

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 - Draft Minutes

Tuesday, October 7, 2025

10:10 AM

Hybrid Meeting - Council Chambers

**HYBRID MEETING - MAY BEGIN EARLY - ADJOURNS BY 10:55 A.M.
(PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON, SEE REMOTE JOIN INSTRUCTIONS AT
www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil, OR CALL 360.778.5010)**

COUNCILMEMBERS

Todd Donovan
Kaylee Galloway
Mark Stremmler

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Cathy Halka, AICP, CMC

Call To Order

Committee Chair Kaylee Galloway called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. in a hybrid meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 3 - Todd Donovan, Kaylee Galloway, and Mark Stremmler

Also Present: Barry Buchanan, Tyler Byrd, Ben Elenbaas, and Jon Scanlon

Announcements

Committee Discussion and Recommendation to Council

1. [AB2025-603](#) Resolution receiving the Forest Resilience Plan submitted by the Forest Resilience Task Force

The following people read from a presentation (on file) on the Forest Resilience Plan:

- Carl Weimer, Forest Resilience Task Force
- Stevan Harrell, Forest Resilience Task Force

Weimer stated the task force has been working on the plan for a little over a year but they do not think the plan is done, so they are glad the Council is just accepting it today and not trying to adopt it. He spoke about the plan and its formation and the recommended next steps in order to make it useful, including establishing a committee focused on plan implementation and made up of County staff, the task force, and the Forest Advisory Committee (FAC).

Harrell spoke about the four major goals of the plan and some of their objectives. He stated under each objective are several actions, and those are probably where most of the revision and updating of the plan needs to happen.

They answered questions and discussed with councilmembers who should carry out the actions of the plan, that an implementation committee is needed to make sure the plan does not just sit on a shelf, that the resolution receives the plan as an initial draft and sets forward the next steps, and how the Council can receive a plan that is not complete.

The following FAC members spoke about what happened at their meeting last evening and how they are gearing up for the next phases of work:

- David Janicki, Forest Advisory Committee Chair
- Tracy Petroske, Forest Advisory Committee Vice Chair

They discussed that the plan should be received as a starting draft strategy document, the FAC should be appointed to revise and complete it, and that someone should then be doing ongoing implementation guidance.

They discussed with councilmembers that the plan itself does not say it is a draft and that it probably should, but that the substitute resolution from the FAC does refer to it as one.

Galloway pointed out a scrivener's error in the "Substitute Resolution - Forest Advisory Committee." The added (7th) whereas clause on the second page is a repeat of one two clauses before it, so it should not be added.

Donovan moved to adopt the substitute resolution.

Scanlon spoke about the third whereas statement on the third page of the substitute which reads:

WHEREAS, Forest Advisory Committee will require sufficient staff capacity to accomplish a body of work of this scope and scale.

He asked if the current staff capacity is sufficient.

The following people responded to that question and spoke about the number of forest acres in the County's control, the challenge of staffing all the County's boards and commissions, and the need to prioritize:

- Satpal Sidhu, County Executive
- Aly Pennucci, Executive's Office
- Kayla Schott-Bresler, Executive's Office

Petroske answered questions about whether the plan will include data regarding how climate change is affecting the forest in Whatcom County and how practices in Whatcom County are going to have an impact on the climate.

Galloway moved to amend the third whereas statement on the third page of the substitute resolution so that it reads:

WHEREAS, the Whatcom County Council recognizes the FAC may require additional staff capacity to accomplish a body of work of this scope and scale and will work collaboratively with the Executive's

Office to try to meet those needs in good faith.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Donovan, Stremmler, and Galloway

Nay: 0

Donovan's motion that the SUBSTITUTE Resolution be RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL WITH PROPOSED AMENDMENT(S) carried by the following vote:

Aye: 2 - Donovan, and Galloway

Nay: 1 - Stremmler

Substitute Amended (without a motion) to fix a scrivener's error (to delete the added 7th whereas statement on the second page since it already exists in the resolution two statements before).

Motion approved to amend the third whereas statement on the third page of the substitute resolution so that it reads: WHEREAS, the Whatcom County Council recognizes the FAC may require additional staff capacity to accomplish a body of work of this scope and scale and will work collaboratively with the Executive's Office to try to meet those needs in good faith.

Items Added by Revision

There were no agenda items added by revision.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:59 a.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Cathy Halka, Council Clerk

Kaylee Galloway, Committee Chair

Meeting Minutes prepared by Kristi Felbinger