

**WSDCC Environment and Climate Caucus Resolution 05 ECC 2022 08 18  
WSDCCRES -- XXX -- XXXXX -- XXX -- ENV – New Approach to WA Forestlands**

**Resolution Calling for a New Approach to Washington’s State Forestlands**

**WHEREAS** greenhouse gasses from the combustion of fossil fuels and other human activity have raised the average temperature of the climate 1.2 degrees Fahrenheit above pre-industrial levels (1), and natural climate solutions have the potential to sequester up to one-third of the emissions necessary to meet global 2030 climate goals (2), with reforestation and natural forest management standing out as having the most sequestration potential while being very cost effective (3), and

**WHEREAS** the Pacific Northwest forest biome is among the best in the world at sequestering carbon while supporting biodiversity (4), and Washington State’s older forests are essential to meet the State’s goal of reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2050, but under current state forest policy, older forests are being clear-cut at an alarming rate of 5,000 acres per year (5), and

**WHEREAS** the Supreme Court of Washington State, in *Conservation Northwest v Lands Commissioner*, determined that the state’s Department of Natural Resources has “myriad ways” to generate revenue from state forestlands or otherwise put them to use for the benefit of the trust beneficiaries (6), and

**WHEREAS** Washington State’s Trust Land Transfer program has proven to be an effective tool for retaining ecosystem service and special lands in public ownership while sustaining and improving potential future economic returns for trust beneficiaries,

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Environment and Climate Caucus of the Washington State Democratic Party calls upon the Board of Natural Resources to oversee the development of a new Forest Conservation and Management Plan for State Trust Lands that restores forest health, protects biodiversity, and maximizes carbon storage and sequestration, while conserving the remaining legacy forests of Western Washington in a way that accelerates the development of structurally complex forests in areas that lack complexity, or are vulnerable to catastrophic wildfire, disease, or pest infestation, and

**THEREFORE IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED** that the new Plan should be developed in close consultation with independent scientists who are not beholden to the timber industry, and

**THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that copies of this resolution be sent to the Governor of the State of Washington, Washington State House and Senate Democrats, the members of the Board

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of Natural Resources, the Commissioner of Public Lands, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Presidents and Regents of the University of Washington, and the President and Trustees of Washington State University, Eastern Washington University, Central Washington University, Western Washington University, and The Evergreen State College, and be submitted to the Washington State Democratic Central Committee for consideration at its September 2022 meeting.

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**Submitted on:** August 7 for consideration at ECC's August 18 membership meeting

**Submitted by** David Perk, ECC member ([davidperk@comcast.net](mailto:davidperk@comcast.net)).

**Passed by the ECC:** at its 2022 August 18 general meeting PENDING

**Posted by:** Steve Verhey, Chair ECC – [verheys@hotmail.com](mailto:verheys@hotmail.com) (509) 899-4956

Angie Homola, Resolutions Chair ECC - [angiehomolad2@gmail.com](mailto:angiehomolad2@gmail.com) (360) 632-3016

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**References**

- (1) <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-12-02/global-temperatures-already-1-2-c-above-pre-industrial-levels>
- (2) <https://www.pnas.org/doi/10.1073/pnas.1710465114>
- (3) <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/sciadv.aat1869>
- (4) <https://esajournals.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/eap.2039>
- (5) <https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/save-washingtons-legacy-forests-to-save-ourselves/>
- (6) <https://www.courts.wa.gov/opinions/pdf/991839.pdf>