



Jefferson County Fire Protection District No. 2

Commissioner Art Frank
Board Chair
P.O. Box 433, Quilcene, WA 98376 ■ 360-765-3333

Commissioner Melody Bacchus
Commissioner Marcia Kelbon

August 21, 2023

Via e-mail to csenka.fc@dnr.wa.gov and
Hillary Franz, Commissioner of Public Lands
Washington State Department of Natural Resources
MS 47001
Olympia, WA 98504-7001

Re: Impact on Local Taxing District from Jefferson County's Proposed Participation in Natural Climate Solutions Investments and Extended Trust Land Transfer Program

Dear Commissioner Franz,

We received a copy of a letter from the Jefferson County Board of Commissioners (JCBOCC) to you dated June 27, 2023. The letter expressed the enthusiastic interest of the JCBOCC in having Jefferson County participate as a recipient of Natural Climate Solutions investments and in an extended Trust Land Transfer Program. Jefferson County Fire Protection District 2 dba Quilcene Fire Rescue (QFR) appreciates the expressed intent of the JCBOCC to expand the inventory of working forests within Jefferson County, as well as to further conservation efforts.

QFR was not consulted in advance by the JCBOCC on the specific land purchases and conservation transfers proposed in its June 27 letter. Nor to our knowledge were other local taxing districts. See, e.g., the enclosed letter dated August 8, 2023 from the Jefferson County Fire Chiefs Association.

QFR supports the expansion of working, harvestable forestland inventory within our district. However, we believe that the proposed purchases and transfers require further study and evaluation before any implementation that results directly or indirectly in any land being taken out of timber production. Specifically, at least the following factors should be considered as part of such transactions:

- The degree of maturity and time to harvest of the existing DNR parcels that are put into conservation as compared to the replacement private land parcels under transfer transactions. It is our impression that the private land parcels, in the

aggregate, have significantly younger forests, delaying timber forest revenue to local taxing districts such as ours by potentially decades. We have not heard of a plan to replace that revenue for our district.

- The potential diminishment of revenue to local taxing districts as well as the county from forest harvest excise tax that would otherwise be collected on private forest land parcels once harvested, i.e., any reduction in the total pool of revenue generation from the complete inventory of both DNR land and private forest land.
- Whether the private forest land being purchased or transferred, which may currently be considered unencumbered with respect to future harvest, will be considered encumbered under the more restrictive policies of the DNR.
- Other potential economic impacts on the businesses and citizens of our districts from the reduction of the inventory of local private forestlands.

We request that the above factors be studied and considered before implementing any of the proposed purchases and transfers, and that local taxing districts such as QFR be consulted with this data in hand before proceeding with such purchases and transfers.

Jefferson County Fire Protection District No. 2 Commissioners



Art Frank
Board Chair, Position 1



Melody Bacchus
Position 2



Marcia Kelbon
Position 3

cc: Mona Griswold, *via e-mail to* Mona.Griswold@dnr.wa.gov