

**JEFFERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
AGENDA REQUEST**

TO: Board of County Commissioners
Mark McCauley, County Administrator

FROM: Heidi Eisenhour, Commissioner
Sarah Ogden, DNR Trust Outreach Specialist
Malloree Weinheimer, Chickadee Forestry

DATE: September 18, 2023

SUBJECT: Next steps with DNR re: Jefferson County State Forests

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

As you may remember as reported at our May 22nd mtg, the 2023 Legislative Session ended with significant investment in state forests. A big part of that was an \$83M budget proviso (via the Natural Climate Solutions Account) that will permanently conserve 2,000 acres of older, carbon dense, structurally complex DNR managed state forests across Western Washington and buy younger replacement forests to provide revenue to rural communities like ours. We received a letter (attached) from the Commissioner of Public Lands, Hilary Franz, on June 7 and responded June 28th with a letter (also attached).

In support of this opportunity Jefferson County has been in conversation with DNR about some difficult to manage parcels in Jefferson County and would like to nominate them for reconveyance or TLT to Jefferson County where they would be managed for combined uses of timber harvest, open space and recreation. In addition, we have had conversations regarding prioritizing areas for DNR to focus on for replacement land purchases for future working forest land in Jefferson County. This funding, funding provided in the previous Legislative Session and future related efforts presents a serious opportunity to protect key forests and contribute significantly to the forest products economy in Jefferson County.

ANALYSIS:

We have heard from DNR and junior taxing districts in certain parts of Jefferson County regarding priorities for harvest and revenue and thus have focused on high priority parcels for conservation status only in the less productive, drier part of East Jefferson County north of Highway 104 and near / adjacent to the Dabob Natural Area.

To this end, as a first step and as discussed at our August 28th mtg, we are in the process of preparing Trust Land Transfer applications for four parcels described below. All of these parcels are north of State HWY 104 in the more populated portions of East Jefferson County and represent existing recreational opportunity:

DNR Sys#	Name	Acres	Trust
6349	Anderson Lake	582	Common School and Indemnity
6247	Beaver Valley	523	Common School and Indemnity (to SFT with InterX)
6519	Cape George	241	Common School and Indemnity (to SFT with InterX)
6354	West Jacob Miller	121	Common School and Indemnity (to SFT with InterX)

We also included parcels in our June 28 letter for consideration for transfer as part of the 2000 acres of structurally complex, carbon dense forests and an additional list of parcels for inclusion of future rounds of Trust Land Transfer. Finally, also as state in our letter we look forward to working with DNR to identify productive replacement trust lands for acquisition as working forests.

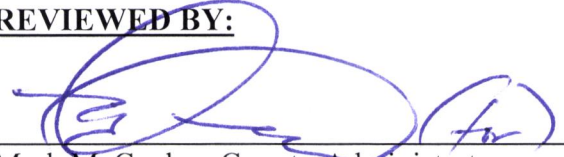
FISCAL IMPACT:

This work is supported with our existing contract with Chickadee Forestry.

RECOMMENDATION:

Discuss potential next steps for Jefferson County in response to the exchange of correspondence between us and DNR.

REVIEWED BY:



Mark McCauley, County Administrator

9.14.23
Date