

Carbon Sequestration Advisory Group Charter

The 2019 Washington State Legislature passed SBH 1109, which includes a budget proviso (see Appendix 1) directing the Washington State Department of Natural Resources to conduct specific activities related to carbon sequestration on natural and working lands. These activities include formation of a Natural and Working Lands Carbon Sequestration Advisory Group to assist DNR with a report back to the Legislature by December 1, 2020. This charter establishes the purpose and roles for this advisory group.

2019 Legislative Charge to DNR (SHB 1109)

In 2019, the Legislature passed a budget proviso as a part of the state operating budget that directed DNR to undertake the following activities:

- Conduct carbon inventories to build on existing efforts to understand carbon stocks, flux, trends, emissions, and sequestration across Washington’s natural and working lands, including harvested wood products, wildfire emissions, land management activities, and sawmill energy use and emissions; and
- Compile and provide access to information on existing opportunities for carbon compensation services and other incentive-based carbon reducing programs to assist owners of private and other nonstate owned or managed forestland interested in voluntarily engaging in carbon markets.

The Legislature specified that, where feasible, the department shall use available existing data and information to conduct this inventory and analysis. The Legislature also specified that for the purposes of this proviso, natural and working land types include forests, croplands, rangelands, wetlands, grasslands, aquatic lands, and urban green space.

The proviso requires that by December 1, 2020, the department must submit a report to the appropriate committees of the Legislature:

- Summarizing the results of the inventories required under this section;
- Assessing actions that may improve the efficiency and effectiveness of carbon inventory activities on natural and working lands, including carbon sequestration in harvested forest products; and
- Describing any barriers, including costs, to the use of voluntary, incentive-based carbon reducing or sequestering programs.

Finally, the proviso requires that the department must form a natural and working lands carbon sequestration advisory group to help guide the activities provided in this section. The advisory group must be composed of a balance of representatives reflecting the diverse interests and expertise involved on the subject of carbon sequestration on natural and working lands. In its report, the department may also include recommendations for additional work or legislation that may be advisable resulting from the advisory group.

The department notes that “the inventories required under this section” include harvested wood products, wildfire emissions, land management activities, and sawmill energy use and emissions, all of which are inventories with relevance to the forest sector. The department also notes that the funding received for this proviso of \$375,000 is sufficient to conduct these initial forest-related inventories, and to support facilitation for the work group. This level of funding is not sufficient to conduct new inventories outside this list specified by the legislature.

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The department further notes that the legislature defines natural and working land types to include not only forests but also croplands, rangelands, wetlands, grasslands, aquatic lands, and urban green space. In light of this broad definition, the department acknowledges its intent to include in its final report to the legislature a summary of information currently available on inventories for this full range of natural and working land types.

Purpose of Work Group

The purpose of the Natural and Working Lands Carbon Sequestration Advisory Group (Advisory Group) is to provide advice and guidance regarding DNR's efforts to report back to the Legislature in the following areas specified in the budget proviso:

1. What are the results of carbon inventories required through the proviso?
2. What could be done to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of carbon inventories?
3. What are the existing opportunities for carbon compensation services and other incentive-based carbon reducing programs for forest landowners and managers who voluntarily engage in carbon markets?
4. What barriers exist, including costs, to the use of these services or programs?
5. Are there any recommendations for additional work or legislation that may be advisable resulting from the advisory group?

Roles and Responsibilities of Advisory Group Members

- Advise DNR on development of deliverables required by the Legislature.
- Review and help interpret results of deliverables.
- Assist DNR in creating linkages with other stakeholders outside the advisory group.
- Identify additional resources, including analyses, datasets, and experts for DNR to draw on as needed.
- Actively participate in five Advisory Group meetings. Meetings will likely be held in February, April, June, September, and October 2020.
- Work collaboratively with other CSAG members to develop recommendations for specific topics related to carbon sequestration in small groups between Advisory Group meetings.

Anticipated 2020 Timeline

Meeting #1	February 12	Discuss inventories and incentives
Meeting #2	May 8	Discuss inventories and incentives
Meeting #3	July 9 (tentative)	Discuss inventories and incentives
Small groups meet between meetings #3 and #4 to develop recommendations		
Meeting #4	Sept. 18 (tentative)	Vet recommendations
Meeting #5	Oct. 12 (tentative)	Finalize recommendations

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Appendix 1: Text of Budget Proviso

From Final FY 2019-2021 Budget: ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1109, April 28, 2019

Sec. 308 (Pages 238-9)

(24)(a) \$250,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2020 and \$125,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2021 are provided solely for the following activities:

(i) Conducting carbon inventories to build on existing efforts to understand carbon stocks, flux, trends, emissions, and sequestration across Washington's natural and working lands, including harvested wood products, wildfire emissions, land management activities, and sawmill energy use and emissions. Where feasible, the department shall use available existing data and information to conduct this inventory and analysis. For the purposes of this section, natural and working land types include forests, croplands, rangelands, wetlands, grasslands, aquatic lands, and urban green space.

(ii) Compiling and providing access to information on existing opportunities for carbon compensation services and other incentive-based carbon reducing programs to assist owners of private and other nonstate owned or managed forestland interested in voluntarily engaging in carbon markets.

(b) By December 1, 2020, the department must submit a report to the appropriate committees of the legislature summarizing the results of the inventories required under this section, and assessing actions that may improve the efficiency and effectiveness of carbon inventory activities on natural and working lands, including carbon sequestration in harvested forest products. The department must also describe any barriers, including costs, to the use of voluntary, incentive-based carbon reducing or sequestering programs. The department may also include recommendations for additional work or legislation that may be advisable resulting from the advisory group created in this subsection as part of this report.

(c) The department must form a natural and working lands carbon sequestration advisory group to help guide the activities provided in this section. The advisory group must be composed of a balance of representatives reflecting the diverse interests and expertise involved on the subject of carbon sequestration on natural and working lands.