



2025 CCA Proviso

Integrating community feedback to secure stronger outcomes for Whatcom County

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Introduction

1. What is the 2025 CCA Proviso opportunity?

- a. How is it different from past years?
- b. What does implementation look like?

2. The Case for Upper Rutsatz

- a. Why Upper Rutsatz is uniquely suited for nomination
- b. Using the 2025 funding opportunity to support multiple county priorities

3. Q&A

Overview



[Link](#)

Recap of 2025 CCA Proviso Highlights

- **Worked with DNR, WSAC, and state coalition partners to amend proviso language**
 - More flexibility to decide what best meets the needs of beneficiaries
 - Elevated the case study of MBSD — up front revenue is essential to making this opportunity accessible to Whatcom County

2025 Natural Climate Solutions "Carbon Sequestration Forests" Proviso: Fact Sheet for County Governments

Background

Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC), Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and numerous conservation organizations were successful in securing \$23 million in the 2025-27 budget biennium from the Natural Climate Solutions account created by the Climate Commitment Act.

\$10 million will be spent to acquire replacement forestland in exchange for permanent conservation of approximately 500 acres of mature, structurally complex forests currently managed by DNR for timber harvest. This is a continuation of funding allocated by the legislature for this same purpose in 2023 and 2024, but with an exciting new provision that allows a "cash for counties" option. County governments can opt in to receive a portion of the replacement value of conserved mature forests in cash so that essential services like schools and fire departments can receive funding now— rather than waiting to receive funding until replacement forestlands are ready for timber harvest.

Another \$10 million of the funds will be spent to purchase replacement forestland for ongoing timber harvest, compensating for "encumbered" lands in Clallam, Pacific, Skamania, and Whatkiakum counties. The final \$3 million was appropriated for DNR to do more [restoration thinning](#) projects.

This investment allows Washington to continue expanding its public lands, supporting local revenue for rural communities, and conserving older forests for the third consecutive year

[HERE](#) is the full proviso text as passed by the State Legislature.

\$10 million for forest conservation timeline

- DNR will receive funds from the legislature in July 2025.
- County governments may send letters to DNR requesting specific parcels be considered for nomination. In fact, the Kitsap County Board of Commissioners has already sent such a letter.
- DNR will begin the process of identifying parcels of structurally complex, carbon dense forests for conservation with a total value of \$10 million. DNR will notify counties once they have selected parcels within that county.
- Regardless of the trust beneficiaryies associated with the lands proposed for conservation, the legislative body of the county where the parcels are located must send a letter of support to DNR and the Board of Natural Resources (BNR). It would be good for letters to indicate whether the county is interested in the "cash for counties" option.
- DNR will then purchase \$10 million of replacement acres for the affected trusts.
- The final step is for the BNR to approve the conservation parcel boundaries.
- Trust beneficiaries will receive revenue from replacement lands as they are harvested. Counties can opt to receive immediate revenue using the "cash for counties" provision.

Recap of 2025 CCA Proviso Highlights

- **New language mirrors existing TLT mechanism**
 - More integrated into the DNR's existing admin processes
 - Prioritizes parcel valuation sooner in the process, allowing for disbursement of upfront funds before replacement lands are finalized
 - DNR staff – valuation is being prioritized with resources and staff time to accelerate *all* rounds of CCA-funded projects
- **Time sensitive opportunity to indicate interest in participating**
 - Past years have prioritized order of county engagement
 - Likely to be more interest from other counties this year; timely action is essential

Recap of Upper Rutsatz Highlights

- Not scheduled as an upcoming sale, so there is no impact on earmarked beneficiary revenue
 - An opportunity to bring unplanned funding to MBSD at time where it is critically needed
 - Potentially not only coming equal to but **surpassing** the total value of revenue that MBSD estimated the district would have received had UR been logged in 2022



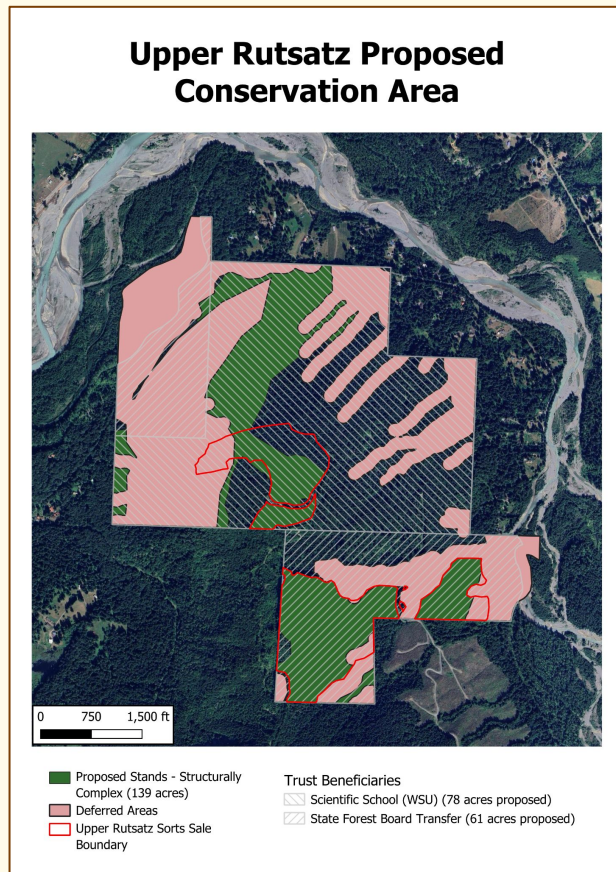
Recap of Upper Rutsatz Highlights

- **Incredibly high conservation value and asset to Whatcom's climate, wildfire, and flooding resilience goals**
 - Aligns with Nooksack Tribe research on late summer flow, and need for cedar conservation to combat large-scale die off
 - Supported by rural community members residing in the Upper Rutsatz area and impacted by watershed events like drought, fire, and flooding.
 - Responsive to community concerns that paused the sale in 2022— closure with meaningful action that benefits our community in multiple ways



Recap of Upper Rutsatz Highlights

- Deemed reasonable by local DNR staff who implement management of proposed acres
 - Majority of surrounding area is “deferred,” ie. not a priority or not available to DNR harvest due to logistical or management constraints
 - This parcel “makes sense” as a candidate for the goals of the CCA proviso– a larger proposed acreage beyond the original sale may improve feasibility for DNR



Next Steps

- Working to develop solutions that truly serve our community's many short and long term needs
- Incorporating community feedback into the solutions we advocate for
- Conservation is just one tool in the toolkit – and a timber economy is essential to using *all* of them



The 2025 CCA opportunity honors multiple years of work to build public support for mature forest conservation, recognize the short and long term resource needs within our county, and improve outcomes in all areas of our community's future together.

Next Steps

Please write a letter to DNR requesting for Whatcom County to participate in the 2025 CCA proviso opportunity, nominating Upper Rutsatz Forest for conservation.

- Community members are showing support via petition
- We continue to engage stakeholders, decision makers, Tribes, and beneficiaries to ensure a truly win-win-win outcome for our community
- ***You're invited: Join us to tour the Upper Rutsatz area to learn more about our work and proposed conservation area***

Questions?

