
Minutes
Board of Natural Resources Meeting
October 6, 2020
Webinar, Olympia, Washington

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

The Honorable Hilary Franz, Washington State Commissioner of Public Lands

The Honorable Bill Peach, Commissioner, Clallam County

Jim Cahill, Designee for the Honorable Jay Inslee, Washington State Governor

Dan Brown, Director, School of Environmental and Forest Sciences, University of Washington

André-Denis Wright, Dean, College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences,
Washington State University

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

The Honorable Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction

1 **CALL TO ORDER**

2 Chair Franz called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM.

3

4 All Board members introduced themselves. A meeting quorum was attained.

5

6 **WEBINAR FORMAT BRIEFING**

7 Ms. Tami Kellogg provided an overview on how to participate in a Webinar meeting.

8

9 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

10 Chair Franz called for approval of the minutes for the September 1, 2020 Regular Board of
11 Natural Resources meeting.

12

13 MOTION: Dean Wright moved to approve the minutes.

14

15 SECOND: Director Brown seconded the motion.

16

17 ACTION: The motion carried unanimously.

18

19 **WILDLAND FIRES UPDATE**

20 Chair Franz provided an update on Labor Day wildfires across the state. She shared the
21 conditions during Labor Day noting that the wildfires were five times the amount of total acres
22 burned in 2019 for the entire year and double the amount of acres burned in 2015 when over one
23 million acres burned during the worst wildfire season on record. She shared that 53 fires started
24 on Labor Day with 13 of those fires expanding significantly, with another 26 fires added the next

1 day. Resources and capacity were limited by local, state, and federal emergency responders
2 because of support to neighboring states experiencing severe fire situations. A small child died as
3 the family tried to outrun a fire in Cold Springs in the northeast area of the state. An entire town
4 was completely destroyed. Catastrophic fires continued to burn across the landscape not only in
5 central Washington but across the entire state. The combination of factors from hurricane force
6 winds, dry conditions, and populated areas near forested areas increased the difficulty in fighting
7 the fires and utilizing air resources, which are important in an initial attack to control fires.

8
9 Chair Franz also spoke about the efforts to improve forest health along with securing resources
10 required to fight fires at the state and local level, as well as restore the health of the forests in
11 central, eastern, and western Washington on state, federal, tribal, and private lands. She invited
12 an update from Angus Brodie, Deputy Supervisor, State Uplands, on actions following the Labor
13 Day fires.

14
15 Mr. Brodie shared an aerial map of the state and reviewed wildfire statistics since mid-
16 September:

- 17
- 18 • Nearly 823,000 acres burned as part of 42 large fires (100 acres or more).
- 19 • Fires under DNR's jurisdiction numbered 1,000 consuming approximately 60,000 acres
- 20 • The majority of the fires consumed 52,000 acres of state land comprised of grassland,
21 agriculture, or other lands. Approximately 3,500 acres of forests burned.
- 22 • The Hollow fire impacted an active timber sale, Variety. The timber sale was purchased
23 by Hampton and was being actively logged. The fire consumed several of the units.

24 Chair Franz commented on the significance of the winds with many fire chiefs attesting to never
25 experiencing the velocity of winds experienced during the September fires. The fire speed, fuel
26 load, and limited resources were all contributing factors, as well as the continued under-
27 investment of local and state firefighting resources and forest and landscape management
28 practices. Firefighters were fighting fires with skeleton crews because federal incident
29 management teams responded to fires in California and Oregon. Under investment of local fire
30 districts in communities on the frontline each year is holding the state back from being able to
31 protect communities and landscapes. The Cold Springs and Pearl Hill fires burned over 400,000
32 acres in 72 hours with fires moving 60 miles in five hours at a speed over 70 mph because of
33 wind. Once winds dissipated, air resources were further hampered by smoke. Although resources
34 were limited, DNR was able to secure additional resources from Montana and British Columbia.
35 The main challenges were hurricane-force winds, grounded air resources, and limited local and
36 state resources.

37
38 Chair Franz invited questions and comments from the Board.

39
40 Commissioner Peach cited the lack of aircraft support because of the wind and asked about any
41 plans to help resolve that type of situation to improve the ability to attack fires. Chair Franz
42 advised air resources are leveraged when smoke first appears, a practice instituted in 2017
43 following the 2014-2016 fires. This change is why 90% of all fires is less than 10 acres and why
44 prior to Labor Day, DNR was able to deploy air resources to fight more fires. Labor Day winds
45 prevented air resources from fighting fires limiting response to resources on the ground.

1 Mr. Cahill inquired about the cause of so many of the fires and steps necessary to prevent future
2 fires. Chair Franz replied that 90% of all fires are human-caused by burning debris piles,
3 campfires, downed utility poles, or other human actions. Investigations are ongoing for the
4 September fires with strong evidence supporting humans causing fires during the Labor Day
5 period either intentionally or unintentionally. Chair Franz spoke about the efforts and focus of
6 DNR to educate the public and prevent fires by is focusing on three areas of preventing fires and
7 helping all individuals in the state understand what they can do to prevent fires through
8 educational outreach and working with insurance companies as many of the fires originated on
9 private property; and the final piece is community resilience. She shared that an example is the
10 Town of Malden where a majority of homes were destroyed. Houses built closely were destroyed
11 except for one house, which was completely untouched. It is important to create defensible space
12 around homes and the community. Each homeowner has the ability to take steps to protect their
13 homes and it is DNR's responsibility to ensure all homeowners have the tools and resources.
14 DNR is promoting a community resiliency package as part of the department's legislative
15 priorities.
16

17 **PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR GENERAL ITEMS OF INTEREST**

18 **Lisa Remlinger, Chief Policy Officer, Washington Environmental Council**, reported one of
19 her last efforts prior to her new role, was participation on the Solutions Table. She stated that the
20 efforts of the Solution Table did not succeed. She is optimistic that new opportunities might be
21 available for the state, DNR, and the Board to generate better outcomes, noting that problems
22 have not been solved as rural communities are still suffering, species are continuing to decline,
23 and climate change continues to alter the landscape. The community continues to offer ideas and
24 wants to work together and is hopeful the Board and Chair Franz feel likewise. She looks
25 forward to the next steps.
26

27 **Joe Beavers, Gold Bar**, commented that two individuals at the last Board meeting attempting to
28 impede DNR's harvesting of timber referred to DNR personnel as hypocrites and liars. He was
29 appalled by the statements. He has interacted with multiple DNR employees since 2008. Besides
30 being highly confident, they without exception have been poised, professional, and polite.
31 Citizens in Washington are blessed to have such a fine group of people working for them. Those
32 statements at the last meeting reflect only upon the individuals making the statements.
33

34 **Jim Stoffer, Director, Sequim School Board**, representing the WSSDA Trust Lands Advisory
35 Committee, reported on the recent adoption of legislative priorities that align with DNR, such as
36 broadband, forest revenue apportionments, comprehensive school safety (seismic studies), and
37 school construction revenue. The committee looks forward to ongoing engagement with DNR
38 staff.
39

40 **Beverly Parsons** deferred her time to Carol Price.
41

42 **Carol Price, resident of Kitsap County**, said United Nations scientists have announced the
43 necessity of establishing climate resiliency within the next 10 years. She spoke about the
44 concerns that citizens have expressed to the Board. She stated that a recent sale in Mason County
45 involved 100-year old habitat containing giant cedars and that Ridgetop acreage in Hooverdale is
46 used by the community for educational purposes. Most recently, the community became aware
47 of the proposed cut in the Rose Point area in north Kitsap County. She shared her concerns with

1 the harvest and that the community has been left out of the process. She then suggested that a
2 moratorium on harvests would be one of the most significant actions DNR could take to
3 positively impact the climate crisis. She stated that it is time to change the Forest Practices Act
4 and other laws governing timber harvests in the state. She urged DNR to stop all sales of trees on
5 public lands.
6

7 **Dr. Patricia Jones, Executive Director, Olympic Forest Coalition**, said she is accompanied by
8 colleagues representing conservation on the Solutions Table. The organizations ask that the
9 Commissioner, Board, and the Legislature bring together a multi-stakeholder task force to find a
10 path forward for the murrelet within the communities. She noted that sales in the next several
11 months will directly impact murrelets and will be the first of stands in the alternatives supported
12 by federal and state agencies as the more ecological approach that should produce better murrelet
13 populations and healthier forests. The sales were part of the solution generated by the Table with
14 efforts unilaterally blocked in the eleventh hour by timber interests opposed to the creative and
15 promising solutions that found support at the Table. She shared that there are overwhelming
16 examples of the businesses' usual paradigm no longer being a workable path forward for
17 Washington State. Leadership is needed from elected officials to step up to the moment and get
18 to the work of saving communities and forests.
19

20 **Paula Swedeen, Policy Director, Conservation Northwest**, reported that she also participated
21 on the Solutions Table and the organization enthusiastically embraced the goals identified by
22 Chair Franz as embodied in the invitation letter. She cited how the letter inspired her to
23 participate with others to seek mutual goals and craft ideas with the intent to solve beneficiary
24 revenue issues and contribute to local economies. She shared examples of options considered by
25 the Solutions Table. While progress occurred in building relationships, increasing mutual
26 understanding, and developing joint proposals, the group hit a wall recently with trust among
27 some parties breaking down. She shared her hope that the effort continues as it is even more
28 imperative for all parties to work towards mutually beneficial solutions to protect ecosystems
29 and strengthen economic and social resilience of the state. The organization requests recognition
30 of the positive outcomes of the Solutions Table efforts.
31

32 **Miranda Malice** voiced support for those skeptical about continuing the old paradigm under
33 current conditions of climate change and forest fires. It appears to be time for a paradigm shift to
34 protect forests with old growth characteristics that are protective of forest fires and habitat. Many
35 people across the state and in her community are very supportive of a paradigm shift as there
36 must be other ways to fund schools. Halting logging would be the state's contribution to carbon
37 sequestration, habitat protection, and protecting workers.
38

39 **PUBLIC COMMENT FOR TIMBER SALE ACTION ITEMS**

40 There were no public comments.
41

42 **TIMBER SALES (Action Item)**

43 **Auction Results for September 2020, FY 2021 Quarterly Market Update, & Proposed** 44 **Timber Sales for November 2020**

45 Koshare Eagle, Assistant Division Manager, Product Sales & Leasing Division
46

1 The results of the September 2020 auctions were presented to the Board by Ms. Eagle. The
2 Department offered 8 sales totaling 42.4 mmbf. All sales sold totaling \$19.1 million for an
3 average of \$450 per mbf with 3.3 bidders per sale on average. Ms. Eagle noted the number of
4 bidders was well over the typical average the Agency sees at auctions.
5

6 Ms. Eagle then provided a fiscal year 2021 update through the first quarter. The Department
7 originally planned to offer 90 mmbf in the first quarter, but offered and sold 87 mmbf. The
8 difference being one sale was removed and a smaller sale added.
9

10 Ms. Eagle then provided an update to remaining FY 2019 and 2020 timber sales. Ms. Eagle
11 noted 24 mmbf of unsold fiscal year 2020 volume was reoffered and sold in the first quarter.
12 This results leaves only 12 mmbf and 14 mmbf of remaining unsold fiscal year 2019 and 2020
13 volume, respectively.
14

15 Ms. Eagle then discussed the current timber market, noting prices continue to climb with
16 increased home starts and home improvement projects. Ms. Eagle added that added pressure on
17 supply from wildfires should keep prices high for the near term.
18

19 Ms. Eagle then presented 12 sales proposed for future auction to the Board.
20

21 Ms. Eagle asked for questions. There were none.
22

23 Ms. Eagle asked for approval of the proposed sales as presented.
24

25 MOTION: Dean Wright moved to approve the proposed sales as presented.
26

27 SECOND: Director Brown seconded the motion.
28

29 ACTION: The motion carried unanimously.
30

31 **PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR LAND TRANSACTION ACTION ITEMS**

32 There were no public comments.
33

34 **LAND TRANSACTIONS (Action Items)**

35 Julie Armbruster, Project Manager, Transaction Section
36

37 Ms. Armbruster reported DNR proposes transferring 109 acres of Common School trust sub-
38 surface mineral rights to the US Forest Service. The rights are located in Skamania County, in
39 the Cape Horn area within the Columbia Gorge National Scenic Area. The Forest Service has
40 been acquiring property in the area to prevent development within the Columbia Gorge National
41 Scenic Areas, and requested transfer of the rights to prevent mineral development by a third
42 party.
43

44 A DNR geology review determined that no mineral potential exists, which is a requirement for
45 allowing relinquishment of mineral rights to the federal government under RCW 79.11.220.
46 Board approval is necessary prior to transferring the rights to the federal government.
47

1 Ms. Armbruster recommends approval of Resolution 1569.

2

3 MOTION: Director Brown moved to approve Resolution 1569 as presented.

4

5 SECOND: Mr. Cahill seconded the motion.

6

7 ACTION: The motion carried unanimously.

8

9 **PUBLIC COMMENT FOR CHAIR REPORT**

10 **Jim Freeburg, North Cascades Conservation Council**, expressed the North Cascades
11 Conservation Council's disappointment in the lack of funding for trust land transfer in DNR's
12 legislative agenda although there are efforts to continue the program. It is important to recognize
13 that there is a place for the program to continue as there are many important lands that need to be
14 protected in the north Cascades at lower elevations that could be preserved through the Trust
15 Land Transfer Program. The program supports efforts on climate change by retaining trees to
16 sequester carbon while enabling the state to receive non-tax revenue for schools and other public
17 services.

18

19 **Matt Comisky, American Forest Resource Council**, appreciated DNR's efforts to share
20 information on the legislative agenda. He continues to review the materials as the information is
21 posted to the Office of Financial Management's (OFM) website. The Council has provided some
22 feedback on the timber sale improvement aspect and commercial real estate. The Council is
23 appreciative of the efforts the department is taking for climate resiliency. One issue surrounds
24 seed sources. Moving trees from one seed zone to another seed zone can have significant
25 unintended consequences. The wildfires over Labor Day spread because of significant fuel
26 loadings on federal forests due to lack of management, particularly in Oregon, as well as in
27 Washington with the Big Hollow fire. One concern with the resiliency plan is the lack of
28 inclusion of the forest products sector from DNR's customer base. Because of the storage of
29 carbon in manufactured wood products, it would be important to include that sector for input and
30 engagement.

31

32 **Rick McGuire, President, Alpine Lakes Protection Society**, conveyed support for the Trust
33 Land Transfer Program as it has been one of the most successful conservation programs in the
34 state by preserving many wonderful places located in low elevations, close to urban areas, and
35 accessible. Many places can be added to the system and the Society supports DNR's continued
36 interest in the program. The DNR conservation program is a great system. He urged DNR to
37 continue the growth of the conservation areas program and support Trust Land Transfer
38 appropriations in the future.

39

40 **Dr. Beverly Parsons** spoke to the overall climate resiliency strategy and the approach presented
41 in the Climate Resilience Report. The approach is inadequate to address the climate situation
42 facing the state because it is too limited in scope and lacks bold, collaborative approaches to
43 address the climate crisis. As referenced earlier, a paradigm shift is necessary. As a starting
44 point, strong proactive action on the part of DNR to stop deforestation is required. The action
45 requires working with other agencies to rethink how school and county funding could be
46 changed to be less reliant on timber sales and how to adjust jobs in forestry. She asked for the
47 development of strategies to cease all clearcutting of state forest lands for 10 years in a way that

1 does not result in an overall reduction of jobs from forestry in the state. She asked DNR to
2 engage multiple state and county agencies along with companies, citizens, tribes, and
3 foundations to creatively make it possible.

4 **CHAIR REPORT**

5 **Climate Resilience Strategy**

6 Angus Brodie, Deputy Supervisor, Uplands introduced the presenters and described the updates
7 on policy level projects the Board will be engaged with over the next year.

8
9
10 Dan Stonington, Executive Policy Advisor, reported the briefing on Climate Resilience Strategy
11 includes presentations from Calvin Ohlson-Kiehn and Jeff Debell on recurrent climate resilience
12 and an overview of DNR's recently released Climate Resilience Plan.

13
14 Mr. Stonington reported DNR oversees forest land management, agriculture and grazing land,
15 natural areas, wildfire suppression, aquatic land management, and forest health, all of which are
16 affected by climate change and climate impacts. In February 2020, DNR released a Climate
17 Resilience Plan. The purpose of the plan is to advance climate resilience within DNR at a
18 program-specific level and at an agency-wide level. The plan broadly examines natural resource
19 sectors within DNR's areas of responsibility and ways to support climate resilience among
20 DNR's partners of tribes, cities, counties, stakeholders, and state agencies.

21
22 Mr. Stonington reviewed the definition of climate resilience as being prepared for and adapting
23 to current and future climate-related changes. Resilience means increasing the health and
24 integrity of the natural systems to enhance their ability to absorb and recover from disturbances.
25 As an institution, resilience means planning for and being prepared for changes that are coming
26 to maintain functions, minimize harm, respond effectively when impacts occur, and recover
27 quickly. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is critical to prevent further escalation of climate
28 impacts.

29
30 The planning process began in 2014 with a climate risk assessment followed by an updated
31 agency-wide strategic plan released in 2018 establishing strategic priorities and a goal centered
32 on resilience. In 2018/2019, efforts built on the climate risk assessment by developing and
33 assessing responses. DNR sponsored workshops and developed a climate resilience advisory
34 council. During the summer in 2019, development on the plan began with outreach to experts
35 and others around the state, as well as with climate leads for DNR programs linking together
36 work from across the programs within DNR.

37
38 Development of the plan was based on the climate risk assessment focusing on the question of
39 what are the high priority climate-related risks to DNR's mission, responsibilities, and
40 operations. Program goals were identified and assessed as to how climate change might affect
41 those goals and specific risks to the mission and operations. Risk is typically a function of two
42 items – what is the likelihood that something bad might happen and the consequence if
43 something does happen. The exercise helps to identify risks in high, medium, and low categories.
44 The plan focuses on high risks.

45
46 Phase 2 efforts developed responses on how to continue to fulfill the mission and
47 responsibilities, as well as taking advantage of opportunities under changing climate conditions.

1
2 Mr. Stonington described how response options were identified. One example involved forest
3 roads and culverts and the seasonal projected changes in precipitation. Climate risks were
4 identified for potential conditions that might trigger landslides, debris flows, or potential forest
5 road damage. Existing tools are available to DNR to plan for variability when forest roads and
6 culverts are designed. For instance, the size of culverts can be assessed for future flows rather
7 than current flows or by prioritizing high risk drainage structures or designing roads to
8 accommodate stronger storms and longer dry periods. Sometimes the scale of the problem might
9 exceed the agency's ability to address the issue requiring different approaches or more authority.
10 The 2015 wildfire season is an example of climate risks for wildfires that increase area burned by
11 uncharacteristic fire. The 2015 wildfire season challenged the militia model within DNR with
12 staff leaving regular jobs to assist with firefighting with some employees out for more than a
13 month challenging both the health and safety of employees and existing workload not completed
14 within DNR. The agency considered new ways to engage to address higher variability and more
15 wildfires. Other situations might occur where uncertainty around climate change might require
16 more study. The examples are various ways for approaching responses either by adjusting
17 existing methods, considering new options, or learning more when necessary.

18
19 Mr. Stonington described the Climate Resilience Plan focus on tribal nations, equity and
20 environmental justice, climate resilience, and reversing greenhouse gas trends. He shared some
21 examples of program-based responses in the plan, as well as agency-level responses, and cited
22 examples of the framework adapted for authority, knowledge, capacity, and motivation for
23 agency-level responses. Additionally, a statewide systemic approach may be required. The plan
24 includes recommendations at the statewide level. One example is establishing an interagency
25 climate resilience leadership structure to address risks, address climate responses, support
26 interagency coordination, collaboration, and funding. A second is providing state endorsed
27 climate impacts projections to support risk assessments, planning, and regulatory systems. A
28 third is providing mechanisms for funding and financing resilience to ensure resources to address
29 the work. A fourth is community-level resilience planning as climate impacts occur at the local
30 level. Finally, education and outreach on resilience needs and opportunities to ensure consistency
31 in messaging and approaches in communicating about climate impacts and responses.

32
33 Near-term implementation steps include initiating responses that can be implemented within
34 DNR's existing authorities and resources, seeking legislative support when necessary, and
35 seeking support for statewide systems-level climate resilience responses. Because of COVID-19
36 and budget repercussions, the plan has refocused on the following:

- 37
- 38 • Initiating actions that can be implemented with existing resources and authorities at the
 - 39 program-specific level and at the agency-wide level
 - 40 • Developing legislative requests for the 2021 legislative session related to resilience
 - 41 • Identifying shovel-ready projects for Stimulus funding
 - 42 • Ensure DNR priorities are included in the state's Climate Resiliency Account

43 Stakeholder outreach included interviews with 75 individuals for expert input representing
44 academia and other state agencies. Several public workshops were conducted. Some business
45 participation was included in the outreach. Mr. Stonington offered to answer questions on the
46 outreach.

1
2 Chair Franz described examples of major climate change impacts in recent years causing the
3 increase in wildfires, floods, hotter and drier climate creating changes in grasslands, and changes
4 in the hydrology and increasing droughts. The goal of the plan is to understand how climate is
5 changing and where it is changing, and how it is changing on the lands and water DNR is
6 responsible for managing, as well as impacts to the communities that depend on lands and
7 waters. The plan specifically recognizes the changes occurring today and in the future.
8 Conversations have been initiated in some communities experiencing climate changes
9 recognizing that the investments they need and their resiliency are the same investments required
10 by DNR to ensure resilience of lands and water managed by DNR, as well as for the
11 beneficiaries receiving value and the economy of activity. The plan sets a trajectory for where
12 the agency needs to focus, as well as the conversations and the work needed within the
13 communities.

14
15 Director Brown complimented staff for their leadership on the issue and suggested some
16 attention is warranted to the intersection between resilience and efforts to address climate change
17 through mitigation by prioritizing those actions that provide for both resilience and mitigation.
18 Addressing resilience of resources in communities is separate from the need to address climate
19 change. He acknowledged that staff addressed the issue as DNR has two structures of a carbon
20 sequestration working group and a climate resilience planning process. It is important those two
21 processes intersect and interweave as actions are considered for implementation.

22
23 Chair Franz thanked Professor for the comments. A number of things in the Climate Resilience
24 Plan address both carbon sequestration and reducing the agency's footprint through clean energy
25 or forest health to reduce wildfires. She acknowledged that both pieces will be intersected as the
26 work of the carbon sequestration advisory group is aligned.

27
28 Commissioner Peach appreciated the approach as it is factored on existing information and
29 fundamental forestry, such as genetics and seed source. That contrasts with other plans as other
30 plans often identify the final outcome and backdoor ways to execute the plan while often
31 discovering some steps or activities are not under the control of the agency or the agency does
32 not have the ability to influence. This approach is appealing because the plan identifies what is
33 known and can be controlled while leaving the door open for additional research.

34
35 Mr. Cahill conveyed appreciation for the work undertaken by DNR. As referenced, OFM is
36 working on a climate resiliency proviso that was included in the budget by the Legislature. The
37 work done by DNR is very helpful and is assisting in leading state efforts in examining
38 resiliency. He asked about implementation and accountability for parts of the plan and
39 identifying areas where progress is occurring or not occurring. Those actions are important to
40 track moving forward in future years as DNR submits budget and legislative requests. Any
41 update on tracking the status of implementation and progress would be appreciated.

42
43 Chair Franz commented that the goal is to move forward on a number of measurable operational
44 targets. The planning process, decision-making, changes in climate, and creating more resilient
45 land and water resources are all part of the plan. DNR is building on the project timeline for that
46 work. Some of the work does call for significant investments or includes other agencies. Staff

1 plans to develop a clearer project prioritization and timeline, as well as a clear statement of what
2 the investment, resources, and funding needs will be.

3
4 Mr. Brodie added that the next two presentations are on actions DNR is pursuing. Future
5 presentations will provide more details on implementation of the plan.

6
7 Calvin Ohlson-Kiehn, Assistant Division Manager for Forest Resources, said he is responsible
8 for the agency's silviculture and reforestation programs. He briefed the Board on how DNR
9 manages its forested trust lands to promote forest health and resiliency to climate change.
10 Another division in DNR is leading the 20-year plan designed to restore forest health in eastern
11 Washington. The team is collaborating closely with the division on state lands.

12
13 DNR's Climate Resiliency Plan lists multiple climate-related risks to DNR's forest sector
14 responsibilities such as increased wildfire potential, increased damage from insects and
15 pathogens, and potential seed and reforestation challenges.

16
17 Mr. Ohlson-Kiehn reviewed some of the strategies to address those impacts with a focus on
18 eastside forests. The plan contains five priority responses for state trust lands. Three priority
19 responses to address forest health issues in eastern Washington forests have reinforced some
20 elements of activities on DNR trust lands for the last 20 years. A critical element not included in
21 the plan is important as it speaks to how DNR maintains stands at lower density to reduce tree
22 moisture stress inherent in the management of forests in eastern Washington. In 2017, the agency
23 completed its 20-year plan to restore forest health in eastern Washington. The plan addresses all
24 federal, state, tribe, and private landowners. To complement the plan, staff completed a state
25 lands strategy in early 2018. Several components of the strategy include managing for trust
26 benefit, managing stands to reduce risk of disturbance and loss, and investing appropriately
27 based on site productivity.

28
29 Mr. Ohlson-Kiehn provided information on the variability of eastern Washington forests, which
30 is based on a variety of factors of temperature, precipitation, and water availability in the soil.
31 DNR created six eco-types for grouping eastern Washington forests. Different forest types
32 require different management strategies. DNR promotes more drought, disease, and fire resilient
33 species and maintains stands at lower density to reduce stress.

34
35 In 2017, the Legislature directed DNR State Lands to conduct a prioritization of areas to conduct
36 forest health treatments. The legislative intent was to reduce wildfire hazards and losses, reduce
37 insects and disease, and improve health and resilience at the landscape scale. The first
38 prioritization was completed in 2018 and is based on the value of timber and other commercial
39 forest products, risks to infrastructure, recreation and tourism, and ecosystem services. DNR is
40 nearing completion of the next legislative report for submittal in November.

41
42 DNR has treated 250,000 acres of state lands in the last 10 years. In some cases, multiple
43 activities have been completed within the same area. Staff are collaborating with the Forest
44 Health and Resiliency Division on ways to more accurately track and report the footprint of
45 treatments. Staff have been asked to consider ways to accelerate the work given the wildfires last
46 month.

1 DNR has received over \$1 million in grants over the last three years to support work on studying
2 forests and response to climate impacts. Since 2015, DNR has studied post-wildfire natural
3 regeneration in eastern Washington. The study revealed active regeneration is occurring and the
4 need for the active reforestation is less than previously considered. Additionally, DNR is
5 studying efforts to enhance regeneration in places with no seed sources following extreme fires
6 and exploring climate change, wildfire, and vegetation research. DNR is publishing in several
7 peer-review journals.

8
9 Mr. Cahill noted that distribution is equal between high, medium, and low priority landscapes.
10 He asked why DNR is not focusing more on high priority landscapes to improve forest health in
11 areas of greatest risk. Chair Franz affirmed DNR focuses on high priority landscapes. The Forest
12 Health Plan was completed at the end of 2017. Mapping of high priority areas began in early
13 2018. DNR now has two years of data. DNR was on target to complete 200,000 acres of
14 assessment on federal, state, tribal, and private lands by the end of 2020. DNR actually
15 completed assessment on two million acres. Development of treatments is the next step for those
16 landscapes. Thirty-three priority areas have been identified for forest health planning.

17
18 Mr. Ohlson-Kiehn added that DNR continues to actively manage all trust lands to the extent
19 possible. Low priority landscapes also have high priority parcels and stands that may be at high
20 risk. DNR is striving to accelerate work in the high and medium landscapes to the extent
21 possible.

22
23 Chair Franz reviewed efforts by DNR to control the Big Hollow fire that began on federal land
24 that was difficult to access both for firefighting and for forest health treatment.

25
26 Mr. Ohlson-Kiehn commented on efforts to replant DNR land affected by the Big Hollow fire.

27
28 Mr. Brodie introduced Jeff Debell.

29
30 Mr. Debell reported he serves as DNR's Forest Geneticist responsible for genetic testing and
31 seed production, which is one part of the overall reforestation program. Other elements are
32 collection of seeds in the woods and seedling production.

33
34 Mr. Debell described some specific program-level actions DNR is pursuing to address climate
35 change by:

- 36
- 37 • Developing climate-resilient seed management and reforestation approaches
- 38 • Matching seed source to environment (right plant, right place)
- 39 • Shifting from geographic variation to temporal variation
- 40 • Engaging with regional projects (seed source movement trial, Oregon Drought Study,
41 Seedlot Selection Tool, and DNA markers)
- 42 • Developing information to make decisions through cooperative testing and evaluation,
43 measuring adaptive traits (cold, drought tolerance), and operational seed source trials.
- 44 • Implementing structures to facilitate adaptation to the future: revamping the Land
45 Management database (LRM) structure, establishment of westside ponderosa pine
46 orchard and eastside seed production areas, including wood stiffness in selection criteria

1 for choosing seed orchard grants, and choosing trees with stable performance across
2 environments

3 **Overview of Legislative Priorities**

4 Chair Franz reported on conversations and discussions with legislators across the state focusing
5 on the impact COVID-19 is having on the department’s budget, the economy, and identification
6 of top priorities while acknowledging the importance of jobs and economic development to
7 create more stability recognizing limited resources and revenue. Virtual tours were conducted
8 with legislators. Those efforts served as the basis in the development of the list of legislative
9 priorities with one addition as a result of the Labor Day fires, which increased the profile and
10 importance of wildlife protection, resources, forest health and restoration of forest and landscape
11 health, and community resilience and investments in communities to protect them from
12 catastrophe wildfires.

13
14 Duane Emmons, Product Sales and Leasing Division Manager, presented DNR’s 2021
15 legislative priorities:

- 16 • Post-COVID Recovery
- 17 • Job Creation
- 18 • Community Resilience
- 19 • Agency Efficiencies
- 20 • Salmon Recovery and Climate Resilience
- 21 • Wildfire, Forest Health, & Forest Resilience

22
23 Mr. Emmons and Brock Milliern, Conservation, Recreation and Transactions Division Manager,
24 presented and described legislative priorities for the following DNR programs:

- 25 • 2021 Geological Survey - \$1.3 million
- 26 • Aquatics - \$8 million
- 27 • State Uplands - \$54 million
- 28 • Forest Practices – \$31 million

29
30 Dean Wright inquired about the extent of the rural broadband proposal. Mr. Emmons explained
31 that the request is specific to repair of existing sites or maintenance on existing sites, but it is not
32 specific to only broadband as many of the facilities also house other antenna systems (TV or
33 Cellular). The request is specific to complete maintenance on existing facilities, complete tower
34 studies to determine if a tower has exceeded capacity and replace those towers or increasing the
35 number of towers, as well as exploring new sites.

36
37 Mr. Cahill commented on the number of bills related to state land management. Dependent on
38 the issues during session and whether the Legislature meets or does not meet and the number of
39 bills that could be processed, he recommended staff consider consolidating many of the
40 proposals into one bill. Chair Franz acknowledged that the information was expanded for
41 presentation purposes and to provide better context for the Board. She agreed the 2021 session
42 will be challenging not only because of revenue shortages but because of COVID-19 and the
43 need to conduct the session differently.

1
2 Mr. Brodie advised that the legislative priorities are focused on post COVID-19 recovery, job
3 creation, community resilience, and agency efficiencies. Two of the main priorities of the agency
4 are climate resiliency and salmon recovery. The total state uplands funding request is \$54.6
5 million comprised of 18 uplands legislative proposals projected to create at least 400 jobs.
6 Several statute changes are a prelude to the trust land performance work in progress with
7 Deloitte and Earth Economics. Next steps include continued work with tribes, stakeholders, and
8 beneficiaries. DNR submitted the legislative package to OFM in September.

9
10 In response to public comments on trust land transfer, DNR considered including trust land
11 transfer as part of the legislative priorities but in evaluating other focuses and priorities, staff
12 believed it would be better not to include the request at this time given that the department has
13 struggled with previous budget requests to gain legislative support of the program. As an
14 alternative, DNR plans to convene a group of stakeholders to reexamine the program and
15 revitalize efforts over the next year. The Trust Land Transfer Program continues to be vital to
16 DNR.

17
18 Mr. Brodie invited questions from the Board.

19
20 Chair Franz remarked that one of the major difficulties was ascertaining the full ability of the
21 Legislature given so many pressing needs in the state. COVID-19 has only exacerbated the
22 situation. A number of programs and projects were contemplated for moving forward during the
23 2021 session; however, based on conversations with legislators around the state on other
24 priorities, DNR was required to make some difficult decisions. Those decisions, however, do not
25 mean the department would not pursue requests in future years. One of those programs was the
26 Trust Land Transfer Program and sharing investments in conservation, recreation, and land
27 opportunities. The release of the Forest Action Plan will reveal the crisis that is facing the
28 department in terms of forest health and the critical need for investment at the state level.
29 Recreation is an important piece but it has been difficult to attract investment and interest both at
30 the state level and the federal level, although the federal government passed the Land and
31 Conservation Act. The advent of COVID-19 has demonstrated the importance of landscapes for
32 people for a healthy and good quality of life. It will be important to leverage those opportunities
33 at this time.

34
35 **ADJOURNMNET**

36 With there being no further business, Chair Franz adjourned the meeting at 11:47 a.m.

37

Approved this 3 day of November, 2020

DocuSigned by:

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Hilary S. Franz, Washington State Commissioner of Public Lands

Approved via Webinar
Jim Cahill, Designee for Governor Jay Inslee

Approved via Webinar
Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction

Approved via Webinar
Bill Peach, Commissioner, Clallam County

Approved via Webinar
André-Denis Wright, Dean, College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences,
Washington State University

Approved via Webinar
Dan Brown, Director, School of Environmental and Forest Sciences,
University of Washington

Attest:


Tami Kellogg, Board Coordinator

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