



**King County**

**King County Rural Forest Commission  
 Meeting Minutes  
 Thursday, September 19, 2019 – 9:00 am to 12:00 am  
 Preston Community Center, Preston**

<b>Commissioner</b>	<b>Present?</b>	<b>Commissioner (Ex-Officio/Non-Voting)</b>	<b>Present?</b>
Monica Paulson Priebe, academic forester (Chair)	✓	Kelsey Ketcheson, WSU Extension	
Amy LaBarge, forest ecologist (Vice-Chair)		Brandy Reed, KCD	✓
Laurie Benson, WA DNR	✓	Martie Schramm, USDA Forest Svc.	
Jeff Boyce, rural cities/professional forester	✓		
Andy Chittick, forest product user/forest landowner	✓		
Wendy Davis, private forest landowner	✓		
Wyatt Golding, non-timber values of forest land			
Daryl Harper, forest landowner	✓		
Steve Horton, forest product user/forest landowner	✓		
Li Hsi, forest landowner	✓		
Bernie McKinney, forest landowner/conservation advocate	✓		
Steven Mullen-Moses, affected Indian tribe			
Grady Steere, large forest landowner			
<b>County Staff Present</b>			
Richard Martin, DNRP			
Wendy Sammarco, DNRP			

**Motions**

Motion 01-0919: to approve the draft minutes from the July 18, 2019 meeting of the Rural Forest Commission as written. Steve Horton made the motion, Wendy Davis seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion 02-0919: RFC will send a letter endorsing the KCD work, relative to the rural forest landowner, to King County Council. Wendy Davis made the motion, Steve H. seconded and the motion carried

Motion 03-0919: Execute a full rewrite/new RFC Report to be completed in early 2020. Steve H. made the motion, Laurie seconded and the motion carried

**Action Items**

Action Item: Future presentation on wood recycling centers.

Action Item: Select new RFC Chair at November Meeting

Action Item: Interview RFC candidates in September/October and agree upon two candidates for recommendation to KC Executive and Council during October conference call.

Action Item: Discuss 30-year forest plan, which will include discussion of a definition of “healthy forest,” during November RFC meeting.

Action Item: Provide rural KC bridges to Richard Martin and he will get answers from Roads Division.

Action Item: Decide on final language for letter to KC Executive and Council in support of KCD forest programs during October RFC conference call.

Action Item: Include discussion during a future RFC meeting of possible amendment to Ordinance 12901 to formally change the name and responsibilities of the RFC to include urban forest.

Action Item: RFC members to edit the current RFC Plan update spreadsheet and send to Richard by November with a target date for a draft plan March 2020.

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Meeting was called to order by RFC chair Monica Paulson Priebe at 9:04 a.m.

### **July 18, 2019 Minutes**

Draft minutes from the July 18, 2019 meeting were reviewed and no changes were recommended. Monica called for a motion to approve the July minutes as written, Steve Horton made the motion, Wendy Davis seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

### **Proposed Recycle Center near Black Diamond/Enumclaw**

The RFC discussed the proposed Recycle Center near Black Diamond/Enumclaw. The operator has a history of non-compliance (out of compliance for fifteen years) in Auburn. An assumption was made that because the operator can't abide by restrictions in Auburn, they are choosing to move. The RFC choose not to take action because this is a single landowner and there were not immediately identifiable broad policy implications. The proposed location for the recycle center is near Bass Lake Natural Area and approximately 2 acres had been cleared; 35 acres planned to be cleared. The permit for the Recycle Center is close to being approved.

Richard provided some answers to questions that were raised during the April 18 RFC conference call and May 16 RFC meeting.

- If you have an operator out of compliance in one location, will it affect a new permit?  
*No, each permit is treated independently*
- How many cases of illegal clearing and grading does KC Department of Local Services address?  
*32 in F Zone: 10 for unpermitted tree cutting; 22 for clearing and grading*
- What are the limits on accessing private property to investigate issues of non-compliance?  
*Non-law enforcement officers cannot enter private property without the landowner permission.*
- Can KC use drones to look at private property?  
*No, not without landowner's permission.*

There was extensive discussion about the Auburn site and recycling facilities in general. Wendy Davis suggested that there should be an ability to limit repeat offenders from simply moving their site of operation. Richard noted that it would take a change of KC Code to do so, but if that was something the RFC wanted to pursue, it was encouraged to do so. Bernie McKinney noted that the Recycle Center is planning to treat wood waste, which is a needed service and produces a valuable product; however, there is are no regulations on the product created or materials processed. For example, it could be building material waste. Li Hsi echoed support for recycling centers as they provide a valuable service to forest landowners.

Action Item: Richard Martin will conduct some additional research of KC code and state regulations as they pertain to operation of recycling centers. Richard will also invite one or more wood recycling operators to a future RFC meeting to discuss their operations.

### **RFC Recruitment**

Because of significant demands on her time, Monica Paulson Priebe has announced that she will step down as RFC chair after the November meeting. However, she would like to remain on the RFC and has agreed to be considered for appointment to a second full term.

Richard Martin reported on progress with recruitment for RFC. Bernie McKinney and Daryl Harper will reach the end of their second full terms on the RFC at the end of the September 2019 meeting, but both have agreed to stay on through the November meeting with the hope that their replacements will be approved in time for the January 2020 meeting. All three members who are completing their first full 3-year terms after the September 2019 meeting have

agreed to be considered for reappointment (Laurie Benson, Amy LaBarge and Monica Paulson Priebe). Thus, there is only a need to fill two positions.

Four applications for new RFC members were received, which is typical for recent recruiting efforts. All candidates will be interviewed in late September or early October. There will be an RFC conference call on October 17<sup>th</sup> to discuss the results of the interviews and vote on the two candidates to be recommended for appointment. RFC recommendations will be provided to Christie True, Director of DNRP, who will then submit the names to KC Executive Constantine. The Executive will forward recommendations to the KC Council for approval. This process should be complete in 4-6 months (January, or early spring)

Action Item: Select new RFC Chair at November Meeting

Action Item: Interview RFC candidates late September/early October

Action Item: Select two candidates for recommendation for appointment during October 17 conference call

### **30 Year Forest Plan Update**

2015 Strategic Climate Action Plan (SCAP) identified a need for a 30-year plan to conserve and expand forest cover in King County. Kathleen Farley Wolf is leading the planning effort and will attend the November meeting to get RFC input. One of the components of the plan is to have a shared vision of “forest health,” which is a term that is not widely accepted within the academic and professional forestry communities. There will be time on the November RFC agenda to discuss development of a definition that at a minimum can apply to King County owned forestland.

Action Item: Discuss 30-Year Forest Plan during November RFC meeting and get input on forest values and strategies

Action Item: Discuss definition of “healthy forest” during the November RFC meeting to help guide forest management on King County owned land

### **Rural Bridges and Weight Limitations**

Larry Jarmillo, Managing Engineer, Department of Local Services (DLS), Roads Division, and Rose LeSmith, Engineering Services Section Manager, DLS, Roads Division, discussed the current status of rural bridges in King County. There are 182 bridges in the Roads Division inventory: 178 vehicular, 3 pedestrian, 1 wildlife. 59 of the vehicle bridges are constructed of timber. Vehicle bridges range from 3 years to over 100 years old, with an average of 51 years old for all bridges (timber bridges average 67 years old). The typical lifespan of steel & concrete bridges is 75-80 years and 40-50 years for timber bridges. As of the end of 2018, 75 bridges exceeded their anticipated lifespan; however, all bridges are inspected frequently and considered safe.

The bridge load rating program has been updated and a number of vehicle bridges now have posted load restrictions with additional postings anticipated. 3 bridges are planned for repair in 2019-2020 and 5 bridges will be replaced [e.g., upper Tokul identified for replacement]. There was significant discussion about load limits and how those limits are interpreted (e.g., does the limit apply to multiple vehicles crossing at the same time or is the total weight for all vehicles on the bridge?). Similarly, there was some confusion about how logging trucks were classified.

Action Item: RFC members will send specific questions about bridges in rural KC to Richard Martin and he will communicate with Larry and Rose to get answers/clarification.

### **Concerns of Commissioners/Agency Reports**

Brandy Reed reminded RFC members that KCD is seeking support for rates and charges increase and that a letter from the RFC would be very helpful. Wendy Davis motioned for the RFC to send a letter supporting KCD forest programs and Steve Horton seconded; the motion passes unanimously. Jeff Boyce will work with Brandy and Monica Paulson Priebe to draft a letter for RFC consideration during the October conference call.

Laurie Benson noted that WA DNR is currently advertising two Good Neighbor Authority timber sales (discussed during the March 21, 2019 meeting). A decision on the Forest Practices Act application for private land near Newcastle (“DeLeo Wall”) has been delayed until early 2020. DNR will be sponsoring a workshop on forest practices

on unstable slopes in the near future.

Bernie McKinney suggested that urban forest conservation is becoming increasingly important and there is no clear line delineating rural and urban forests. Bernie recommended that the RFC consider dropping “Rural” from the commission title and simply become the KC Forest Commission. Rural. Richard read a portion of Ordinance 12901 (1997), which created the Rural Forest Commission: “The purpose of the commission is to advise the executive and council in their efforts to encourage forestry in the rural area. The commission should apply its efforts to making forestry viable in King County’ rural areas.” Richard noted that a formal change in RFC focus would require an amendment to the ordinance. The issue was tabled for discussion at a later date.

Richard Martin provided an update on work to revise/amend/update the 2009 RFC report. A revised version of the strategies spreadsheet was distributed and Richard asked RFC members to find time before the next meeting to review the spreadsheet and provide suggested edits. The spreadsheet will serve as the foundation for an updated report. The new report will 1) include a report card on implementation of the 2009 recommendations/past performance review, 2) identify current King County forest conditions, 3) outline RFC forestry concerns and 4) provide a shared vision for forest management in the future. Report should apply to all rural forest land in KC (private, industrial, public). The report can serve as an important education tool and should be formally presented to the Executive and Council, with special attention directed to recommendations for future work and funding needs. Richard noted that a full rewrite would take time and he would likely need to find writing support (e.g., contracting with technical writer). Steve Horton motioned for the RFC to prepare a full rewrite and update of the 2009 RFC report by early 2020. Laurie Benson seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

Action Item: During the October RFC conference call, members will review a draft and develop a final version of a letter to KC Executive and Council supporting KCD forest programs

Action Item: Include discussion during a future RFC meeting of possible amendment to Ordinance 12901 to formally change the name and responsibilities of the RFC to include urban forest.

Action Item: RFC members to edit the current RFC Plan update spreadsheet and send to Richard by November 2019 with March 2020 the target date for a draft report.

November meeting will be Daryl and Bernie’s last meeting. The meeting will be at Wilderness Lodge in Maple Valley on November 21, 2019

Meeting was adjourned at 11:58

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