

Whatcom County Forest Advisory Committee (FAC)
Meeting Summary
February 3, 2026

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Start Time: | 4:00 p.m. |
| Location: | Zoom and in-person at the NW Annex Conference Room |

| Members | Affiliation | Present | Absent (Excused?) |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>VACANT</i> | Small forest landowner | | |
| Holly Koon | Small forest landowner | √ | |
| David Janicki | Commercial forest landowner | √ | |
| Rob Janicki | Commercial forest landowner | √ | |
| Shelby Beam | Harvester or silviculturist | √ | |
| Mallore Weinheimer | Harvester or silviculturist | √ | |
| David New | Citizen w/ forestry expertise | √ | |
| Tracy Petroske | Citizen w/ forestry expertise | | √ (Y) |
| Aubrey Stargell | Forest product manufacturer | √ | |
| Adam Ellsworth | Forest product manufacturer | √ | |
| Cory McDonald | DNR | √ | |
| Brandy Reed | Whatcom Conservation District | √ | |
| Rachel Vasak | Whatcom Land Trust | √ | |
| Frank Bob | Lummi Nation | | √ (N) |
| <i>UNFILLED</i> | Nooksack Indian Tribe | | |
| <i>UNFILLED</i> | U.S. Forest Service | | |
| | | Quorum Present | |
| Electeds | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Staff | | | |
| Alexander Harris | WC PDS | √ | |
| Public | | | |
| Kaia Hayes | RE Sources | √ | |
| Alan Chapman | WCD Board of Supervisors | √ | |
| Maia Walston | Darrington Collaborative | √ | |
| Heidi S. | Small forest landowner | √ | |
| | | | |

Meeting Summary

Holly Koon opened the meeting at 4:05 PM. David came in 10 minutes late, Tracy was absent.

Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum

Roll was called and a quorum was present.

Agenda Review and Approval of Meeting Summary

The agenda was reviewed and approved.

Small edits were made to the meeting summary. Holly made a motion to approve the amended meeting summary. Dave N. seconded. Passed unanimously.

Open Public Session

Heidi introduced herself. She is a landowner in the Maple Falls area who owns land zoned Commercial Forestry. She noticed the FAC had an interesting agenda and decided to listen in. Brandy mentioned that there is an open seat on the FAC for a Small Forestland Owner.

Announcements

Mallore Weinheimer introduced herself. She was recently added to the FAC. She has her own forestry business. Each of the FAC members introduced themselves.

Reports

DNR/BNR

Cory said he didn't have an update on the BNR or DNR.

City of Bellingham

- Rob shared that he met with Whatcom Mountain Bike Coalition, City of Bellingham (COB), and Whatcom Land Trust for their Annual Meeting to discuss activities on the Galbraith Mountain. The mountain already has 65 miles of trails, and it will soon have 20 more miles.
- Rob said at some point in the future, he'd like to present to the FAC about his pilot project to create a carbon vault on Galbraith Mountain.
- COB is doing their first commercial thinning projection in the Lake Whatcom Watershed, Janicki Logging Co is doing the thinning. Some of the wood may be going into the carbon vault. Mallore said she was involved in laying the timber sale in the City of Bellingham.
- Aubrey applauded the Janickis and the City of Bellingham for engaging in forest management on municipal land. He said all too often, public land like this doesn't have a lot of management. He said there is value in having demonstration forestry for the public to learn from.

Legislative session

- Dave N. said he's been tracking the legislative session. He said now is the busiest time of the session, with many cut offs for bills to advance.
- Dave said there are a number of bills that are important to the FAC:
 - HB 2620- Restore collaboration in forest practices rule making. Had a hearing but did not make it out of committee
 - HB 2421 - Phase toxic chemicals in tires, passed out of committee in January along party lines. Did not make it to the house floor

- SB 5404 5475 - Fish habitat restoration relating to culvert replacements. Died in committee
- HJM 4004 One bill would ask Congress to modify the Marine Mammals Act relating to pinnipeds. Passed house but appears to be dead in the senate
- SB 5999- Bill that would modify how carbon credits are administered. Did not make it out of committee
- HB 1726-Prioritize lumber from within the state for Public Works projects. Did not make it out of committee
- SB 5838- put two tribal members on the Board of Natural Resources. Passed in Senate but did not make it out of committee in house
- HB 2251 - Restructure what the Climate Commitment Act funds can be used for. Passed house, still alive in Senate
- SB 5994-timber tax distribution relating to junior taxing districts. Passed Senate, had hearing in house with do pass recommendation
- Rachel shared a few other bills she's been tracking:
 - HB 4000 4009 SJM 801~ Requesting Congress funds wildland fire fighting. Passed 49-0 in senate, now in house
 - SB 5567 - expand training for natural resources careers Died in committee
 - HB 1983-amend definition of "timberland" for the purposes of excise tax Passed House, had hearing Monday in Senate Ways and Means

Forest Practices Board

Dave said they will meet next week. He'll track that meeting and report back.

Business

Tour to the Sierra Pacific mill

Adam shared that Monday March 9 could work. Alex shared that hosting two separate tours would be required for the FAC to avoid having a quorum. One cohort would start their tour at 8am, the other would start at 11am. Agreement to move forward with scheduling.

FAC Workplan

- FAC members discussed their work plan for 2026.
- Alex said he would let the FAC know when Chapter 8 is being discussed at the Whatcom County Council.
- Holly described her vision for the Lay of the Land document
 - She said if we don't have a shared understanding of the lay of the land, then we can't have a meaningful conversation about the forestry issues in Whatcom County.
 - She recognized that taking on all of this is probably too ambitious for the FAC, especially since this is a committee that is made up of volunteers. She recommended tackling two topics to focus on this year.

- Brandy asked more about what the goal was of this exercise – is the goal to draft white papers for each topic?
- Holly said the purpose is capacity building. If the committee has built this expertise and knowledge base, then this committee can really serve as the expert committee on forestry topics in Whatcom County.
- Malloree said what seems to be needed is “baseline information” to serve as the foundation of policy discussions at the FAC.
- Rachel said that if we embark on a large research project, by the time we’re done, the information will have changed.
- Alex repeated back what he was hearing: the FAC should focus on doing the “Lay of the Land” exercise for priority topics that are relevant to the FAC’s purview. He said he had heard FAC members express interest to be responsive to emergent issues, especially issues relating to forest management on county lands and federal lands. Rob highlighted that at the end of the day, county-owned lands are really the only thing that the FAC can actually influence.
- David highlighted some of the questions that could be ironed out for federal lands, such as the different management classifications, how much acreage is still harvestable, etc. He said the more you shrink the land base, the less creative you can be in our silvicultural prescriptions.
- Brandy said GIS will be our friend in answering these questions. This takes staff capacity, and WCD is offering some staff capacity to help with basic GIS exercises.
- Maia Walston of the Darrington Collaborative said she may be able to extend an invitation to a quarterly meeting that includes updates on forestry activity in the Mt Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.
- There was some conversation about Designated Forestland (DFL) being discussed in the future. Malloree said we should invite the Whatcom County Assessor’s Office to present to the FAC on the DFL criteria.
- Kaia Hayes weighed in that WWU has students who might be interested in helping with GIS projects.
- Holly recommended that the FAC focus on answering questions relating to county lands, federal lands, and small forest landowners. The first step will be to bullet point the questions of what we need to know.

Next Meeting

- David shared that a representative from the Whidbey-Camano Land Trust will be presenting about the Trillium Community Forest, which is a multi-use forest where active forestry has been taking place.
- Work Plan
 - Work session to identify the list of questions FAC members have for each ownership type.
 - Alex weighed in and recommended that instead of doing a series of white papers on each of the topics, the FAC could instead update the Background section of the Forest Resilience Plan to include the baseline data for each land ownership type. This could be 5-10 data points that are compiled for each land ownership type. Then there could be a deep dive for 2-3 topics (with subcommittees). FAC

members expressed agreement with this suggested route, which will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.

Adjourn

David adjourned the meeting at 6:00pm.