



KITSAP COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Efficient, accessible and effective county services

December 4, 2023

Christine Rolfes
DISTRICT 1

Charlotte Garrido
DISTRICT 2

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DISTRICT 3

Washington State Department of Natural Resources

Attn: Todd Welker

Deputy Supervisor for State Uplands

PO Box 47001, Olympia WA 98504-7001

CC: Board of Natural Resources

Dear Mr. Welker,

The Department of Natural Resources is planning a 105-acre timber sale called "Breaking Bud" above Lake Tahuya in Green Mountain State Forest, scheduled to be auctioned on March 26, 2024. The Kitsap Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) urges the Natural Resources Board to protect legacy forests in Kitsap County by removing Unit 1 from the Breaking Bud Timber sale.

Unit 1 of the Breaking Bud timber sale is 70.3 acres and located in the headwaters of the Tahuya River. This forest is "naturally regenerated" as it was last logged before replanting was common practice in timber harvests and as such, it contains a diverse mix of native plants and tree species. Parts of this unit contains structurally complex forests with at-risk Douglas fir and cedar trees up to 49 inches in diameter. Unit 1 is ecologically valuable and should be preserved for carbon benefits, habitat, protection of water resources, recreation, and for future generations.

We'd like to highlight an excerpt from the [Washington Legacy Forest Defense Coalition](#) website that explains the significance of structurally complex legacy forests:

Legacy forests are natural forests that retain biological, structural, functional, and/or genetic legacies of natural and old growth forests. Most legacy forests were selectively logged during the first half of the 20th Century. Prior to World War II, there were no chainsaws, and logging operations were very labor intensive. There were also a lot of big trees, so loggers would often leave behind the smaller trees, defective trees, standing dead trees, and trees that were difficult to access or out-of-reach of their yarding systems. In other cases, trees were left behind as seed trees.

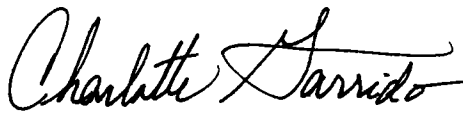
Many of these forests closely resemble old growth. Because these forests were not re-planted, but instead allowed to grow back on their own, they exhibit much of the species diversity, genetic diversity, and structural complexity of the natural forests they replaced.

Because almost all the old growth forests in Western Washington were logged long ago, legacy forests play a critical role in preserving the biological, genetic, and ecological legacies of the natural, lowland forests that once dominated the Pacific Northwest.

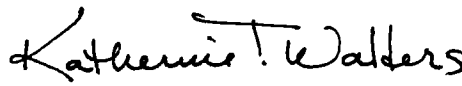
Furthermore, we request that DNR consider deferring all other timber sales on Green Mountain if they contain structurally complex and naturally regenerated forests, including "Firvanna," "Tree Louise," and "Blinky," so that Kitsap County and DNR can work together in finding a long-term solution to protect remaining ecologically precious forests.

Thank you for considering the opportunity to protect these rare and important forests. We welcome additional conversations with you or your team regarding trust lands management within Kitsap County. Please do not hesitate to reach out.

With gratitude,



Charlotte Garrido, Chair



Katherine T. Walters



Christine Rolfes