **Comment Summary:**

Request the department go back and look at what's required under the department's HCP – how many are completed? Concern that there are none.

#### **Response:**

DNR has continually been planning under the *Forest Resource Plan* Policy No. 16, Landscape Planning. Examples of completed plans include the Loomis State Forest in 1996 and Lake Whatcom in 2004. Since 1992, there have been six landscape plans completed and approved (Elochoman, Loomis, Siouxon, Clallam, Tahuya, and Lake Whatcom). There were also numerous pilot landscape plans started and left in various stages of completion (Winston Creek, Willy Huel, Elbe Hills, Van Zandt, Ahtanum, North Crescent, Loop Loop, Larch, Wallace Falls, Marsh, and Buck Creek). The Board's Preferred Alternative encourages DNR to integrate previous planning work into these plans as they are developed for each of the HCP planning units.

DNR's HCP predicted that the most efficient and precise application of the conservation strategies would be accomplished through landscape planning. The HCP acknowledged that landscape assessments utilizing the concepts of landscape planning could be useful and successful at many levels. "For example, a plan based on a landscape assessment can be as simple as a computerized geographic information system report that displays resource information that indicates forest stands available for various silvicultural activities, or as complex as a detailed documentation of the physical, natural, and cultural resources along with a specific schedule of activities through time to reach highly focused, multiple objectives" (1997 *Habitat Conservation Plan*, page IV. 192). However, it was expected even in the Olympic Experimental State Forest that landscape boundaries would be adjusted over time during implementation of DNR's HCP (1997 *Habitat Conservation Plan*, page IV.83).

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While the intent of the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan* Landscape Planning policy was to develop plans at a smaller scale than HCP planning units, the process could never be completed on all of the 83 identified landscapes in Western Washington, mainly due to the cost and time associated with developing plans at this smaller scale. Plans developed at the HCP planning unit scale are expected to take as much time and have similar costs as the smaller scale plans developed under the landscape planning policy. The HCP planning units provide a linkage to the strategic goals of DNR's HCP, are manageable from an organization perspective, more cost effective and provide a sufficient scale to assess the potential for significant cumulative impacts within and across watersheds. The process and scale of the landscape planning units (HCP planning units) are designed to provide DNR with the flexibility to react and update plans easier.

Through the planning process, DNR will develop better communication with the public by emphasizing collaboration with stakeholder groups and Tribes. DNR will be providing annual reports to the Board of Natural Resources on implementation of the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* and will perform a substantive review of the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* at five-year intervals under the Implementation, Reporting and Modification of the Policy for Sustainable Forests policy.

The planning process helps to create a shared understanding of forest conditions and future forest management activities. It's DNR's opportunity to share what is known about conducting forest management activities.

**Comment Summary:**

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives. That said, Policy Objectives 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8 should also apply to the analysis.

**Response:**

SEPA requires the analysis of a range of alternatives that can reasonably meet the objectives of a proposal, specifying the purpose and need to which the proposal is responding. The development of the policies and the policy alternatives analyzed within the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* are guided by the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources in defining the purposes to be accomplished in fulfilling the need to update the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. The Board of Natural Resources' policy objectives set necessary parameters on updating the policies in the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan* and cannot be divorced from the statements of purpose and need. Finalizing the objectives, purpose and need was one of the primary functions and goals of the SEPA scoping process and was identified as such at that time in order to provide the necessary sideboards for developing reasonable

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alternatives. In some instances, several objectives were met by the development of a range of policy alternatives for a specific policy subject. In other instances, a specific policy subject area was developed to fulfill a specific policy objective. The aggregate of the policies and alternatives analyzed in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* have been narrowed to meet the aggregate of the policy objectives including the purpose and need for updating the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. Alternatives that did not meet the policy objectives, purpose and need identified by the Board of Natural Resources are not analyzed within the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*.

The Forest Land Planning policy subject area works in conjunction with other policy subjects to fulfill the need and purpose of the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* in meeting the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources.

Policy Objectives 1, 2, 4, 7 and 8 were considered as each policy subject area was discussed. The *Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* have identified the policy objectives that were most instrumental in guiding the particular policy subject. Since the primary purpose of forest land planning is to translate outcomes established by state and federal law and Board of Natural Resources policy into specific activities in the field, Policy Objectives 1, 2, 4, 7 and 8 are critical considerations in the development and implementation of a forest land planning policy.

**Comment Summary:**

Remove language regarding available resources and budget and include specific timeline and guidelines for completion of plans and the elements they should contain.

**Response:**

DNR plans on making it a priority to complete forest land plans in all Western Washington HCP planning units. These plans will be carried out in compliance with the Board's Preferred Alternative policy upon approval.

The form and format of these plans and the elements they contain will be designed as part of the implementation process for this policy. While it might be desirable to complete all of these plans simultaneously, the realities of budget and staffing require DNR to complete these plans as resources allow. Moreover, it is important to note that neither the Board of Natural Resources nor DNR controls appropriation levels. Those budgetary decisions are made in the Legislature. However, this does not diminish the intent of DNR to complete these plans as quickly as possible.

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## **Subject Area: General Silvicultural Strategy**

### **Comment Summary:**

Incorporate comment from sustainable harvest from the Native Plant Society December 19, 2003, to the application of that policy to the eastside and discourage use of insecticides.

### **Response:**

The policy addresses the use of “professional management of forest stands through active stewardship of forested state trust lands” and not the use of any method. Silviculture does not address any method as westside or eastside. Methods are just tools that are applied where appropriate to meet the desired landscape level objective.

DNR agrees with the expressed concern and has stated that the use of insecticides will only be considered when “forest insect population reach epidemic proportion” and an “unacceptable hazard to human life, resources and property” exist, as stated in this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*, General Silvicultural Strategy policy subject area in Chapter 3.

### **Comment Summary:**

Analysis is flawed and contradictive – does not discuss impacts of the elimination of 1992 *Forest Resource Plan* Policy No. 30 and although biodiversity pathways is discussed as an approach, nothing in the policy specifically directs DNR to pursue this technique of silvicultural management. For example, the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* (pg 3-137 and 3-138) states that “Alternative 1... attempts to provide a site-specific and outcome-oriented approach to managing DNR’s forested state trust lands. In doing so, Alternative 1 mandates techniques and field craft, rather than outcome-oriented approaches.” There are serious concerns that the Westside sustainable harvest calculation process does not allow the “biodiversity pathways” approach as described by Dr. Andrew Carey.

### **Response:**

In response to the concern on the elimination of Policy No. 30 in the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan* that addresses “when DNR determines it is necessary, extra protection for soil, water, wildlife, fish habitat and other public resources,” the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and this *Final EIS*, does address the issue in Chapter 1 under the Key Relationships section “General Silvicultural Strategy and Other Policies” and again in the General Silvicultural Strategy policy subject area, Affected Environment subsection, Chapter 3. The concerns are better addressed in these strategies than in the older Policy No. 30 discussion of the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. The General Silvicultural Strategy better defines the role of silviculture treatment “to

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guide the progression of stand development, to achieve an outcome and enhance forest stand diversity across the landscape.”

The use of the term “field craft” addresses the method of how DNR approaches achieving the outcomes and enhancing forest stand diversity across the landscape. The term “outcome-oriented approaches” is not a method, but a statement of strategy that does not address the risk factors and cost factors the field craft will include.

DNR’s approach to biodiversity pathways is one possible path that may be used to address some habitat objectives, but like any approach, all objectives will not be met by one approach. DNR will be using field craft to determine the range of acceptable alternatives to meet an objective and then determine the one that will best meet the objective with the best chance of success and an acceptable return on investment.

**Comment Summary:**

Generally speaking, DNR’s approach to biodiversity pathway management is consistent with Dr. Carey’s approach at a stand level. Dr. Carey’s approach in his 1996 paper envisioned an “unzoned” forest, where there are no areas, such as riparian areas, set aside for special management. DNR cannot use an “unzoned” approach over all of its lands, as this would be inconsistent with DNR’s HCP and the Forest Practices Act.

Cumulative effects is inadequate since it doesn’t analyze the impacts of the proposed policy in conjunction with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions and analysis refers to “rotational objectives” (*Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*, pg. 3-139) which could imply short-term trust revenue, rather than balancing with ecological services and other non-timber related objectives. Plus no analysis of managing the greatest possible portion of forested state trust lands.

**Response:**

The concern that trust lands will be managed for only revenue generation, meaning shorter rotation on the landscape basis, is not what is stated in Chapter 1 under the Key Relationships subsection “General Silvicultural Strategy and Other Policies” and again in the General Silvicultural Strategy policy subject area, Affected Environment subsection in Chapter 3.

Landscape level strategies do determine individual stand level objectives. Each stand can fill one or more landscape objectives, but no one stand can meet all landscape strategies. Once the objectives role of the stand is determined in the overall landscape, then field craft will develop alternatives to meet the stand level objectives. One of the considerations in field craft is rotation length in meeting objectives.

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Finally, it isn't clear what additional cumulative impacts analysis is being requested, since no specific present, past or reasonably foreseeable future impacts were identified by the commenter for inclusion in the cumulative effects analysis for this policy.

**Comment Summary:**

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives. That said, Policy Objectives 1, 2, 3, 6, and 9 should also apply to the analysis.

**Response:**

SEPA requires the analysis of a range of alternatives that can reasonably meet the objectives of a proposal, specifying the purpose and need to which the proposal is responding. The development of the policies and the policy alternatives analyzed within the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* are guided by the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources in defining the purposes to be accomplished in fulfilling the need to update the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. The Board of Natural Resources' policy objectives set necessary parameters on updating the policies in the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan* and cannot be divorced from the statements of purpose and need. Finalizing the objectives, purpose and need was one of the primary functions and goals of the SEPA scoping process and was identified as such at that time in order to provide the necessary sideboards for developing reasonable alternatives. In some instances, several objectives were met by the development of a range of policy alternatives for a specific policy subject. In other instances, a specific policy subject area was developed to fulfill a specific policy objective. The aggregate of the policies and alternatives analyzed in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* have been narrowed to meet the aggregate of the policy objectives including the purpose and need for updating the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*.

The General Silvicultural Strategy policy subject area works in conjunction with other policy subjects to fulfill the need and purpose of the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* in meeting the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources.

A suggestion was made that language from *Forest Resource Plan* Policy 30 that granted discretion to reduce trust income to provide extra protection for certain resources should be included in the updated policy. Since the resources protected are covered in the individual policy subjects, and coupled with the fact that the General Silvicultural Strategy is simply the means of integrating and



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implementing the policies on the ground, it is unnecessary to include this language in the updated policy.

Although the General Silvicultural Strategy policy subject area primarily meets Policy Objectives 5 and 7, other policy objectives are also met. The General Silvicultural Strategy is a primary tool for achieving Policy Objective 1 of meeting laws, trust obligations and the HCP. Policy Objective 2 is strongly reflected by the active management approach to achieve balance from the four perspectives necessary to meet the trust mandate. Policy Objective 3 was considered in all the policy subject areas. Policy Objective 6 is met by the strong focus of the General Silvicultural Strategy Board's Preferred Alternative to achieve landscape outcomes for balanced economic, ecological and social benefits. And although Policy Objective 9 is primarily met by the Financial Diversification policy subject, it is also met by the General Silvicultural Strategy intent to use intensive and innovative silviculture to simultaneously produce trust revenue and diversity across landscapes.

**Comment Summary:**

Eliminate the statement to manage “the greatest possible portion of forested state trust lands” (*Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*, pg. 3-137), since it is based on the unproved assumption that more management is always better for the trust and the resources.

**Response:**

Management of a stand does not always imply that activities will occur. Active management means also reviewing the progress of a stand to meet its objective, and evaluating them on a regular basis. DNR's field staff will evaluate if an activity would speed the progress of the stand to meet its stand level objective and if the investment in the stand would be warranted. DNR's field staff reviews the progress of many stands on a regular basis and only proposes activities when its stand level objective will be delayed or will not be met without intervention. By management of “the greatest possible portion of forested state trust lands,” more of the stand will meet its objective sooner.

**Comment Summary:**

Second paragraph in the Significant Impacts and Mitigation Measures subsection of the General Silvicultural Strategy policy subject area in Chapter 3 is too vague for directing DNR, i.e., professional management, active stewardship, forest structures, intensive silviculture, structural diversity vague and undefined. Existing policies more useful because more specific, e.g., Policy No. 33 included specific guidance because of specific concerns about the risks.

**Response:**

The language commented on does not appear in the Significant Impacts and Mitigation Measures subsection of the General Silvicultural Strategy policy

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subject area. When read alone, “professional management, active stewardship, forest structures, intensive silviculture, and structural diversity” in the Board’s Preferred Alternative may seem vague. The whole document must be read to clarify the vision of what these terms mean. The details can be found by looking at the section on “PO14-C General Silvicultural Strategy Applied To The Timber Resource Base Available For Sustainable Harvest In Western Washington.”

The Affected Environment subsection of the General Silvicultural Strategy policy subject area in Chapter 3 of this *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* discusses the use of herbicides for weeding. The first choice would not be herbicides in all cases, but other methods would be used when they are found to be successful. When use of herbicides is determined to be the best course of action, DNR follows all of the instructions on the product label to limit any impact on other organisms.

In addition, state and federal law provide much, if not more, mitigation of impacts to the environment from use of chemicals than Policy No. 33.

**Comment Summary:**

Any use of pesticide or herbicide should include an analysis that values everything.

**Response:**

DNR reviews proposals to apply pesticides and herbicides through the SEPA process that covers the elements of the natural and built environment as defined by WAC 197-11-444 Elements of the Environment.

**Comment Summary:**

Language from Policy 30 should be included in the updated policy that granted discretion to reduce trust income to provide extra protection for certain resources.

**Response:**

Many of the Board’s Preferred Alternatives direct the protection of special resources because it is consistent and compatible with the trust mandate and is in the best long-term interest of the trusts to do so. Income generation for the long-term is not possible without a perpetually healthy and productive forest ecosystem. Many of the proposed policies in this document are intended to ensure this objective, therefore any short-term reduction in income to ensure long-term sustainable income for the trusts is in the trusts’ best interest.

**Comment Summary:**

Alternative 2 relies on “dovetailing” policies into planning and implementation, assuming landscape-level planning will occur.

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**Response:**

Historically, landscape plans were too detailed, took too long to complete, and consequently, were too expensive to allow full implementation of the *Forest Resource Plan* policy.

However, DNR is committed to landscape level planning, as outlined in the Board's Preferred Alternative, and DNR is hopeful that this new approach can be more widely implemented. This hopefulness stems from DNR's belief that the method of landscape planning proposed in the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* will be more efficient and economical than the methodology used under the *Forest Resource Plan*.

**Subject Area: Forest Land Transactions****Comment Summary:**

Policy should address financial impacts to the trusts of forest land leases, e.g., Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation.

**Response:**

All agreements with the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation require full market value compensation to the trusts. This compensation is for lost value of property with encumbrances in place.

DNR is currently reviewing the valuing and process of (Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation-related) leases and agreements pertaining to recreational use of forested state trust lands.

**Comment Summary:**

Urge DNR to reconsider policy of converting shrub-steppe if there is one, absent the acquisition of equal or higher-quality lands for permanent preservation.

**Response:**

In terms of shrub-steppe habitat found on forested state trust lands, DNR has been looking at opportunities to sustainably manage these in conjunction with forested environs; and exchange high quality shrub-steppe to other agencies, such as the Bureau of Land Management and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, to ensure its protection.

In terms of DNR's agricultural lands, which are not governed by the *Policy for Sustainable Forests*, some conversion of lower quality fragmented shrub-steppe to cultivated agricultural or other income generating uses, will occur. Higher quality and larger contiguous patches of shrub-steppe habitat will continue to be

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evaluated for meeting trust objectives or transfer out of trust status, with compensation to the trusts, to ensure its protection.

**Subject Area: Forest Roads (formerly “Roads”)**

**Comment Summary:**

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives. That said, Policy Objectives 3, 4, 6, and 9 should also apply to this analysis.

**Response:**

SEPA requires the analysis of a range of alternatives that can reasonably meet the objectives of a proposal, specifying the purpose and need to which the proposal is responding. The development of the policies and the policy alternatives analyzed within the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* are guided by the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources in defining the purposes to be accomplished in fulfilling the need to update the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. The Board of Natural Resources’ policy objectives set necessary parameters on updating the policies in the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan* and cannot be divorced from the statements of purpose and need. Finalizing the objectives, purpose and need was one of the primary functions and goals of the SEPA scoping process and was identified as such at that time in order to provide the necessary sideboards for developing reasonable alternatives. In some instances, several objectives were met by the development of a range of policy alternatives for a specific policy subject. In other instances, a specific policy subject area was developed to fulfill a specific policy objective. The aggregate of the policies and alternatives analyzed in the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* and the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests* have been narrowed to meet the aggregate of the policy objectives including the purpose and need for updating the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*. Alternatives that did not meet the policy objectives, purpose and need identified by the Board of Natural Resources are not analyzed within the *Final Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests*.

The Forest Roads policy subject area works in conjunction with other policy subjects to fulfill the need and purpose of the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* in meeting the 10 policy objectives set out by the Board of Natural Resources.

Policy objectives 3, 4, 6 and 9 were considered as each policy subject area was discussed. The Draft and Final EIS have identified the policy objectives that were the most instrumental in guiding the particular policy subject. Objective 3 applies

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to all policies. Objective 4 is primarily met by the External Relationships policy subject area, but is instrumental in identifying the outcomes of the Forest Roads policy. Objective 6 applies to all policies. Objective 9 is primarily met by the Financial Diversification policy subject area, but is also instrumental in identifying the outcomes of the Forest Roads policy.

**Comment Summary:**

Add additional language to address shortcoming of forest practices rules, e.g., recommend an extensive monitoring program to measure impacts from roads and the ability to impose requirements that exceed DNR's HCP, forest practices rules, and SEPA to address problem areas.

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative for Forest Roads is not limited in its ability to exceed forest practices rules or DNR's HCP to address impacts from roads. Excellence in public stewardship, sustainable stewardship, and balancing trust income, environmental protection and other social benefits through adherence to the prudent person doctrine; undivided loyalty to and impartiality among the trust beneficiaries; intergenerational equity; and not foreclosing future options are all reflected in the Board's Preferred Alternative for Forest Roads. In addition, the Board's Preferred Alternative ensures integration with other policies, e.g., Public Access and Recreation, to provide a policy that not only emphasizes the importance of minimizing the road network, but does so within the entire context of the *Policy for Sustainable Forests*. Inherent in the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* is the ability to go beyond baseline regulations as needed to protect the publics' and the trusts' interests. SEPA does not establish baseline regulations. It is an environmental review and decision-making process that is integrated into the development of DNR proposals to assess and disclose the potential for significant adverse impacts and provide environmental protection as appropriate to avoid or minimize significant adverse impacts from roads.

Road Maintenance and Abandonment Plans provide a mechanism to monitor problematic roads and ensure they continue to meet the standards established by the forest practices rules.

All policies that make up the proposed *Policy for Sustainable Forests* are subject to annual reporting requirements to the Board of Natural Resources under the Board's Preferred Alternative for Implementation, Reporting and Modification of the Policy for Sustainable Forests.

**Comment Summary:**

In consideration of the demand for recreation, road closures should consider all user needs (recreation, wildlife, forest practices, cultural significance) and then prioritize.

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Maintain the road systems, upgrade them, make them safe to travel on and make them so that they make a minimal impact on the environment. The road system is important not only for recreation, but also alternative roads, detour roads, for fire breaks and fire access, recreation and then the access to all lands so that the lands can be managed.

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative directs DNR to minimize roads consistent with other Board of Natural Resources policy, including Public Access and Recreation, Cultural Resources, Forest Health, Catastrophic Loss Prevention, and Visual Impacts. This allows balance of road closures with meeting other Board of Natural Resources-directed outcomes and statutory requirements of the Multiple Use Concept, in addition to developing and maintaining roads to meet trust objectives.

**Subject Area: Research**

**Comment Summary:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative should include a statement that DNR-developed science will be peer-reviewed by an independent science panel prior to implementation or publication. Science developed by an organization that has a financial stake in the results needs to be objectively peer reviewed to be credible.

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative discussion has been amended to recognize the value and importance of peer review.

**Subject Area: External Relationships**

**Comment Summary:**

Trusts come before Tribes.

Trust mandate education is equally or more important than environmental education, so environmental education should not be singled out for highlighting.

**Response:**

The Board's Preferred Alternative for External Relationships has been amended to reflect the importance of meeting trust needs as DNR's primary obligation and highlights DNR's opportunity to provide education concerning trust land management, as well as environmental education.

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**Subject Area: Comments Received Directed Toward a Particular Preference or Concern**

**Comment Summary:**

Support document.

Much more complex and complete than the 1992 *Forest Resource Plan*.

Need flexibility, minimizing lawsuits, produces jobs, taxes and trust benefits.

Comprehensive, but complex.

DNR land management is very professional.

Support active management.

Sustainable forests include more than sustainable harvests.

Oppose clearcuts.

Forests and habitat concerns should take precedence over economics.

Good process – open – transparent.

Concern that we are farther than ever from providing for the needs of a growing population for clean water, a quality place to recreate and wildlife habitat that will allow the public's wildlife to recover and thrive.

Take a long-term perspective when managing for forest health, ecology, watersheds and habitat to protect all the resources.

Continue to sustainably manage and preserve trust lands.

Support sustainable harvest.

Taken as a whole, the matrix of the regulatory framework that DNR operates within provides a significant amount of environmental protection and public input.

Continued overlay of environmental policies on the HCP and the forest and fish rules will have severe impacts on the trust lands' ability to maintain reasonable financial outcomes and stay sustainable.

Support Board of Natural Resources preferred for Watershed Systems.

Urge limiting operations to those best managed by a government timberland manager and leaving activities best managed by the private sector to them.

Use substantial prudence where speculating on higher promised returns versus known quantities.

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Support DNR's expanded marketing strategies to take advantage of market conditions, but it is important to have some consistency of income to the beneficiaries annually.

Focus should be on maximizing return for taxpayers now that DNR received a green certification from the Sustainable Forestry Institute®.

Prefer Wildlife Habitat Alternative 2.

Support Wildlife Habitat Alternative 3.

Favor Watershed Systems Alternative 1.

Support Preferred Alternative for Watershed Systems.

Support Riparian Management Zones Alternative 3.

Support Board's Preferred for Riparian Management Zones.

The unique relationship between the trust beneficiaries and the forest industry to produce products to the public and income to the beneficiaries should be noted.

Support Board's Preferred Alternative, which is a rewrite of Alternative 2 for External Relationships.

Support either option A or B of the Board's Preferred Alternative for SEPA Review.

Support Implementation, Reporting and Modification Alternative 3.

Support Board's Preferred Alternative for Research, which is a rewrite of Alternative 3.

Support legal and positive use for recreation.

Forest industry ready to work with DNR in providing safe and effective recreation.

Support Public Access and Recreation Alternative 4, because it allows DNR the option to relocate, reduce or eliminate access to sensitive habitat either unilaterally or through a collaborative public process.

Support Public Access and Recreation Alternatives 3 or 4.

Support Public Access and Recreation Alternative 4.

Provide adequate funding for enforcement.

Degradation of forest habitats from misuse of public lands should not be tolerated.

Support Cultural Resources Alternative 2.



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Support Local Economic Vitality.

Support Forest Land Planning Alternative 2.

Support General Silvicultural Strategy.

Support Forest Land Transactions to rely on the policies within the *Asset Stewardship Plan* and not include this policy in the *Policy for Sustainable Forests*.

Support Forest Roads Alternative 3.

Support minimizing roads. Policy represents significant progress.

For Acquiring Rights of Way and Granting Rights of Way, support DNR's proposal in Alternative 2 related to each of these policies, which is to rely on other DNR policies and statutes and not include this policy in the *Policy for Sustainable Forests*.

Applaud link between proprietary land management and forest practices rules.

Support Eastern Washington delineation and combined riparian/wetland policy.

Support the Preferred Alternative for Visual Impacts.

Prefers Alternative 2 over Alternatives 1 and 3 for Old-Growth Stands in Western Washington.

Recommend Old-Growth Stands in Western Washington Alternative 2.

Support Old-Growth Stands in Western Washington Alternative 3.

Retain old growth, period.

Support Riparian Management Zones Alternative 3.

Support Board's Preferred Alternative for Riparian Management Zones.

Local economies deserve consideration.

Counties depend heavily on timber for jobs and county revenue to support services.

Local Economic Vitality policy espouses intelligent stewardship.

Proposed policy should be measured against events related to the Lake Whatcom landscape.

Alternatives 3 and 1 in that order are better for gene pool protection.

General support of Board's Preferred Alternative for Genetic Resource.

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**Response:**

DNR received many comments directed toward a particular preference or item of particular concern. DNR appreciates these comments, as they serve to remind DNR and the Board of Natural Resources of what is important to the public, other agencies including the Tribes, and other stakeholders during the Board of Natural Resources' deliberations on the proposed policies. Many of the issues embodied in these comments are in the responses for the specific policy subject.

**Subject Area: Other: Within DNR's Responsibility, but Outside the Purview of the Draft EIS and the Final EIS****Comment Summary:**

Slope stability remains an issue. Need more concern over geology of harvesting on forested state trust lands.

**Response:**

No policy gap was identified for harvesting and road construction on unstable slopes. Forest management activities on unstable slopes are regulated by DNR's HCP and by the forest practices rules (Chapter 222 WAC).

**Comment Summary:**

Support ownership grouping by counties.

Support eliminating the 50/25 rule.

Support HCP intent of eight leave trees per acre.

Support 10-15% in older forest condition.

Support flow of timber between decades that provides for management flexibility and responsiveness to markets.

Support economic value as basis of sustainable harvest calculation.

Support Alternative 5 or 6 of sustainable harvest calculation.

**Response:**

The issues above were addressed in the *Final EIS on Alternatives for Sustainable Forest Management of State Trust Lands in Western Washington* (DNR, 2004) as part of that process.

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## COPIES OF ORIGINAL COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE DRAFT EIS

The wording in all of the comments below is verbatim as received by DNR. There have been no corrections of any typographical errors. Comments are shown in the order listed in Table I-1.

### Commenter 1: E-mail Received from Leigh McKeirnan

**From:** "The Mc Keirnan" <mckeirnan@kalama.com>  
**To:** "SEPACENTER SEPACENTER" <SEPACENTER@wadnr.gov>, "John Karpinski" <karpjd@pacifier.com>, "Bill Dygert" <bdygert1@comcast.net>, "RuthDeery" <ruthd@kalama.com>, willapahillsaudubon@yahoogroups.com>, "Womenswirefrom Care2" <womenswire@care2.com>, RODRIEAR@dfw.wa.gov>, "TomGeiger" <tom@wecprotects.org>, <info@wildliferecreation.org>, <brobinson@tnc.org>, <junstine@1000friends.org>, info@celp.scattercreek.com>, <action@americavotes.org>, "LindaMcLain" <linda\_sierraclub@hotmail.com>, <hpackard@audubon.org>, <arnw@amrivers.org>, <lwwwa@lwwwa.org>, <lmcshane@ecosystem.org>, <cascade.chapter@sierraclub.org>  
**Date:** Monday, May 02, 2005 5:56:09 PM  
**Subject:** Trustlands- especially Kelso- fo review meetings this month

After the 126 home landslide in Kelso, I tried to make something good out of all the bad. We got the Jacobsen Trustland transfer through the legislature. The only problem is that the city tried to split the Longview/Kelso parks department twice and take Kelso back to Kelso. Also, last year the city hired a new parks director with a forestry background advertised in the Daily News..So Doug Southerland gave the trustland straight to the city with no logging restrictions. We had 6 legislators willing to put an additional 1000 acres through the legislature surrounding it as well as Trust for Public Lands twice, but the city pooh- poohed it. Now supposedly they are working with Columbia Land Trust-seeing is believing. Upon accepting the transfer the city manager said, "We'll log it eventually". I had given the city two top geologists' letters, Scott Burns from Portland state University , and Dave MONTgomery from UW saying that logging on the steep slopes would cause sliding -into the river. Scott said it would even unleash the Aldercrest slide into the river valley. The dike protecting the town is nearby and has had to be raised many times-but now it is too narrow for Stordahl's trucks. The town, parks, and schools are on the other side. How many multimillions will it cost this time? There is a reason for the DNR code WAC 222-16-050 (1) (D) class 4 special even though it is often unadhered to as in the Aldercrest case where the wetlands at the base were logged. I called the dNR up personally before they logged it and told them of all the wetlands. How many people could die???Children at school?

This trustland stands on extremely steep slopes right above the Coweeman river with salmon, steelhead and cutthroat trout documented by Lower Columbia Fish Recovery. Also there were three eagles' nests in the 2001 wildlife map there and eagles have been know to return. I haven't checked there maps since then.

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There might be more now. I counted 8 eagles and photographed them and sent a photo of 4 bald eagles in a tree on our street one year to wildlife after they told me it wasn't an important eagle area. I am sure many come from the trustland. Also owls, redtailed hawks, etc, elk herds of 60 or more elk, bear, white tailed deer, coyotes, raccoons, otters in the river after the smelt, a nearby trout pond. Last January one weekend before a freeze we saw 700 geese fly into the sheltered valley. There is a wetland lake in winter on one side of the trustland that has been the favorite haven for duck hunters for decades. At a city council meeting where Al Slater, the city manager's self described counsel, screamed, "How soon can we start thinning it?", a couple of years ago, a local logger/hunter said to me, "That will ruin it to thin it Leigh. We're on the same side now". There are over a 1000 ducks home to that wetland lake, never mind heron etc etc. This is all so close in to town. There are millions of viewing spots and already there are trails and canoeing possibilities and plenty of logging roads. Outdoor clubs volunteered to make any trails so we don't need your help. The last thing I want to see is for us to start logging for recreation and access the way we used forest fires as an excuse to log the Olympic Rain forest which only became drier after logging. I looked at the new California quarter with John Muir on it and thought, he must be rolling over in his grave looking at the lack of vision of Californians today. -it's wall to wall freeway in many parts with only 1000 giant sequias left in the whole state and they are planning on thinning them for forest fires! and if that is what you want for Washington, you will lose much more value than the immediate short term gain. People don't go to Switzerland to look at access roads. A conservative group, Wildlife Watchers of America will tell you there is much more value in saving land for tourism. Also I think it is important to help small tree farmers, but not large foresters like Weyerhaeuser, whose lawyer admitted they bankrolled the scab labor logging of Eagleridge in the slide areas even though we told them about the eagles etc. They bankroll them all over many states. By the way the pipeline had a leak behind Aldercrest and was removed and it slid out behind me and had to be buried 150 ft deep and Olympic pipeline said it was due to logging. There were several pipeline explosions near logging that year. How much money are you trying to make now??? There are pipelines that go into the trustland - There are three above me on the other side of the hill. Do you realize how much it cost to bury that pipeline 150 ft deep??? What if our kid hadn't seen the bubbles behind Aldercrest and what if I hadn't reported it??? How many dead kids would that be and how much money would that be worth to you. All I can think is "Dear God, they know not what they do....." IN the past it was decided it would be too costly to helicopter out the logs on the Jacobsen trustland. But one greedy city manager could destroy all that is beautiful. A pearl to give the city pleasure and value for decades to come. Instead logging for access and recreation could cause sliding. It is unnecessary to log for access, the trails and logging roads are already there as they are in most trustlands. It's just another excuse to log for greed. The following letter from a wildlife photographer and Audubon member best describes it: From: "Jack Scharbach" <johnscharbach@willapabay.org>

To: <mckeirnan@kalama.com>

Subject: Debi VanBuren-DNR

Date sent: Fri, 20 Jul 2001 09:29:49 -0700

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7-20-01

816 Oneida Rd.

Naselle WA 9863

360-465-2689

Debi VanBuren

DNR P.O. Box 47104

Olympia WA 98504

Dear Ms. Van Buren:

Leigh McKeirnan asked me to contact you regarding DNR property in the Aldercrest slide area near Kelso. Over a period of more than a month I made around ten trips into that area, exploring and photographing the DNR parcel and the parcels around it. Among the features that impressed me were the close proximity of ecosystems and habitats-wetland, marsh, mature and second-growth forests, small streams and large. I saw what you would expect in such a rich diversity of habitats, including a large variety of waterfowl and shorebirds, eagles, deer, coyotes, and the tracks of other species. The centerpiece is the mature forest that belongs to DNR. It is steep in places, its topography probably made complex because it is prone to slides, and it drops to the flat floodplain of the Cowlitz River. Usually, when I approached the shallow pond at the base of the old forested hill the air would be filled with ducks and geese and the sound of their wings.

I am not a biologist and can't attest that this area is unique for its wildlife, though any area that supports runs of salmon and where bald eagles are seen routinely is unusual and worth protecting. It is even more unusual to see such a rich wildlife area so close to an urban area. There is a park right across the Cowlitz River, and a school nearby. It seems to me that this area deserves protection for a variety of reasons. It is a de facto refuge, both because of the mature forest and the variety of habitats, but also because it is unsuitable for development because of its potential for slides. Because of its unusually unstable topography, it would be a good site for the study of how streams, forest and wildlife respond and recover from natural disturbance.

I think most of us draw solace from the knowledge that animals are faring well somewhere, in lands that shaped them and were shaped by them. It does our hearts good to know that nature rules at least in some small isolated spot, but to have a real

functioning forest in your back yard, that is the kind of experience that shapes the lives of humans as well. Please move to protect this place.

Jack Scharbach

Please remember there are meetings over what they are going to do to trust lands in the guise of recreation and access this month.-starting tomorrow. Dates attached I hope. Please present the material attached in Kelso-especially Kelso at the SEPA center. Thank

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you Leigh McKeirnan 146 SouthVista Way Kelso Wa 98626 mckeirnan@kalama.com  
360 423-2464

CC: "The Mc Keirnans" <mckeirnan@kalama.com>

### **Commenters 2 and 3: Mike Davis and Bob Dick**

Transcription of Tape Recording –

05.03.05 Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests  
Public Hearing Lacey Community Center Hearings Officer – Dave Dietzman, WA State  
DNR

Dave Dietzman –

When you come up, if you could introduce yourself for the record.

Mike Davis –

My name's Mike Davis. I'm a forester with Hampton Tree Farms. To begin I would like to commend the DNR and the Board of Natural Resources for their efforts and hard work in generating the Policy for Sustainable Forests. By law, DNR trust lands are mandated to be managed to produce revenue for named beneficiaries. Hampton Tree Farms supports the DNR's recognition of this mandate and acknowledgement of their fiduciary responsibility as trust managers. As a consumer and active purchaser of DNR timber sale volume, we'd also like to throw our support behind the DNR's recognition of recreational forest users. This support also includes any activities that are legal, positive in nature, on DNR-managed trust lands. As a purchaser, we support the DNR's concept of examining other potential future market strategies and special forest products. I would like to remind the DNR that the vast majority of their revenue is generated by the purchasers of DNR timber sales with that resource being converted to plywood, lumber, panels and chips. These manufacturing and product opportunities should remain a focal point of emphasis considering that these activities will generate and facilitate the trust mandate to produce revenue. The Draft Policy for Sustainable Forests also examines different selling and auctioning strategies for future consideration with respect to the timber sale program. Moving forward, we strongly encourage an ongoing emphasis primarily on lump sum timber sales. Consideration should be given to scale and tonnage sales as an appropriate vehicle to market and sell thinnings, partial cuts, salvage sales as a result of blowdown, fire and insect mortality. Thank you.

Dave Dietzman –

Thank you, Mike. Next we have Bob Dick.

Bob Dick –

For the record my name is Bob Dick. I am Washington manager of the American Forest Resource Council. I represent forest operators who use DNR timber in their operations. First of all I want to congratulate DNR on a product very well done. I have to say that it's better than valium, it is really dull, but you have done a nice job of doing a complete job of going through your policies, it is much more complex, much more complete than the 92 program and you deserve credit for that. I think probably tonight one other thing I'd tell you is that we all need to remember why the trust lands are here. They are here to

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benefit the beneficiaries, not the forest industry, not the environmental community, but the beneficiaries. Now they need to be managed in accordance with all the laws, policies and regulations that guide forest land management, but we need to remember why those lands are here. I think you have done a good job of laying out that mandate in the document. I would say that as far as recreation goes, last year, about a year ago, when we attended the scoping meetings it was apparent that there is a substantial increase in the interest in recreation. And again I applaud the department for recognizing that and I want to tell you that the forest industry stands ready to work with DNR and recreationists to make sure that they have a safe, pleasant experience in the forests. More later. I guess the only other thing I'd have to say is that I'd be embarrassed to tears to ask for two more weeks to get comments in. We've had a year, there have been dozens of meetings, there is no excuse not to have them in on the 16th.

Dave Dietzman –  
Thank you, Bob.

That concludes the folks that signed up to comment. Would anybody else like to comment? Are there any additional questions that you might have? Yeah, Bob.

Bob Dick –  
Got a question for you. The Board of Natural Resources is still writing and making draft policies. How is that addressed in this document to make sure we're dealing with up-to-date information?

Dave Dietzman –  
Yeah, that's a very good question. I don't know if this thing (microphone) is working.

Bob Dick –  
Doesn't matter. (Inaudible background voices.)

Dave Dietzman –  
Yes, in my introductory comments, I mentioned that, and I don't think you were here yet, the Board is continuing discussion on these draft policies. They have provided input on a number of the department recommended policies, some of that is reflected in draft environmental impact statement, some of that is not because we didn't have that information, although at this point we don't anticipate any substantial changes that would affect the analysis in the draft EIS. We feel like we captured the range of analysis and the range of alternatives to provide them to modify that recommended alternative and so far that's what we've seen. So, we will be identifying that in the final EIS, identifying the Board's preferred alternative at that point and there will be a discussion of that preferred alternative and any changes that that preferred alternative has regarding the impact analysis.

Okay, anything else? I don't want to bore you. (Laughter) We certainly appreciate you coming out It's been a lot of effort. I know that the project team all appreciates this very much. There's a substantial amount of effort gone into the development of this document and I guess we're going to have to, hopefully this is a good sign that there's not a lot of real controversial comments. Hopefully that reflects favorably on the scoping

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that we've done over the past year, to try to nail down these policies within the Board's flexibility for making their decision. I'm sure the Board appreciates you coming out, too. Thank you very much and we'll close the hearing.

For the record, this hearing was conducted at the Lacey Community Center, on May 3, the hearing began about 6 PM and since there are no additional folks to provide comment at the hearing, we're going to close the hearing at 6:30. Meeting adjourned.

**Commenters 4, 5, 6 and 7: Jim Buck, Rod Fleck, Bob Lynette and Carol Johnson**

Transcription of Tape Recording –

05.04.05 Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests  
Public Hearing Port Angeles – Peninsula Community College Hearings Officer – Dave Dietzman, WA State DNR

Dave Dietzman – Let the record show that it is about 6:20 on May 4. This hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests is being held at the Little Theater at the Peninsula College campus in the city of Port Angeles.

Jim Buck. If you'd like to come up and please just speak into the microphone here.

Thank you. For the record, I'm State Representative Jim Buck from the 24th District. During the period from 1995-1999 I was the chairman or vice-chairman of the Natural Resources Committee in the House. At that time, DNR was in the process of entering a Habitat Conservation Plan and I fought that effort not so much because I was opposed to the concept of Habitat Conservation Plans, I just thought we could get a better deal than we got. But the effort or my efforts to keep it from happening without legislative authority were not successful and we entered a Habitat Conservation Plan with the federal government which was a multi-species Habitat Conservation Plan. Several years later, the Forest and Fish Act was enacted by the legislature. I was the prime sponsor of that. In the process of taking a look at the Forest and Fish Act and the Habitat Conservation Plan I went ahead and made a site prescription by site prescription comparison between the two and I'd like to read just briefly what the comparison showed. And this is available as public record from my office if anyone is interested. The comparison of the common categories of the HCP and Forest and Fish plan says that the Forest and Fish protections generally exceed the HCP protections. This is somewhat dependant on how minimal harvest in the HCP inner zone and selected removal of single trees, groups of trees, thinning operations and salvage in the outer zone and the wind buffer areas compares with the site prescriptions in the Forest and Fish plan. Forest and Fish prescriptions provide better site protection on Type 4 and 5 streams, which account for 72% of the stream miles in Western Washington. Forest and Fish prescriptions also provide equal or better protection on most Type 3 stream mileage in Western Washington. The HCP protections exceed Forest and Fish protections in Western Washington on only about 10 to 20% of the stream miles in Western Washington and then only in cases where moderate or greater windthrow hazards exist. When considering that most Western Washington private timber is found in site class 1 or 2, 72.6%, it



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should be noted that the Forest and Fish provides equal or better protection in 9 out of 12 possible site class comparisons. Now the purpose of reading that was to provide testimony that we have two programs in the state that are recognized by the federal government as meeting ESA requirements. Your multi-species HCP and the Forest and Fish plan which is in the process of being turned into an HCP. The buffer prescriptions for the multi-species HCP are quite specific and the fact that the law requires you to put forth a sustainable harvest plan with a 10-year sustainable harvest plan to, and comply with the HCP, is quite a daunting task. We were assured when the HCP was being considered by a former Lands Commissioner that we would be able to get 644 million board feet a year out of this thing. At this stage, we are not close to that. This is a problem for a lot of citizens in this county and many other counties that rely on a suitable timber harvest to be able to go ahead and find employment, plus be able to provide funds back to the junior taxing districts, such as Forks Hospital, our local hospital the county and a lot of the other places. So I want to urge that we go for a Policy for Sustainable Forests that gives us the maximum amount of wood while still staying in compliance with the ESA. I think that it's important for everyone to understand that I attended a ceremony at DNR headquarters yesterday in which the department received a green certification from the Sustainable Forestry [Initiative® program], which is the first state in the country to have done this. So our compliance with the ESA through the Habitat Conservation Plan and our Forest Practices have put us in pretty good stead, because we now are, have met your requirement for being able to market our wood as green certified anywhere in the country. So I guess the gist of my testimony is that we have been recognized as having a sustainable program and we should work to maximize the return for the taxpayers of the state from this land which is held in trust for them. So with that, thank you.

Dave Dietzman –

Thank you Jim, if you have anything you want us to keep for the record, just submit it or send it in. Alright, we have Rod Fleck.

Rod Fleck –

My name's Rod Fleck, I'm the city attorney for Forks and we've been involved with DNR natural resource issues for quite some time. There are seven things I'm just going to try to point out quickly based on earlier comments and then going through the version today.

First and foremost, there does not seem to be a clear policy on compensation back to the trusts and how that is going to be ascertained and a determining factor and the term compensation is used repeatedly in the document. Still have not seen how that is going to be discussed. This became a huge issue with the Loomis Forest and I think that there would be great advantages to the department to have the Board establish an element in defining compensation to the trusts within its Trust Mandate. I think that would be very advantageous many years down the road. If it was done it would have been extremely helpful in the Loomis situation and might have prevented a large amount of the hostilities that arose when that discussion occurred.

The second item would be aesthetics. Still uncertain whether or not the preferred alternative comports with the Trust Mandate which the primary responsibility to the DNR

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is the trust beneficiaries. There should be some way to temper the aesthetics or the preferred alternative on aesthetics to say that aesthetics will be addressed in timber management approaches when there is minimal or short-term impacts, financial impacts, to the beneficiaries. The way it's worded now, you could start having a large number of local areas argued for significant aesthetic set-aside. And the issue of compensation again is referenced there and it does not necessarily address the fair market compensation. Some would argue in fact that by (inaudible) aesthetic buffer the state is transferring a value to those adjacent property owners and their property at the expense of the beneficiaries. Meaning that if I had a piece of property here and I had a viewscape of your land behind me and you haven't cut it, there might be a value to that aesthetic look and if I argue that you should (inaudible) there and not harvest that when you propose a timber harvest, and you do so to accommodate my or my subdivision's interest, you are then depriving the beneficiaries of total compensation for that and transferring that value to those homeowners. I think that's problematic in this policy.

Your older forest policy is getting better. It's now only about 18 times what Dr. Bergeson suggested setting aside in the resolution adopted by the Board of Natural Resources. In her resolution, I think it's 1110, there was a reference to natural forests that the sustained harvest calculation document says is about 2,500 acres, we're now back up to 75,000 acres. (Inaudible) in some of those cases there is an issue here about whether or not the policy statement with a non deferred older forest is in compliance with the obligation with Skamania where there's a reliance on social and cultural interests to determine what the future actions of those are. There's not a reference at all in there with regard to the obligation to the trust beneficiary and that's your primacy obligation. The others are laudable and Skamania's very clear on that one. I think that it can start being or should be addressed there. There is also a concern in this policy about short-term deferrals becoming permanent or long-term deferrals. The example being that the 15,000 acres that were set aside as old growth research reserves were set aside for a 10-year period and then continued in all these proposals these become much longer in their duration and we already have a set of short-term deferrals in the sustained harvest calculation that I think stay in place until 2007 or 2008. As a result, you may be setting a precedent here that those should become much longer term deferrals and your sustained harvest calculation number did not work with that assumption. I'd be kind of concerned about creating that precedent within this policy. I think you're setting yourself up to that argument to be made very easily. I'm still very intrigued and interested if this can actually be mapped where these acres are under this definition. This definition is a lot clearer than the one in the sustained harvest calculation definition where we had niche diverse, fully functional, etc., so I think this definition would be easier to map, but I still think it's owed to the beneficiaries, especially the junior taxing districts, we have a separate obligation that's different than your state beneficiaries to know which taxing those districts those lands are in because that could have a significant impact to the (missing text). And I think again, the Skamania trust mandate, your trust law obligations should be clear about having to account for things that you're moving on and off the balance folks of those who are receiving benefits from it.

The wildlife alternative, I think again alternative 3, you need to stay clearly within the obligations of the trust mandate, not within the interests of the trusts. There's a nuance there that has me concerned especially with the recent project that's been going on with

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western Jefferson County where the argument is that that participation in that project is a benefit to the trusts, but it's not been, no analysis has been done on that that I can find in DNR's files that that's actually been determined and calculated. And so I'm a little concerned that this is kind of setting up that same situation where it's while it's in the interest of the trusts if we might be able to, possibly with this in conjunction with this maybe get species recovery quicker, maybe we could do this – based on what analysis, where's your demonstrative evidence that that's actually the case. I think that you're required to do that. The other issue is how you determine when you will cooperate or participate in these types of endeavors with other government and organizations, I think is the way it's worded and does that include such things as land exchanges, does that include such as (inaudible) land management obligations in those areas that are adjacent to maybe some of these participatory organizations property. Those are issues I think that we are still trying to find answers for and I think the plan is, unfortunately, not real clear on.

The external relations, this is a policy it's more of a word smith issue, but as it's worded it creates a hierarchy where the tribes are placed in the primacy position in the sentence over the trust beneficiaries. That's not your trust law mandate. I think if you're trying to differentiate between these different governments, either reword the sentence or flip it around to say the trust beneficiaries, then listing all the other types of government with the tribes first. In addition at the very end of that sentence, it still has me baffled why environmental education is singled out as a means of corroboration, cooperation and participation in the department's management duties. I mean there's a whole host of things that you guys could be doing all those on and if you want to single something out a few of us could argue your trust mandate education would become first and foremost and then maybe a couple of these more laudable objectives.

As for planning, the planning preferred alternative still has a significant concern for us. The SEPA process is not very conducive to cooperative planning. (inaudible) in the HCP actually discusses how planning is supposed to be done, in the HCP landscapes and planning unit and that's a distinction that the department is now collectively putting the landscapes into a planning unit plan. That's not what the HCP talked about when it talked about landscape planning and it did not also rely on SEPA only means of public involvement, cooperation. This administration has laudably taken on this effort and done some of the work under analysis which is an analysis under an assessment package of another alternative which is advantageous, but it doesn't necessarily involve all the stakeholders, it doesn't necessarily involve all of us with an interest in that landscape and I think that it would be much more advantageous to go back and look at what the HCP actually said and I want to see if you can actually do that, if it's too costly, or (inaudible) sit down and ask the legislature if that's something because it was so important in this 70-year agreement that we work out how that will get funded and prioritize that and report this back to the Board. I also think in this whole planning process there should be some feedback report back to the Board because as I understand it, in the OESF there's 11 or 12 landscape units and I don't think one of the landscape plans has been completed yet. Assessments have been underway, but I don't think they've been completed. So, and that's 8 years, 9 years.

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Finally, I think it's very important and laudable for the department to get a much deserved pat on the back for the Local Economic Vitality. I can still vividly remember the meeting with then Commissioner Belcher who made it very clear and told the city, myself the mayor, the former mayor and the current mayor of our city clerk/ treasurer, that quote "it was not her job nor her need to care about the Forks economy as part of her operation." While she's never been known for her tact with those she disagreed with, it was disheartening to say the least. This policy at least recognizes the symbiotic relationship between those natural resources and communities and the department needs to ensure that community is somewhat in tact so the department can meet its management goals. If you don't have the folks in the communities who can do the thinnings, do the replants, do the harvesting, do the processing, you won't have the ability to manage your lands. It's that simple, and so understanding the local economic vitality and the relationship with the department is critical and this policy is a much, much needed one and the department really deserves a pat on the back for doing that.

Dave Dietzman –

Thanks Rod. Do you have a hard copy of your comments?

Rod Fleck –

I'll write it.

Dave Dietzman –

Okay, great. Thank you very much. Anybody else. (Attendee asking if they can speak from their seat, Dave saying he doesn't know if the microphone will pick it up from there.) If you could also state your name for the record.

Bob Lynette –

Sure, my name is Bob Lynette and I live at 212 Jamestown Beach Lane, Sequim, and I have to say it, I come from the old days of Bert Cole a long time ago and DNR has certainly come a good ways from Mr. Cole's idea of just cut without any other benefits to the public from their DNR lands. Just a couple of comments and I'm referring to those comments now to the summary Draft EIS four-page handout that was given out tonight at the hearing.

Under Financial Diversification, I would favor the second alternative. Under Forest Health, I would also favor the second alternative. Under Older Forests and Old Growth, I really can't tell from this write-up, but I would certainly favor retention of as much old growth as possible, in fact retain old growth period. Under Wildlife Habitat, Alternative 2, it's very difficult frankly in the writing of it for me to still notice a big difference between 2 and 3, I know there is, but I can't, this write-up is tough to get on four pages, I understand. Under Watershed Systems, I'd favor Alternative 1. And under Riparian Management Zones, Alternative 1 with a slight difference, this says no action alternative protects key non-timber resources by establishing riparian management zones along Type 1-4 waters and, when necessary, along Type 5 waters. I would change that to "when advisable along Type 5 waters to protect ecological values." Thank you.

Dave Dietzman –

Thank you Bob. Anybody else?

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Carol Johnson –

Hi, this is Carol Johnson. I'm the Executive Director of the North Olympic Timber Action Committee and I do have my hand-in. I'm just going to make a couple comments separate from what I'm turning in on my prepared document. We do thank you for coming here, I know you travel a long way, we do that during the month when we have to go there, but I appreciate during the whole process of the sustained harvest calculation and now the rewrite of the Forest Resource Plan, you have held these meetings in Port Angeles, and even though I'm disappointed in the turn out tonight, in other events we have had some significant turn out and we appreciate you guys coming this way so that we can get as many people as possible from our community to be here for this.

One of the things that has happened in the past and I know it affects our county and its junior taxing district is when you do plan the harvest, that there is at least something happening in every year of the plan in each of these areas. The counties are always strapped for money and having no continued stream is really difficult for them and I know you've got your goals that you have to meet, but I think it is important as part of your marketing strategy to look at some consistency of (inaudible) to the beneficiaries on an annual basis.

Then the last thing I'll say and I'll give my letter right here (gave letter to Jodi), one of the last things I'll talk about is the alternative for road maintenance. Here on the peninsula we've always had a long history of timber and logging roads, not only DNR, but they connect with private and federal lands and we have made the same testimony for the federal lands that as much as possible, maintain the road systems, upgrade them, make them safe to travel on and make them so that they make a minimal impact on the environment. But the road system is important not only for recreation here, but also as in some cases, alternative roads, detour roads, that kind of thing and certainly we hold them very dear for fire breaks and fire access, recreation and then the access to all lands so that the lands can be managed. Thank you.

Dave Dietzman –

Thank you, Carol. Anybody else? We'll take some time for questions and turn the tape off for a minute.

I just want to thank you for coming tonight and I want to let the record know that it is 7:06 PM and we're concluding the public hearing portion of the meeting. Thank you very much.

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Document Received at Port Angeles Public Hearing from Commenter 7:  
Carol Johnson



NORTH OLYMPIC TIMBER ACTION COMMITTEE  
P.O. Box 1057 • Port Angeles, WA 98362 • (360) 452-6645 • FAX (360) 452-0718

DNR  
SEPA Center  
P.O. Box 47015  
Olympia, WA. 98504-7015

Re: DNR draft "Policy for Sustainable Forestry"

May 4, 2005

To Whom It May Concern;

The North Olympic Timber Action Committee appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft policy for Sustainable Forestry and thank you for holding a public hearing in Port Angeles.

The need to produce income for the Trusts, while striving for a high standard of ecological protection and meeting the demands of multiple recreational user groups makes your job more complex in creating policies that meet your goals and will be accepted by the citizens at large.

We remain concerned about the definition of old growth and the management within older forests on thousands of acres fitting this category on the Peninsula and the corresponding detrimental affects on Trust beneficiaries.

We support the DNR's expanded marketing strategies to take advantage of market conditions, but it is important to have some consistency of income to the beneficiaries annually.

We hope you will reach a final policy document that allows flexibility, minimizes petty law suits and produces the jobs, taxes and trust revenues we can all benefit from.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol Johnson".

Carol Johnson  
Executive Director

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**Commenters 8, 9 and 10: Bob Dick, Mark Baugh, Kris McCall**

Transcription of Tape Recording –

05.05.05 Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests  
Public Hearing Mount Vernon Best Western CottonTree Inn Hearings Officer – Dave  
Dietzman, WA State DNR

Dave Dietzman –

Let the record show that it is approximately 6:20 PM on May 5, 2005. This hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests is being held in the CottonTree Inn in Mount Vernon. Comments, first person is Bob Dick.

Bob Dick –

For the record, my name is Bob Dick. I am Washington manager of the American Forest Resource Council. I want to say at the onset that we will submit written comments prior to the deadline. And I just want to make three points tonight.

First of all, the document is very comprehensive. The department deserves a job well done on the document. Having said that, point number two is that the document is very complex and that am very much hoping that you will produce a much condensed document that lays out the policies similar to the one that encompasses the Forest Resource Plan policies. That's the document I hope you follow that lead.

The final point I want to make is that your old growth policy is under development. I sat through the discussion with the Board of Natural Resources yesterday. A few things within that and I did make this point to the Board is that the department needs to take into account what happens to the small acreages of old growth as they blow down, burn, get insects in them, etc. What do you do with that? That is not addressed in the document. Once vertical trees become horizontal trees, what do you do with them? Obviously we think that they ought to be salvaged.

The other thing I want to address very briefly is that there are some significant patches of old growth timber, one to take note of is the 15,000 acre piece of old growth timber on the Olympic Peninsula that belongs to the University of Washington that's been sitting there ever since anybody's been afraid to put a saw into it. For understandable reasons. But it's approximately \$500 million worth of timber only and I would suggest rather than just letting it sit there, that the department explore a trade with the US Forest Service. I would much rather see that than the department trying to get \$500 million out of the legislature, which you won't get probably, and go out and buy private land. There is a plethora of Forest Service second growth that I think would very nicely replace that old growth. Give it to the Forest Service and get some land that you can manage.

That's it. Thanks.

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Dave Dietzman –  
Thanks, Bob. Next is Mark Baugh.

Mark Baugh –  
My name is Mark Baugh and I'd just like to commend you guys for the job you've done and the huge amount of time and effort that you've taken to put this policy together. I realize the vast array of concerns that you've had to deal with in organizing this policy and I'm confident that you've reviewed all the environmental concerns in detail and have adequately addressed all the other concerns, the wildlife, recreation and water quality issues in your planning here. I also appreciate that you recognize the fiduciary responsibility that you have to the trustees to provide revenue from this land.

Just recently I've become aware how our schools stack up against schools in other countries and I think it's extremely important that we have as much funding as possible to develop our education systems in the state as we compete on an international market for jobs and things, I think it's extremely important that we fund our schools to the maximum. Since I work a company that owns sawmills in our state, I think it's extremely important for our lumber mills to have a reliable, steady flow of available logging to operate the mills with. We look forward to the implementation of this plan as soon as possible, so that we can be assured that we have a steady resource supply going forward. And of course we would favor the largest cut you guys believe is sustainable in those (inaudible, sounds like "lands" or "plans").

It's also important that we recognize that the timber that comes from these lands is necessary for supporting the rural economies of this area. Not only is it a steady supply of timber for the well-being of mill works in Everett and Snohomish, Arlington, Darrington, Anacortes, Everett, Epperson and all the other mill towns in our communities, but there's also the huge group of people that are timber fallers and loggers and truck drivers and mechanics that are involved in getting that timber to the mill. And also all the other people that are involved and that they support in the businesses in their communities from equipment sales right down to the local grocery stores. So, we want to make sure that all of those people are given consideration in the planning of this.

I do think we can (inaudible) in the way the department is presenting some of the logging that they have for sale, especially in their log sort programs. The company that I work for is a very large purchaser of Department of Natural Resources volume and we find this methodology of sale detrimental to our needs and we can't really see that it's of any benefit to the trusts that own it. And we'd preferred to see sales sold on a lump sum basis. Again, I'd like to thank you guys and the Board for the hard work you've put together and compiled in this plan and we look forward to its implementation and the healthy, productive forests that will develop as a result of this plan.

Dave Dietzman –  
Thank you, Mark. Kris McCall.

Kris McCall –  
Good evening. For the record my name is Kris McCall, proud resident and (inaudible) of Skagit County. First I'd like to commend the DNR and the Board for all of their hard



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work and due diligence that went into the Policy for Sustainable Forests. There have been a number of changes since 1992 that warrant a change in policy. These include 1) the adoption of the HCP, 2) change in the allowable annual cut, 3) new Forest Practice rules and 4) also a huge increase and interest in recreational activities. It seems like it'd be hard to generate a document to cover all the areas and changes, but this one does it well. Not only does it cover key cultural, social and environmental issues, but recognizes the DNR's fiduciary responsibilities to the trusts. I feel the new Policy for Sustainable Forests will assure Washingtonians continual benefits from the state trust lands. Thank you very much.

Dave Dietzman –

Great, thank you, Kris. I don't know if you have written copies that you want to leave with us now, you can if you want. If you don't we'll just transcribe what you've said. Anybody else?

The next steps are to gather all the comments and we're going to take a close look at those and have some internal review of those and decide if we need to make any amendments to the document, go back to the Board with a summary of those in some shape or form and we plan on issuing a Final Environmental Impact Statement probably, it looks like September, could be late August, but it's more likely to be in September sometime.

The Board also accepts comments on their proceedings at their regularly scheduled Board meetings, except August which is reserved for the annual Board retreat. So, if you want to show up at those, you're welcome to do that.

With that, I just want to thank you for coming. We really do appreciate you coming out. We've been putting a lot of time into this document and it's good to see you people show up that are interested in seeing it go forward and so we appreciate you coming out.

So, let the record show that this hearing in Mount Vernon is being concluded at approximately 6:30.

**Commenters 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15: Leigh McKeirnan, Mike Davis, Bob Dick, John Links and Al McKee**

Transcription of Tape Recording –

05.09.05 Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests  
Public Hearing Longview Cowlitz County PUD Hearings Officer – Dave Dietzman, WA  
State DNR

Dave Dietzman – Let the record show that it is currently 6:17 on May 9, 2005. This hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests is being held at the PUD headquarters in the city of Longview and my name is Dave Dietzman and I am the hearings officer. And with that, we have Leigh McKeirnan. If you'd come up here so we can make sure we get them tape recorded.

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Leigh McKeirnan – I think a perfect example of what could happen to the state trust lands when you don't do enough concern over the geology, for example look at the trust land back there in that photograph shows how steep it is and years ago they determined it would be not economically feasible and was too environmentally sensitive to log. So you need to consider geology more before you log these trust lands. And also you have to think of like Wildlife Watchers of America conservative group found out that there's much more money to be made in tourism and you have to think of the basic community, too, that the trust lands in and the needs of the state for that trust land as well as the wildlife. Don't just do what you did behind us and log an 8-foot across old growth tree and if you save an eagle's tree by some miracle, please leave a buffer around it so it really lasts. All the homes where I live, there were no buffers left. So, everything slid and I think you need more enforcement of your trust lands protection and I think logging them for wildfires, that's such an excuse I mean the city attorney in our town said we might need to log it for wildfires. What stands on documented steelhead salmon, cutthroat trout, smelt river with otters in it, documented by Lower Columbia Fish Recovery, it has three eagle's nests, documented by Wildlife, owls, eagles, there are eight bald eagles on my street but Wildlife says it's not an important eagle area. There's a wetland lake with thousands of ducks. I counted 700 just in a time period of just walking maybe 15 minutes on the dike, 700 geese going into that river valley before an ice storm. Need to think of wildlife. And then access, another reason or another excuse for logging is access and recreation. Doug Sutherland gave it straight to the city, then the city manage couldn't split it, the Kelso-Longview parks department take the parks department back to Kelso instead of giving the trust land to the city parks, Doug Sutherland gave it straight to the city with no logging restrictions. Recreation, we have around the Jacobsen transfer we have all kinds of we have all kinds of lands we're trying to attach to it and pick up which the city's tried hard not to allow us to do. And I would like you to really consider saving this special area as a focal point. We have something so special right in the center of town, you've logged everything else all around it. I gave you two geology reports from two university geologists saying it could unleash land sliding into the river valley. That floodplain right next to it floods every year even in drought years. You need to consider all of the wetlands, the drought, all the conditions around it. The dike's been raised many times, that dike protects schoolchildren, and the elderly. You didn't care about 126 homeowners in Aldercrest, you didn't care about the 300 of us. I called the DNR personally beforehand. I walked buffers with city officials and we gave them petitions that would save everything.

Nothing we did and we were involved for years during all that slide stuff and you still allowed Weyerhaeuser to bankroll Eagle Ridge doing all this illegal logging and it doesn't happen here, it happens all over the state and all over several states and you should check into the illegal logging practices of Weyerhaeuser in trust lands. And enforcement and enforcing buffers around rivers, eagle's nests. Why does Wildlife say it's not an important wildlife area when there's eight bald eagles of on my street that I took photographs of and sent them. Why did the DNR come back and log the cliff at the end of my street after 126 homes slid a block down. That was ancient landslide area that geology shows you are not to log land, steep slopes. There's no enforcement, you enforce the codes on your trust lands because look what happens it will cost you a lot more money. This time I had Fran, Farra put it in, sign for those geology statements and this time I'm holding the DNR responsible. If God doesn't hold you responsible, I will.

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I'm sure you'll have to answer to God if I'm not successful someday. For all the schoolchildren and all the elderly on the other side of that dike, it's been raised many times and that's before any logging. Ninety years you had the nobody logged geology areas, why do you do it now?

Dave Dietzman –

Thank you, Leigh. Next one, Mike Davis.

Mike Davis –

I've had the opportunity to testify at a number of these hearings and typically I do so as a representative of the company I work for, but tonight I'd like to say a couple things as a citizen. But before I take that hat off, I would like to say a few things about the DNR and their enforcement. The company I work for, we log a number of DNR sales and we get our ears pinned back if we don't still to the rules and regulations that we have in our contracts and I think you guys do a good job of enforcement.

Anyway, now as a citizen, I think we should all pause and reflect about our trust lands in this state and how fortunate we are to have the type of system we do in this state. We have 2.1 million acres that are mandated by law to produce revenue for named beneficiaries. And even though we may not be specifically those beneficiaries, we all benefit from our state lands. We all have kids or maybe a spouse or grandchildren or someone that's directly related to the schools in the state and in some way or form, we all benefit from our trust lands.

Quick story, about 10 years ago I moved from Washington to Oregon. And I spent those years in small rural communities down there, and you all might remember in the late 80s and early 90s when the federal timber sale program fell apart. Those highly federally-dependant communities and schools down in the state of Oregon really struggled when that federal timber sale program essentially went away. And I'm here to testify today, 15 years later, that those schools and communities down there are still struggling. And I know that happened up here in the state of Washington, too. And it's real important that there's a social and economic link in our small communities and our rural areas with the timber communities. For instance, an operator will move into a small community and he'll need a work force for his operations. The community needs a way of life, so the two become linked. All of a sudden you have money and dollars flowing into the community supporting businesses and the schools are vibrant, their healthy, the communities are healthy, and the counties are healthy. If that goes away, then it creates a drag. The schools start to fall apart, the communities suffer and it creates a drag in the local counties and those counties are going to start to drag down some of the larger cities in that same county. So one way or another, we're all affected by it.

Finally, I'd like to make a comment about the DNR's recognition of wildlife and recreation in their plan. I think they've done a good job of recognizing the importance of these industries. I think the recreation and tourism industries go hand-in-hand and real well with the timber industry. Recreation and tourism jobs help complement and they help supplement timber jobs. But make no mistake about it, tourism and recreation jobs will never, never substitute blue collar timber jobs in our rural counties. Those blue collar timber jobs are the jobs that are going to put the food on the table for those

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families in those rural communities. And I'd like to complement the Board and complement this DNR staff that has been involved with this. I think you guys have done a great job and I think you've done a service to our community. I'd also like to encourage anybody that knows a school board member or a county commissioner to get involved. This is an important process. Thank you.

Dave Dietzman –  
Thank you. Next we have Bob Dick.

Bob Dick –  
For the record, my name is Bob Dick. I'm Washington manager for the American Forest Resource Council. I've got four points I want to make.

Kind of building on what Mr. Davis just had to say. We all use forest products, we all use wood, we all use it every day, multiple times a day. There is a demand for what we, the forest industry, produce. The trust lands are an integral part of producing the forest products that we use. Recognizing that the trust lands are not there for the benefit of the forest industry, they are there for the benefit of trust beneficiaries, but it's a unique relationship that we have with DNR and the trust beneficiaries to produce the products to produce the income for the beneficiaries.

I think one of the points I want to make tonight is that you DNR operate within quite a matrix and while the draft document does a good job of covering that, I'd think it wouldn't hurt to say it in public. First of all, you have the Public Lands Statutes which lay out the basic charge of what you do, how you will do it. Then you have the Sustainable Yield Statute that says whatever you do, you will do within the concept of sustained yield. In other words you will advantage no generation over another generation, today or tomorrow. You have the Multiple Use Statute that says that when activities are compatible with the trust mandate that you can engage in other activities or allow other people to engage in other activities on these lands, recreation or whatever. You have the Forest Practices Statutes and Regulations which have gone from basically a reforestation statute prior to 1974 to a set of rules and regulations that come in a three-ring binder about an inch and a half thick. They are very sophisticated, probably the most so in the nation. We have SEPA, the State Environmental Policy Act. Every timber sale that you put up goes through SEPA. Every policy that you put forward goes through the SEPA process to ensure the public has a say. You have a Habitat Conservation Plan which is arguably the most stringent in the nation, which really is the defining document for how DNR will manage its lands on the westside. You have the agency review, once you go through all the other stuff, the other agencies get a shot at you to make sure that what you're doing falls within the purview of their particular missions. You have local and regional planning processes where you have your folks in the field planning, recognizing the local problems, challenges, etc., to make sure those are addressed. Finally, you have the timber sale contract which is very specific about what the contractor can and cannot do in the field. Taken as a whole, this matrix provides a significant amount of environmental protection. It provides a significant amount of input for the public into your process.

Want to close by saying that I have substantial opportunities to spend time in the field looking at how all this stuff gets done on the ground and I have to tell you that I think

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that DNR's land management is very, very professional. I think that your field people deserve a lot of credit for taking all of this stuff and putting it to work on the ground.

Finally, I'll say what I've said a couple times before and that is that this is a very complex, thorough document, and all of you are to be congratulated on putting together a good set of draft policies.

Dave Dietzman –  
Thank you, Bob. John Links.

John Links –  
What I came to say I can say from here.

Dave Dietzman –  
I don't know if we'll get it on the record.

John Links –  
That's fine. I don't (inaudible) part of the record.

Dave Dietzman –  
Okay.

John Links –  
I'd like to applaud the DNR for how they've conducted themselves in this process and I strongly support (inaudible) and appreciate that they have regained sight of their fiduciary duties to the trusts. Thank you.

Dave Dietzman –  
Thank you, John. I apologize, I don't think I can read this last name.

Al McKee –  
I don't really have prepared comments. I'm a Skamania County Commissioner and I not only represent Skamania County, I'm the vice-chairman of the Washington Timber Counties. First of all, I identify myself as one of those county commissioners that Mike Davis was speaking about earlier and I know just how those Oregon counties feel coming from Skamania County. Our county depends heavily on timber harvest for jobs and county revenue for services and it has over the years. And if we're going to survive in the future, we're going to have to continue to depend on them to a greater degree than we've been able to for the past few years. I would like to also emphasize that that's not just a plight in Skamania County, but in the state of Oregon and state of Washington both, there are a lot of small rural communities that are surrounded by timber and the only way they'll survive is if there can be something done in that forest to support those communities, which means that there needs to be intelligent stewardship and I think this plan espouses intelligent stewardship. Their program allows for harvest to support the dependent communities and still sustain what I think is a reasonable level of old growth and support the multitude of species that depend on the habitat related to the forest.

As far as timber counties are concerned, I'm just going to quickly review some of the things just for the record here to let you know or to re-emphasize the point that these

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points were unanimously adopted by the timber counties and I believe there are 21 timber counties and I'm not aware that any of them have changed their mind in the interim. Of course timber counties support the use of active management.

They support the use of ownership grouping which provides sustainable harvest calculations for each individual county.

They support the elimination of the DNR policy maintaining at least 50 percent of each watershed administrative unit in timber 25 years of age or older, which has been referred to as the 50/25 strategy.

They support the use of the HCP intent of eight leave trees per acre and elimination of the DNR policy addressing leave trees at the stand level as a percentage of the available trees.

They support the maintenance of 10-15 percent of the HCP planning units in older forest conditions.

The timber counties support controlling harvest regulation by permitting wider fluctuations, which is called modulating, but still providing for certainty to provide for more flexible management that allows the DNR to be more responsive to markets. This approach limits changes to +/- 25 percent of the previous decades harvest level, as defined by timber volume.

The timber counties support the use of economic value as the basis of sustainable harvest calculations. The basis of this decision was a desire to see the DNR focus more attention on the counties needs to additional income from the Forest Board lands and recognition of the affect of this proposed change in policy.

The consensus decision reached by the timber counties would support the Board of Natural Resources in selecting alternative 5 or 6 or a combination of those two. And the primary difference between 5 and 6 was the use of Dr. Jerry Franklin's biodiversity pathways in alternative 6. The policy results in the ability to manage more of the landscape and speeds the process of developing desired fish and wildlife habitat conditions.

And I would conclude by saying that I think this, or I would reiterate what some of the others have already said, that I think the process has been very thorough, very well thought out and I know it's involved a lot of hours of people that needed to be using doing other things and we in Skamania County really appreciate that and are looking forward to the impacts in the future. Thank you.

Dave Dietzman –  
Thank you, Al. Anybody else.

Leigh McKeirnan –  
Can I make one quick comment. Just one please. Probably (inaudible) other area (inaudible) in forestry that I (inaudible) know about. But I was involved in the process around (inaudible) that cost the federal government multi millions of dollars (inaudible).

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And then people don't bother to (inaudible) – remainder of comment is inaudible – lots of noise with people getting up, etc., speaker didn't come back up to the microphone to have comment on recorder.

Dave Dietzman – I want to thank everybody for coming here tonight. There has been a lot of work gone into the development of these policies and the department and I know the Board, really appreciates your interest in moving the process forward.

I will go ahead and close this portion of the comment period, then I'll give my closing remarks. For the record, let the record show that this public hearing in Longview on the Policy for Sustainable Forests at the PUD building is being closed at 6:40 PM. Thank you.

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**Documents (3 Pages) Received at Longview Public Hearing from Commenter 11:  
Leigh McKeirnan**

Hi Leigh,

Sorry for the delay in getting back to you, but I've been very busy trying to leave town for a few months on a research trip.

Based on your experiences, it does sound like DNR should stipulate that any land transferred to the city as a "wilderness area" not be logged, especially if the ground is steep and slope stability is a potential concern. Feel free to forward my email to Debi Van Buren (I don't have her email address). No geologist worth their salt would argue that cutting mature trees down on steep soil-mantled slopes would not affect the potential for slope instability. In regard to your question about the proposed road down the slope from your house, any geological report should address the potential for cutting material from the toe of the slope to affect potential instability upslope. And any jurisdiction (city, county, whatever) should insist on a quality analysis and review the work of consultants paid by project proponents. If you want someone to review such reports for you, you might contact Tim Abbe at Philip Williams and Associates (in Seattle); he is a registered geologist who graduated from UW a few years ago.

FYI, I will be out of town for most of this spring (from this afternoon to May).

Sincerely,  
Dave

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David R. Montgomery, Professor  
Dept. of Earth & Space Sciences  
University of Washington, Box 351310  
Seattle, WA 98195-1310  
(206) 685-2560 phone  
(206) 543-3836 fax

*Received from  
Leigh McKeirnan  
@ May 9, 2005  
public hearing  
in Longview.*



# AREA NEWS

SATURDAY

## Ever-expanding impact



From left, Kelso city councilman Alan Slater, geotechnical engineer Ken Bass and civil engineer Tasoja Berquam of the Army Corps of Engineers walk away from a mudslide that is choking an unnamed creek in the Aldercrest area and that could threaten the Coweeman River.

## Aldercrest slide could send mud into Coweeman

ARON STEINBERG / THE DAILY NEWS

Kelso officials are raising the possibility that the Aldercrest landslide could send a mud wave slushing into the Coweeman River.

Such a slide could damage the Grade Street Bridge or block the river itself.

Less dramatically, the slide could gradually wash so much silt into the Coweeman that it would clog the river and cause it to flood.

The city is enlisting the Army Corps of Engineers to evaluate these hazards and determine whether it can do anything about them. They are talking, at least, about building a check dam on the unnamed creek at the base of the Aldercrest slide.

"There's far more mud down here than I thought there would be," City Councilman Alan Slater said during a tour of the slide Thursday.

As the Aldercrest slide slowly slips downhill, tons of soggy, gooey, sticky mud are oozing into an unnamed creek at the eastern base of the hill. The slide mass is several hundred feet wide and is pushing old sewer pipes, houses, trees and dirt into the creek, cutting across an old state logging road.

A slug of debris a couple hundred yards long is blocking the creek, which locals have called Bear Creek for decades. The shattered remains of the home of Dan and Shelley Hughes is scattered like floatam on top of the mud, several hundred feet downhill from where it was built.

All this movement has officials concerned on two counts.

■ A sudden surge of debris could dam the creek, trapping water upstream. Eventually, the ponded water would break through and a wave of water, mud and trees would sluice into the Coweeman, a scant half-mile or so to the north.

■ Alternatively, the creek could steadily pick up the mud and carry it into the Coweeman as the mountain hemorrhages soil that bleeds into the river.

The impact of these scenarios is uncertain. At the very least, says City Engineer Kay Adams, it would add silt to a riverbed already clogged with volcanic sediment brought up the Coweeman by Mount St. Helens mudflows on May 18, 1980.

"If you continue to silt in the bottom of the river, it will lose its capacity," Adams said. Only a heroic sandbagging effort prevented the Coweeman dike from falling in February 1994, sparing South Kelso from a major flood.

At worst, a cascade of mud could bring so much debris into the river that it could wallop the Grade Street Bridge about a mile below the junction of Bear Creek and the Coweeman.

"All those trees and rock wads — if they get out in the river during a flood event, it could run it into the bridge. I don't know how much the bridge could take, and I really don't want to find out," Adams said.

Another possibility is that the river could be blocked, temporarily, by a logjam, though Adams said that's a long shot.

There are two comforting facts: One, Bear Creek is a small drainage, so it does not carry much water to

comparison to the Coweeman itself. Two, the worst of the rainy season is probably over, buying the city some time to study and act.

Tasoja Berquam, a civil engineer with the corps who inspected the slide Thursday, called the moving hill "a pretty incredible landslide."

She and Ken Bass, the city's contract geotechnical engineer, agreed that there's no way that the slide can be arrested at an acceptable cost. It's probably impossible to even set up a drill rig on the slide, Berquam said, because the soil is so soggy.

"You can't even walk on it. It appears to be very viscous," Berquam said.

This reporter found that out himself Thursday when he sank to mid thigh in what had appeared reasonably stable ground. Adams said a city worker recently rescued a man who had sunk into the mud up to his waist.

Solutions to the problem are limited. Two possibilities discussed Thursday: Dredging silt out of the creek or the Coweeman (either for building a check dam — smaller but similar to the one the corps built on the Toutle River in the mid 1980s to stop erosion of volcanic debris).

Before the corps gets involved, Berquam said, it must decide whether it can take action under its "advance measures" authority, which allows it to take steps to head off disasters. She will take the issue to her supervisors next week, Berquam said.

Adams said nothing forces the city to act, but the mud at the very least will cause a silt problem for endangered fish runs.

## Bus company Kelso depot is 'illegal and unconstitutional'

CONYER MCKINNEY / THE DAILY NEWS

An Oregon bus company and the city of Kelso are in a legal battle over a city ordinance that requires a permit to obtain a permit.

Pierce Pacific Stages Inc. is suing the city for violating the ordinance by loading and unloading passengers at a curb.

Greyhound pays the city to use the point out. The Thualain, Ore., company says the city ordinance is "illegal and unconstitutional" and is suing the city for \$170 monthly for the city's use of a curb.

Greyhound rents an agency in Kelso, Ore., to handle the bus. The agency said Friday, following the city's action, it was not a Kelso police officer's ticket.

Pulling to a curb on a public street, Kelso police officers have been against the city to stop them from doing so.

The city on Friday had not received Pierce's attorney, Michael D. McDaniel, to Police Chief Steve Scobelli. Pierce's was the third ticket in drivers wracked up. Each carries a \$100 fine.

The crackdown began Wed. Pierce's attorney, Michael D. McDaniel, said he would sue the city if the city did not stop the use of the terminal.

Vancouver bus driver Judith Thompson on suspicion of unlawful use of a public street, she was arrested. According to a police report, Greyhound bus lines jacket and other items were found on the bus.

When an officer saw a supervisor's name, she gave a verbal warning. Pierce said that nothing would be done.

The incident was so bizarre, Scobelli said, he was wondering what he should do. He said he would call the police.

Greyhound passengers and that company. When an officer saw a supervisor's name, she gave a verbal warning. Pierce said that nothing would be done.

Pierce Pacific is not affiliated with Greyhound's legal department. Pierce said she would sue the city if the city did not stop the use of the terminal.

Meanwhile, Scobelli said officers at the train depot to ticket Pierce's bus. The city is reviewing the situation.

## Paper workers to hold rally

The Association of Western Paperworkers is holding a rally Sunday in Kennewick to support displaced timber workers and their families.

The Timber Retraining Benefit Fund is holding the rally to support displaced timber workers and their families.

The rally is scheduled for 1 p.m. at the Local 153 Hall at 724 15th Ave.

## ARSENAL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

without a license. His bail was set at \$10,000. Bail for Phillips, who was also arrested on a probation violation warrant, was set at \$20,000.

In an interview earlier this week, a longtime friend of Phillips expressed his distress about how the young man's reputation has been tainted by what he sees as sensationalist media coverage.

Jones says the two young men stayed in the minds of police after a November 1997 incident in which they and three others were arrested for allegedly burglarizing the Broadway Campus of St. John Medical Center.

From police on the scene at the time, Jones said, "The flavor that I got... was that these guys were decked out like a military unit or a SWAT team. It was very unusual."

All were wearing military fatigues, had rappelling or climbing gear and maintained radio communication with one another, he says. "Obviously, not your run-of-the-mill teenagers."

"It looked like he was writing notes to himself for a book about his lifestyle out on the street."

He talked about a personal code of honor. He talked about how to survive on the street when you're on the run.

There was some talk about contacting skinheads, not sym-

metrical stammers, complete lists of local and area scanner frequencies, military uniforms, first aid kits and Lydazine, apparently to use as an anesthetic if they needed to subdue themselves.

Brewer objected to the description by police that they'd turned up a "military style explosive."

Police have also been searching for a description of one of their suspects. "They say they were together," Jones says, gathering the case a way for the pair to know what to do with the street.

The young men had also had numerous publications of their names and possessed a copy of the FBI's "How to Survive" manual. Jones says he has various receipts and by-ship instructions to make improvised weapons. Jones says he has also been seen with a rifle.

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# PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

March 4, 2002

Department of Natural Resources  
State of Washington

Dear DNR -

It has come to my attention there might potentially be logging on some steep lands in the Kelso, Washington area. The area in question is directly east of where the famous "Aldercrest-Banyon Landslide" occurred in 1998 in Kelso. The Aldercrest-Banyon Landslide is now the second biggest landslide in American history involving homes. I have been working on slope stability and landslides in the Kelso area for the past five years - as a consulting geologist and also as a professor with my students in class projects. I am very familiar with the area.

It is my understanding that there might be some transfer of this land to the city of Kelso and that it might be logged in the future. I would hope that you would completely investigate the potential of logging the site and restrict it. There are some very large, ancient landslides that we have mapped on the site and logging them could lead to slope instability at the site. It would have great impact on the streams and the hillside. I will be taking a group of geologists up to Kelso in May from all over the United States, and one of our stops on the trip is to talk about the ancient landslides on that unlogged piece of land. I would highly encourage you not to allow logging on the site. There is a great potential for slope failure there.

I know that you will have questions on my statements - I would love to answer them. You can contact me at 503-725-3389 by telephone and [burns@pdx.edu](mailto:burns@pdx.edu) by email. Good luck in making your decisions.

Sincerely,

Scott F. Burns  
Professor of Geology

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Scott Burns

Department of Geology, Portland State University, Portland, OR 97207-0751 • (503) 725-3389 • FAX (503) 725-3025 • [BurnsS@pdx.edu](mailto:BurnsS@pdx.edu)  
Scott F. Burns • Sherry L. Cady • Kenneth M. Cruikshank • Michael L. Cummings (Chair) • Christina L. Hulbe

Document (3 pages) Received at Longview Public Hearing from Commenter 15: Al McKee

Mike DAVIS  
Al McKee  
Skamania County  
Vice-Chair of  
WA Timber Counties

December 15, 2003  
To: The Members of the Board of Natural Resources  
From: Dan Cothren, Chairman,  
Washington State Association of Counties, Timber Counties  
Re: Comments on the Draft EIS on the Sustainable Harvest Calculation

The Western Washington Timber Counties subgroup of the Washington State Association of Counties respectfully submits the following comments on the Sustainable Harvest Calculations Draft Environmental Impact Statement of (SHCDEIS) to the Board of Natural Resources (BNR). The subgroup is composed of all the western Washington Counties with Forest Board Transfer and/or Forest Board Purchase Trusts within the County.

The Timber Counties recognize that well managed, sustainable forests are a sources of pride, employment, recreation, and valuable fish and wildlife habitat; and that the sustainable harvest calculation will guide the management of Washington State trust timberlands for revenue generation supporting schools, universities, counties, ports, and numerous other taxing districts, while providing employment and recreation for Washington citizens and conservations benefits from quality habitat for fish and wildlife.

The Timber Counties have reviewed the alternatives and underlying policy options found in the SHCDEIS. After consideration of each of the alternatives, the Timber Counties have reached consensus on requesting that the BNR adopt the following policies:

Received from Al McKee @ May 9 public hearing in Longview.

1. **The Timber Counties support the use of active management.** This decision was based on a number of factors, including higher net revenues for the timber counties, more jobs in the woods due to increased thinning and other silvicultural activity, reaching fish and wildlife habitat goals sooner and the prospect of managing more of the land base with fewer single purpose set-aside areas. The Timber Counties recognize that this level of management activity may require a reasonable increase of the gross revenues set aside in the Forest Development Account (FDA) to support DNR's management costs. The Timber Counties are willing to consider increases in the FDA share of proceeds if they are based on the lowest reasonable cost of business which would generate the highest net revenue to the counties.
2. **The Timber Counties support the use of an Ownership Grouping which provides sustainable harvest calculations for each individual county.**
3. **The Timber Counties support elimination of the DNR policy of maintaining at least 50% of each watershed administrative unit (WAU) in timber 25 years of age or older ("50/25" STRATEGY).** The current use of this policy results in conflicts with implementation of the HCP, a reduction of management flexibility, reduced harvest volumes, with little added environmental protection.

This program allows few harvest to support those dependent communities & still ~~for~~ sustain old growth that supports the multitude of species.



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4. **The Timber Counties support use of the HCP intent of 8 leave trees/acres and elimination of the DNR policy addressing leave trees at the stand level as a percentage of the available trees.** The current practices were adopted without the benefit of SEPA analyses and were not an approved element of the HCP. The HCP requires that 8 trees per acre be left after a regeneration harvest to meet the need for maintaining elements of an older forest. The BNR should encourage DNR to clump or grouping leave trees on the landscape rather than spacing them evenly across harvest areas unless specific management objectives or rules require otherwise.
  5. **The Timber Counties support the maintenance of 10-15% of each of the HCP planning units in older forest conditions.** This would provide the ability to move the “older forest” around the landscape over time and manage more of the land base rather than creating set-asides that complicate management.
  6. **The Timber Counties support controlling harvest regulation by permitting wider fluctuations (modulating) but still providing for certainty to provide for more flexible management that allows the DNR to be more responsive to markets. This approach limits changes to +/- 25% of the previous decades harvest level, as defined by timber volume.**
  7. **The Timber Counties support the use of economic value as the basis of the sustainable harvest calculation.** The basis of this decision was a desire to see the DNR focus more attention on the counties need for additional income from the Forest Board lands and recognition of the affect of this proposed change in policy. Alternatives 5 and 6, which utilize economic value as the basis for the SHC, provide for high levels of net returns to timber counties while providing for conservation and other benefits.

The consensus decisions reached by the Timber Counties would support the BNR in selecting Alternative 5 or 6 or a combination of these alternatives. The primary difference between alternative 5 and 6 is the use of Dr. Jerry Franklin’s “Bio-Diversity Pathways” in alternative 6. The policy results in the ability to manage more of the landscape and speeds the process of developing desired fish and wildlife habitat conditions. The use of “Bio-Diversity Pathways” causes considerable changes in income streams in specific counties between Alternatives 5 and 6. The Timber Counties ask that the BNR consider a combination of Alternatives 5 and 6 to insure a reasonable and stable income stream to each county.

The package of policy decisions described above will result in an outcome that is highly acceptable to the Timber Counties. The package also provides for significant ecological and social benefits that will benefit all generations. We feel that this package is fully sustainable, providing an appropriate balance of ecological, social and economic factors. We ask that the Board view these comments in their entirety, rather than individually, since changing one of the policies could result in a dramatically different outcome.

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We are appreciative of the open deliberative process and wish to thank you for your consideration of the Washington Timber Counties position on these important policy decisions.

Sincerely,

Dan Cothren, Chair  
Timber Counties, Washington State Association of Counties

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## Commenters 16 and 17: Stewart Wechsler and Joe Monks

Transcription of Tape Recording –

05.10.05 Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests  
Public Hearing Bellevue Community College Hearings Officer – Dave Dietzman, WA  
State DNR

Dave Dietzman – Let the record show that it is now about 6:55 PM on May 10 and this hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests is being held at Bellevue Community College in the city of Bellevue and our one and only commenter at this point is going to begin and if you would begin by please stating your name clearly for the record, we'd appreciate that.

Stewart Wechsler – My name is Stewart Wechsler. I'm a naturalist, ecologist, not an ecology degree but I've been studying it intensely for quite a while and I'm deeply concerned about our natural heritage in this state. I think that harvesting trees is something that I want, I love wood and I think that they're good jobs. But I think in the long run, managing our forests for maximum preservation of our natural heritage or biodiversity will be much more important to us in the long run and future children and future generations.

This term forest health is often used. As a botanist and ecologist, I want the plants to feed the insects, to feed the birds, to enjoy the insects for themselves, to feed the birds and the lizards and everybody else and to sustain the food chain. I want trees to be sick to support woodpeckers and support the fungi which break down the trees and create habitat for all sorts of things. So to me, what a commercial forest manager calls an unhealthy forest might be a healthy biodiverse forest. I understand the concerns when one species of insect say does a whole lot of I'll call it damage, but that's still subjective, to a whole lot of area at once and sometimes that's because something's a little out of control or out of balance, such as what happens when you suppress fires for a long, long time. I would like to see a complete ban on bio-engineered plants or animals in our forests. They can have long-term damages. If a tree that's insect resistant is introduced we starve the insects and starve the birds. That's not a good thing. I would like any use of pesticides or herbicides to be done with valuing everything, every organism that could possibly be impacted and think a little further and try to find some other ones because we'll never know all the things that will be impacted.

When we plant things, we interrupt the natural succession and we interrupt the biodiversity and we prevent the things that nature would have planted from being there. So there's some advantages. You might have a forest quicker. It's good in some ways. You might have a lack of some of the things that would be there after a natural fire or all those different plants and animals, fungi if you want to add the other kingdoms, etc. So I don't think planting should be considered "oh it's just a good thing to replant." It's got a downside, too.

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Other than that, general comments about forest policy, I don't have many, but I'd like those things to be considered and I hope to have the energy and time to read more so I can comment more specifically.

Dave Dietzman –

Very good. Thank you, Stewart. I know we have another gentleman that just joined us. Might turn the tape off for a minute. (Tape turned off until new gentleman was signed in and ready to speak). We'd ask you to try to keep it within about 5 minutes or so.

Joe Monks –

It'll be less than that. Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the draft EIS. My name is Joe Monks. I'm a life long resident of western Washington and I've worked in the forest products industry since graduating from the University of Washington in 1978.

On a primary note, first of all I have to congratulate the DNR on securing forest certification by the Sustainable Forestry Initiative® Program. That's a job well done. I think this acknowledges the DNR's land management requirements and activities that benefit every citizen in the state of Washington.

Secondly, and the reason of course we're here tonight is to comment on the proposed revisions to the 1992 Forest Resource Plan. The 1992 plan was very cumbersome and failed, in my opinion, to adequately address the needs of the state's trust forests and the needs of the beneficiaries of the forests. These needs are diverse and include forest health, environmental protection, sustainability of the timber resource, and economic benefits mandate by the trusts endowment policies. \$250 million a year is something all taxpayers in the state of Washington should be proud of and happy to receive.

The preferred alternative, while still too limited in its economic benefits and timber resource supply, will be sustainable for future generations and will enhance the health and habitat of our state's valuable trust forests. It will remove a mere 1-1/2 percent of the growing forest resource inventory, while contributing to an increase in that inventory to nearly 150 percent of today's standing timber all in one generation's passing. The Board has recognized that our forest is an asset that must be managed to satisfy a broad array of beneficiaries and public desires. The Board has also effectively addressed the issues of the forest protection, its health and its habitat for future state of Washington generations. Thank you.

Dave Dietzman –

Thank you, Joe. Let me just go over the next steps. The next steps are to gather all the comments and we're going to take a close look at those and have some internal review of those and decide if we need to make any amendments to the document. We will be going back to the Board with a summary of those in some shape or form. And we plan on issuing a final environmental impact statement probably in September or it could be in late August. The Board also accepts comments on their proceedings at their regularly scheduled Board meetings, except August, which is reserved for the annual Board retreat. So if you want to show up at those Board meetings, you're welcome to do that. With that, I just want to thank you for coming out. We do really appreciate your

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attendance. A lot of work has gone into preparing this document and the alternatives that are before the Board of Natural Resources and it's really good to see people show up who are interested in seeing the process move forward.

So let the record show that this hearing in Bellevue on May 10, 2005 is being adjourned at 7:10.

Stewart Wechsler –  
Could I have one comment?

Dave Dietzman –  
I think we can, do you still have the tape on. I'm going to open up the hearing for a comment. But I would like you to speak into the microphone.

Stewart Wechsler –  
Since there was some kind of glitch and the room published and I got on my e-mail and presumably everybody else did was a different room, and there may have been people who showed up and saw nothing and didn't understand that that public hearing sign that I saw that said public safety on the bottom as I read it, was not the same hearing. I would like to allow the possibility if somebody wants an extension time for comments before this May 16 who showed up, but wants to think about it, you know have an extension, that there might be a possibility for an extension for people who showed up and found no meeting. That's all.

Dave Dietzman –  
We're going to re-close the hearing. No other comments and it is now about 7:09 and this hearing in Bellevue on the Policy for Sustainable Forests is being adjourned at this time.



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**Commenter 18: Valerie Holland**

May 10, 2005

Rochelle Goss, SEPA Center  
Manager Department of Natural  
Resources SEPA Center  
P.O. Box 47015 Olympia WA 98504-7015

**Re: File 05-041501: DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
(DEIS) ON THE POLICY FOR SUSTAINABLE FORESTS**

Dear Ms. Goss:

We support the DEIS generally and we specifically support your recommended alternatives in sections 3.2.6 “Wildlife Habitat” under Forest Ecosystem Health and Productivity, and 3.3.1 “Public Access and Recreation” under Social and Cultural Benefits.

In our April 12, 2004 scoping comment letter to you, we urged you to consider “phased clear cutting of forests to enhance wildlife habitat for the Roosevelt Elk that inhabit the Sequim area. Our understanding of your recommended “Wildlife Habitat” Alternative 3 is that it allows the Department the flexibility to accomplish this when warranted. This will allow local DNR and WDFW officials to balance the needs of the forest trust and wildlife.

Public access and recreation on the Burnt Hill area of DNR lands is a local concern because of damage to the Sequim Elk Herd’s upland habitat. We support your “Public Access and Recreation” Alternative 4 because it allows DNR the option to relocate, reduce or eliminate access to sensitive habitat either unilaterally or through a collaborative public process.

Please contact Frank Figg, 360-681-8599, [Olyelkman@aol.com](mailto:Olyelkman@aol.com), if you have any questions about our position.

Sincerely,

Valerie Holland, Chairperson  
Sequim Elk Habitat  
Committee  
P.O. Box 1930 Sequim WA 98382

CC: DEWT and SEHC Committee members

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## Commenters 19 and 20: Bill Howard and Bob Dick

Transcription of Tape Recording –

05.11.05 Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests  
Public Hearing Ellensburg, Central Washington University Hearings Officer – Dave  
Dietzman, WA State DNR Page 1 of 2

Dave Dietzman –

At this time we are ready to begin receiving official oral comment. We have 2 people who have signed up. I would just ask that you respect each other's time while they're giving their comments, try to keep sideline discussions to a minimum so everyone can hear. We'll give you about five minutes. I don't think we're going to have to worry about that tonight, though. So, let's let the record show that it is about 6:15 on May 11, 2005, and this hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests is being held at Black Hall at Central Washington University in the city of Ellensburg and with that, we have Bill Howard who has signed up. And if you'll come up here, Bill, we have a mike set up here, so if you'll speak from here that would help us.

Bill Howard –

My name is Bill Howard. I'm chief region forester for Boise Cascade and central Washington and I have three primary comments which will address most concerns with the financial aspects of the plan. But first I'd like to congratulate the department on a thorough undertaking and a good revision to the management plan. I guess my first caution would be because it's largely drafted through changes to the allowable cut program and the HCP, that I'd just caution that eastside forestry is dramatically different from westside and so the policies and programs as they become implemented need to reflect the local conditions and the local realities of pine fir management of central and eastern Washington. And that includes all the asset resources that are associated there.

Now the two financial concerns I have. First of all, in terms of marketing, the log sort sales contract as drafted at this time, or as utilized at this time, is not particularly customer-oriented, there is a long ways to go and several companies have provided input which has not really been reflected, but in any case, that customer orientation needs to be much stronger in its influence in how those contracts are written.

And then, second of all, in terms international marketing or global marketing, I'd caution the department to stay within your core competencies you've developed over the years of your timber sales program and not to reach beyond your skill set and that is to continue marketing timber sales and logs in the northwest and develop continuing relationships with the purchase customers you already have. Thank you very much.

Dave Dietzman –

Thank you, Bill. Next we have Bob Dick.

Bob Dick –

Good evening. For the record I'm Bob Dick, Washington Manager for the American Forest Resource Council. Two things I want to talk about tonight. The first is recreation. It was in this room about a year ago where you held the scoping hearings and you had a

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roomful of people interested in recreation. That was reflected throughout the state in almost all of your hearings. The draft policies do recognize that and I applaud DNR for looking at that. I would suggest that the Board of Natural Resources sooner than later needs to address recreation and how it fits into trust land management. You have statutory guidance, you have policy guidance, but there is going to be increasing demand for recreation and increasing potential conflicts. Along those lines, I would like to say that the forest industry wants to be part of the solution because we certainly will be involved in being part of the problem in terms of roads being closed, operations that are sensitive for equipment and so on, and we want to be part of how we deal with that and I think we can be a constructive part of how we deal with it.

The second issue I want to talk about briefly is forest health. All up and down the eastside of the Cascade crest, over into the northeast Washington country, forest health is a problem. It's going to be a worse problem before it gets fixed. Again, I think the document does a good job of looking at the policies related to that, but I think that the Board needs to continue, early and often, addressing forest health, particularly on the eastside because it's going to be a big deal before it's done. And really, forest health is going to drive how much you recoup from these timber lands for trust beneficiaries and the sooner you deal with it, the more efficient you will be in dealing with the problems. Thank you.

Dave Dietzman – Thank you, Bob. Okay, that's all the folks that have signed up. So, if there's anybody else that would like to provide public comment, oral comment, they can do that at this time. They are welcome. There are several other means of commenting if you don't want to provide oral comment tonight. We're just about finished for this evening.

Next steps are to gather all the comments. We're going to take a close look and have some internal review of those comments and decide if we need to make any amendments to the document. We're going to be going back to the Board of Natural Resources with a summary of those comments in some shape or form and we plan on issuing a final environmental impact statement probably in September or it could be in late August. The Board also accepts comments on their proceedings at their regularly scheduled Board meetings, except in August which is reserved for the annual Board retreat. So if you want to show up at those, you're welcome to do that. With that, I just want to thank you for coming tonight. We really do appreciate you coming out. There's been a lot of hard work that's gone into preparing this document and the policy alternatives before the Board and it's good to see people show up who want to move this process forward. So, with that, one last call if somebody wants to make an oral comment. And if not, let the record show that this hearing in Ellensburg at Black Hall on May 11 is being adjourned at 6:20 PM.

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**Commenter 21: Alan Dragoo (Submitted Comment Card at Spokane Public Hearing – see next page)**

Transcription of Tape Recording –

05.12.05 Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests  
Public Hearing Spokane, Hilton Garden Inn Hearings Officer – Dave Dietzman, WA  
State DNR Page 1 of 1

Dave Dietzman – For the record, my name is Dave Dietzman. Let the record show that we started the hearing here in Spokane on the Policy for Sustainable Forests on May 12 at approximately 6:10 PM and we have one person who attended the hearing and is submitting a written comment. But since we have nobody to provide any oral comments, we're going to close the hearing at 6:30.

**Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy  
for Sustainable Forests**

**Comment:** I am in favor of either  
alternative 3 or 4 for Public Access  
and Recreation

Name: Alan Dragoo  
Address: 14726 E 48th Lane, Venetia, WA 99037  
E-mail: A.Dragoo@aol.com

give original card to  
SEPA center (5-12)  
revd

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**Commenter 22: Michael Marsh**

Department of Natural  
Resources SEPA Center  
P.O. Box 47015 Olympia, WA  
sepacenter@wadnr.gov

Dear Sir,

The Washington Native Plant Society appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests. The Society works to promote the appreciation, study and preservation of native plants and the habitats and ecosystems on which they depend.

We ask (again) that the Department withdraw the proposal to return certain northern spotted owl habitat circles to matrix (harvestable) status. The DEIS says, "In addition to the commitments made in the Habitat Conservation Plan, the department agreed with the Federal Services to protect a number of northern spotted owl habitat circles until 2007. Therefore those lands are deferred from harvest for the agreement's duration" (Sec. 3.1.3. Affected Environment). This action will place the owl population in additional jeopardy, undoubtedly before it can have reversed its present decline in numbers, and will disturb or destroy exceptionally valuable mature or old-growth forest.

3.2. Forest Ecosystem Health and Productivity. We welcome the selection of a landscape approach to maintaining forest health, and the use of best science to continually seek best methods for dealing with issues. We applaud the recognition of exotic weeds as a major element to deal with in forest health analysis.

Care should be taken, in the planning for and process of improving forest health, not to remove valuable habitat trees/snags when their presence in relationship to other forest health issues is not critical. To reduce the rate of spread of forest diseases, consider replanting with appropriate species mixes and appropriate spacing and species interposition after thinning treatments take place.

1. 3.2.2. Wildfire and Catastrophic Loss Prevention. We favor more aggressive silvicultural treatment to restore open stands of appropriate species in eastside forests, in areas that have been invaded by Douglas-fir through fire suppression, but would plead for the retention of large woody debris on site for its multiple values: as habitat/shelter for animals of all sizes; for the food chains that it supports during the decay process and the mineral elements naturally returned to the soil, over generations; for the retention of moisture; and to function as nurse logs for certain tree and shrub species.

2. 3.2.3. Gene Pool Preserves. The maintenance of genetic stock from natural populations is very important. The Department should note and teach that these stocks are not only needed for economic benefit in the present and future, but for the future evolution of these trees as elements of the northwest forest. Alternatives 3 and

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1 (in that order) are better for gene pool protection for reasons given in the

discussion. Alternative 2 should not be implemented. The approach selected in discussion of Alternative 3 might not be the best idea, since concentrating seed stocks from dispersed locations in one “gene garden” would not allow a seed from another micro-habitat to exhibit the potential that it would have in the place it came from.

3.2.5. Old Growth Stands and Older Forests. Alternative 2 is preferable to either Alternative 3 or Alternative 1. Stands of old growth smaller than 80 acres are less suitable for preservation than larger contiguous stands because of the prevalence of edge effects in smaller stands of old-growth, modifying their composition and function. To select such small stands and clusters of individual trees as candidates for incorporation into HCP forests may not fulfill the affected species’ need for habitat. To harvest some stands currently incorporated as HCP stands would result in an unacceptable level of “take,” i.e., killing or displacing these individuals from their accustomed habitat. The purpose of the HCP is to retain and protect habitat essential for the long-term survival of species. The purpose of the Endangered Species Act, of which the HCP is an element, is to provide for the long-term survival of species. It is often not recognized (for example in the Bush administration’s approach to salmon protection) that for a population to flourish there must be acceptable unoccupied habitat as well as that currently occupied, for young individuals to disperse into.

Despite the frequent reference to “biodiversity pathways” in the discussion of wildlife habitats, there appears to be no plan to maintain or enhance habitat connectivity and minimize the effects of the fragmentation, which has resulted in the isolation of portions of species populations from other population centers.

3.2.7. Watershed Systems. The Department should stick to Alternative 1. It best regulates and directs the activities of DNR without relying on the effects of other laws and regulations to accomplish the planning that the agency should do on its own with due consideration for site conditions.

I question the statement, “The principle means of transporting sediment to water bodies is landslides.” Or to put my objection another way, that may be true, but most of that sediment stays in one place. The principle method of adding sediment to the water column is soil disturbance by humans.

In several sections of this Draft EIS, mitigating activities are referenced as being required “when necessary.” This vague language should be altered to include criteria establishing definite action triggers. Such criteria could, for example, require monitoring of stream sediment load and water temperatures and comparison of the data with historical records, and specify trigger levels of percent sediment increase or temperature increase.

The current definition of wetlands in the State Forest Practice Rules is not given, so it is impossible to know whether the definition given in the preferred alternative for wetlands management expands or diminishes the

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definition (or lack thereof) used previously.

### 3.3. Social and Cultural Benefits.

Alternative 3 is preferable. Since the Department seems willing to spend extra money to figure out how to enhance the tourism potential of State Trust Lands (Section 3.1), why not spend a buck to enhance the tourists' and residents' experience, as intended there?

1. 3.3.3. Visual Management. Elimination of the 100 acre maximum for clearcuts is an ecological threat. Even though this limit is still present in the watershed section, a clearcut could be continued from one watershed to another and exceed 100 acres, and this can exacerbate the threat of wind throw to adjacent stands and increase the gap size that wildlife must cross to reach acceptable new habitat.

2. 3.4.2. General Silvicultural Strategy. The preferred alternative proposes to extend the silvicultural methods adopted September 2004 for westside forests. The Washington Native Plant Society extends by reference its suggestions, in our letter dated December 19, 2003, (attached) relative to the silvicultural practices chosen there, to application of the same practices in eastside forests. In addition, the use of insecticides to manage insect infestations must be discouraged because of the demonstrated hazards posed to bats and to insectivorous birds.

3. 3.4.3. Forest Land Transactions. Disposition and Conversion of Trust Lands reduces the total extent of natural landscape in the state. Relatively undisturbed examples of shrub-steppe land in eastern Washington have been converted to agriculture under long-term leases, destroying that natural resource and its ecological function. In at least one case, the state has exchanged state land for federal land so that it could lease the more valuable (for agriculture) former federal land on the Columbia River for conversion to a vineyard. Under 2.2.3. Trust Mandate and Responsibilities, the statement appears that "The Department believes it is in [the] best interest of the trust beneficiaries over the long term to manage forested state trust lands to: preserve ecological function, which may cause the listing of additional species as threatened or endangered. . ." High-quality shrub-steppe is increasingly rare, and the Washington Native Plant Society has selected preservation of this ecosystem for special attention. We urge the Department to re-consider their policy, if there is one, of permitting such leases or sales, absent the acquisition of equal- or higher-quality lands for permanent preservation.

Sincerely yours,

Michael Marsh, Chairperson  
Conservation Committee  
Washington Native Plant Society  
swamp@blarg.net

cc: Fred Weinmann, Catherine Hovanic

att: sustainable forest mgt EIS comments, Dec. 19, 2003



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**Commenter 23: Jeremy Sage**

May 11, 2005

Department of Natural Resources SEPA Center PO Box 47015 Olympia, WA 98504-7015

RE: Draft EIS, Policy for Sustainable Forests

Responsible official:

In review of your draft EIS for your “Policy for Sustainable Forests,” I have made several comments outlined below. Of greatest concern are the department actions in regards to the Spotted Owl and the endangered species act on a whole. Actions to obtain specified harvest levels should raise alarm given recent lack of success in Spotted Owl recovery expectations. In addition, the Department continually recognizes the increasing recreational demand being placed on its lands; however, the recommended policy does absolutely nothing to address the growing need for active management of recreation to ensure compatibility with other uses and wildlife. I strongly encourage the department to take these issues quite seriously and fully realize that sustainable forests do not only include sustainable harvests.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Sage Wildlife Biologist Point No Point Treaty Council

### 3.2.2 Wildfire and Catastrophic Loss prevention

Regulatory framework

Reasonable effort... How is this term defined. Is it economic???

Alternative selection

Exclusion of “net benefit” idea from alternative 1 in alternative 2. To what extent will the department “incorporate...catastrophic loss prevention strategies...”? Will the department “reduce or prevent significant forest resource losses...” at all costs? Where will the department draw the line as to how much effort to put forth in preventing losses from either fire or pest?

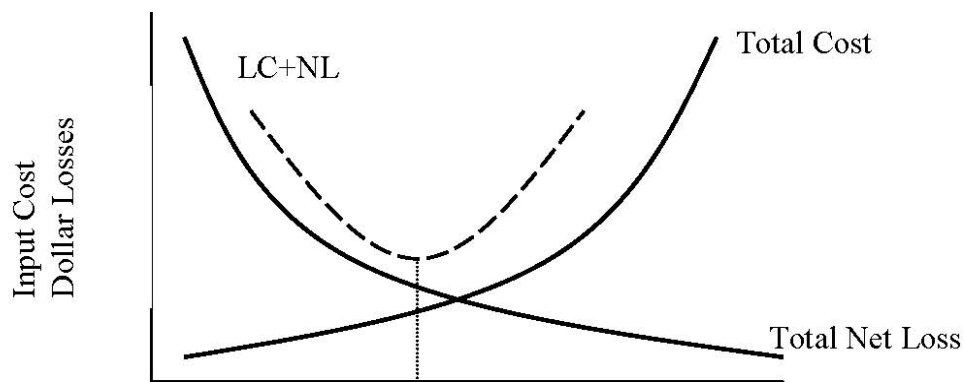
Recommend some form of cost-minimization analysis as initially developed by Sparhawk (1925), Davis (1965), Gamache (1969), and Gorte and Gorte (1979) who created a least-cost-plus-loss (LC+L) model to determine resource allocations for fire suppression and prevention. This model is designed to determine the amount of money that can be reasonably spent for fire protection in national forests (Sparhawk 1925), by showing that expenditures can be justified so long as the sum of those expenditures (LC) and any residual loss (L) was declining (Donovan and Rideout 2003). Mills and Bratten (1982)

and Bellinger et al. (1983) amend the LC+L to cost-plus-net-value-change (C+NVC) to recognize the beneficial effects of fire. In this reformulation, C denotes all costs associated with fire suppression, and NVC reflects net fire related damages. It is therefore assumed that increased expenditures on fire suppression (C), will reduce net fire related damages (NVC) and the optimal level of expenditures and damage is that which minimizes total cost (Donovan and Rideout 2003). This notion is also ascribed to wildlife that cause damage, in that they simultaneously confer benefits. Both strategies, LC+L and C+NVC, attempt to account for net-benefit changes resulting from an action.

Davis (1965) compares fire protection to insect and disease control, flood control, and national defense, among others. He argues that each of these efforts have the objective of preventing something from happening and that each could be treated by the LC+L model. LC+L theory has subsequently been extended into pollution control (Freeman et al. 1973, Baumol and Oates 1988) and forest pest management (Herrick 1981).

The LC+NL curve below is a hybrid between LC+L an C+NVC models and allows for an efficient level of fire presuppression/suppression to be determined based on the cost associated and the damages averted at varying levels of intervention.

Theoretical Cost-Minimization Curves.



E\*  
Intervention Level

### 3.2.5 Older Forests and Old Growth

The department's desire to expeditiously incorporate as many acres as possible into a harvest cycle is obvious in the strict adherence to the original HCP and not above, even in the face of what appears to be an under achieving Northwest Forest Plan, (and other ESA related plans in association with the Northern Spotted Owl) which even though it has increased older forests by 606,000 acres, the Northern Spotted Owl has declined significantly more than the expected 3.1 percent annually in many locations. Despite the departments assertion that their land holdings of older successional staged forests is "of minor significance" compared to the overall extent of old growth forests in Washington, they do have a significant role in the ability to not only maintain the Northern Spotted Owl at a healthy level, but increase it to the point of which it is no longer endangered and given the objective of the HCP to not only cover the Spotted Owl, but also other

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threatened or endangered species, it should be ill advised to make haste in releasing any deferred habitat. p3-48 “Martens and fishers are closely related to .....” The fisher was listed as Endangered in 1998 in Washington is actually presently believed to be extirpated from Washington at this time. WDFW and NPS are currently scoping a reintroduction with the Western Olympics as the most likely site of introduction. And thus may pose new challenges that are not currently addressed in the HCP, unlike other species who are listed but don’t actually reside in Washington and no plans are underway to reintroduce them.

### 3.2.9 Wetlands

Departments recommendation “The department will allow no net loss of acreage and function of wetlands as defined by state Forest Practice Rules” -No accountability for preservation of “quality wetlands” vs marginal ones when policy only guides towards acreage.

-Is value of natural wetland equivalent 1:1 with a created one and therefore if losing a wetland and even replacing it with one in the same sub-basin, are we losing quality? Wetlands are not necessarily equivalent even when in same sub-basin.

### 3.3.1 Public Access and Recreation

“Population growth has greatly increased the demand for access and recreation..... funding to provide multiple use opportunities ...has decreased” Yes, but then why is this not addressed in the recommended policy. Appropriation for the quickly increasing demand for recreational use needs to be addressed The department routinely underestimates the true value of recreation and other non-timber harvesting activities when “balanc[ing] economic, ecological, and social concerns” and therefore does not create any such balance of economic, ecological, and social concerns other than its own. Surveys cited demonstrate the changing demand for state lands and therefore should register the need within the department to afford more effort towards creating such a landscape that can truly meet the objective that is recommended by itself. Alternative #3 seems to more closely match the growing demand for recreation on trust lands. See roads section for consequences of not planning for appropriate recreation needs.

### 3.3.1 Local Economic Vitality

Management actions that support economic vitality of local communities are going to require more emphasis than how simple forest management activities will affect them, rather it will also need to include how the department handles the growing recreational demands.

### 3.3.2 Cultural Resources

Alternative 2 “The department will actively communicate and promote collaboration with Tribes and interested stakeholders to address culturally significant areas.” Issues of tribal cultural significance extends beyond specific areas. Western Washington tribes have retained through various treaties the rights to hunt and gather. Therefore, when

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considering cultural significance, one must also understand how forest practices will affect tribal hunters and gatherers ability to exercise these rights. In section

3.2.6 Wildlife Habitat, no specific attention is afforded to species of cultural significance to tribes, even though under most circumstances they will be preserved given the focus on biodiversity conservation.

#### 3.4.4 Roads

Little significant evaluation of road utility for public access and recreation despite recognition of increasing demand. Closure of roads that are of recreational significance creates incentive for user created roads and trail which as indicated have environmental consequences. Therefore road closures should be made more in line with a balance of public demand and environmental quality. By forcing recreationists to utilize only those roads that are of use to the department at the time, the potential for user conflict is increased.

It should not be expected that the department maintain all roads in use for recreation; however, in consideration of the demand for recreation, road closures should consider all user needs (recreation, wildlife, forests practices, cultural significance) and then prioritize

Snoqualmie Tribe Environmental and Natural Resources [ENR] Department Response Comments to Washington Department of Natural Resources [DNR] Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests

The comments herein represent a preliminary response by the Snoqualmie Tribe Environmental and Natural Resources [ENR] Department [“the Department”]. The Department reserves the right to revise or amend these comments. Further consultation is needed between Washington Department of Natural Resources [WA DNR] and Snoqualmie Tribe [“the Tribe”] regarding this policy and the requisite government to government relationship in order to develop a more fully detailed response, and to conform to the level of discussion contemplated through the Centennial Accords.

The Snoqualmie Tribe [“the Tribe”] has had federal recognition restored during the mid-1990s. Since the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests [“Draft EIS”] is based on revisions to the 1992 plans, there is a need to fully initiate and integrate the consultation process between the State of Washington and Snoqualmie Tribe regarding the Draft EIS and on the Policy in order to discuss the potential impacts of the Policy on Tribal resources and interests.

There are, for instance, other components of the legal framework which are necessary for consideration, and which are not referenced in Section 2.4. Since the Sustainable Forests Policy references the Habitat Conservation Plan [HCP], it appears that other laws which are applicable to and referenced in the HCP should apply here as well, including the National Environmental Policy Act [NEPA] and the National Historic Preservation Act [NHPA]. Moreover, the ENR Department wishes to incorporate by reference in this response to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests its comments regarding the HCP which were submitted on May 12, 2005. Also, since the HCP and corresponding EIS are currently in draft form, changes or revisions to those documents should be fully analyzed with respect to the Draft Environmental Impact

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Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests, and should become part of necessary consultation with the Tribe noted above.

The actions which will result from the Sustainable Forests Plan will not do so in a vacuum, and the effects will not be limited to State Lands. The cumulative impacts of actions correlated to this plan include downstream effects in combination with other watershed activities. This includes effects which should be analyzed in the framework of the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, NEPA, NHPA, and other applicable state and federal laws, regulations, and Executive Orders. Moreover, there are potential impacts to treaty and reserved rights of Tribes. Where applicable, Section 106 consultation needs to occur, through the Tribe, Tribal agencies, and Departments. Rights of access and resources also need to be protected. The ENR Department generally opposes the use of clearcuts in Tribal traditional areas because of adverse impacts.

These issues need to be discussed, and there should be a Programmatic Agreement with the Tribe to assure that its rights and resources are being protected. Economics appears to be the driver of the Sustainable Forests Policy; the “rules of the road” regarding forests and habitat should first be discussed, delineated, and adhered to.

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**Commenter 24: Ian Kanair**

Snoqualmie Tribe Environmental and Natural Resources [ENR] Department Response  
Comments to Washington Department of Natural Resources [DNR] Draft Environmental  
Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests

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The actions which will result from the Sustainable Forests Plan will not do so in a vacuum, and the effects will not be limited to State Lands. The cumulative impacts of actions correlated to this plan include downstream effects in combination with other watershed activities. This includes effects which should be analyzed in the framework of the Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, NEPA, NHPA, and other applicable state and federal laws, regulations, and Executive Orders. Moreover, there are potential impacts to treaty and reserved rights of Tribes. Where applicable, Section 106 consultation needs to occur, through the Tribe, Tribal agencies, and Departments. Rights of access and resources also need to be protected. The ENR Department generally opposes the use of clearcuts in Tribal traditional areas because of adverse impacts.

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**Commenter 25: Bob Dick**

16 May 2005

Ms. Jenifer Gitchel DNR SEPA Center POB 47015 Olympia, WA 98504-7015 re:  
Policy for Sustainable Forests

Dear Ms. Gitchel:

American Forest Resource Council (AFRC) represents numerous Department of Natural Resources (DNR) timber purchasers in Washington, Oregon, California and Idaho. AFRC's Timber Purchasers Committee includes both AFRC and non-AFRC purchasers and provides a principle interaction between all DNR timber purchasers and DNR, the Board of Natural Resources and trust beneficiaries. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the *Policy for Sustainable Forests* DEIS (draft policy).

The draft policy is well done and complete. We applaud DNR staff for their work thus far.

**DNR'S SEPA process**

***AFRC commends DNR for conducting an open, transparent policy revision process.***

AFRC and numerous stakeholder groups were invited to meet with DNR as part of the SEPA scoping process. Additional discussion occurred at numerous Board meetings and statewide scoping and draft EIS public meetings throughout the state. SEPA compliance is a rigorous, time-consuming process; AFRC compliments DNR for the exemplary manner in which agency staff conducted the process.

**Link Policy objectives with economic performance objectives**

***Bergeson Principle #1 should be included as an explicit policy statement under Economic Performance alternatives.***

The "Bergeson Principles" are de-facto Board policy, the first of which states that DNR's financial performance is to be measured by Net Present Value (NPV); this standard is absent from both the DEIS policy objectives and the three financial performance alternatives.

**Leases**

***The policy document should address financial impacts of forestland leases.***

DNR leases forestland to supplement trust revenue. Some leases (mainly for public recreation sites or wildlife habitat protection) do not reflect market value, or are of such length that future land management flexibility is affected. The Board, for example, recently approved the sale of a 40-acre parcel in which "fair market value" was substantially reduced due to a long-term lease with the Interagency Commission for

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Outdoor Recreation. Had this lease not been in place, or if the lease term had been shorter, the trust may have received substantially greater income.

### **Forest and Product Diversification**

*1) Balanced age classes within DNR planning units will help assure sustainable, even-flow outputs in the future.*

The DEIS addresses product diversification and new marketing strategies, but overlooks the important role of both forest age class and species distributions in the primary (forestland) trust asset. A policy or goal statement should address this dimension of the trust asset.

*2) If it ain't broke, don't fix it.* DNR has experienced, capable purchasers who manufacture product for historically strong markets. Purchasers know markets; they know and like DNR's raw material. We urge DNR to use substantial prudence when speculating on higher promised returns versus known quantities. In addition, we urge DNR to limit its operations to activities best managed by a governmental timberland manager. Activities best handled by the private sector should stay within the private sector.

### **Old Growth and older forests**

*The policy document should address old forest salvage.*

The DEIS does not recognize that old growth, older forests, or forestlands managed to become older forests eventually will suffer catastrophic loss from blowdown, fire, insect or disease impacts. This is true for all older stands, regardless of the 80 acre target retention threshold contemplated by the DEIS.

### **Biological Diversity**

*The term "biological diversity," must be better defined; it should explicitly state that such efforts must be consistent with trust objectives.*

DNR intends to focus on biodiversity-based land management. The term "biological diversity," however, like "old growth," means different things to different people. It is a broadly defined concept, not an operationally tested set of silvicultural prescriptions. We urge substantial caution following this path.

### **Watershed systems**

*The proposed policy statement should reflect that trust compensation may be required for watershed mitigation.*

The DEIS recommended policy on watershed systems indicates that DNR may develop mitigation strategies in watersheds as part of its forestland planning process. This policy statement should be measured against events related to the Lake Whatcom landscape. The Department should consider what it does not want in a policy as much as it should measure what it does want.



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## **Riparian Management Zones (RMZ's)**

***The Board should consider amending HCP RMZ standards to mirror state Forest Practices Standards if federal assurances are secured in the Forest Fish process.***

The proposed policy to establish RMZ's along some seasonal non-fish bearing waters is conservative. The policy objective should explicitly state that "professional judgement" should include adherence to trust objectives and fiduciary responsibilities. We are not aware of credible science that supports the need for timber leaves for these zones, or, conversely, proves that absence of timber is deleterious to fish.

## **Wetlands**

***Wetland policies should be consistent with F/F requirements***

AFRC applauds the link between proposed proprietary land management strategies and state Forest Practices rules.

## **Public Access and Recreation**

***1) AFRC strongly recommends that the DEIS discussion of public access and recreation, and other sections that reference RCW 46.09 (Multiple Use statute) explicitly note the act states that public uses of state lands, "...may be permitted only if there is compensation to the trusts.***

The DEIS discussion of public access and recreations, including the regulatory framework discussion, references Washington's Multiple Use statute at least three times. In only one instance does the DEIS fully describe the "compensation to the trusts" proviso of the statute.

***2) The forest industry commits to working with DNR and Recreationists to ensure a safe, effective recreation environment on trust lands.***

Scoping meetings highlighted intense recreation community interest in trust land management. Neither DNR nor the forest industry currently is prepared to deal with that level of interest. This is an issue that should be dealt with sooner than later. The industry is committed to work with interested parties.

## **Visual Management**

***Land designations under Washington's Growth Management Act (GMA) and HCP compliance should guide visual management policies; trust lands should not be burdened with additional requirements.***

The proposed policy statement says DNR generally will mitigate visual impacts, which is unnecessarily broad and could reduce trust revenue. The proposed policy states DNR will assess the cost/benefit to trust beneficiaries of prudent mitigation expenditures, and will consider ownership transfer of significant scenic areas, but there is no mention of compensation to the trust for potential in-between mitigation, e.g. Blanchard Mountain.

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The Forest Practices Board already has denied a petition to have aesthetics and visual quality designated as a public resource. The Board of Natural Resources should heed FPB's lead.

**Evaluate impacts of prior trust land management policies**

*DNR should analyze existing Forest Plan policies related to recently completed Westside sustainable harvest recalculation, the upcoming eastern Washington analysis and future sustained yield projects.*

Several policies became constraints on trust land management that will impact future revenue generations, eg affects of various ownership groupings, analysis of future harvest flow controls, and analysis of current, non-Board approved Northern Spotted Owl habitat treatments.

**Eastern Washington land management**

*Eastern Washington forestlands are “hand-me-down” lands managed by the department. We commend the department for recognizing the potential timber resources in eastern Washington. These lands are productive, produce significant income and need continued attention as they become more important to trust revenue production.*

Good inventory and sustained yield information are the base for intensive forest management. DNR should begin the eastern Washington sustained yield analysis as soon as practicable. Forest health is a continuing issue and deserves at least as much attention as currently received.

Eastern Washington lands largely were ignored for decades because “revenue potential did not justify investment.” Eastern Washington lands will become more important as time marches on. They should be treated as such.

AFRC sincerely appreciates the opportunity to comment. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions or need more information.

Sincerely

Malcolm R. Dick, Jr.  
Washington Manager

C Board of Natural Resources  
Tom Partin, President, AFRC  
Frank Backus, Chairman,  
AFRC  
DNR Timber Purchasers

Commenter 26: Chama Archimede (?sp)

MAY-16-85 04:39 PM QHARUBA

360 595 0433

P.01

To: SEPA Center page 1 of 2  
PO Box 47015  
Olympia, WA 98504-7015  
Fax # 360-902-1789

From:  
Chama Archimede  
2990 Clipper Rd.  
Deming WA 98244  
360-595-9967

Subject: Public Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests.

Please accept my written comments + concerns on the DEIS, and related issues surrounding changes to the Forest Resource Plan.

- One of my main concerns is the feasibility of generating funds for schools + public services from the state lands. Is this an out-dated idea now that the population of Washington is growing immensely? Can the forests truly sustain the amount of \$ needed? And is the actual amount of \$ generated worth all the organizational, structural + environmental costs? If possible, I hope the DNR has begun or begins looking for alternative ways to fund these crucial public needs in consultation with the state legislators. It seems time for a big change in the way the DNR is mandated to do business. Pressure needs to be taken off the land. The state has a responsibility to its citizens to try + preserve natural landscapes + habitats. Anywhere that can be developed is, or will be, so let's work on at least having some areas that are off-limits + more 'natural.'
- I realize that at this point the state lands have been managed + cut for a long time, so the diversity really isn't there anymore. When talking about forest health, ecology

and watersheds + habitat, it is crucial to look beyond the shorter term into the future. We have such an enormous impact on the natural world and we have the knowledge + awareness to make it better for all living beings. My request is that the DWR strives for this higher good by choosing methods of harvest that are more sustainable and not so devastating for the small + large scale habitats. I know some of the methods are already employed when making decisions. I'd like to see more selective cutting + greater diversity in the species replanted <sup>those allowed to</sup> self-seed. The less diverse the forests, the less diverse the creatures are that live there. Also, even larger stream buffers could benefit stream stability, fish habitat, + water quality. Please honestly look at the bigger picture.

②  
Charm Archibald  
Page 2 of 8

- Fire + fuels reduction has become a big national issue. Please don't use this threat of fire as an excuse to clearcut more land. Do it smartly with scientific information from a variety of different camps.
- My request for motorized recreational uses is that it be closely monitored for damage to the environment + not allowed near areas where people reside. Permits should be required + paid for, + strict regulations on times of year it is allowed, with greater amounts of time when it is not allowed. An all-out ban would be okay w/me.

I really love the landscapes of Washington state. Being in nature is my favorite thing and brings meaning to my life. Please do all you can to work on sustainably managing + also increasingly preserving what is left in your care. Thank you so much for this opportunity for public comment. Sincerely, Charm Archibald

**Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Comments on the  
Draft EIS on Policy for Sustainable Forests May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2005**

**Wildlife Policy**

Alternative 3: In general, the department agrees with the proposition that managing for biological diversity is the underpinning for ecological sustainable forest management and is a more efficient approach to dealing with unlisted species than a species by species approach. However, accomplishing such a goal can still be difficult to implement due to lack of knowledge about the relationship between biodiversity and forest function. In order for such an approach to be successful, more specific policy guidance may be required to help DNR implement this alternative and to help give the public more confidence that successful management for wildlife, biodiversity, ecosystem function, and thus forest sustainability is indeed occurring. For instance, it would be helpful to know over what proportion DNR ownership would this policy direct DNR to apply management techniques that support biological diversity. Furthermore, if the department believes that managing for biodiversity is the underpinning for sustainable forestry, what justifications does it have for NOT employing these techniques on some portion of trust lands?

We would also like to note that individual species that may be on the decline and are dependent on forests, especially late-successional forest types, may still serve as reasonable surrogates for achieving broad ecosystem management goals. In eastern Washington, for instance, the northern goshawk has been shown to be associated with complex mixed conifer forest types and the white-headed woodpecker is associated with late-seral open Ponderosa Pine forests. Thus, we would recommend not completely abandoning species-specific management approaches where they are consistent with the broader goal of managing for ecosystem sustainability. p.3-70. In the analysis of Alternative 3, the text states that “thinning, under Alternative 3 would increase the amount of structurally complex forest, and therefore provide more wildlife habitat.” This statement is only true if variable density thinning is used. Evenly spaced, standard commercial thinning tends to perpetuate simple stand structure and low biodiversity and ecosystem function. Thus, in order to provide an accurate analysis of the effects of this alternative, it would be helpful to know over what proportion of DNR ownership would this policy be implemented? Under the recently adopted sustainable harvest calculation, not all acres will be managed under a biodiversity pathways approach. And, the use of such techniques has not been discussed in public documents for eastern Washington.

p.3-70: Uncommon habitats. Managing for uncommon habitats is an important element of protecting biological diversity in forested landscapes. The policy in Alternative 3 is vague on the extent to which DNR will be required to protect these habitats, and the

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analysis in this section is equally vague. We support the idea expressed in the EIS analysis that uncommon habitats would receive more protection than under the current policy, but it is difficult to see how the proposed change in language from Alternative 1 to Alternative 3 achieves that higher level of protection. Active management of forests for biodiversity is quite consistent with trust obligations over the long term. However, protection of uncommon habitat types may require low or no active management. The overview analysis for Alternative 3 actually suggests that individual unlisted species and their habitats would not be the focus of voluntary conservation measures, but management for biodiversity would be. Thus, the statement on this page that “the department would be directed to also voluntarily participate with state and federal agencies and other organizations on initiatives related to non-listed species and their habitats when consistent with trust objectives” seems inconsistent with language on p. 3

66. We would like clarification of how alternative 3 would achieve protection of uncommon habitats where they are not currently protected under DNR’s HCP.

p. 3-71. Landscape diversity. The analysis in this section only appears to address western Washington. It is very unclear how this policy will apply to eastern Washington, and thus it is difficult to have confidence in the overall conclusions based on the lack of complete analysis, and the lack of more specific language in the actual policy.

#### **Minor technical comments on Wildlife analysis section**

p. 3-61. The USFWS has never adopted a recovery plan for the Northern Spotted Owl.

p. 3-61. To state that state or federally listed species that are not covered under the HCP or Forest Practices rules are all associated with late-successional forest or riparian habitats is not accurate. Furthermore, to state that these species “may” be protected under the provisions of the HCP or Forest Practices rules is unsubstantiated and does not belong in an EIS. In-depth analysis is required to support such a statement, and is in fact a subject of some debate in the overall forest policy arena in Washington State at this time. For instance, it was recognized in the 1992 EIS adopting the Forest Practices Rules requiring that wildlife reserve trees be left in harvest units that the specific provisions adopted as rule would not likely meet the life history needs of many cavity dependent species (WFPB 1992). An effort is underway under the direction of the current Forest Practices Board to evaluate whether or not there are species that are not receiving protection under the current mix aquatic and terrestrial rules.

p.3-62. The DEIS should recognize that DNR’s HCP and the Northwest Forest Plan do not cover federal forest lands outside of the range of the spotted owl, thus does not address many east side forest-dependent species that occur outside of the range of the owl.

#### **Older forest and Old Growth Policy (p. 3-53).**

Comments on language of preferred alternative: We recommend a smaller minimum stand size for protection than 80 acres. There are ecologically unique and rare stands that are smaller than this size that could potentially be lost under your preferred alternative.

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Stands as small as five to ten acres are still significant, especially if they are comprised of underrepresented plant communities.

This policy is also over-reliant on HCP commitments to establish the location of old growth that will be prioritized for conservation. There may be areas without an owl or murrelet conservation function that have remnant patches of old growth. These patches likely provide important habitat in the context of areas otherwise depauperate of old forest conditions. We recommend that old forest be preserved wherever it is found. The criteria by which decisions will be made about old growth stands other than contribution to HCP objectives, is vague. We believe this may result in future conflict over the disposition of old growth stands.

We recommend using the Old Growth Scientific Committee's definitional approach rather than the HCP definition. The HCP definition is a black and white approach that was not based on a rigorous quantitative assessment of old growth ecology. The index approach allows for recognition of "degrees of old growth-ness" rather than a sharp delineation of old growth or not old growth, and thus is more reflective of natural complexity. Furthermore, the index will allow consideration of naturally mature stands that will be the department's next old growth.

The policy should be clarified with respect to what "old forest conditions" mean. The FEIS for the Sustainable harvest calculation identifies three stages of complex forest: botanically diverse, niche diversification, and fully functional. It would be helpful to know if the Board intends that the DNR will target 10-15 percent in all three of these stages, or just in niche diversification and fully functional, which are closer in ecological function to unmanaged old growth than the botanically diverse stage. It would also be helpful to know if the Board intends with this policy to direct DNR to not harvest stands that are on an advanced developmental trajectory to an older forest condition when the 10-15 percent has not yet been met. For example, most west side planning units have less than 1 percent niche diversification and fully functional forest. Should these advanced stages, that are not yet old growth, be harvested prior to a planning unit reaching that 10-15 percent older forest target? We would recommend that naturally mature stands that are in the niche diversification stage, even if they have some prior management history, not be harvested until the Board's goal of 10-15 percent of an older forest condition in the planning unit is achieved.

We also recommend that the Board address east side old growth as a policy issue as soon as possible, if it is not being addressed in this round of policy updates for the Forest Resource Plan. We would also like to know what kind of guidance DNR will receive regarding east side old growth prior to be resolved at the Board level.

Thank you for considering our comments. If you have questions regarding these comments, please contact Paula Swedeen at 360-902-2612.

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**Commenter 28: Sue Chickman**

Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society P.O. Box 502, Sequim, WA  
98382 360/681-4076



Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society  
P.O. Box 502, Sequim, WA 98382  
360/681-4076

To Promote Birding and Conservation as Community Educators, Volunteers, and Stewards

May 25, 2005

Department of Natural Resources SEPA Center PO Box 47015 Olympia, WA 98504-7015 Fax: (360) 902-1789 E-mail: [sepacenter@wadnr.gov](mailto:sepacenter@wadnr.gov)

Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Policy for Sustainable Forests

Dear Department of Natural Resources,

The Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society, with its more than 600 members residing in Clallam County, thanks you for this opportunity to comment on the subject draft EIS. We appreciate all the effort that went into preparing the document. Please accept the following comments for your consideration:

1. Financial Diversification, alternative three
2. Forest Health, alternative two
3. Old Growth, alternative two
4. Wildlife Habitat, alternative two
5. Watershed Systems, alternative no action
6. Riparian Management Zones, alternative three
7. Public Access and Recreation, alternative four
8. Visual Management, alternative four, with the following change: transferring visually significant lands without compensation to the trust
9. Forest Land Planning, alternative two
10. Roads, alternative three

Please provide adequate funding for enforcement because it is needed to mitigate many of the illegal and unsafe activities occurring on trust lands (i.e., target shooting, lead contamination, dumping). In addition, there are too many incompatible recreation activities occurring in the same locations, and there are ever-growing environmental problems associated with off road vehicle (ORV) use . ORV's cause habitat degradation in the form of stream bed damage, loss of wildlife, loss of rare vegetation, the spread of invasive weeds, and erosion.

Old growth stands should have highest priority for protection.

Please add FSC certification as a complement to DNR's new FSI certification program.



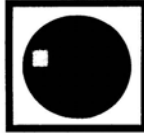
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Thank you for allowing us to comment.

Sincerely,

*Original signed by:*

Sue Chickman Conservation Chair



## Washington State Association of Counties

206 TENTH AVE. S.E., OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON 98501-1311  
TELEPHONE (360) 753-1886 • FAX (360) 753-2842

May 31, 2005

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources SEPA Center  
and Members of the Board of Natural Resources  
1111 Washington Street SE  
P. O. Box 47015  
Olympia, Washington 98504-7015  
[sepacenter@wadnr.gov](mailto:sepacenter@wadnr.gov)

Dear Members of the Board of Natural Resources  
and Mr. Kit Metlen, SEPA Responsible Official,

The Washington Timber Counties subgroup (Timber Counties) of the Washington State Association of Counties respectfully submits the following comments related to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) concerning review and update of the Forest Resource Plan, now referred to as the "Policy for Sustainable Forests" (PSF), to the Board of Natural Resources (BNR). The Timber Counties are those Washington counties which have Department managed trust lands within the county. These comments may be appended in the future based on continued review by the Timber Counties.

Our comments focus on the alternative language for individual policy statements and will include reference to the preferred alternatives developed by the BNR in their discussions during and since the publication of the DEIS.

**Policies related to Economic Performance:**

Financial Diversification, the counties are supportive of the BNR preferred alternative which is a rewrite of Alternative 4.  
Financial Assumptions, the counties are supportive of the BNR preferred alternative which is a rewrite of Alternative 3, with additional language to specify that the review will occur at least once per year.  
Land Classifications, the counties are supportive of the BNR preferred alternative which is a rewrite of Alternative 2.

**Policies related to Forest Ecosystem Health and Productivity:**

Forest Health, the counties are supportive of the BNR preferred alternative which is a rewrite of Alternative 2.

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May 31, 2005

Wildfire and Catastrophic Loss Prevention, the counties are supportive of the BNR preferred alternative which is Alternative 2.

Genetic Resource, the counties are supportive of the BNR preferred alternative which is a rewrite of Alternative 1.

Special Ecological Features, the counties are supportive of the BNR preferred alternative which is Alternative 2. There is some concern related to this policy when it leads to an increase in state ownership of lands within those counties with a very high level of state and federal ownership and therefore a diminished private land tax base.

Older Forests and Old Growth, the counties are supportive of the DNR preferred alternative which is Alternative 3.

Wildlife Habitat, the counties are supportive of the BNR preferred alternative which is a rewrite of Alternative 3.

Watershed Systems, the counties are supportive of the BNR preferred alternative which is a rewrite of Alternative 3.

Riparian Management Zones and Wetlands, the counties are supportive of the BNR preferred alternative titled "Riparian Conservation" which differentiates between treatment of trust lands in Western and Eastern Washington and combines the riparian and wetland policies.

**Social and Cultural Benefits:**

Public Access and Recreation, the counties are supportive of the DNR preferred alternative which is Alternative 4.

Cultural Resources, the counties are supportive of the BNR preferred alternative which is a rewrite of Alternative 2.

Visual management, the counties are supportive of the BNR preferred alternative which is a rewrite of Alternative 4.

Local Economic Vitality, the counties are supportive of the DNR preferred alternative which is Alternative 3.

**Implementation:**

Forest Land Planning, the counties are supportive of the BNR preferred alternative which is a rewrite of Alternative 2.

General Silvicultural Strategy, the counties are supportive of the DNR preferred alternative which is Alternative 2.

Forest Land Transactions, the counties support the DNR proposal, in Alternative 2, to rely on the policies within the "Asset Stewardship Plan" and not include this policy in the PSF.

Roads, the counties are supportive of the BNR preferred alternative which is a rewrite of Alternative 3.

Acquiring Rights of Way and Granting Rights of Way, the counties support the DNR proposal, in Alternative 2 related to each of these policies, to rely on other DNR policies and statutes and not include this policy in the PSF.

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May 31, 2005

Research, the counties are supportive of the BNR preferred alternative which is a rewrite of Alternative 3.

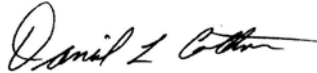
External Relationships, the counties are supportive of the BNR preferred alternative which is a rewrite of Alternative 2.

SEPA Review, the counties can support either options A or B of the BNR preferred alternative. SEPA compliance is required by statute and the inclusion of a policy would be informational only.

Implementation, Reporting and Modification, the counties are supportive of the DNR preferred alternative which is Alternative 3.

WSAC Timber Counties are appreciative of this opportunity to comment on the DEIS and will continue to follow the progress of this policy development and comment as necessary in the future.

Sincerely,



Dan Cothren, Chair  
Timber Counties  
Washington State Association of Counties

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**Commenter 30: Lisa McShane**

Northwest Ecosystem Alliance re: Policy for Sustainable Forests Draft Environmental Impact Statement May 31, 2005

DNR SEPA Center  
P.O. Box 47015 Olympia, WA 98504-7015

May 31, 2005

Re: Policy for Sustainable Forests Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear DNR:

On behalf of Northwest Ecosystem Alliance and our members, I write to provide comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Policy for Sustainable Forests.

The timing and relevance of this policy document is unclear: On September 7, 2004, the Board of Natural Resources voted to adopt new logging rules for Westside forests – the Sustainable Forest Harvest Calculation. That document essentially established target logging levels for the next 10 years. Yet the document on which we comment today is the policy document for those same logging levels. We are concerned that the update is not driven by science but by a need to fill in the blanks for the existing harvest calculation.

The following comments are specific to the policy.

**2.2 Trust lands**

Washington’s Trust lands are unique in the nation and nothing in our constitution or in law requires the DNR to maximize revenue. DNR does have the option to manage our trust lands in a way that maintains what the majority of citizens value most: the clean drinking water, high quality wildlife habitat, places to recreate and attenuation of flooding that can be gained from our state trust lands.

Our state constitution allows DNR to manage lands with these public values as objectives, rather than constraints, when it says: “All the public lands granted to the state are held in trust for all the people.” Additionally, the enabling act and the state constitution, written when we had 500,000 people, detailed how our trust lands can be sold. Today, as our population approaches 7 million people, it’s time to consider the needs of the citizenry beyond revenue and timber production.

Court rulings do not require DNR to maximize revenue at the expense such critical public needs as an irreplaceable source of drinking water or wildlife habitat. In 1984 the Washington Supreme Court ruled, in *Skamania v. Washington*, that the state Legislature could not let timber companies off the hook for logging contracts on state trust lands, because of the state’s trust duty of “undivided loyalty.” In *Skamania*, the court narrowly ruled that the state cannot favor private industry above their duty to beneficiaries. It did not rule on the increasing conflict between public values such as clean drinking water, recreation or wildlife and the beneficiaries.

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While some infer the Skamania ruling means the state must maximize revenue, in a more recent case in Okanagon County, the Chelan County Superior Court said “nothing in the law... requires the department to maximize current income.”

The state Supreme Court has also written that the public trust doctrine is like “a covenant running with the land...for the benefit of the public and the land’s dependent wildlife.” It is this broad public trust that must be protected: the state’s enduring obligation to provide clean drinking water, safety from landslides for those who live near trust lands, habitat for the state’s wildlife and places for our nearly 7 million residents to recreate. Thus, our trust lands must be managed “for all the people.”

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Policy for Sustainable Forests only considers how to maximize revenue from the State’s public forests. We request that an Alternative be included in the next iteration of the EIS that evaluates how water quality, wildlife habitat, and recreation opportunities will be protected and maximized while some sustainable logging occurs to restore lands degraded by historic logging practices that focused on generating revenue.

### **3.2.1 Forest Health**

Since 1992 little progress has been made towards more resilient and resistant forests. Some of our state forests, especially in eastern Washington, remain uniformly and densely stocked, many with non-native species and the old growth trees and biological legacies (large snags and down wood) are fewer in number. Old growth trees are key to healthier forests: they are more fire resistant, they host predator insects that can play a role in controlling insect outbreaks and they provide genetic material that has adapted to the site and are more resilient to forest health problems. We ask that your forest policy be modified to ensure retention of old growth trees and stands of any size, and large snags and down wood. We further request that even-aged, densely stocked, structurally uniform young managed plantations be a priority for treatment with careful thinning to restore structural and species diversity.

### **3.2.2 Wildlife**

DNR relies on the Habitat Conservation Plan in order to protect wildlife. However, the HCP has yet to contribute to the recovery of threatened and endangered species and the information used to draft the HCP is old. Current information is available and should be used in drafting this policy. Recent studies show declines in wildlife populations. For example, owl populations are declining faster than anticipated (over 60% decrease in some areas in the last decade!) That indicates a need for increasing the amount of owl nesting, roosting, and foraging habitat, yet your alternatives will decrease available habitat. Chinook salmon also have been impacted by past logging practices and your alternative increases logging in riparian areas without any evaluation of the potential impacts to aquatic species such as salmon. We request that the next iteration of the EIS apply current and up-to-date information to develop an alternative that restores habitat for threatened, endangered, and sensitive plants and animals.

### **3.2.5 Older Forests and Old Growth**

Old trees and stands, even those smaller than the arbitrary limit of 80 acres, have high ecological and social value. We ask, first and foremost, that all remaining mature and old growth forests and biological legacies (e.g. large trees, snags and down woody material)

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on state trust lands be permanently protected. There is no scientific basis for logging the last mature and old growth forests or any biological legacies from our state's public forests, and there exists broad lasting public support in our state for their permanent protection.

### **3.2.7 Watershed Systems**

Cumulative effects of logging on watersheds is well documented, yet DNR has abandoned the watershed analysis process that sought to address these impacts at the right scale. Without completion of watershed analysis, DNR's claim that Forest Practice rules comply with the Federal Clean Water Act is simply a guess that can be easily proven wrong.

Providing clean water to the people of Washington certainly falls well within your mandate of holding these lands in trust for all the people – water is more valuable than timber and in some cases, citizens rely heavily on state trust lands to provide that water. We ask that you reinvigorate your watershed analysis program to ensure that cumulative impacts of multiple landowners logging watersheds does not impact the right of the people to clean drinking water and wildlife habitat.

### **3.2.8 Riparian Management Zones**

The new Sustainable Harvest Calculation, for which this is the after-the-fact policy, allows significant logging in riparian areas, including patch clear cuts. It's hard to see how this new policy of logging and clearcutting riparian areas on our public lands will improve habitat for the public's wildlife.

We ask that you provide the strongest possible protection for riparian areas along rivers, streams, wetlands, seeps, springs, and other areas in the aquatic-terrestrial interface. Riparian areas with older forests should be protected from logging and road construction. Only careful treatments designed to develop old forest characteristics in even-aged, densely stocked, structurally uniform young managed plantations should be allowed in riparian areas. We request that the next iteration of the EIS reflect this need.

### **Conclusion**

Your Policy for Sustainable Forests should be the guiding principle for managing state trust lands, lands that you are mandated to hold in trust "for all the people." While these public lands can and should yield revenue for the beneficiaries, they can and should provide habitat, recreation and clean water for the diverse and compelling needs of all the people. Based on the Draft Policy for Sustainable Forests, as well as the Sustainable Harvest Calculation, we remain concerned that we are farther than ever from providing for the needs of a growing population for clean water, a quality place to recreate and wildlife habitat that will allow the public's wildlife to recover and thrive.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call or email.

Sincerely,

Lisa McShane Community Relations Director Northwest Ecosystem Alliance

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Commenter 31: Becky Kelley and D. Eric Harlow

Sent via email

May 31, 2005

Department of Natural Resources SEPA Center PO Box 47015 Olympia, WA 98504-7015 Fax: 360-902-1789 Email: [sepacenter@wadnr.gov](mailto:sepacenter@wadnr.gov)

Re: Comments on April 2005 Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the *Policy for Sustainable Forests*

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept the following comments on the April 2005 Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the *Policy for Sustainable Forests*, on behalf of the Washington Environmental Council (WEC) and the Washington Forest Law Center (WFLC).

**Relationship between *Policy for Sustainable Forests*, and Western and Eastern Washington Sustainable Harvest Calculations**

These comments speak to the “Need” for the plan, as described on page 1-3 of the DEIS. Please note that the statement in Appendix G (page 2) that no comments were received on the proposed need is incorrect. The scoping comments submitted by WEC (excerpted below) addressed the proposed need.

While it is rapidly becoming a moot point, we remain concerned that DNR has taken a backwards approach to planning for state forest management. Please see the excerpt below from our April 2004 scoping comments on the *Policy for Sustainable Forests*. In the *Policy for Sustainable Forests DEIS*, DNR states that the Western Washington sustainable harvest calculation was identified as the first step in revising the *Forest Resource Plan* (page 1-3). Why? And what about the Eastern Washington sustainable harvest calculation? The *Policy for Sustainable Forests* covers the whole state. If the Western Washington calculation needed to be completed before revising the Policy, why did the Eastern Washington calculation not need to be completed as well?

By focusing on the Western Washington harvest calculation first, DNR started at the middle level of planning, and is now trying to plan “up” (Policy for Sustainable Forests), “down” (sustainable harvest calculation implementation plans), and “sideways” (Eastern Washington harvest calculation). This approach doesn’t make much sense; it is likely to lead to a muddled product with a lack of vision; and it reduces WEC’s sense that the current comment process is meaningful. The cut level target has already been set; realistically, it is the driver for state forest management.

Excerpt from WEC’s 4-12-04 scoping comments:

*Forest Resource Plan Update Process*

As we expressed to you at our March 29 meeting, we are concerned that the process for updating the Forest Resource Plan does not make sense. The Forest Resource Plan is a general plan for state forest management across the state that should integrate DNR’s



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various forest management documents and provide an overall vision for managing the forests. Yet, the Board of Natural Resources has nearly completed the new sustainable harvest calculation (SHC) for the next decade, during the course of which they discussed and decided to alter some of the Forest Resource Plan policies (at least for western Washington). Thus the process of reviewing the Forest Resource Plan is functionally already partially complete, and it has been done in a piecemeal fashion, with the logging target being the obvious driver.

It was encouraging at our March 29 meeting to hear that part of the reason for updating the FRP is not just the changes that have occurred since 1992, but the need to look ahead 10-20 years at the factors influencing forestry and how to deal with them. Yet there was relatively little discussion during the SHC process of such broader factors. We request that DNR articulate why the decision-making process has been timed as it has (western Washington SHC before FRP update) and how the eastern Washington SHC will fit with the timing of the FRP update process. We understand from DNR staff that the SHC may be recalculated based on changes to the FRP, but DNR should understand the public's skepticism that there is any intention of doing so, given the way the process has been designed and the large amount of time and energy that various parties put into the western Washington SHC process. Unfortunately, the FRP update feels like an afterthought in the DNR's thinking, yet it deals with some of the most important issues that will face DNR foresters in writing the 5 western Washington SHC implementation plans: how to balance various interests, out on the ground.

### **Purpose**

We appreciate your adding to the Purpose statement, to incorporate the ideas stated in our scoping comments.

### **Policy Objectives**

There are multiple ways of achieving the purpose, and alternatives should consider the reasonable methods of achieving the purpose. However, the DEIS relies on one set of policy objectives to achieve the purpose and relates the alternative analyses to this one set of policy objectives. This approach does not meet SEPA intent for a range of alternatives. There may be other management objectives that meet the purpose more effectively, which need to be evaluated. Each alternative could have a different suite of policy objectives that could meet the purpose, however, the DEIS limits alternative consideration to a small range of options that meet the policy objectives.

We are particularly concerned about the limited policy objectives considered, in light of concerns we have regarding those objectives.

#6 Outcome-based management within a flexible framework sounds reasonable in the abstract, but the reality is that state forest management is already subject to a large number of specific requirements (see objective #1) that must be met. Also, DNR lacks sufficient budgets to support a more outcome-based approach, with the greater monitoring and research requirements it entails.

#10 The existing statement is fine, but would be improved by restoring the language that appeared in the draft: "Monitoring will also help identify needed changes in policies and

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DNR practices to better meet trust and BNR objectives.” This explicit statement that monitoring is not a hollow exercise, but is intended to inform management decisions over time, is important.

#7 and #8 These objectives are of the greatest concern. It is good to see that the language changed in #7 from as much as allowed by law, to as much as is prudent. However, in combination, these two objectives seem to send a message: DNR’s focus is on actively managing as much of the land base as possible, and that which cannot be actively managed should be purchased from the trusts. This approach does not meet the trust mandate; is rooted in the idea that only active management can generate revenue, when in the future that may be untrue; and sends a negative signal to the public with regard to DNR’s responsibilities to protect *public* resources like clean water without compensation (similar to any other landowner). Please see our April 2004 scoping comments (note that the Policy numbers have changed, and were previously called “Objectives”):

- Objective 3 states that as much of the forest land base should be actively managed as is allowed by law and the HCP. This statement may conflict with objective #1, which pledges to meet the state and federal law, the HCP, *and* the trust mandate. The State Forest Practices Act, the federal Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act (as examples) do not expressly require intergenerational equity; the trust mandate does. This requirement for intergenerational equity (as well as other elements of the trust mandate, such as the “duty to reduce the risk of loss to the trusts,” 1992 FRP page 5) may require DNR not to actively manage parts of the forest land base for a time. The current FRP explicitly acknowledges this fact on page 4: “The department has an obligation to provide for all generations, without unduly favoring present or future beneficiaries. Therefore, the department believes some of its policies, which would provide greater protection for state forest land than the minimum legal requirements, allow the department to preserve the long-term productivity of the forest lands and protect the range of resources found on state land for future beneficiaries.”

Also, the statement may conflict with Objective #4; for example, the trusts could receive revenues from a city or county for avoiding active management of lands that provide drinking water for that city or county. The Objective could be reworded: “Promote sustainable management of the forested land base, consistent with state and federal laws, the HCP, and the trust mandate, and utilize forestry practices...”

- Objective 5 could be read to imply that forested trust lands that provide special benefits (beyond direct financial returns to the beneficiaries) that conflict with active management must be purchased from the trusts. We are not opposed to purchasing some special areas from the trusts, such as through the trust land transfer program, which we support. But it is important not to imply that all areas unsuitable for active management must be purchased from the trusts. All landowners, including large private forest landowners in Washington, have some lands that they cannot actively manage, in order to protect the public resources on those lands. DNR has that same responsibility, which is compatible with the trust mandate. To suggest that any lands that cannot be actively managed must be transferred out of the trust would be a large step backwards in DNR’s vision of forest stewardship.

#### **Four Major Policy Categories**

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Again, the concerns articulated in our scoping comments remain:

The 40 policies of the current Forest Resource Plan currently are organized into 4 categories: Trust Asset Management, Forest Land Planning, Silviculture, and Implementation. DNR proposes 4 new categories to replace those: Economic Performance, Ecological Protection and Enhancement, Social and Cultural Benefits, and Creating Sustainable Forests (Implementation). As we discussed at our March 29 meeting with DNR staff, those four categories are all important, but dividing forest management that way seems reductionistic and counter to DNR and the BNR's goals of pursuing forestry and other policies that *simultaneously* provide social, economic and environmental benefits. For example, which category would old growth protection fit into? Particularly if DNR could receive carbon credits for agreeing to protect currently unprotected old growth, such a policy would arguably fit into the economic, social/cultural and ecological categories—and it would be important for the trust beneficiaries, the public, and DNR foresters to recognize that it is in fact contributing to all three goals simultaneously.

It can be argued that category headings are not particularly important, but in fact, the way issues are framed up can have a significant impact on how they are perceived and discussed over time. Rather than dividing the policies into broad issue or “value” categories, it might work better to think about categories that capture how DNR staff work to manage these forests, as the existing categories do. Such an approach might also be helpful to foresters in using the plan, and to the public, in understanding how the plan will be implemented by linking the various policies to particular steps that DNR takes in managing the forests.

## **Comments on Alternatives and Analysis**

### *3.1.1 Financial Diversification*

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives.

Alternative 4, the Department recommended alternative, does not adequately account for social and environmental benefits from the trust lands. With increasing population and global supply of timber products, demand will increase for local recreational and non-timber resources from trust lands. In addition, reasonably foreseeable impacts such as global warming and effects on forest health and water production from forested watersheds are not addressed or analyzed. Alternative 4 should be amended to include elements of alternative 3 that focus on social and ecological benefits of trust lands since these will become increasingly valuable in the future. Alternative 4 as it stands does not meet the trust mandate for the aforementioned reasons.

The cumulative effects analysis is inadequate under SEPA since it does not even attempt to analyze the impacts of the proposed policy in conjunction with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions. It also fails to analyze the alternatives individually.

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### 3.1.2 Land Classifications

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives.

One of the policy directives developed by the Board of Natural Resources during the development of the Westside Sustainable Harvest Calculation was to manage as much of the trust lands as possible as ‘on-base’, which, by definition, means available for harvest. Alternative 2 embraces this concept, but changes the term for what is not-available for harvest to ‘short and long term deferrals’. By definition, a deferral means that management and related impacts are only delayed for a short or long period of time, not prevented. That there are ‘no significant probable adverse impacts’ or cumulative effects associated with managing a significantly greater portion of trust lands as ‘on-base’, even if management is ‘deferred’ is completely unjustified and unsupported by this DEIS.

The cumulative effects analysis is inadequate under SEPA since it does not even attempt to analyze the impacts of the proposed policy in conjunction with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions. It also fails to analyze the alternatives individually.

### 3.2.1 Forest Health

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives.

The definition of healthy forests used on page 3-18 is extremely anthropocentric and reflects a narrow view of what a healthy forest is. For a discussion of this topic, please see:

[http://www.prm.nau.edu/PRM346/forest\\_health\\_article.htm](http://www.prm.nau.edu/PRM346/forest_health_article.htm)

The definition and policy statements under Alternative 2 should be changed to include positive statements that healthy forests generally reflect natural conditions. The policy statements about ‘inappropriate species composition’ and ‘species best adapted to the site’ need to include statements that the desired future condition will reflect a natural composition. The definition of appropriate species composition or best-adapted species are dependent on management goals, and the current unhealthy forest conditions are largely the result of past management activities. The policy needs to be more specific about what the desired future condition will be, and how it will be achieved.

Impacts from global warming also need to be addressed when considering management of forests for healthy conditions. There is abundant peer-reviewed scientific literature on the issue of climate change, some with projections on specific impacts on natural resources in the Northwest. For example, see: *NWF* 2005; *NOAA* 2003; *Mote et al* 2003; *Mote et al* (no date); *Goodstein and Matson* 2004. Expected changes include increases in forest pest outbreaks, increased fire frequency and intensity, decreased summer stream flows, increased stream temperatures, and shifts in annual hydrographs. Significant impacts to listed species are also expected, including a potential 20% decrease in usable

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stream habitat by 2040 due to stream temperature increases. *NWF* 2005. There is no discussion in the DEIS about the potential impacts of the reasonably foreseeable impacts that global warming will have on trust resources or the potential interactions with the proposed policy changes. Prudent trust management includes addressing future impacts to trust assets.

### *3.2.2 Wildfire and Catastrophic Loss Prevention*

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives.

The ecological benefits of salvage logging are not clear-cut (so to speak). There has been ample research in the past 10 years indicating that salvage logging of burned areas can cause long-term negative impacts in productivity and on other resources. Increased erosion from roads and logging impacts on hydrophobic soils, removal of woody debris that provide nutrients to burned soils, and the removal of standing snags that provide valuable habitat can impact trust assets to a greater degree than the short-term returns from salvaged timber. These potential impacts need to be carefully weighed and incorporated to a stronger degree in the policy statement under alternative 2.

In addition see comments about global warming under the previous section. Policy must take into account the significant impacts on forest health and fire frequency caused by global warming.

The cumulative effects analysis is inadequate under SEPA since it does not even attempt to analyze the impacts of the proposed policy in conjunction with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions. That there would be no cumulative impacts under Alternative 2 is unsupported by any analysis. There could be substantial direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts from increased salvage logging as well as increased fire frequency and pest outbreaks on adjacent private and federal lands due to global warming.

### *3.2.4 Special Ecological Features*

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives.

The DEIS acknowledges that “special ecological features receive little protection within the regulatory framework.” (DEIS, pg 3-41). The proposed policy under alternative 2 does little to change this, and describes the impacts as ‘minimized’, but does not provide any substantial protection other than ‘options’ to manage or ‘dispose’ of the land in question. The DEIS fails to describe the actual impacts of this policy on rare plants and sensitive species other than implying that impacts would be ‘minimized.’ It does not specifically describe how such areas would be protected other than by being transferred out of trust management.

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The policy statement that ‘The department will protect such areas through disposal, retention, creative partnerships and funding mechanisms’ (DEIS pg 3-42) is vague, undefined, and unenforceable. How the areas will be ‘protected’ is unclear except, perhaps, by ‘disposal’ if this means that the land will be transferred out of trust management. This policy is an example of a conflict with Policy 3.1.2 Land Classification, as more land will be managed as ‘on-base’ without any meaningful protection provided.

The cumulative effects analysis is inadequate under SEPA since it does not even attempt to analyze the impacts of the proposed policy in conjunction with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions. In fact, the cumulative effects analysis largely contradicts the statements in the regulatory framework section that states that special ecological features receive ‘little protection’. That there would be no cumulative impacts under Alternative 2 is unsupported by any analysis, and fails to include actions on other land ownerships.

### *3.2.5 Older Forests and Old Growth*

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives.

The rationale for the 80-acre stand is unclear and unjustified. There is no supporting technical or scientific documentation to support the significance of the 80-acre stand size for management purposes. In particular, in areas with very little remnant old growth, even stands much smaller than 80 acre parcels could contribute significant wildlife habitat, seed source, and forest qualities that would otherwise be non-existent in managed forests.

The reliance on experimental management of old-growth stands in the OESF is problematic. To a large extent, the DNR has failed to complete landscape and 12-step management plans for management in the OESF. (See the attached excerpt concerning the OESF, from WEC and WFLC’s joint comment letter on the Western Washington Sustainable Harvest Calculation DEIS). The analysis does not include DNR’s failure to implement previous Forest Resource Plan and HCP planning processes.

We are generally supportive of the approach laid out in Alternative 2, if it is modified to provide old-growth protections to stands in the OESF with the possible exception of stands targeted for controlled experiments under the adaptive management program. Alternative 2 is also somewhat unclear in terms of protection of trees vs. stands and whether old growth would be transferred out of the trust and if so under what circumstances. We would like to see the policy statements written more clearly, in order to ascertain their effect on the ground and to confirm our support for this alternative. Also, when the new definition is complete, it should be reviewed for potential incorporation in Alternative 2.

The cumulative effects analysis is inadequate under SEPA since it does not adequately analyze the impacts of the proposed policy in conjunction with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions. It also fails to analyze the alternatives individually.

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### 3.2.6 *Wildlife Habitat*

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives.

Alternative 3 does not have the positive commitment to independently ‘voluntarily participate in efforts to recover and restore endangered and threatened species’ that occurs in Alternatives 1 and 2. Instead, it will focus on ‘conservation of biodiversity’. A focus on broader metrics such as biodiversity is laudable, but without a specific commitment to protect listed species, and without careful definitions and sideboards about how ‘conservation of biodiversity’ will be applied, the policy may not be adequate to protect wildlife on trust lands. The DEIS describes the regulatory framework including the Northwest Forest Plan (DEIS, pg 3-62), but does not describe how much weaker habitat protection on trust lands are in comparison to federal management and potential impacts from less protection.

Alternative 3 also does not adequately capture the intent of the FRP policy No. 22 including “The department will provide wildlife habitat conditions which have the capacity to sustain native wildlife populations or communities” Or “The department shall develop wildlife habitat objectives...”

Compliance with federal and state laws may not insure adequate protection for state-listed species. For example, the WDFW is required to develop recovery plans for state-listed species, but has failed to do so for most of the species on the list. DNR should work with WDFW to develop species and habitat management plans rather than assuming that existing protections (such as the riparian strategy) are sufficient to provide protections to the species that occur on trust lands.

There is also extensive reliance on the DNR HCP to provide adequate protection for a variety of species even though the DNR HCP only applies to the range of the northern spotted owl. There is an additional 500,000 acres of trust forests in the central and east side of the state that do not benefit from management under the HCP. Impacts in these areas are not adequately analyzed.

The cumulative effects analysis fails to address reasonably foreseeable impacts from global warming, the Forests and Fish HCP, and other efforts to conserve endangered species, salmonids in particular.

### 3.2.7 *Watershed Systems*

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives. That said, policy objectives 1, 2, 8 and 10 should also apply. (Note that our statement that these policy objectives should apply is a SEPA concern—that the policy statements are supposed to satisfy the policy objectives—rather than a statement of support for the objectives; see concerns with objectives, described above).

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The purpose of monitoring watersheds is to address cumulative watershed effects (CWEs). There is abundant literature regarding the effects of multiple actions on watershed functions, and means to address them. The appropriate scale to address cumulative effects of multiple forest practices is generally at the Watershed Administrative Unit (WAU) level. The FRP policy number 19 and the watershed analysis rule WAC 222-22 were developed to specifically address cumulative watershed effects at the appropriate scale since generic or non-watershed-specific mitigations and regulations were found to be deficient. This situation has not changed—cumulative effects cannot be adequately addressed through generic best management practices, project specific SEPA, limiting clearcut sizes, or ‘flexible approaches’. The assertion that the Forest Practices Rules comply with the Federal Clean Water Act has not been determined—having it as a goal does not mean compliance is assured.

Forest Policy No. 19 under the existing FRP was very clear in what was intended, specifying that “the department *will analyze by watershed* the effects of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future activities...” (emphasis added). Additionally, the HCP also assumed that watershed analyses would be conducted to address cumulative effects (despite the department’s interpretation to the contrary). Despite the clear language, DNR has failed to adequately implement watershed analysis and has failed to address cumulative effects. In fact, the watershed analysis program is not funded or staffed, and is essentially defunct. Therefore, references to watershed analysis such as “The state Forest Practice Rules also provide methods for addressing cumulative effects through watershed analysis” (DEIS pg 3-76) and “The department will participate in watershed analysis as defined by state Forest Practices Rules when initiated by other landowners or by the state’s Forest Practices Program” (DEIS, pg 3-78) are false and misleading because even if private landowners wished to conduct a watershed analysis, the DNR support necessary to complete it is unavailable (despite the FPB directive to ‘reinvigorate’ watershed analysis given on March 19, 2003). Attached are comments on cumulative effects entitled “The proposed forest practice rules associated with the Forest Practices HCP are not adequate to prevent impacts from forestry-related cumulative effects” submitted by WFLC to the federal Services for the Forests and Fish HCP. Although written specifically to comment on that process, they include an analysis of the state forest practice rules in regards to cumulative effects as well as the most recent information on the status of the watershed analysis. None of the attachments cited in that document are attached as part of this submission.

There are numerous unfounded assertions in this section. First, the assertion that Alternative 1 does not meet the policy objectives as well as the other alternatives is not justified. If applied as intended, it would meet all of the policy objectives more effectively than the other alternatives since it would actually meet the trust mandate of protecting the resource for future generations. Second, the assertion that alternative 3 is just as effective as alternative 1 in protecting water resources and aquatic habitat is not justified by any evidence or scientific analysis. The assumption that increased flexibility equates to increased resource protection is unfounded; it actually increases the risk to resources since it does not provide the rigorous watershed-specific analysis provided by watershed analysis.



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Reliance on landscape planning will not adequately address cumulative effects at the watershed scale since the scale of analysis is the HCP planning unit, which incorporates several WRIAs. In addition, the proposed policy for landscape planning is subject to “available resources and budget” (DEIS, pg 3-129). If the resources devoted to watershed analysis are any indication, landscape planning is unlikely to occur at rate or level of detail sufficient to adequately address cumulative effects.

The cumulative effects analysis is inadequate under SEPA since it does not adequately analyze the impacts of the proposed policy in conjunction with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions. The cumulative effects analysis fails to address reasonably foreseeable impacts from global warming, the Forests and Fish HCP, and other efforts to conserve aquatic habitat. It fails to address the cumulative impacts of multiple management strategies on adjacent private and federal lands within the same watershed.

### *3.2.8 Riparian Management Zones*

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives. That said, policy objectives 1, 2, 7, 8 and 10 should also apply.

The DEIS acknowledges that the eastside riparian management guidelines fail to protect smaller non-fish bearing streams. Statements include “large woody debris recruitment, stream shade, and leaf and litter production would be at moderate risk for Type 4 streams and at high risk for Type 5 streams... the adverse effects to the riparian microclimate along non fish-bearing streams are considered high to very high...” (DEIS, pg 3-86). The DEIS states there is a “moderate to high risk of adverse impacts to several functions of Type 5 waters exists under alternative 1, primarily in Eastern Washington” (DEIS, pg 3-89) and continues with “The analysis for Alternative 3 is identical to the analysis for Alternative 1” (DEIS, pg 3-90). Despite the high risk, the proposed alternative 3 provides no additional protection for these streams, which is clearly inconsistent with Policy Objectives 1, 2, 3, 5, and 8 as well as the trust mandate and the Clean Water Act.

The assertion that the sustainable harvest level is consistent with the habitat conservation plan and the riparian management plan is questionable. The Services have not approved the riparian management strategy, and the assumptions used in the SHC model were significantly different than what the HCP intended and what may be finalized in the riparian strategy. See the attached Sustainable Harvest Calculation FEIS comments submitted by WFLC and WEC.

Assuming that future plans or adaptive management will address various issues is relying on tentative and uncertain future promises that are not acceptable as mitigation. For example, the Type 5 conservation strategy and CMER projects may not even be completed depending on funding availability and on whether federal assurances are granted for the Forests and Fish rules.

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In regards to rare plants, the DNR is not required to survey for rare plants or even consult with the DNR heritage program prior to operations in riparian areas. The assumption that “some of the areas are buffered, so some of the plants will be protected” is inadequate.

The cumulative effects analysis is inadequate under SEPA since it does not adequately analyze the impacts of the proposed policy in conjunction with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions. The cumulative effects analysis fails to address reasonably foreseeable impacts from global warming, the Forests and Fish HCP, and other efforts to conserve aquatic habitat. It fails to address the cumulative impacts of multiple management strategies on adjacent private and federal lands within the same watershed.

### *3.2.9 Wetlands*

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives. That said, policy objectives 1, 2, 7, and 8 should also apply to the analysis.

The DEIS acknowledges that the tools used to map wetlands on trust lands are inadequate, and that there has been no way to track whether the policy of no loss of wetlands has been appropriately implemented. Without the appropriate tools or monitoring, there is no way to determine if the policy has been, or will be, implemented as intended. In addition, if state forest practices rules are followed, there would be no protection for wetlands less than one-quarter acre in size. This is inconsistent with the policy directive. As written, this policy is contradicted by existing regulations and practices. It is also unenforceable without accurate wetland delineation and monitoring.

The cumulative effects analysis is inadequate under SEPA since it does not adequately analyze the impacts of the proposed policy in conjunction with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions. It fails to address the cumulative impacts of multiple management strategies on adjacent private and federal lands within the same watershed or wetland.

### *3.3.3 Visual Management & 3.3.4 Local Economic Vitality*

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives. When assessing the cost/benefit to the beneficiary, the department needs to consider that the beneficiary is often local and that the community would likely obtain recreational and tourist income if the landscape is maintained in an aesthetically pleasing manner.

The department should also consider the economic benefits of ecological services to local communities—clean water, healthy forests, and thriving wildlife populations all provide benefits to local communities and the beneficiaries that are difficult to quantify using traditional economics. Jobs associated with restoration should also be part of the equation. As we stated throughout the SHC process, and in our scoping comments for

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this process, we request that DNR use full-cost accounting to consider the full range of costs and benefits to the trust beneficiaries and others of various management strategies.

#### *3.4.1 Forest Land Planning*

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives. That said, policy objectives 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8 should also apply to the analysis.

Multiple policies over the years have addressed landscape planning at DNR. Block plans, landscape plans, watershed analysis, action and development plans, and now implementation plans have all been attempts to manage the trust asset at a landscape level. Unfortunately, none of them have been successfully implemented. “In Western Washington, the department delineated 83 landscape planning units. To date, numerous landscape plans have been *started*” (DEIS, pg 3-127, emphasis added).

Alternative 2 proposes land plans at the HCP planning unit scale, based on available resources and budget. This proposal is problematic for several reasons. Foremost is the escape clause that allows the DNR to avoid any landscape planning due to a tight budget, which is a constant consideration. The DEIS provides evidence of this tight budget; in section 3.3.1, DNR indicated that it only has the financial resources to maintain on a regular basis about 30% of existing recreational facilities (DEIS, pg 3-102). During the recent SHC planning process, DNR indicated that it would soon deplete its operating fund unless the management fee charged to the trustees was increased. DNR has received authority from the legislature to increase fees, but only for the next two years. Given the past track record for landscape planning at DNR, it seems highly questionable that this effort will proceed as planned. The DEIS fails to analyze environmental impacts associated with the past and continued failure to implement any significant level of landscape planning or cumulative effects analyses. The reliance on SEPA to address cumulative effects of the landscape plans assumes that they will be completed, therefore the assumption that SEPA will address cumulative effects is flawed.

Second, landscape planning, assuming that funds are available to complete them, would occur at the HCP planning unit level. These units are generally too large to adequately address cumulative effects and impacts to resources at the site-specific level. Although the extended SEPA checklist is intended to address site-specific impacts, there are a range of resource impacts that can occur cumulatively between the site-specific and HCP planning unit level. The proposed policy does allow for different scales of analyses for unique circumstances, but given DNR’s reliance on generalized mitigation measures, lack of resources, interest in developing broad landscape plans, and vague language in the policy, it is unclear whether this portion of the policy would be implemented.

Landscape planning is such an important process that it should be made a priority for the DNR. Language regarding available resources and budget should be removed and specific timelines and guidelines established for completion of landscape plans and the elements they should contain. If watershed analysis is not going to be required on trust

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lands, then landscape planning should include the watershed scale analysis required to address cumulative effects.

The cumulative effects analysis is inadequate under SEPA since it does not adequately analyze the impacts of the proposed policy in conjunction with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions. It fails to address the cumulative impacts of multiple management strategies on adjacent private and federal lands at the appropriate scale within a watershed. It does not address the past failures in landscape planning, the extensive degraded conditions on trust lands, and the possibility that due to limited budgets and resources landscape planning will not be implemented as intended.

#### *3.4.2 General Silvicultural Strategy*

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives. That said, policy objectives 1, 2, 3, 6, and 9 should also apply to the analysis.

The first statement in the department's preferred policy directs the department to manage 'the greatest possible portion of forested state trust lands' (DEIS, pg 3-137). This policy creates pressure to manage as much of the landscape as possible without giving consideration to natural processes or that it is in the interest of the trust to leave some areas of the landscape unmanaged. The statement should be eliminated since it is based on the unproven assumption that more management is always better for the trust and the resource.

The second paragraph of the policy is too vague to be helpful in directing the department (DEIS, pg 3-137). Such phrases as 'professional management', 'active stewardship', 'forest structures', 'intensive and innovative silviculture', and 'structural diversity' are vague and not defined. The policies eliminated under this proposal were much more specific and useful in guiding the DNR. For example, policy No. 33 provided specific guidance on how to apply vegetation control techniques, because there was specific concern about the risks involved with those treatments.

In addition, policy No. 30 provided language that specifically granted DNR discretion to reduce trust income to provide extra protection for certain resources. This language should be included in the updated policy because it recognizes that there are instances where protecting special resources is compatible with the trust mandate even if it means a reduction in income.

The analysis of the alternatives is flawed and contradictory. For example, the DEIS (pg 3-137, 138) states that "Alternative 1... attempts to provide a site-specific and outcome-oriented approach to managing the department's forested state trust lands. In doing so, Alternative 1 mandates techniques and field craft, rather than outcome-oriented approaches" (emphasis added). The analysis of the alternatives does not discuss or analyze the impacts of the elimination of policy No. 30, and although biodiversity pathways is discussed as an approach in the affected environment, nothing in the policy specifically directs the department to pursue this particular technique of silvicultural management. In fact, there are serious concerns that the Westside SHC process does not

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follow the ‘biodiversity pathways’ approach as described by Dr. Andrew Carey. See the attached Sustainable Harvest Calculation FEIS Comments submitted by WFLC and WEC.

The cumulative effects analysis is inadequate under SEPA since it does not adequately analyze the impacts of the proposed policy in conjunction with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable actions. It fails to address the cumulative impacts of multiple management strategies on adjacent private and federal lands at the appropriate scale within a watershed. It also relies on ill-defined objectives that will ultimately determine how the landscape will look. For example, the cumulative effects analysis for Alternative 2 refers to “rotational objectives” (DEIS, pg 3-139), which could imply that rotation age and management objectives will be focused on maximizing short-term trust revenue rather than balancing with ecological services and other non-timber related objectives. There is no analysis of the cumulative impact of managing the ‘greatest possible portion of the forested state trust lands’. Alternative 2 relies on ‘dovetailing silvicultural policies into a landscape-level system of planning and implementation’. This assumes that landscape-level planning will occur (See comments above on section 3.4.1).

#### *3.4.4 Roads*

The alternatives presented do not meet SEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives. All of the policy alternatives are measured by how well they meet the arbitrary policy objectives rather than the purpose and need. The decision space needs to include a broader array of policy objectives to capture a full range of alternatives. That said, policy objectives 3, 4, 6, and 9 should also apply to this analysis.

The addition of the requirement to minimize roads on forested state trust lands to the preferred alternative is a welcome addition. Reducing the extent of roads in a watershed is a key element in reducing impacts from roads. This policy statement, in combination with the RMAP program represents significant progress towards improving watershed conditions.

However, due to the extensive impacts of existing roads on aquatic habitat, additional language should be added to address shortcomings in the Forest Practices Rules. Attached is a comment letter written for the Forests and Fish HCP and DEIS. Although not written specifically for commenting on this DEIS, it contains extensive review of best available science and the Forest Practices Rules related to roads and is incorporated by reference into this comment letter.

The preferred policy should recommend an extensive monitoring program to measure impacts from roads, as well as the ability to impose requirements that go beyond the HCP, Forest Practices Rules, and SEPA to address problem areas.

*3.4.7 Research* The preferred policy should include a statement that DNR-developed science will be peer-reviewed by an independent science panel prior to implementation or publication. Science developed by an organization that has a financial stake in the results needs to be objectively peer reviewed to be credible.

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Thank you for considering our comments. If you have any questions, please contact Becky Kelley at 206-622-8103 ext 205 or Eric Harlow at 206-223-4088 ext. 5.

Sincerely,

/s Becky Kelley Campaign Director Washington Environmental Council /s D. Eric Harlow Staff Scientist Washington Forest Law Center

### **Citations**

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**Document Received at Mount Vernon Public Hearing from Commenter 32:  
Paul Kriegel**

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Vernon

May 5, 2005

Board of Natural Resources  
State of Washington

Board Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to have input in to the policy for sustainable forests.

I appreciate the fact that the Board and DNR recognize the trusts mandate and the fact that this mandate sets the stage for all of the management options that have been considered. Washington State set an example for the rest of the nation to follow when it kept its trust lands and managed them for the benefit of all rather than selling them off.

One side benefit of the trust lands, is the impact those lands and the timber sale program have on the rural economy of our State. We should never forget to include these benefits in our calculations and conversations regarding the goods and services provided by trust lands. Too many of the trust land critics fail to acknowledge these benefits and their impacts on the rural economy of Washington State. The focus must be on all the revenue's derived from these lands, not just the revenue to the beneficiaries.

This document does a good job of covering all the environmental concerns surrounding forest land management. It is important however that we recognize the impacts these environmental policies have on the final financial outcome. Continued overlay of environmental policies on the HCP will have severe impacts on the trust lands ability to maintain reasonable financial outcomes and stay sustainable. The reason for the HCP was to gain federal security under ESA and to protect those species deemed threatened. It's time to let the HCP and the forest & fish rules work. Rather than continuing to make new changes, let's monitor the rules we now have to see how effective they are.

Regarding the increasing demand for out door recreation, let's not lose sight of the primary responsibility of the DNR. The trust mandate requires the DNR to manage first for the trusts, and all other interests are secondary to the trusts, and should not interfere with the trusts!

Thank You,



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# Appendix I.

## Policy Crosswalk

<b>POLICY CROSSWALK</b>		
<b>2006 POLICY FOR SUSTAINABLE FORESTS</b>	<b>2005 DRAFT EIS ON THE POLICY FOR SUSTAINABLE FORESTS</b>	<b>1992 FOREST RESOURCE PLAN</b>
Financial Diversification	Financial Diversification	Special Forest Products (No. 8)
Financial Assumptions	Financial Assumptions	Review of Financial Assumptions (No. 12)
Definition of Sustainability for the Sustainable Harvest Calculation	Not applicable	Sustainable, Even-Flow Harvest (No. 4) Harvest Levels Based on Volume (No. 5) Western Washington Ownership Groups (No. 6)
Recalculation of the Sustainable Harvest Level	Not applicable	Not applicable
Harvest Deferral Designations	Land Classifications	Land Classifications (No. 3)
Forest Health	Forest Health	Forest Health (No. 9)
Catastrophic Loss Prevention	Wildfire and Catastrophic Loss Prevention	Fire Protection (No. 10)
Old-Growth Stands in Western Washington	Older Forests and Old Growth	Old Growth Research Areas (No. 14)
Wildlife Habitat	Wildlife Habitat	Wildlife Habitat (No. 22) Endangered Species (No. 23)
Watershed Systems	Watershed Systems	Watershed Analysis (No. 19)
Riparian Conservation	Riparian Management Zones Wetlands	Riparian Management Zones (No. 20) Wetlands (No. 21)
Genetic Resource	Genetic Resource	The Genetic Resource (No. 15)
Special Ecological Features	Special Ecological Features	Special Ecological Features (No. 13)
Public Access and Recreation	Public Access and Recreation	Providing Public Access (No. 25) Recreation on State Forest Lands (No. 29)
Cultural Resources	Cultural Resources	Identifying Historic Sites (No. 24)
Visual Impacts	Visual Management	Green-up of Harvest Units (No. 32)
Local Economic Vitality	Local Economic Vitality	Not applicable

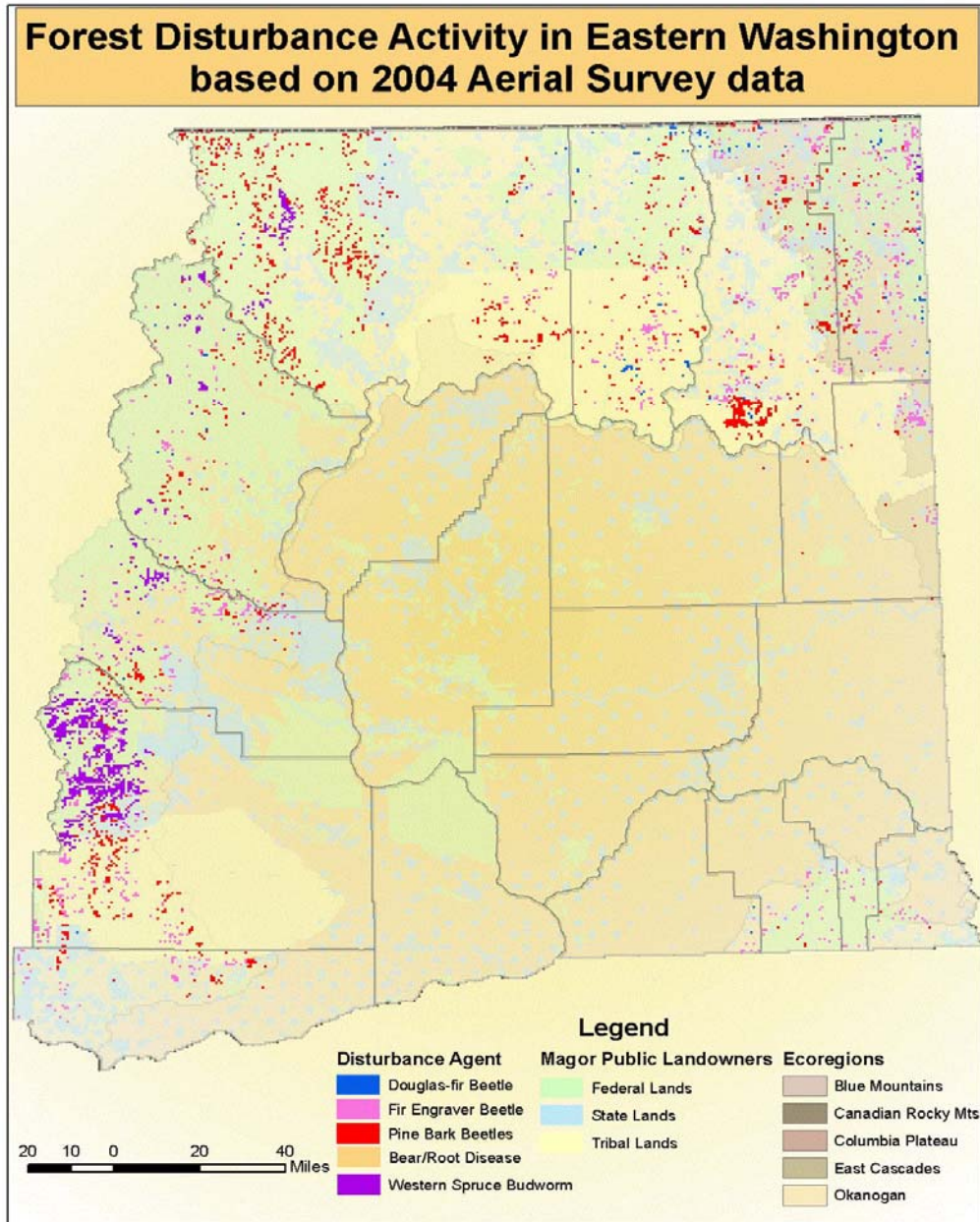
## POLICY CROSSWALK (continued)

2006 POLICY FOR SUSTAINABLE FORESTS	2005 DRAFT EIS ON THE POLICY FOR SUSTAINABLE FORESTS	1992 FOREST RESOURCE PLAN
Forest Land Planning	Forest Land Planning	Landscape Planning (No. 16)
General Silvicultural Strategy	General Silvicultural Strategy	Managing On-Base Lands (No. 11)
		Silviculture Activities (No. 30)
		Harvest and Reforestation Methods (No. 31)
		Control of Competing Vegetation (No. 33)
		Fertilizing, Thinning and Pruning (No. 34)
Forest Roads	Roads	Developing and Maintaining Roads (No. 28)
Research	Research	Research (No. 40)
External Relationships	External Relationships	Soliciting Information (No. 17)
		Public Involvement (No. 35)
Implementation, Reporting and Modification of the Policy for Sustainable Forests	Implementation, Reporting and Modification	Implementing the Plan (No. 36)
		Monitoring the Plan (No. 37)
		Modifying the Plan (No. 38)
		Consistency with Other Plans (No. 39)

## 1992 SUBJECT AREAS NOT BEING ADDRESSED IN 2006 POLICY FOR SUSTAINABLE FORESTS

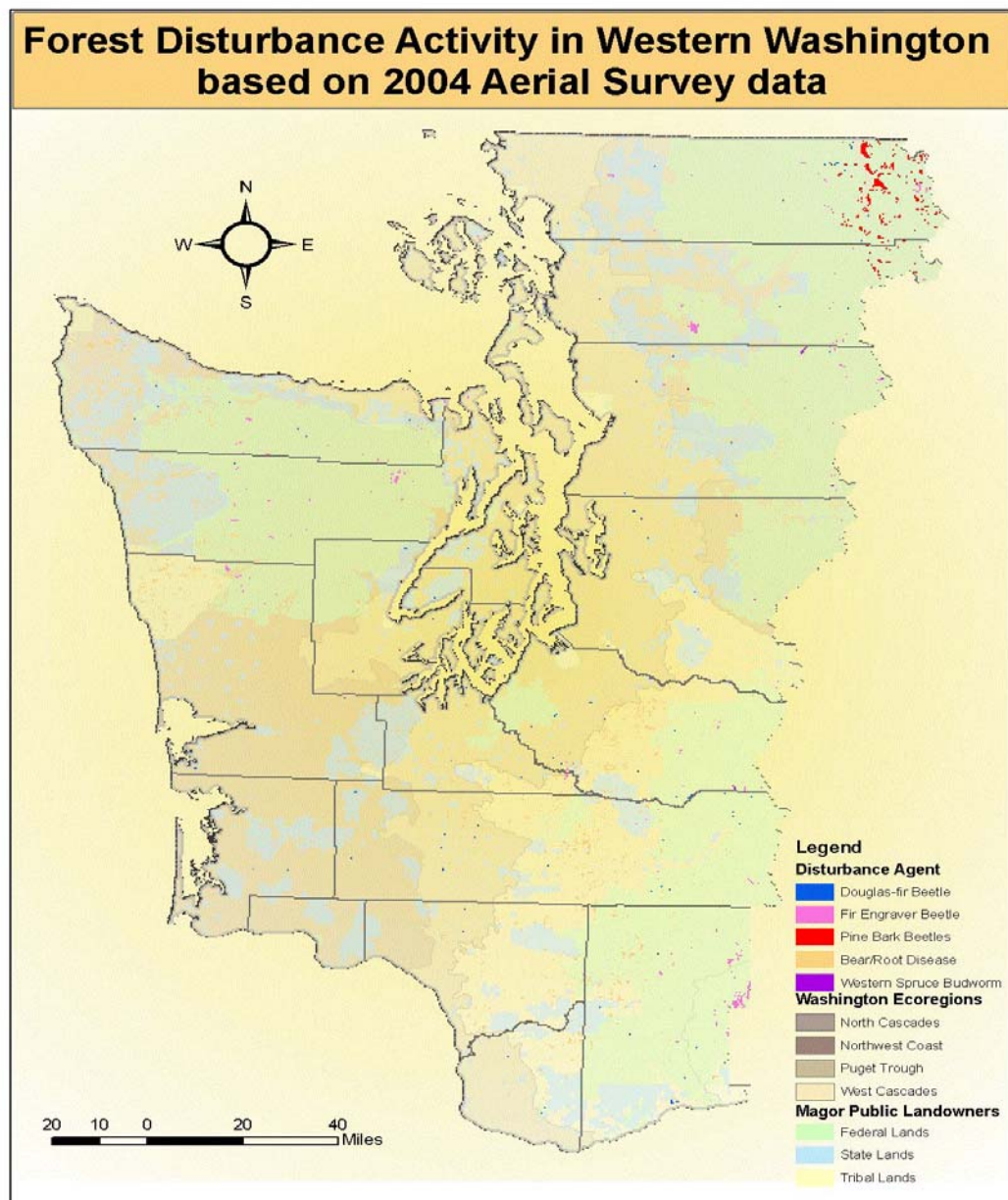
2006 POLICY FOR SUSTAINABLE FORESTS	1992 FOREST RESOURCE PLAN	REASON
Forest Land Transactions	Federal Grant Land Base (No. 1)	Policies related to forest land transactions are already provided through state law and the <i>Asset Stewardship Plan</i> .
	Forest Board Land Base (No. 2)	
Not applicable	Eastern Washington Ownership Groups (No. 7)	Will be addressed during calculation of Eastern Washington sustainable harvest.
SEPA Review	SEPA Review (No. 18)	No policy is necessary to restate that the department must comply with state law.
Acquiring Rights of Way	Granting Public Rights of Way (No. 26)	Policies related to granting and acquiring rights of way are already addressed in other department policies, making policies in the Policy for Sustainable Forests redundant.
Granting Rights of Way	Acquiring Rights of Way (No. 27)	

# Map 1. Eastern Washington Forest Health



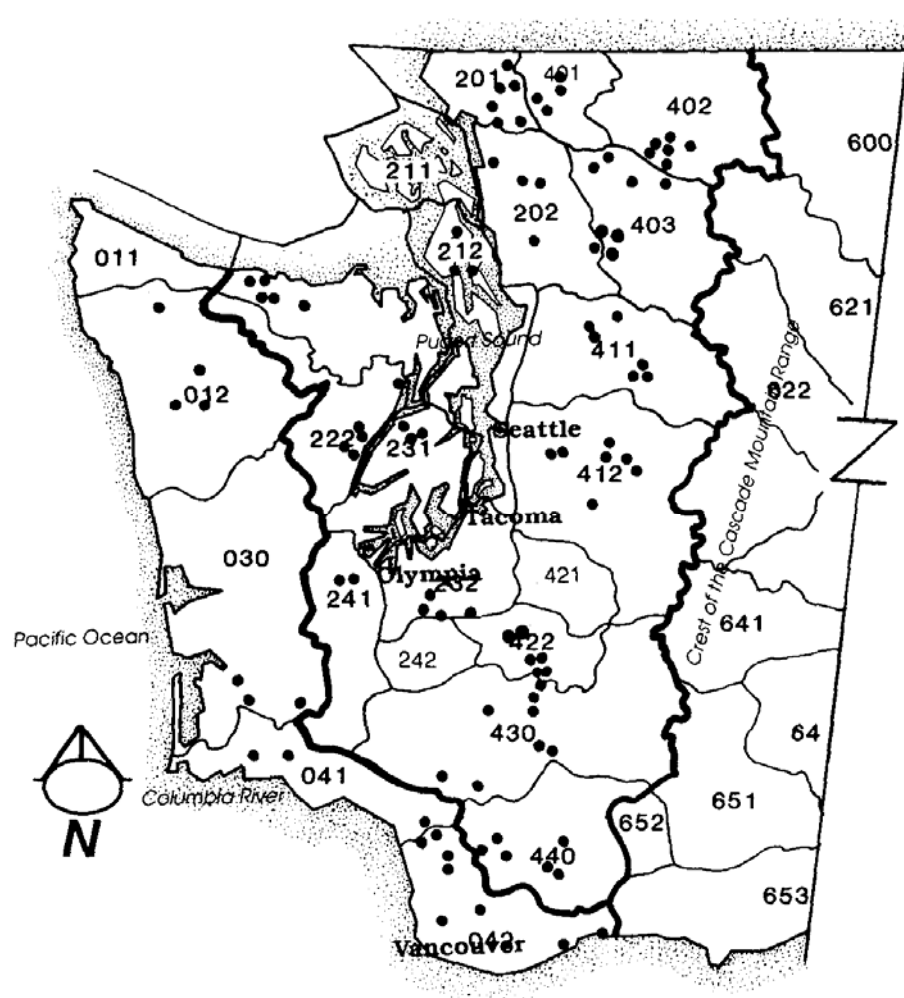


## Map 2. Western Washington Forest Health





## Map 3. Location of Gene Pool Reserves Designated by Washington DNR



- Gene Pool Reserves designated by DNR

