



The mission of the Olympic Forest Coalition is to protect and restore forest and aquatic ecosystems on the public lands of the Olympic Peninsula.

Forest Alert:

Lands Commissioner Peter Goldmark Aligns Himself with the Timber Industry

April 2, 2009

In a hugely disappointing action, Lands Commissioner Peter Goldmark aligned himself with the timber industry at a meeting of the Forest Practices Board (FPB) on March 31. The FPB is the official body that sets regulations for forestry in the State of Washington.

In essence, although the FPB voted in favor of needed improvements of the forest practices rules, Commissioner Goldmark and the timber industry voted for Washington taxpayers to pay the timber industry for their forest practices permits (applications) - another words, paying the timber industry for the additional cost of such compliance.

Even assuming the calculation of that cost is accurate (stated as \$300,000/year at the FPB meeting), the principle that natural resource protection should be conditioned on "payment" to the landowner is an appalling precedent. The people of the state of Washington have repeatedly rejected this linkage, the last time by 59% (I-933, November 2006).

In the worst split of the Forest Practices Board in

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many years, in a 7 to 5 vote Goldmark sided with industry against the Department of Ecology representative, the Fish & Wildlife representative, the Snohomish County representative, the Tribal representative, and the sole public interest representative. As a result of the board's vote on a proposal that did not receive any public notice, there is now an effort underway in the Legislature to find a way to pass a forest practices permit fee suspension in order to "allow" the scientifically-proven-to-be-necessary improvement in the forest practices rules to take effect.

The Conservation Caucus to Forests and Fish, of which the Olympic Forest Coalition is a member, has worked for years to obtain this needed improvement to the forest practices rules (regarding an issue called "desired future conditions" (DFC) and riparian buffers). But we cannot allow this necessary improvement to be done on the basis that the people of the state should pay industry to protect public resources. Acceding to this demand would establish a terrible precedent, and it must be defeated (again).

Therefore, I am asking you to do two things:

* Please send an email to your legislative representatives and senators and ask them to stop the forest practices permit fee suspension proposal from being approved in the current legislative session ([click here to get contact information](#)); and,

* Please convey your disappointment to Commissioner Goldmark as appropriate. Let him know that this is not the platform he campaigned on. His email address is: cpl@dnr.wa.gov.

If you live in the 24th Legislative District, please contact:

[Representative Kevin Van De Wege](#)
[Representative Lynn Kessler](#)
[Senator Jim Hargrove](#)

For other areas, please find your representative's name and email address here:

<http://www.leg.wa.gov/legislature>

If you have any questions, please contact Toby Thaler at
(206) 783-6443.

Thanks for your help,