Resolution Supporting a Forest Carbon Tax and Reward Program

WHEREAS industrial logging practices that include clearcutting, dense networks of logging roads, and timber plantations accelerate climate change and increase the vulnerability of Washington's rural communities to its effects.

WHEREAS peer reviewed studies have found that industrial logging activities in Washington including those related to land use conversion are responsible for 32[1] to 45[2] million metric tons CO_2 equivalent each year after accounting for long term storage in wood products, making these activities the second greatest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the state.

WHEREAS peer reviewed studies have also found that industrial logging practices reduce climate resiliency by increasing risks associated with wildfires, heat waves, water shortages, warming waters, flooding, invasive species and other climate stressors.[3]

WHEREAS a forest carbon tax is a market-based mechanism that would run in parallel with the Climate Commitment Act and incentivize the transition to climate smart forest practices that result in lower GHG emissions, increased carbon sequestration, and improved climate resiliency on Washington's forestlands while maintaining forestlands as a lucrative investment.[4]

WHEREAS a forest carbon tax can help the state reduce its budget deficit by providing a reliable source of revenue to finance climate adaptation and by reducing costs associated with wildfires, damages to roads and infrastructure, extreme heat events, flooding, depleted water supplies, loss of fisheries and invasive species – all factors worsened by the synergistic effects of industrial logging and climate change.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we call on Washington state legislators to enact a forest carbon tax and reward program administered by the Department of Ecology and similar to the program drafted for consideration by the Oregon Legislature[5] and which (a) levies a

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[1] https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/ab28bb.

[2] https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10668-024-04523-7.

[3] See summary of peer reviewed research on pages 5 – 8: https://irp.cdn-website.com/0358d1eb/files/uploaded/Wishbone%20SEPA%20comments%205-3.pdf.

[4] https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10668-024-04523-7.

[5] https://irp.cdn-website.com/0358d1eb/files/uploaded/LC2875_DRAFT_2017_Regular_Session.pdf.

carbon tax on logging-related emissions from corporate forestlands over and above the carbon captured by lands permanently protected from logging or enrolled in long term carbon storage agreements; (b) includes tax credits and exemptions that incentivize the adoption of climate smart alternatives to industrial forest practices or reduced impacts from development; (c) establishes a forest carbon incentive fund (FCIF) with the revenues received as a sub-account of the CCA's Operating Account, and (d) permits allocation of FCIF proceeds to state agencies to finance climate adaptation measures, protect carbon rich ecosystems on state owned lands, compensate state trust land beneficiaries for any revenues displaced by such protection, and reduce the cost of implementing climate smart forest practices on private forestlands through a cost share program developed by the Department of Natural Resources.

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Organizational endorsements

- Center for Sustainable Economy, Port Townsend
- This Land, Portland
- 350 Seattle, Seattle
- Washington State Democratic Party (VERSION ADOPTED AT CONVENTION)
- Olympic Climate Action, Port Angeles
- Kettle Range Conservation Group, Republic
- 350 WA, Seattle
- Cascadia Climate Action Now, Kalama
- (Your organization will appear here)

Please send requests to be added to info@sustainable-economy.org, with "Endorsing Forest Carbon Tax and Reward" in subject line. Please provide organizational name, address, phone, website and point of contact.