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**Mark Personius, AICP**  
Director

## Memorandum

**TO:** Whatcom County Council

**FROM:** Joshua Fleischmann, Planner

**THROUGH:** Steve Roberge, Assistant Director

**DATE:** March 31, 2022

**SUBJECT:** Amendment to Whatcom County Code 2.123.040 Membership - Term of Office for the Forestry Advisory Committee

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The proposed ordinance will amend Section 2.123.040 Membership - Term of Office for the Forestry Advisory Committee (FAC) allowing the County Council to waive the registered voter/residency requirement for representatives of commercial forestry landowners on the FAC.

The FAC consists of 11 membership positions, of which there are presently 7 positions filled. Two of the unfilled positions are for "commercial forestry landowners or their eligible representatives".

The Commercial Forestry zone in Whatcom County does not allow for construction of residential dwellings. Therefore, unsurprisingly, a large percentage of the commercial forestland is held by entities whose primary mission is the active management of forestlands for the purpose of harvesting timber.

Whatcom County and the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) collectively own roughly 50% of commercial forestland in Whatcom County, and are both represented as part of the FAC, either as a member (DNR) or as staff support (Whatcom County).

Meanwhile timber management companies with headquarters located outside of Whatcom County make up another 43% (~80,000 acres) of the commercial forestland ownership and may not have representatives eligible for membership on the FAC due to the registered voter/residency requirement. However, they have a clear vested interest in forestry policy in Whatcom County.

These amendments would allow the County Council to appoint non-resident representatives of timber management companies to the FAC. This amendment

would allow timber management companies with vested interests in forestry to be involved in discussions and recommendations that affect the forestry industry.

If you have any questions, please contact Joshua Fleischmann at 360-778-5952 or [jfleisch@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:jfleisch@co.whatcom.wa.us).