

NEWS RELEASE

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State DNR Names Vicki Christiansen as New Regulatory Executive

OLYMPIA - Washington State Commissioner of Public Lands Doug Sutherland announced today that he has appointed Vicki Christiansen as Executive Director of Regulatory Programs, effective September 15.

Christiansen succeeds current Executive Director Pat McElroy, who retires at the end of December. Her September start date allows her to work alongside McElroy for a three-month period prior to his retirement to facilitate a smooth transition.

"I'm very pleased that the Department has this level of skill available for this level of responsibility. In 26 years of working with DNR, Vicki has experienced all aspects of the work this agency does, from in-the-trench fire-fighting, to regional manager, to statewide operations manager," Sutherland said.

"In my 5 years of working with Vicki, she has been assigned some of the most difficult tasks we have had to accomplish, and she has done so with energy, intelligence, and integrity," he said.

Christiansen is looking forward to working with Commissioner Sutherland and the Department to promote the sustainable use of Washington's forests and to protect the safety and economic well-being of the state's citizens.

"I firmly believe that sustainable working forests can provide multiple social, environmental and economic values such as clean water, wildlife, green spaces and jobs for current and future generations," Christiansen said.

"I look forward to building on the foundational achievements under Pat McElroy's leadership and continuing to work with the collaborative network of stakeholders in Washington that care so deeply about our state's natural resources," she concluded.

A Washington native, a professional forester, and a graduate of the University of Washington's College of Forest Resources, Christiansen is in her 26th year of service with the State Department of Natural Resources.

First hired as a wildland firefighter in 1980, she has been assigned increasing levels of responsibility over the years, including management in forest practices, surface mining and resource protection. During her career with DNR, Christiansen has established a strong track record of stakeholder collaboration and public involvement in addition to "on-the ground" experience and familiarity with natural resources issues.

DNR's Executive Director of Regulatory Programs provides tactical and strategic leadership for the agency's regulatory programs-Forest

Practices, Geology and Earth Resources, and wildland firefighting. In addition, the Executive Director serves as Washington's State Forester. The Executive Director also serves as Commissioner Sutherland's designated Chair of the Forest Practices Board.

DNR Protects Public Resources

DNR provides wildfire protection and supports the Forest Practices Board in protecting public resources on 12.7 million acres of private and state-owned forestland.

The 12-member Forest Practices Board is an independent state agency established in 1975 by the Legislature under the state Forest Practices Act. By law, the board is charged with establishing rules to protect the state's natural resources while maintaining a viable timber industry.

A forest practice is defined as an activity carried out on forestland, which relates to the growing, harvesting or processing of timber. Some examples include: logging, thinning, road construction, brush control, fertilization, and land conversions.

The Governor appoints seven members of the Forest Practices Board. The remaining members are designated by law, including the Commissioner of Public Lands. The other members are the heads of the Departments of Community, Trade, and Economic Development; Agriculture; Ecology; and Fish and Wildlife, or their designees.

Because the Commissioner of Public Lands both administers DNR and chairs the Forest Practices Board, DNR provides staff support for the Board. The Forest Practices Act also requires DNR to administer and enforce all board-adopted rules.

Commissioner Sutherland is the 12th Public Lands Commissioner since statehood in 1889.

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Editors note:

A photo of Ms Christiansen is available to download from http://www.dnr.wa.gov/downloads/nr06_094/