

CLALLAM COUNTY COMMISSIONER RANDY JOHNSON

STATEMENT OF INTEREST---WSAC REPRESENTATIVE ON THE BOARD OF NATURAL
RESOURCES

Department of Natural Resources (DNR) state trust lands are unique public working forests that provide funding for our schools, fire districts, and many other public services. State trust lands are also a critical source of timber that creates tens of thousands of jobs here in Clallam County and across rural Washington, while also providing clean water, recreational opportunities, and wildlife habitat. I would be honored to represent the WSAC timber counties on the Board of Natural Resources, which sets policy for the management of these lands.

Clallam County has the largest number (93,000 acres) of DNR-managed State Forest Transfer lands (AKA county trust lands) of any timber county in the state. In total, DNR manages approximately 160,000 acres in Clallam County. Sustainable timber harvests from our State Forest Transfer lands support at least 17 junior taxing districts in Clallam County, as well as our forest products industry.

Some of our junior taxing districts are highly dependent on the revenue they receive from DNR timber harvests to “stay in business,” so we have tried to improve to our ability to predict likely harvest revenues - for them as well as for Clallam County. In fact, our county recently created a Revenue Advisory Committee of all the junior taxing districts plus the county to meet with the DNR to review timber sale results and forecasts, understand and educate the committee as to the environmental and legal issues for timber sales, and to review other topics such as silviculture, wildfire preparedness and workforce needs.

The timber industry is the only private employer in Clallam County that provides year-round, family-wage jobs. However, we have lost mills and forestry contractors and are at risk of additional losses if harvest levels on DNR lands are further reduced. Clallam County has worked cooperatively with DNR at all levels, including our local and regional offices, the Board of Natural Resources, and the Commissioner of Public Lands.

On the local level, the DNR timberland provides wonderful recreational opportunities such as the property easements for the Olympic Discovery Trail, and the land for a world class downhill trail bike race. A significant portion of our local DNR lands (60%) have been set aside from timber harvest to benefit endangered species. It should be obvious that I live, recreate in and value our natural environment.

I have extensive experience in both the private and public sectors with many of the issues that come before the Board of Natural Resources.

RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE

- 1) Hot Shot crewmember and smokejumper fighting fires during summers while in college and graduate school.
- 2) Worked for a large corporation including the position of VP and Director of Forest Products for ITT Rayonier dealing with operations in Canada, the Southeast, and the Northwest.
- 3) President of Green Crow which started out as a very small company and grew into a family-owned company doing business in Washington, Oregon, Vermont, New Hampshire and New Zealand for 30 years. This included timber sales, timber purchases, land transactions of all varieties including an exchange with the DNR, cell tower leases, windmills, solar farm leases, sand and gravel operations, carbon credits and leases, recreational leases, conservation easements with environmental organizations, and fish habitat improvements. I am extremely proud to have been involved in the Forest and Fish agreement which resulted in a fifty-year state-federal Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for private lands resulting in cool clean water for fish as well as a predictable supply of timber to support industry and communities. Our family continues to be a small timberland owner with membership in the Washington Farm Forestry Association for timberland in Pacific and Clallam counties. Our family also continues to own timberland in Vermont and New Hampshire including maple syrup operations.
- 4) Since being a County Commissioner, I have served on the Timber Counties Caucus, the WSAC-led committee determining the economic effects of the Marbled Murrelet on counties, the committee to review and revise the Trust Land Transfer process, the Carbon and Forest Management work group, and the Encumbered Timber Counties caucus. In most cases, this was made possible by working with other counties, WSAC and others to collaborate on these projects and hopefully create better outcomes or information on which to make decisions. I have also been very involved in the timberland purchases by the DNR for the benefit of Clallam County related to Clallam County as an encumbered county.

There are many critical issues that will soon come before the Board of Natural Resources, including a long-overdue Sustainable Harvest Calculation for eastern Washington and a new decadal plan for western Washington. The Board will also play an important role navigating the current debate about the harvest of mature forests and honoring the intent of the State Trust Lands HCP. I also believe we must continue to take a proactive approach to reducing hazardous fuels and aggressively fighting wildfires.

I would be honored to have your support.