



Board of County Commissioners  
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Kate Dean, District 1   Heidi Eisenhour, District 2   Greg Brotherton, District 3

May 23, 2022

Board for Natural Resources  
MS 47000  
Olympia, WA 98504-7000

Dear DNR policy leaders,

We want to start by saying we stand firmly by our collective belief that forestry is an important economic and cultural driver in the state of Washington and especially here at home on the Olympic Peninsula. We also see enormous opportunity for innovation in how state-owned lands are managed. Whether it is variable density thinning, or the selling of carbon credits alternatives to clear-cutting exist.

On April 4<sup>th</sup> we sent a letter asking you to not approve and defer the Beaver Valley Sorts timber sale that was before the Board on your agenda for Tuesday, April 5, 2022. We asked this given the important work that DNR is engaged in which will ultimately inform this sale and others like it in the future around older forests. At that point on April 4<sup>th</sup>, we did not know about the DNR's historic carbon project that was announced April 6, 2022.

We are very grateful that you deferred Beaver Valley Sorts to the July auction to give us time to understand the implications locally and also now to begin to digest the new carbon program you introduced. Thank you! As we said in our April 4<sup>th</sup> letter, Jefferson County highly values the ecosystem functions that our forests serve, especially carbon sequestration as we see the impacts of climate change accelerating. Imagine our surprise with the April 6<sup>th</sup> announcement essentially answering this call for acknowledging the wealth of carbon storage potential represented in older forest stands in Washington, including in east Jefferson County and the entire Olympic Peninsula.

It feels like DNR has many balls in the air including the review of older forests policy and now the historic carbon project. To that end we feel we need to wait to see if our older forest stands, especially in East Jefferson County, which represent gold mines of carbon storage and biodiversity, are included Phase II of your carbon project and how they are considered via your update of your older forests policy. In conversations with the region we understand that you're currently assessing the best place to focus for Phase II of the carbon project. We're interested in the outcome of this assessment and have a hard time not being optimistic that older forests in Jefferson County will end up high on the list.

Finally, we ask that that you pause further action on the Beaver Valley Sorts and Pennywise Timber Sales and allow time for full consideration of the options – which we understand includes the possibility us requesting reconveyance of State Forest Transfer (SFT) trust lands. Even if we pursue reconveyance of most of the acres of SFT older forests in east Jefferson County there would still be over 90% of lands in this trust for DNR to manage on our behalf. It seems prudent to wait for DNR to finalize the timeline for the carbon project's phase two selection process and your consideration of older forests before you move forward with timber sales with stands of older forests in Jefferson County.

Thank you for your attention to our input.

Sincerely,

Heidi Eisenhour, Chair  
District 2

Greg Brotherton  
District 3

Kate Dean  
District 1