

**Small Forest Landowner Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**Notes**  
**July 7, 2015**

Present: Vic Musselman, Tami Miketa, Ken Miller, Heather Hansen, Terry Jackson, Bob Gunther, Tammy Perreault, Howard Wilson, Sheena Wilson, Mark Hicks, Phil Hess, Steve Bona-Meyer (by phone).

Presenters: Mark Walgreen (DOR Forest Tax Program), Jordon Dilba (DOR Current Use and Education Specialist), Mike Braaten (DOR Performance and Administrative Manager)

Review of 5/5/15 SFLAC notes approved as written.

**Tax Discussion/presentation Context** – Clarity on state process for approval/denial of forest tax status.

- DOR role – oversight, technical oversight, guidance, addressing systemic inconsistency, county process review. Would work with landowner if they're removed from program. Need specific reasons from county before going to DOR.
- DOR site has additional info, as well as the legislative site for laws/rules. County has info on acreage, etc.
- 14 counties have removed Open Space/Timber classification.
- RCW changed in 2014 to 5 acres or more to get into designated forest land designation.
- Acreage of house, lawn, etc. deducted from timber acreage.
- Open space designation approved by Commissioners and can change with them.
- Assessment budget based system – DOR sets rates for each class; budget based system whereby any increase/decrease in one assessment means someone else's assessment makes up the difference. Tax shifting.
- Open space land an option for people who own timber for enjoyment, county may negotiate public access with designation.

Next steps: The SFLAC agreed to make a list of concerns and share them with DOR and address them one at time. Need to meet with county assessors and educate them.

- DOR asked that small forest landowners provide more detail like parcel numbers, etc. to explore issues.
- How do we get message out that even if timber isn't harvested, it provides a public benefit. Also need to change laws.
- Designated timber status not good fit, but assessors not allowing more open space.
- Need to clarify taxation for land with power easements as well.

## **Proposed Westside Riparian Template**

- Proposed for adaptive management science review & policy review. Went to Forest Practices Board in Dec; went to TFW in Feb; policy formed subcommittee to deal with; \$30k allocated by adaptive management to do literature review.
- Disregards site index and RMZ as determinant of buffer. Relies on stream width.
- Dick Miller explains different prescriptions, people ask for clarity.
- Tami did review of all small alternate plans for past 9 years. Could be additional supporting data.
- Proposed template is simple, therefore used preferably to fixed width or alternate plan. Proposal buffer ranges are about half of what fixed width range is.
- Proposal could make other templates obsolete for smalls (hardwood, thinning, fixed width).
- Question of whether this is a rule change or template?
- Revised template for policy in October.
- Could turn into several templates for Board Manual Section 21.
- Should have studies designed through adaptive management and test, before template accepted.

Meeting Adjourned

Next meeting will be on September 9, 2015 12:00 to 4:00 at Ken Miller's Tree Farm.