

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

Start Time:	4:00 pm
Location:	Zoom and in-person at the NW Annex Conference Room

Members	Affiliation	Present	Absent (Excused?)
VACANT	Small forest landowner		
Holly Koon	Small forest landowner	√	
David Janicki	Commercial forest landowner	√	
Rob Janicki	Commercial forest landowner		√(Y)
Shelby Beam	Harvester or silviculturist	√	
Mallore Weinheimer	Harvester or silviculturist	√	
David New	Citizen w/ forestry expertise	√	
Tracy Petroske	Citizen w/ forestry expertise	√	
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)
UNFILLED	Nooksack Indian Tribe		
UNFILLED	U.S. Forest Service		
		Quorum Present?	Yes
Electeds			
Ben Elenbaas	Whatcom County Councilmember		√
Staff			
Alexander Harris	WC PDS	√	
Public			
Maia Walston	Darrington Collaborative	√	
Jessica Larson	Whidbey-Camano Land Trust	√	
Alan Chapman	Whatcom Conservation District	√	

Meeting Summary

Tracy opened the meeting at 4:05 PM. David arrived by zoom a few minutes late, then took over facilitating the meeting.

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. Dave New made a motion to approve the amended meeting summary. Adam seconded. Passed unanimously.

Open Public Session

Maia Walston introduced herself. She is the coordinator of Darrington Collaborative.

Announcements

Adam shared that NW Hardwoods announced they're closing a hardwood mill located in Centralia. He said they are consolidating the operation to their Longview facility. This means hardwood logs will have to travel further.

Holly shared that she saw an article in the Cascadia Daily News regarding the proposed geothermal power plant east of Bellingham. The Whatcom PUD and the Nooksack Tribe are working together to explore the feasibility of building a geothermal facility at one of two potential sites on the slopes around Mt Baker. One location is Lookout Mountain (near Grouse Mountain). The other is at Baker Hotsprings. Alex will share the Cascadia Daily article and the report.

David J. said they did a study on their acreage on Galbraith Mountain to determine how much acreage was impacted by the new forest practices rule change relating to buffers on Np streams. He shared that because of these rules, he estimates that they'll lose 10 harvestable acres. David said, as a consequence, they now plan to log a stand sooner than they would have, which is a microcosm of the unintended consequences that are probably happening elsewhere on the landscape.

Presentation

David introduced Jessica Larson, who is the Stewardship Director at the Whidbey-Camano Land Trust (WCLT). Jessica gave a presentation about the WCLT and the Trillium Community Forest).

- WCLT does acquisition, conservation easements, and stewardship across thousands of acres on Whidbey Island and Camano Island.
- Three parking lots for public access. 7 miles of trail. Currently 730 acres with an additional 148 in progress. Hunting access is allowed, with certain constraints.
- Trillium Community Forest includes hundreds of acres that require active management to send the forest towards old-growth conditions.
- The Janickis took on the job, they did a great job working with the public as questions came up about the active management that was required to restore the overly dense.
- One of the stands was thinned down from 600 trees per acre to 300 trees per acre.
- WCLT developed a lot of marketing material that explained to the public about why they were using active management to restore forest health.
- Round 1 of thinning was paid for by EQIP. They were able to make money from the thinning, which went into the stewardship budget for the property.

- Aubrey asked how much wind throw they've experienced. Jessica said it has been nominal.
- Alex said he would upload Jessica's slides to the FAC webpage.

Discussion to Reschedule FAC Meetings

Rachel is unable to attend FAC meetings at the current selected time. There was agreement to keep next month's FAC meeting at the same time (4pm first Tuesday). Tracy asked Alex to send out a doodle poll (four times that work for the meeting room's calendar). Then the FAC can decide what to do at their next meeting.

Reports

DNR/BNR

- Cory shared that the budget at DNR is constrained. He shared that timber revenue is very important for DNR's overall budget.
- Cory said that it looks like the legislature is slated to gut DNR's recreation budget, but there's some uncertainty about where it will land.
- Aubrey pointed out that if DNR has a reduced budget, it will have compounded impacts that limit DNR's ability to lay out future sales, which will then impact future timber revenue.
- Cory said there needs to be a meaningful amount of volume to keep the work force and infrastructure in place. He said that a timber sale is made up of a bunch of different products, each of which has to go somewhere.

Legislative session

- Dave said that most of the bills that he was tracking have died. He said that by next month he'll have a more comprehensive debrief on where things landed.

Forest Practices Board

- Dave said the FPB met in February.

Business

FAC Workplan

- David shared that he and Tracy had decided to focus the FAC's attention on a project that will develop a Lay of the Land for Whatcom County's forestlands. This will include some high-level data points for each different kind of ownership type.
- FAC members worked together on a document that identified the landowner types, and also the data points that are needed.
- Landowner groups identified: federal, state, county/municipal, industrial forest landowners, small forest landowners (AKA non-industrial forest landowners), non-profit and community forests, and tribally-owned forests.
- The following FAC members volunteered to participate in this ad hoc subcommittee to work on this: Malloree, Shelby, Cory, Tracy, and Holly

- Tracy said these data points will then furnish the Background section of the Forest Resilience Plan. This was the plan that the FAC identified last year needed additional work.
- Malloreë said she was hired by Jefferson County to do an analysis of the different landowner types across the forest landscape there. Malloreë asked whether Whatcom County could provide staff support for GIS analysis to answer some of these questions.
- Brandy said Whatcom Conservation District may be able to support some of the GIS work.
- Tracy and David said it was necessary to get this information finished by the April meeting.

Next Meeting

- Lay of the Land project

Adjourn

David adjourned the meeting at 6:00pm