Minutes - King County Rural Forest Commission Meeting
Thursday, March 16, 2017, Preston Community Center

Commissioners present: Nate Veranth, forest landowner (Chair); Andy Chittick, forest landowner/sawmill operator; Amy LaBarge, Forest Ecologist; Grady Steere, Campbell Global; Brandy Reed, King Conservation District; Monica Paulson Priebe, Green River College; Steve Mullen-Moses, Snoqualmie Tribe; Bernie McKinney, Green River Coalition

Guests: Mike Lasecki, King Conservation District (KCD); Rachel Konrady, KCD; Greg Wingard, Green River Coalition

King County Staff: Fereshteh Dehkordi, Department of Development and Environmental Review; Richard Martin, WLRD; Linda Vane, Commission Liaison

Chair Nate Veranth called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Motions

Motion 1- 0317 That the minutes of the January 19, 2017 meeting be approved. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Greg Wingard provided comment.

Proposed King County code changes
RFC Code Update Committee: Steven Mullen-Moses, Monica Paulson Priebe, Andy Chittick

Monica Priebe opened the discussion with an overview of the Code Update Committee’s proposals for additional edits to the draft definitions of “forestry” and “forestry uses,” which were introduced at the January 19 commission meeting. Monica reminded the commission that the definitions would be that which serve as a reference points or “guides” in King County Code for those who wished to research regulatory requirements pertaining to forestry and forestry uses elsewhere in the code.

Monica reviewed the edits proposed by the committee. A discussion ensued and additional edits were recommended by the commission members. General comments about the desired outcomes of the code update project included:

- The primary need is for people to understand which activities require a permit and which do not when they read the county code.

- The final version of the definitions should help make people more aware of the need to get county-approved forest management plans [also known as forest stewardship plans].

- Taking the WSU Extension forest stewardship classes would provide certain benefits to forest landowners. It’s an important concept that needs more marketing. DPER could help by telling people who come in for a permit that this service is available.
• Where appropriate, there should be more alignment across Agriculture- and Forestry-related code.

Andy Chittick led the discussion on Code Update Committee’s recommended edits in the reorganized 21A.08.090 Resource Land Uses table and the accompanying conditions. An extensive discussion followed, which included but was not limited to the following themes:

• A new provision for exempting forest recreational trails should include a reference to the standards to be used as the basis for the exemption, e.g., the Forest Service standards or the KC Parks programmatic permit for soft surface recreational trails.

• Structures devoted to warehousing, refrigeration and storage of agricultural products are currently allowed in the Forest zone as well as the Agriculture and Rural Area zones. Storage of forest products should also be allowed. Further discussion would be needed to determine if forest products should simply be added to the existing condition or if a separate condition should be developed for storage of forest products.

• The conditions governing sawmills, the sale of forest products and covered sales areas are difficult to understand and should be clarified.

Staff and Agency Reports and Announcements

King County – Richard Martin, Agriculture, Forestry and Incentive Programs Unit Manager, announced that two new staff positions had been created. He anticipated that interviews for a Regulatory Protection Specialist would take place in April. Steven Mullen-Moses would represent the Rural Forest Commission on the interview panel according to Richard. In addition, a position for a technical assistance Forester would be advertised in April.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Next meeting
The next meeting will be held on May 18, 2017, at the Preston Community Center.