



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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MEMORANDUM

To: Skagit County Planning Commission
From: Guy McNally
Date: August 15, 2006
Re: 2005 GMA Update Proposal Deliberations – Additional Forestry Issues

This memorandum responds to two issues, raised in the written correspondence regarding forest natural resource lands policies or regulations, that do not correspond to any of the “major themes” addressed in the Department’s August 1st memorandum (See Table 1, next page). That memorandum, the issues and responses here, and the Planning Commission’s own reading of the public comments, will assist in preparation for deliberations regarding forest natural resource lands on August 22nd, and possibly extending to August 24th.

Other than what has been addressed in this and the August 1st memos, the bulk of the correspondence relating to forestry pertain to specific map amendment proposals. These will be addressed later (the Planning Commission is scheduled to begin deliberations on map-amendment proposals on Tuesday, October 10). Please contact staff with any questions.

Table 1. Additional Forestry Issues

Comment	Page	Response
<p>14.16.410(5)(k) Restrictions on ‘enclosed structures’ in Industrial Forest zone should be removed. Enclosed structures are needed for safety and to encourage public use. Enclosed facility would reduce indiscriminate target shooting elsewhere in forested areas.</p>	<p>p. 1771</p>	<p>The existing code restrictions apply to all future uses within Industrial Forest areas. However, the commentator appears to seek this code amendments to allow for the location and construction of a specific planned shooting range in the Frailey Mountain area.¹</p> <p><u>The Department does not support this amendment proposal.</u> Recent actions by the Board of County Commissioners,² along with a renewed emphasis on long-term commercial resource viability, as articulated during the 2005 GMA Update process, do not support the establishment, construction, and proliferation of enclosed structures within Industrial Forest, except under certain specified circumstances.³ Also, a recent set of rulings by Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board required the County to establish consistency between its Parks and Capital Facilities plans, and existing language in the Comprehensive Plan and Skagit County Code limiting enclosed structures in Industrial Forest. In carrying out these orders the County was found to be in compliance with the GMA.⁴</p>
<p>Expand Industrial Forest uses to allow for vacation cabins.</p>	<p>p. 1746</p>	<p><u>The Department does not support this amendment proposal.</u> In relation to enclosed structures, the response above also applies to this issue. In addition, certain previously permitted recreational cabins and other structures within Industrial Forest have been found to be used as year-around residences. Notwithstanding any efforts to remedy pre-existing concerns, the County is firm in its commitment to restrict any future use that is inconsistent with long-term commercial forestry. This includes cabins.</p>

¹ The Department has no comments relating to the merits or potential outcome of efforts to permit a shooting range in the Frailey Mountain area. Rather, these comments relate to the broader concern of preserving long-term forestry viability.

² Interim Ordinance No. O20060001, February 6, 2006, which renews Interim Ordinance No. O20050010, July 26, 2005, establishes certain interim controls on the permitting and construction of single-family residences within Industrial Forest, and outside of an existing fire district. Although unrelated to the commentator’s concerns regarding the need for enclosed structures in shooting ranges, these interim ordinances nevertheless affirm Skagit County’s policy commitments to conserve long-term commercial forestry, in part by discouraging the potential for future land-use conflicts between forest resource management and non-forestry uses and activities.

³ Enclosed structures are allowed in direct support of commercial forestry operations.

⁴ WWGMHB Case No. 04-2-0011, Lake Cavanaugh Improvement Association and Citizens to Save Pilchuck Creek v. Skagit County.