



January 15, 2009

Dear Commissioner Goldmark, Governor Gregoire, and State Legislators:

Over the past five years, the Northwest Environmental Forum has convened stakeholders from a wide range of backgrounds and perspectives to examine the challenges facing forestry and forest management. The Forum has provided an opportunity to examine data, review the outcome of recent research, and engage in dialogue on how to maintain Washington's forested landscape. Forum participants are unified against the loss of forest lands in Washington. Participants recognize that actions must be taken to a) keep commercially-viable lands in production, and b) maintain forested lands that may no longer be commercially viable without additional resources or revenue streams.

Participants agree that it is vital for the state to maintain its forested landscape. Forests assist the state in achieving its goals for economic development; protecting the water in the state's rivers and in Puget Sound; preserving the state's biodiversity; reducing greenhouse gas emissions; and maintaining the quality of life of citizens across the state. Participants agree that we must sustain the long-term profitability of forestry to maintain these forests. Participants have embarked on a joint effort to address the challenge of sustaining the long-term profitability of forestry, irrespective of outstanding differences and traditional positions.

Participants are committed to working together to keep Washington wood competitive; to find new revenue streams for the ecosystem services and recreational benefits that Washington citizens' accrue from these forests; and to ensure regulatory stability and social license for the practice of forestry. At the October 2008 Forum, participants agreed that six actions would assist in maintaining Washington forests; these actions are fully described in the Northwest Environmental Forum Major Findings Report. There are sideboards and details that must be negotiated and refined to secure final support for each of the actions from the full breadth of stakeholders. The following list identifies the most promising action areas to focus efforts to reach consensus:

1. FOREST LAND DATA BASE ENHANCEMENT AND FUNDING
2. RIGHT TO PRACTICE FORESTRY (RCW 7.48.305)
3. FUNDING FOR LAND OWNER RIPARIAN MITIGATION PROGRAMS (FFFPP AND FREP), DNR LONG-TERM RMCA FLEXIBILITY and DNR BUDGET REQUESTS FOR FORESTRY ASSISTANCE AND LANDOWNER INCENTIVES FOR HABITAT PROTECTION
4. TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDRs)

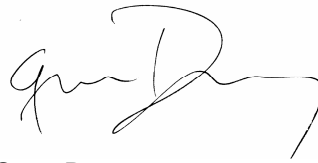
5. BIOMASS AND FOREST HEALTH (with a focus on Eastern Washington, family foresters and establishing clear accountability measures)
6. LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON STRATEGIC RETENTION OF WASHINGTON'S WORKING FORESTS AND FOREST INDUSTRY

We ask that you support these recommended actions by working with the stakeholders to advance consensus-based approaches to these six actions in the 2009 legislature and beyond.

Sincerely,



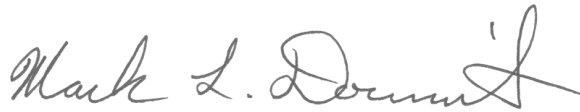
Peter Goldman
Washington Forest Law Center



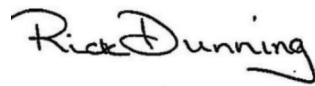
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