

**Whatcom County
Council Climate Action and Natural Resources Committee**

**COUNTY COURTHOUSE
311 Grand Avenue, Ste #105
Bellingham, WA 98225-4038
(360) 778-5010**



Committee Minutes - Final

Tuesday, September 12, 2023

9 AM

Hybrid Meeting

**HYBRID MEETING - ADJOURNS BY 10:15 A.M. (PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON,
SEE REMOTE JOIN INSTRUCTIONS AT www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil,
OR CALL 360.778.5010)**

COUNCILMEMBERS

Todd Donovan
Ben Elenbaas
Kaylee Galloway

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Dana Brown-Davis, C.M.C.

Call To Order

Committee Chair Kaylee Galloway called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. in a hybrid meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 3 - Todd Donovan, Ben Elenbaas, and Kaylee Galloway

Also Present: Barry Buchanan, Tyler Byrd, Carol Frazey, and Kathy Kershner

Announcements

Special Presentation

1. [AB2023-567](#) Presentation from Lauren Clemens, Climate Action Manager, regarding the Whatcom County Climate Action Program 2023 Workplan

Lauren Clemens, Climate Action Manager, read from a presentation (on file) and answered a question about the interlocal evaluating siting options for electric vehicle charging infrastructure countywide (**AB2023-572**) on the Finance agenda today. She answered whether they would be finding private vendors or whether they would be doing public charging infrastructure.

This agenda item was PRESENTED.

2. [AB2023-534](#) Presentation regarding DNR Trust Land Management in Whatcom County
Duane Emmons, Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Assistant Deputy Supervisor for State Uplands, read from a presentation (on file) and answered how the beneficiaries became beneficiaries, whether beneficiaries have a say in how the lands are managed, who decided on the conservation areas and protections in the Lake Whatcom watershed, the meaning of long-term deferral, and what percentage of all the DNR-managed lands are not in conservation.

Councilmembers, Emmons, and Tyler Schroeder, Executive's Office, discussed the idea of how beneficiaries have a say in how the lands are being managed on their behalf and how revenue is allocated, recognizing that different counties may have different priorities and values and that management is becoming less of a one-size-fits-all approach, refining the map and community dialog about how many properties in the ownership of DNR can be harvested and for what purposes, whether there is a process to be able to switch State lands with Federal lands and to transfer the harvesting in those Federal areas in Whatcom County and then maybe protect some of the State lands that are in the watershed (or in different

locations), following up with DNR around timeline and implications of the Climate Commitment Act funding, and getting an update on the carbon pilot project.

This agenda item was PRESENTED.

Committee Discussion

1. [AB2023-541](#) Discussion of a proposed ordinance to establish a Forestry Task Force

Galloway briefed the Councilmembers on the draft ordinance and its purpose.

Councilmembers discussed whether the sunset clause (September 2025) allows for enough time, how much the task force would cost the County, whether we have staff that are available to serve on a task force like this, whether this is something the existing Forestry Advisory Committee (FAC) could have taken on within their own structure, whether Whatcom County would be managing their own forests, whether the discussion should be brought back to this committee on the next meeting date, whether they should be focusing resources and energy on issues that seem more pressing for the county, and the importance of also looking at long-range issues.

Tyler Schroeder, Executive's Office, answered whether the Administration is OK with a timeline of discussing this further on September 26th and stated that would work.

Galloway asked that they keep this in mind as they have discussions about budget priorities later today.

This agenda item was DISCUSSED.

Items Added by Revision

There were no agenda items added by revision.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:23 a.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Kaylee Galloway-via email 9/18/2023

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Kaylee Galloway, Committee Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription

SIGNED COPY ON FILE