

**WHATCOM COUNTY**  
Planning & Development Services  
5280 Northwest Drive  
Bellingham, WA 98226-9097  
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**Mark Personius, AICP**  
Director

# **Forestry Advisory Committee** **Meeting**

## **LOCATION**

**Hybrid Meeting: Zoom (details below) and  
Northwest Annex Conference Room  
Whatcom County Planning and Development Services  
5280 Northwest Drive, Bellingham, WA 98226**

**Date: March 5, 2023**

**Time: 4:00-6:00 P.M. Pacific Time PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)**

Whatcom County PDS is inviting you to a scheduled in person or Zoom meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87106867064?pwd=b0NLTIZnTTZqOHBGQk1mY2FQbWFKQT09>

Meeting ID: 871 0686 7064

Passcode: 722152

One tap mobile

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## **Forestry Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda**

March 5, 2024

4:00-6:00 P.M.

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1. Roll call/Determination of Quorum
2. Agenda Review & Approval
3. Approval of 2/6/2023 meeting summary
4. Open Public Session
5. Administration
6. Reports (20 minutes)
  - DNR/BNR (McDonald)
  - Whatcom Forestry Profile Subcommittee (David)
  - Legislative Update (Dawson)
  - Forest Resilience Task Force (McDonald/Petroske)
  - Stewart Mountain Community Forest (Elder)
7. Old Business
  - Comprehensive Plan 2025 Update – Review and approval of a list of major issues that should be addressed in the Forestry Lands section of Chapter 8, Resource Lands (60+ min)
8. New Business
  - Review of 1 section of the draft Whatcom Forestry Profile (Janicki, 30 minutes)
9. Announcements
10. Adjournment

**Attachments:**

- Draft 2/6/2024 meeting summary
- Draft list of major issues to address in the CompPlan
- Approved 2024 FAC Work Plan

*Individuals who require special assistance to participate in the meetings are asked to contact us at least 96 hours in advance. The staff contact at Whatcom County Planning and Development Services is Cliff Strong, [cstrong@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:cstrong@co.whatcom.wa.us), 360-778-5942.*

**Whatcom County Forestry Advisory Committee (FAC)  
Meeting Summary  
February 6, 2024**

Start Time:	4:00 p.m.
Location:	Northwest Annex Central Conference Room/Zoom

<b>Attendees – Members</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Absent (Excused?)</b>
David New	Small forest landowner	√	
Holly Koon	Small forest landowner	√	
John Gold	Commercial forest landowner	√	
David Janicki	Commercial forest landowner		√ (No)
Matt McGee	Harvester	√	
Quentin Dills	Harvester		√ (No)
Jed Dawson	Citizen w/ forestry expertise	√	
Tracy Petroske	Citizen w/ forestry expertise	√	
Aubrey Stargell	Forest product manufacturer	√	
Susan David	Forest product manufacturer	√	
Cory McDonald	DNR	√	
<b>Quorum Present</b>			
<b>Electeds</b>			
<b>Staff</b>			
Cliff Strong	W/C PDS	√	
Priscilla Drewry	W/C PDS	√	
Bennett Knox	W/C P&R	√	
<b>Public</b>			
Lauren Sheehan		√	

**Meeting Summary**

Chair Gold opened the meeting at 4:00 PM.

**Roll Call and Determination of a Quorum**

Roll was called and a quorum was present.

**Agenda Review & Approval**

The agenda was approved with 0 amendments.

**Approval of Minutes**

The meeting summary of 1/3/24 were approved.

**Open Public Session**

No public comments.

**Administration**

**Review & consideration of adoption of 2024 Work Plan**

Chair Gold presented the FAC with a draft 2024 work plan, which the FAC reviewed and amended.

*Motion to approve the 2024 work plan, as amended, carried unanimously.*

## Subcommittee Reports

### **DNR/BNR Update**

Cory McDonald reported that, regarding the CCA chosen sites, DNR is considering next steps after receiving the counties' responses, including that from Whatcom County Council regarding Anderson Creek and Brokedown Palace. The BNR also heard a "State of State Lands" at their last meeting.

### **Whatcom Forestry Profile Subcommittee**

The subcommittee met and have agreed to bring the report to the FAC in 4 sections through June, with editing to be done in July.

### **Legislative Update**

Jed Dawson provided an update on the legislature. Those of interest to the FAC that are progressing include HB 2489, HB 2207, SB 6121, SB 5667, HB 2446, SB 6281, and HB 2201. Those not progressing include HB 2243 and HB 2333. He also informed the FAC of the Nooksack adjudication process and urged folks to get involved if they want to protect any water rights they believe they may have. Info can be found at <https://ecology.wa.gov/water-shorelines/water-supply/water-rights/adjudications/nooksack>

### **Forest Resilience Task Force – Appointment of FAC Representatives**

The FRTF has not yet met, but should by the end of March.

## Old Business

### **Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update**

Cliff led a discussion on what the FAC thinks may need to be amended. David and Tracy had provided some ideas ahead of the meeting and others were developed during the meeting. Cliff announced that they will have time at their March meeting to continue the discussion. He will compile a list of what he's heard so far and have these available for that meeting, though additional ideas are welcome.

Chair Gold nominated Susan David to be in charge of coordinating with Cliff on this process.

*Motion to appoint Susan David to be in charge of coordinating with PDS on this process carried unanimously.*

## New Business

### **Review & consideration of approval of letter to send to the Whatcom County Treasurer, requesting summary of 2023 timber sale distributions to beneficiaries, and summaries of Timber Excise Taxes**

Chair Gold reviewed a letter the Holly Koon and he wrote, on behalf of the FAC, to the Whatcom County Treasurer requesting a summary of 2023 timber sale distributions to beneficiaries, and summaries of Timber Excise Taxes. He will give the County Executive a heads up before sending.

*Motion to approve and send the letter carried unanimously.*

## Announcements

Chair Gold made mention of the excise tax map and distribution info he included in their packets.

David New played a video of a surprising find of spawning Chinook salmon in an intermittent stream on his tree farm near Stanwood.

## Adjournment

Chair Gold adjourned the meeting at 6:00 PM. Next meeting is on March 5, 2024, 4-6pm; Zoom and Northwest Annex Conference Room.

# 2025 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update

## Forestry Advisory Committee Recommendations

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### General Comments

1. The Forest Resource Lands section should address the role of forests in carbon sequestration, and how climate change may affect forestlands.
2. The history in the Process subsection ends in March 1994. If such a history is provided, it ought to be updated to now, including a description of the current Forestry Advisory Committee and what it does; either that or get rid of old history.
3. The Background Summary subsection should address the current discussions on developing a Forest Management Plan for County-owned forests and the creation of the Forest Resiliency Task Force.
4. The FAC is creating a forestry profile document that will provide updated stats on the forestry industry in W/C. It's data and descriptions should be incorporated.

### Specific Comments

1. Add the following new policies:
  - 1.1. Support policies that recognize the local timber industry as a part of the global economy, cognizant of the impact that the local timber industry has on the world supply of timber products, and how changes in the local timber industry might affect the GHG emissions and environmental impacts of the timber industry in other parts of the world.
  - 1.2. Support the use of wood products in building construction wherever possible as a replacement for steel and concrete.
  - 1.3. Implement policies that encourage forest landowners and stewards to use best management practices to maintain and improve the forest health the lands they manage.
  - 1.4. Recognize the ability for sustainable forest practices to produce a wide variety of benefits, and identify opportunities to optimize the wood production and carbon storage capacity of forestlands and wood products in Whatcom County.
2. Modify the following language as shown:
  - 2.1. **Chapter 8 > Background (Page 17):** ~~With a growing population,~~ there is a genuine need to promote conservation of productive forest land and associated public resources through a balanced combination of regulatory protection as mandated by the Growth Management Act, and the provision of incentives for maintaining lands in long-term commercial timber production. ~~Premature~~ conversion of those productive forest lands to other land uses that are incompatible with the management of forest resources is recognized as a threat to the forest industry. Such conversions include changing the use of forest land from commercial timber production to incompatible residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural land uses, or parks and preserves that exclude forest production management. Once forest land has been converted and roads, utilities and other infrastructure have been constructed, the land is not ~~as~~ useful for long-term commercial forest production.

2.2. **Policy 8H-5:** Consider surface mining, along with rock crushing, washing, and sorting, when done as part of conducting forest practices within the forestry zones, as compatible uses.

2.2.1. Does this it need more clarification? Should it be more directly linked to road-building, etc., as part of a harvest exercise? Otherwise, it seems too wide-open and vague.

2.2.2. **Policy 8G-9** addresses conversion outside the Lake Whatcom Watershed Overlay District. Shouldn't the policy apply countywide?

2.2.2.1. Discourage inappropriate conversion of designated forest land to incompatible non-forest uses. It is the intent of this policy not to allow conversion of GMA designated forest lands of long-term commercial significance **outside the Lake Whatcom Watershed Overlay District** if the proposed use is incompatible with the maintenance of long-term forest management. Incompatible uses include those that:

...

## Individual's Suggestions

### David New

- Chapter 8, Resources Lands > Forestry Lands > Implementation Strategies and Actions
  1. NEW: Support policies that recognize the local timber industry as a part of the global economy, cognizant of the impact that the local timber industry has on the world supply of timber products, and how changes in the local timber industry might affect the GHG emissions and environmental impacts of the timber industry in other parts of the world.
  2. MODIFY: Recognize the ability for sustainable forest practices to produce a wide variety of benefits, and identify opportunities to optimize the wood production and carbon storage capacity of forestlands *and wood products* in Whatcom County.
    - Note: I can't find such an existing policy.
  3. NEW: Support the use of wood products in building construction wherever possible as a replacement for steel and concrete.
  4. STRIKE: the "Encourage uneven-aged forest management practices" section.
    - Note: I can't find such language.
  5. NEW: Implement policies that encourage forest landowners and stewards to use best management practices to maintain and improve the forest health the lands they manage.

### Tracy Petroske

- Chapter 8 > Background (Page 17): We can discuss why I propose striking these words... possibly not an option but they are trip-points for me.
  - **With a growing population,** there is a genuine need to promote conservation of productive forest land and associated public resources through a balanced combination of regulatory protection as mandated by the Growth Management Act, and the provision of incentives for maintaining lands in long-term commercial timber production. **Premature** conversion of those productive forest lands to other land uses that are incompatible with the management of forest resources is recognized as a threat to the forest industry. Such conversions include changing the use of forest land from commercial timber production to incompatible residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural land uses, or parks and preserves that exclude forest production management. Once forest land has been converted and roads, utilities and other infrastructure have been constructed, the land is not **as** useful for long-term commercial forest production.
- Policy 8H-5 bears discussion; does it need more clarification? Should this be more directly linked to road-building, etc., as part of a harvest exercise? Otherwise, it seems too wide-open and vague.

- Policy 8H-5: Consider surface mining, along with rock crushing, washing, and sorting, when done as part of conducting forest practices within the forestry zones, as compatible uses.
- Resolution 2022-036 (Council Priorities), #7.1 is TOO VAGUE... it needs specifics about how to support a thriving forest products industry!
  - 7. Build resilience to climate change in forests that enables, both a thriving timber economy and healthy sustainable forest ecosystems for wildlife, carbon sequestration and storage, production and storage of cool, clean water, and environmentally safe recreation.
    - Support a thriving local forest products industry and sustainable local resource economy including living wage jobs.
- Resolution 2022-036 (Council Priorities), #7.10 – We should evaluate... BEFORE rezoning, not WHEN rezoning.
  - Evaluate the net loss or gain in carbon emissions and ecological function when rezoning forest lands for other uses.
- Resolution 2022-036 (Council Priorities), #7.12. A minimum number of working forest land... ???... acres? What unit of “minimum number” ...
  - Consider development pressures on working lands and work with partners on the possibility of establishing a Whatcom County goal of maintaining a minimum number of working forest land that is required to sustain local forestry infrastructure.

**WFAC WORKPLAN AND DELIVERABLES 2024 -- 2/8/23**

ITEMS	TASKS	Add date	Committee Action	PROGRESS / STATUS	KEY ASSUMPTIONS	MEETINGS (2024)																				
						JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC									
<b>Ongoing</b>																										
monitor Board of Natural Resources issues						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X								
monitor / evaluate proposed WDNR timber sales of high public interest						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X								
review annual report from Whatcom Treasurer regarding distributions to Trust Land beneficiaries								X																		
review annual report from Whatcom Treasurer regarding Timber Excise Tax receipts									X																	
engage with FRT taskforce										X																
updates to CNRC						X				X						X										
engage with CIAC																										
public input / new business						X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X								
<b>Short term priorities</b>																										
2024-2025 Comprehensive Plan review		2/6/2024	designate Susan David as point person and subcommittee		adoption by 6/25	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X								
develop profile of the Whatcom County forest sector (confer 2019 Rural Land Study)	final draft to full FAC 12/23==>7/24	2/7/2023	create subcommittee	not completed, reschedule	final draft 7/24			David J	Aubrey S	Susan D	Holly K	X														
request information and accountig system changes from Whatcom Treasurer regarding Timber Excise Tax receipts		2/6/2024	approve letter to Treasurer					X	X																	
<b>Medium term priorities</b>																										
develop position paper on role of the forest sector / working forests in mitigating carbon pollution: state of the science, policy recommendations																										
5-year update of 2017 GHG inventory (forests/trees)				pending recommendation from CIAC																						
review Forestry Chapter of Whatcom County Climate Action Plan (2021)	recommendations to full FAC 6/23	2/7/2023	create subcommittee	approved full FAC 7/23 presented to CIAC 12/23	CAP review initiates in 2025																					
<b>CNRC priorities</b>																										
Compliance Monitoring by Interjurisdictional Committee (IJC)																										
Forestland Management Plan for Lake Whatcom Reconveyance lands (8700 acres)				RFP distributed 11/23					X	X																
Forestland Management Plan for Stewart Mountain Community Forest (500 acres)																										
Forestland Management Plan for Canyon Lake Community Forest (2200 acres)																										
Lake Whatcom Landscape Plan revisions																										
Policy recommendations for improving outcomes on properties assessed under current use taxation (RCW 84.33, 84.34)																										
<b>Parking Lot</b>																										
mitigating illegal activity on forestland	consider motion to designate subcommittee																									
educational tours				interested members to bring proposal back to FAC																						
Phase II Carbon Project parcels / evaluation		1/3/23 memo to council		waiting for response from DNR to Council	legislature failed to authorize WDNR to proceed with program in 2023 session																					
<b>Other</b>																										
Presentation: Comprehensive Plan							Cliff Strong																			
Presentation: Nourse Tree Farm salmon video								Dave New																		
Presentation: USFS Collaboratives									TWS (invited)																	
Presentation: Stewart Mtn CF									Chris Elder																	
Presentation: State Lands fiscal year workplan										Chris Hankey																
Presentation: State Lands HCP implementation												X														

# Forestlands in Whatcom County

Prepared by: David Janicki

## Abstract:

This document aims to concisely analyze the forestlands in Whatcom County, demonstrate the various groups who own or manage those forestlands, and provide a brief history of the management practices used throughout. Such an endeavor requires some generalizations. Tribal and Conservation forestlands make up 1% of the total forest acreage in Whatcom County and will therefore be added to the 'Private Ownership' class. Additionally, due to their overall size, different historical management styles, and conditions, federally owned and managed forests will be split into two categories: United States Forest Service lands, and National Park lands.

## Methodology:

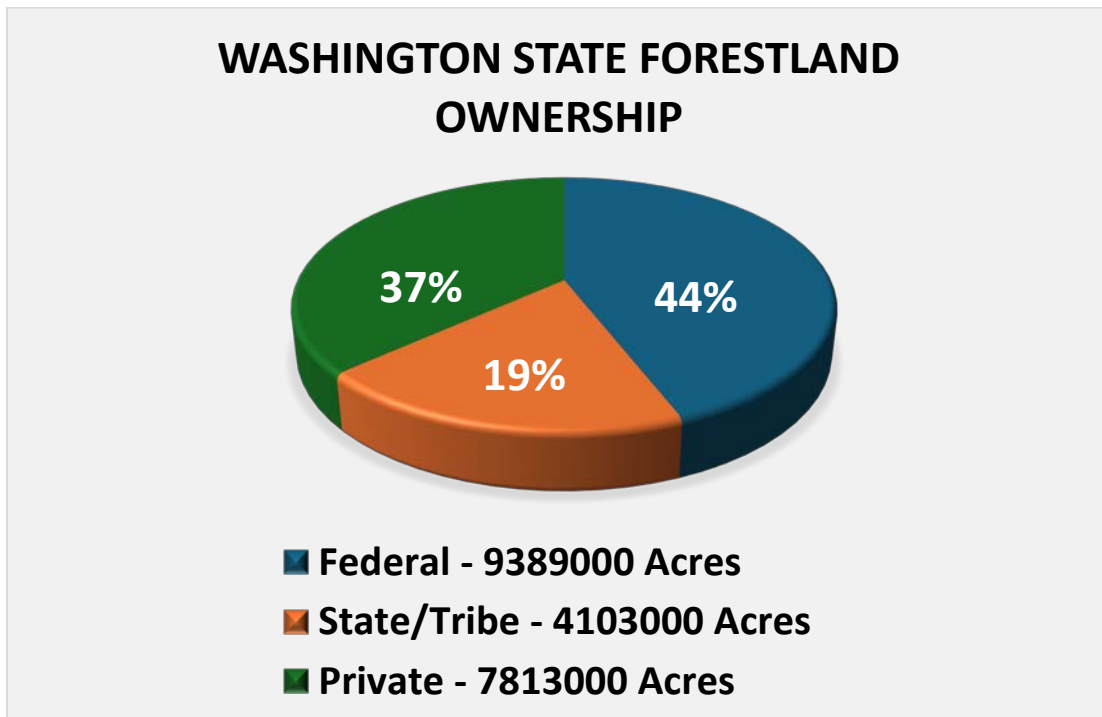
The United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Inventory and Analysis Program provides the primary resource for this summary. Additional data used was furnished by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources. All volume estimates are calculated using the Scribner Rule.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Scribner Log Rule measures the length of the log in feet and the small end diameter in inches. The result is the volume of the log in board feet. Staebler, G. R. (1953). Long Logs or Short Logs with The Scribner Scale. *The Timberman an International Lumber Journal*, LIV (10). [https://doi.org/https://www.fs.usda.gov/pnw/olympia/silv/publications/opt/15\\_Staebler1953b.pdf](https://doi.org/https://www.fs.usda.gov/pnw/olympia/silv/publications/opt/15_Staebler1953b.pdf)

**State Overview:**

Washington State’s total land area is 42.6 million acres. Roughly half of this area is forested. The federal government, primarily the Department of Agriculture, manages about 44% of the forestland in Washington. State Trust Lands, through the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Tribal governments, and County and Municipal bodies manage approximately 19% of Washington’s forestland. The remaining 37% of the forestland is managed by private landowners.<sup>2</sup>

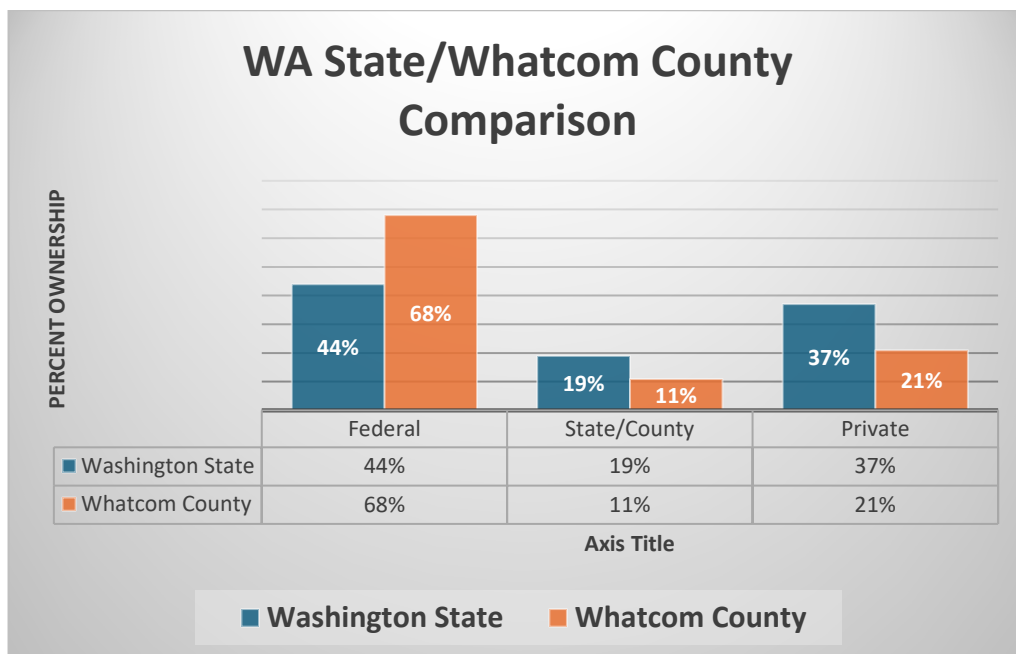
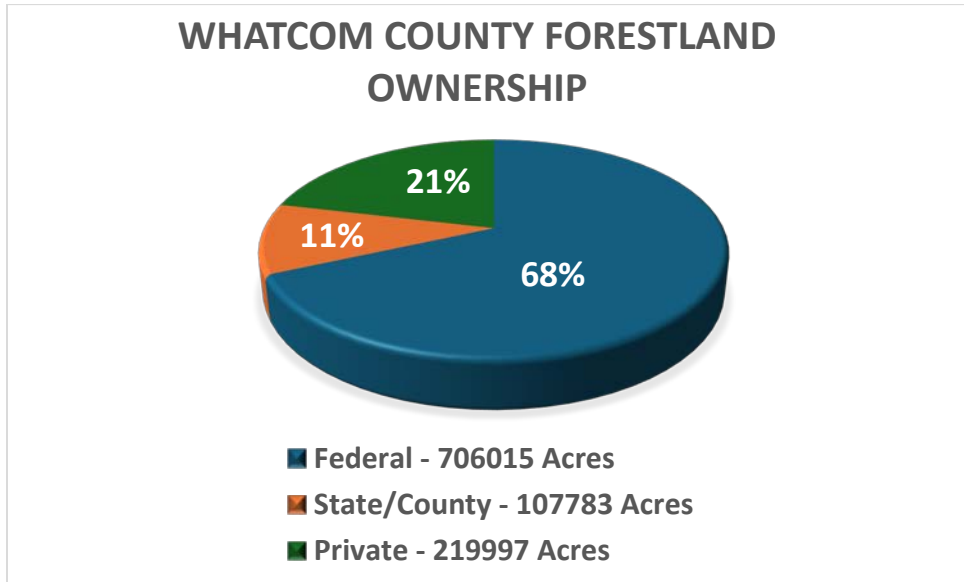


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<sup>2</sup> USDA Forest Service, Forest Inventory and Analysis Program, Fri, 16 Feb 2024 20:19:44 GMT. Forest Inventory EVALIDator web-application Version 2.1.0. St. Paul, MN: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northern Research Station. [Available only on internet: <https://apps.fs.usda.gov/fiadb-api/evalidator>]

**Whatcom County/Washington State Land Management Comparison:**

Of the thirty-nine counties in Washington State, Whatcom County is the 12<sup>th</sup> largest, with a land area of over 1.3 million acres. However, of the 19 counties in Western Washington, Whatcom is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest. Over one million of those 1.3 million acres (75%) are forested, which is 25% higher than the State average. In Whatcom County, 68% of forestland is managed by the Federal government, while 21% of forestland is managed by private landowners, and only 11% of forestland is managed by State and local governments.



### Whatcom County Forestland Ownership:

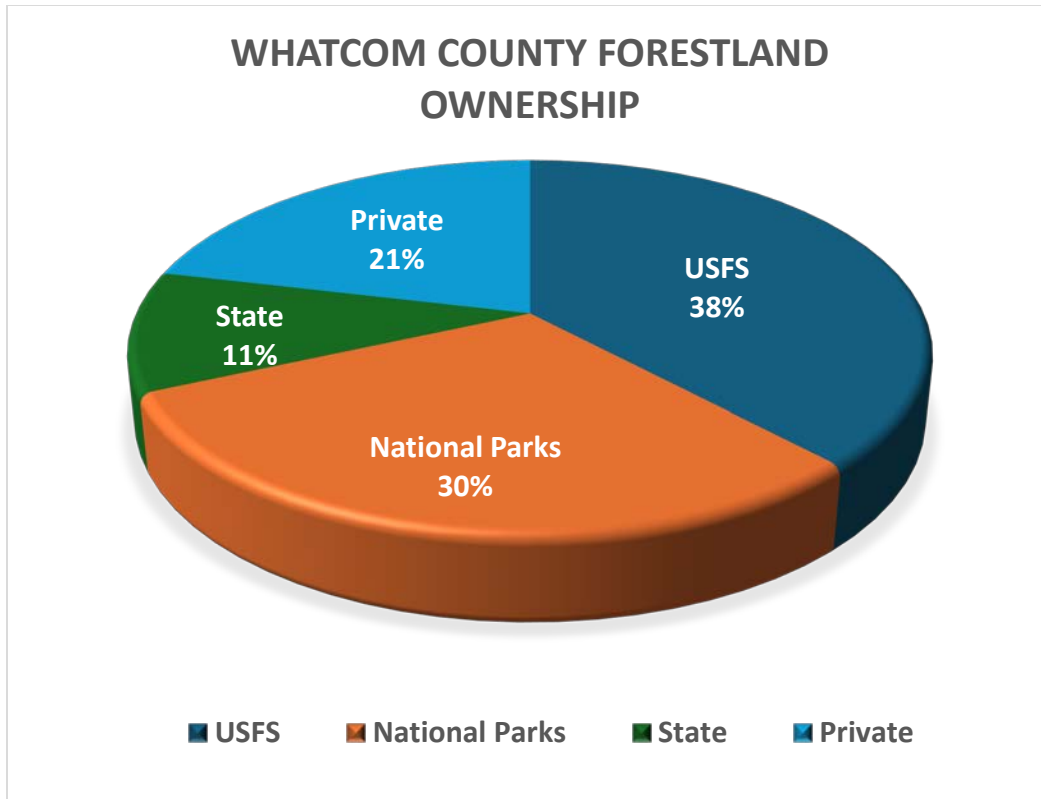
Three primary classes of ownership make up the forested acres in Whatcom County. These include Federal forestland, State forestland, and Private forestland. Federal Forest consist of United States Forest Service (USFS) and National Parks. State and County Forest consist of State and municipal forestlands. Private forestlands consist of Commercial, small family, Tribal, and conservation forestlands.<sup>3</sup>

### WHATCOM COUNTY FORESTLAND<sup>4</sup>

Ownership	Acres	Class	Acres	% of Total
USFS	393,116	USFS	393,116	38%
National Parks	312,919	National Parks	312,919	30%
State	99,105	State	107,783	11%
Municipal	8,678	Private	219,997	21%
Conservation	3,184			
Tribal	6,974			
Commercial	94,481			
Family Forest	115,358			
Total	1,033,815			

<sup>3</sup> These terms are used as defined by the Pacific Northwest Research Station of the USDA Forest Service: Commercial forestland includes land that is privately owned, which has the primary purpose of producing timber products for profit and per owner is 10,000 acres or more of forestland. Family forestland includes land that is privately owned and per owner is less than 10,000 acres of forestland.

<sup>4</sup> WFPA. (2007). *Forest Facts and Figures*. Olympia, Washington; Washington Forest Protection Association. Retrieved 2024, from <https://data.workingforests.org/doc/Forest%20Facts%20and%20Figures%202007.pdf>. USDA Forest Service, Forest Inventory and Analysis Program, Wed, 14 Feb 2024 19:39:23 GMT. Forest Inventory EVALIDator web-application Version 2.1.0. St. Paul, MN: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northern Research Station. <https://apps.fs.usda.gov/fiadb-api/evalidator>



Importantly, the above figures refer to the gross acres and not ‘harvestable’ acres. The acres do not consider the numerous laws and regulations such as, fish streams and habitat, non-fish stream buffers, wetlands, required leave trees, unstable slopes, spotted owl habitat, murrelet habitat, or other critical areas.<sup>5</sup> For example, on the State managed land, of the 99,105 acres under management, less than half of those acres, only 49,000, are harvestable acres.<sup>6</sup>

Given how variant the forestland is in Whatcom County there is no comprehensive data set on the net harvestable acres on private land. However, three small forest landowners in Whatcom County, totaling 5000 acres, shared with us the net harvestable acres on their combined lands are 3990 acres, or roughly 80%. Thus, we can assume that roughly 20% of private forestland acres are no-cut areas.<sup>7</sup>

On Federal Land, the National Parks are completely off-limits to harvest and the USFS lands are regulated even more stringently than State lands. For the past 31 years, no significant harvest activity occurred on forestlands in Whatcom County managed by the USFS. Therefore, as of 2024, in Whatcom County the total net-harvestable acres are 224,997.6, or just under 22% of the gross acreage.

<sup>5</sup> WAC 222-30-021: (n.d.). <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=222-30-021>

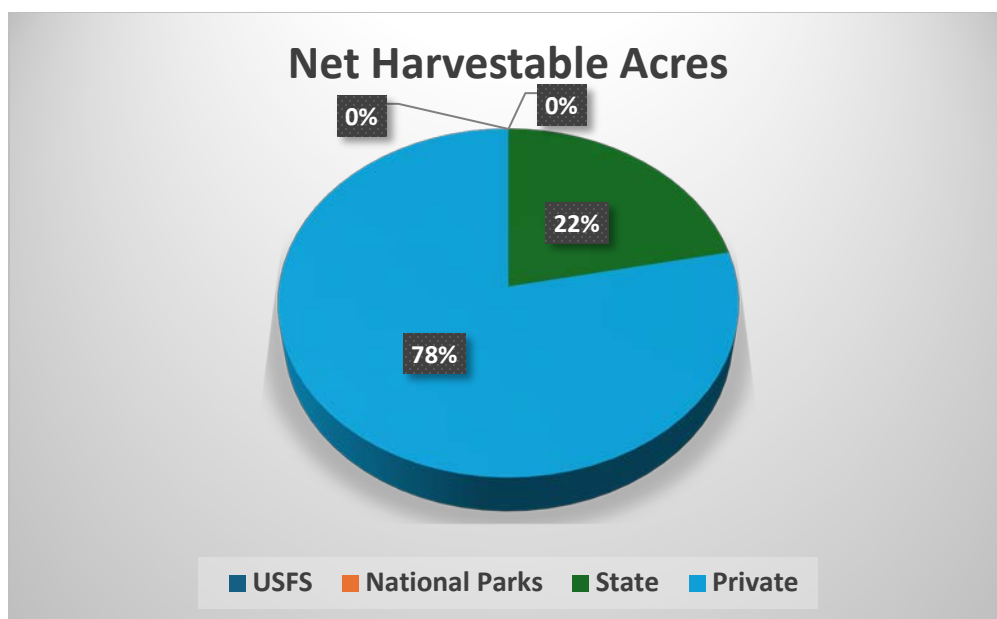
<sup>6</sup> See the Whatcom County Forest Advisory Committee meeting (NEED DATE), Washington State DNR presented to FAC the current manageable acres in Whatcom County owned by the DNR.

<sup>7</sup> The three private landowners are: Galbraith Tree Farm, Sanfi Acres, and Kennedy-Jones Family Trust

**Current Net Harvestable Acres in Whatcom County<sup>8</sup>**

Owner	Total Acres	Net Acres	% Net Acres
USFS	393116	0	0%
National Parks	312919	0	0%
State	99105	49000	49.4%
Private	219997	175997.6	80%
Total	1033815	224997.6	22%

Private land produced 78% of the net harvestable acres, while the State manages the remaining 22%.



Since the USFS previously managed their forestlands in Whatcom County prior 1993, we can create an estimate of potential net-harvestable acres. Within the last decade, the USFS sold several small sales in neighboring counties. Thus, one could postulate that, if the USFS decided to actively manage the land they are tasked with stewarding in Whatcom County, the management practices implemented would resemble those in Skagit and Snohomish County. Therefore, we will assume that the no-cut areas on USFS land to be roughly 50%, or as much as on State land.<sup>9</sup> This conservative assumption yields the following: of the over 1million acres of forestland in Whatcom County, nearly half, 421,555 of those acres are permanently off limits to be harvested for lumber.

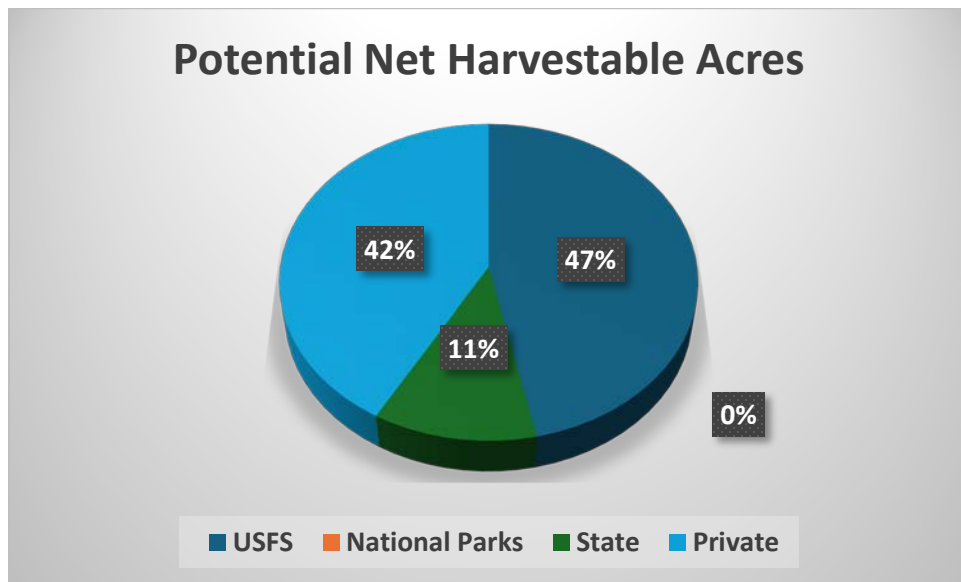
*\*Assumes the USFS begins actively managing their forestland*

<sup>8</sup> County forestland acres were removed from the state forestland data set to reflect a more accurate percentage.

<sup>9</sup> As of 2023, the USFS does not currently do any active management in Whatcom County, here is a timber sale contract sold in Skagit County that shows the emphasis the USFS puts on forest health, stream restoration, stewardship, and thinning. Additionally, the leave tree requirements on Federal land are much more exhaustive, i.e., no cedar, no alder (except for ROW), no fir over 23inches, and no white wood over 25inches [fseprd553517.pdf \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/forestry/programs/forest-restoration/forest-restoration-projects/fseprd553517.pdf)

Owner	Total Acres	Net Acres	% Net Acres
USFS	393116	196558	50%
National Parks	312919	0	0%
State	99105	49000	49.4%
Private	219997	175997.6	80%
Total	1033815	421555.6	41%

Assuming the USFS started managing their forestlands in Whatcom County, the total number of net-harvestable acres becomes 421,555, which is still less than half, 41% of the gross forestland acres in Whatcom County.

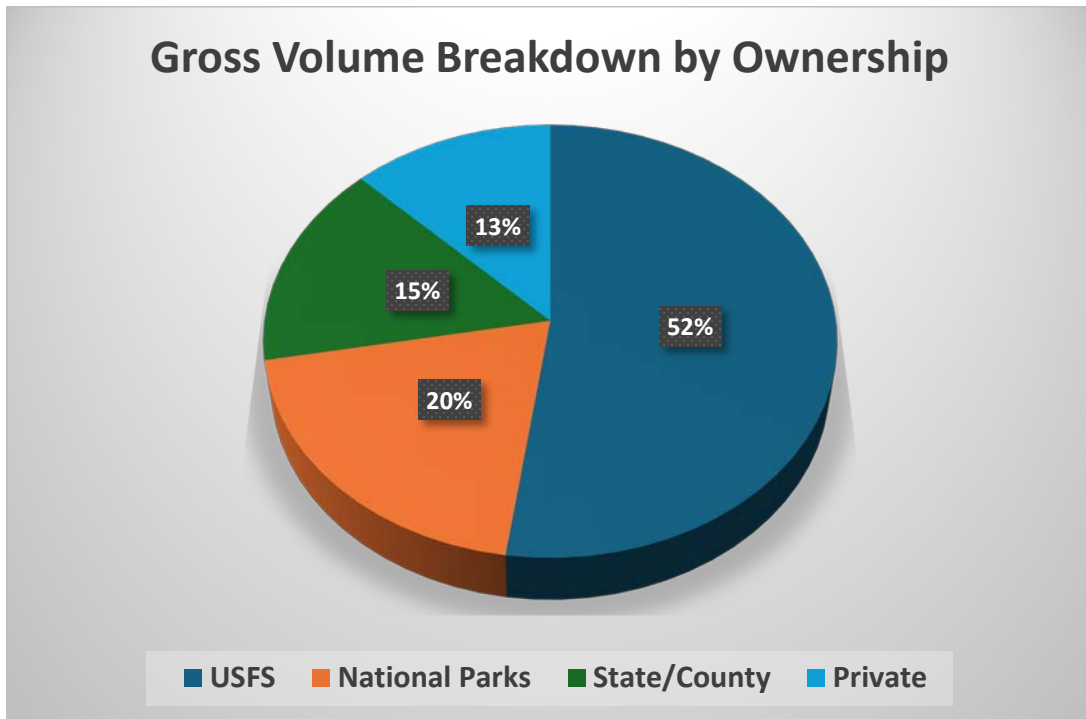


### Whatcom County Gross Timber Volume:

According to the United States Forest Service and using the Scribner scaling method, Whatcom County currently has an estimated net sawlog volume of 20.1 billion board feet or 20MBF/acre on average. The USFS forestland contains half of that volume (10.4 billion board feet). The national park lands have 3.9 billion board feet. State trust lands have 2.6 billion board feet, with another 3.1 million board feet on county, municipal, and tribal land. The remaining 2.5 billion board feet is on private land.<sup>10</sup>

#### Whatcom County MBF Ownership

Owner	MBF	% of Volume
USFS	10483119	52%
National Parks	3978989	20%
State/County	3083448	15%
Private	2512044	13%



<sup>10</sup> USDA Forest Service, Forest Inventory and Analysis Program, Fri, 16 Feb 2024 23:42:25 GMT. Forest Inventory EVALIDator web-application Version 2.1.0. St. Paul, MN: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northern Research Station. [Available only on internet: <https://apps.fs.usda.gov/fiadb-api/evalidator>]

### Growth and Mortality by Ownership:

According to data from the United States Department of Agriculture, the average **annual** mortality of sawlog volume, in board feet (Scribner rule), in Whatcom County is 146,267MBF. Put in perspective, from 2012-2017 the total timber volume sold, and harvested, in Whatcom County on State managed lands was 120,489MBF, or over 20million board feet less than the sawlog timber volume that dies on average each year in Whatcom County. Nearly 75% of the total mortality (109,107MBF) happens on USFS managed land. The National Parks loses 13,667MBF annually to mortality. State and County forestlands lose a combined 16,196MBF annually to mortality (13,314MBF on State land and 2,882MBF on County land). Privately managed lands lose 7,296MBF annually to mortality.<sup>11</sup>

#### Annual Mortality by Ownership

Ownership	MBF Mortality	Mortality Rate	Total %
USFS	109107	1.09%	75%
National Parks	13667	0.76%	9%
State	16196	0.62%	11%
Private	7296	0.30%	5%

The abovementioned data shows the total annual growth on timberlands in Whatcom County to be 312,701MBF. The majority of the total growth, 36%, occurs on private land (112,213MBF). State and County managed lands grow approximately 82,005MBF (26%). USFS managed lands account for 20% of the total growth (63,788MBF) and the National Parks grow 54,695MBF, or 17% of the annual total.

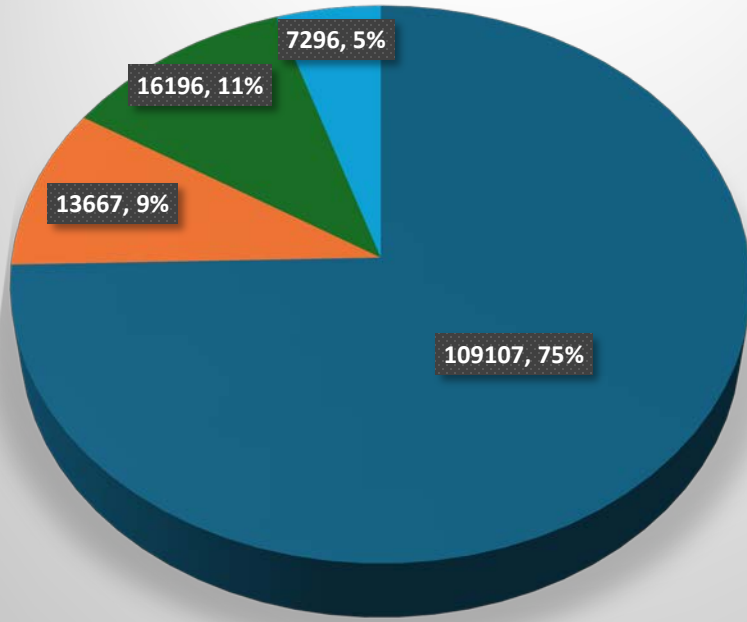
#### Annual Growth by Ownership

Ownership	MBF Growth	Growth Rate	Total %
USFS	63788	0.64%	20%
National Parks	54695	3.04%	17%
State	82005	3.15%	26%
Private	112213	4.68%	36%

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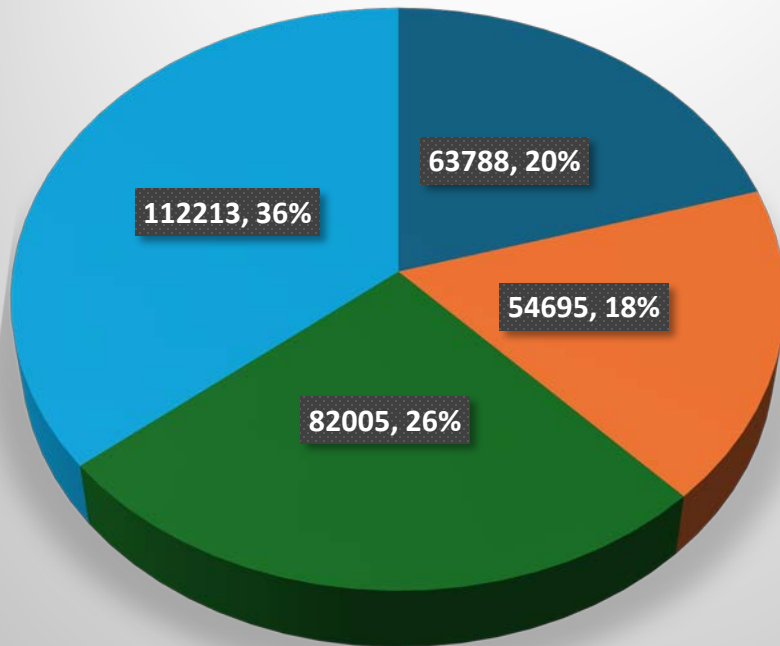
<sup>11</sup> USDA Forest Service, Forest Inventory and Analysis Program, Mon, 26 Feb 2024 19:18:19 GMT. Forest Inventory EVALIDator web-application Version 2.1.0. St. Paul, MN: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northern Research Station. [Available only on internet: <https://apps.fs.usda.gov/fiadb-api/evalidator>]

### Annual Mortality By Ownership



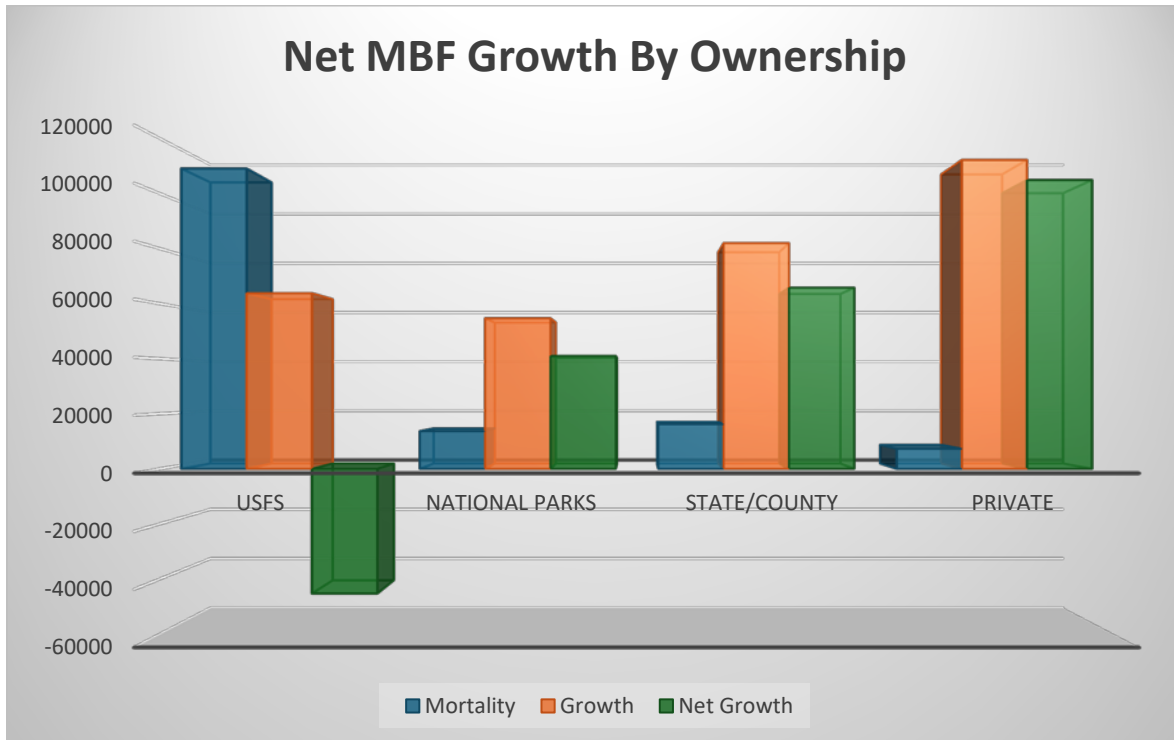
■ USFS ■ National Parks ■ State ■ Private

### Annual MBF Growth by Ownership



■ USFS  
■ National Parks  
■ State  
■ Private

Thus, the total net annual growth in ‘Thousand Board Feet’ of timber volume in Whatcom County is 166,435MBF. Of the four ownership categories, the forestland managed by the USFS is the only one with a negative net growth, -45,319MBF. National Park forestlands net 41,028MBF annually. State and county managed lands net 65,809MBF annually. The highest net growth, both in terms of percentage and absolute volume, occurs on Private forestlands, 104,917MBF each year.



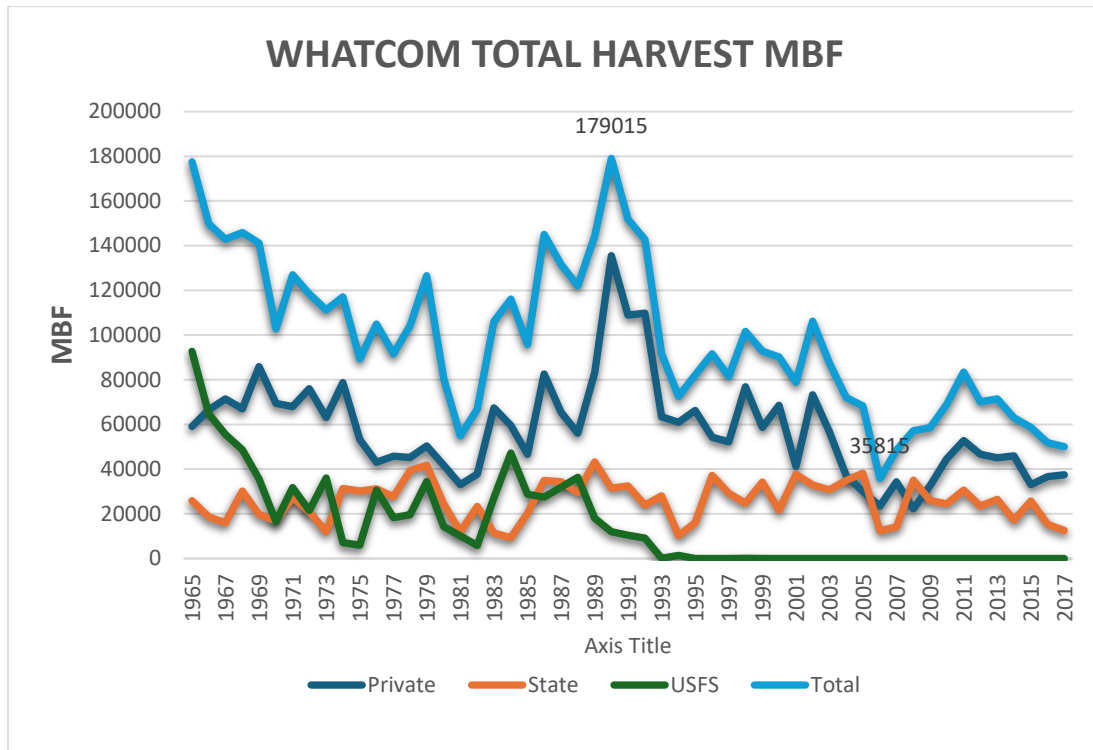
Put differently, 38% of the total forestland and 52% of the total volume in Whatcom County has a negative annual growth rate of -.43%. While 21% of the total forest area and 13% of the total volume in the County has a positive annual growth rate of 4.18%.

#### Net Growth Rate Breakdown

Ownership	Mortality	Growth	Net Growth	%Mortality	%Growth	Net Growth Rate
USFS	109107	63788	-45319	1.04%	0.61%	-0.43%
National Parks	13667	54695	41028	0.34%	1.37%	1.03%
State/County	16196	82005	65809	0.53%	2.66%	2.13%
Private	7296	112213	104917	0.29%	4.47%	4.18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>146266</b>	<b>312701</b>	<b>166435</b>	<b>0.73%</b>	<b>1.56%</b>	<b>0.83%</b>

### Historical Management Practices:

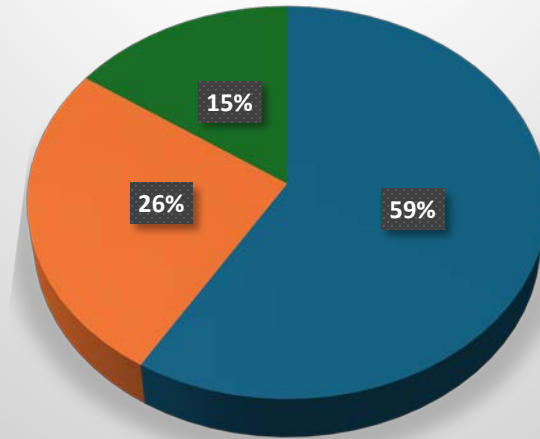
From 1965-2017 Whatcom County harvested a total of 5,221,424MBF, with an average of 98,517MBF harvested each year. All of this volume comes from State, Private, and USFS managed lands. Before the Spotted Owl legislation in 1992, Whatcom harvested an average of 120,954MBF each year. That number dropped by 39% to 73,388MBF/year from 1993-2017.<sup>12</sup> All of the volume after 1992 comes from Private and State managed lands. The federal law that went into effect in 1993 essentially made harvesting 'old growth' or very mature forest, impossible.



Since 1965, Private forestlands produced 3,064,565MBF, or 59% of the total harvested volume, in Whatcom County. During that same period, State forestlands produced 1,357,887MBF, or 26% of the county total, and the USFS forestlands produced 798,972MBF, or 15%. However, prior to 1993, when the USFS actively managed their forest, the USFS produced 25% of the total harvested volume in Whatcom County, the State produced 21%, and Private landowners produced 55%.

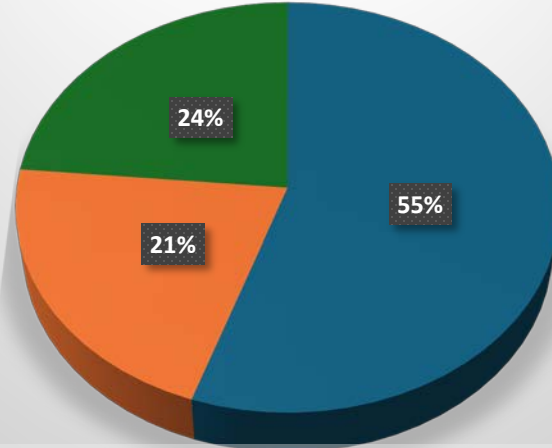
<sup>12</sup> 1988-2000 an ERA of incremental changes. Environment and Natural Resources Division. (2023, September 14). <https://www.justice.gov/enrd/1988-2000>

## Total Harvest by Sector 1965-2017



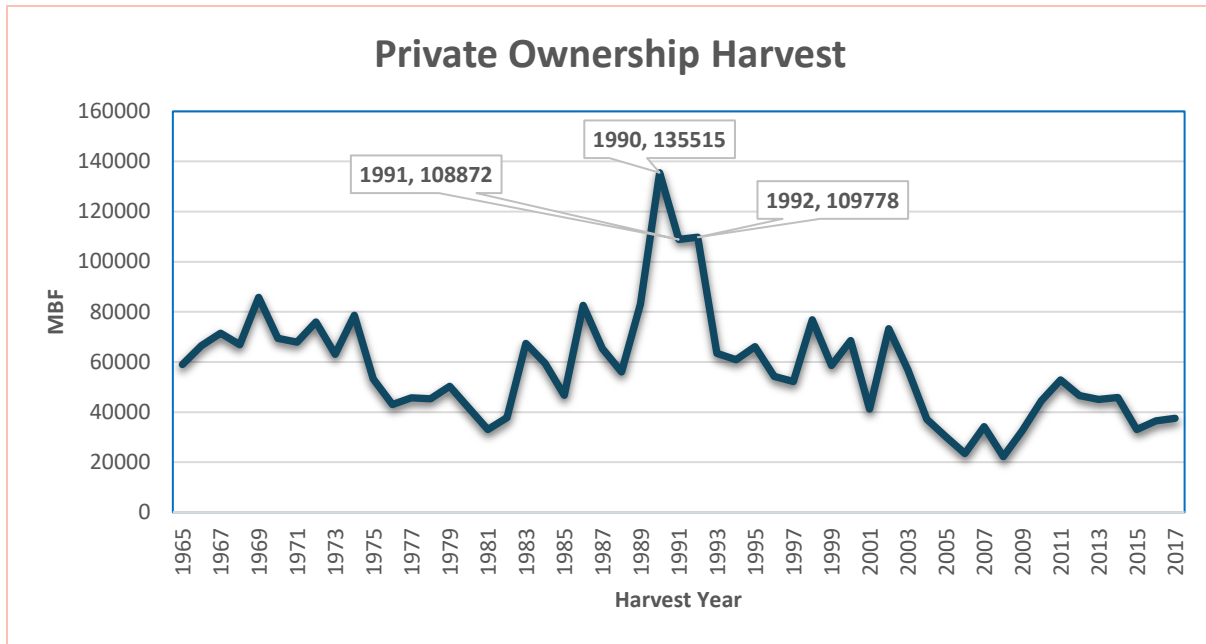
■ Private: 3,064,565MBF ■ State: 1,357,887MBF ■ USFS: 798,972MBF

## Harvest Totals by Sector 1965-1992



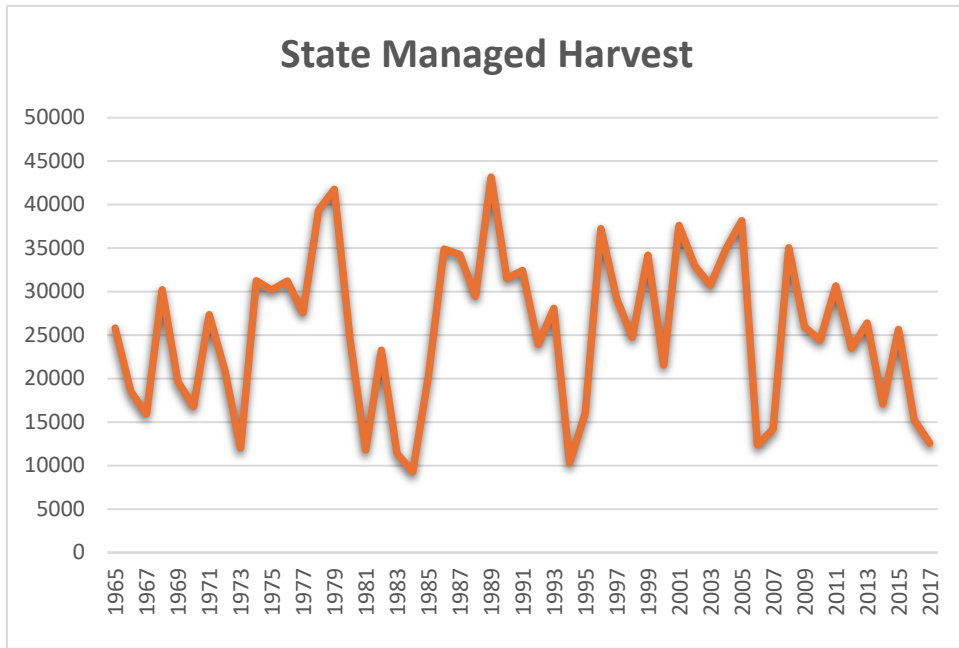
■ Private: 1870289MBF ■ State: 718963MBF ■ USFS: 797462MBF

### Private Harvest Trends:



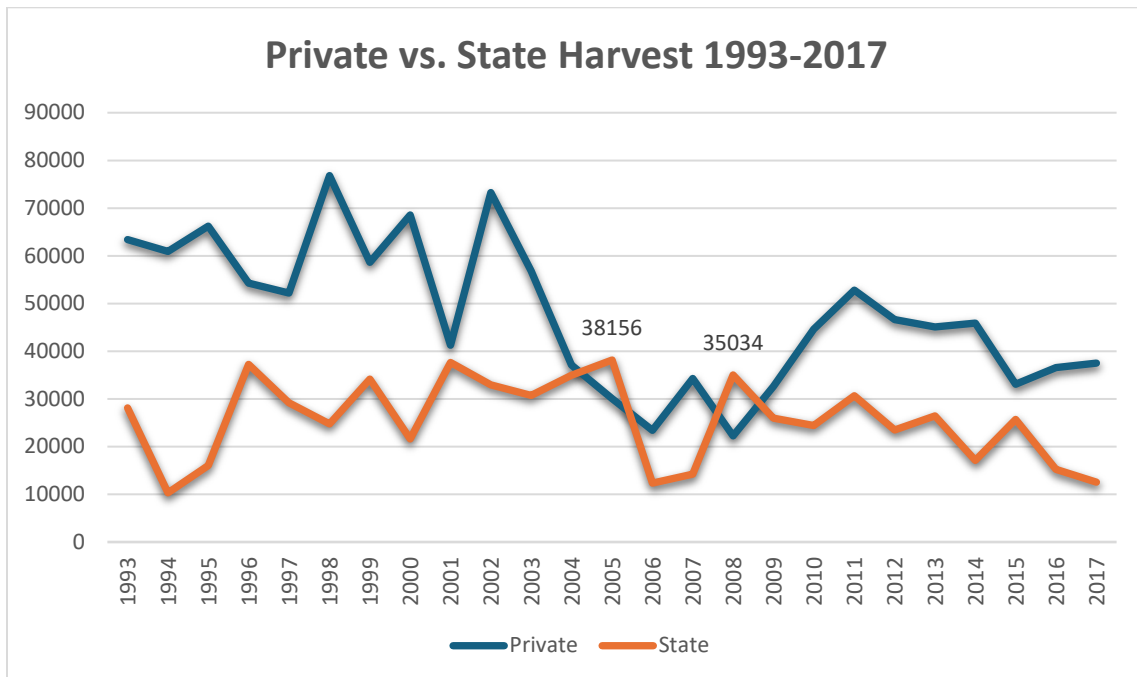
Of the three actively managed ownership classes in Whatcom County, economic and political factors influence Private forestlands the most. The largest outlier among Private forestlands occurred immediately before the Spotted Owl legislation became law. A great and rapid increase in private sector harvesting was the greatest variant caused by this legislation, primarily because landowners understood that much of the volume on their land would be permanently tied-up once the legislation became law. Excluding the four years prior to the law being passed, Private forestlands harvested 53,617MBF on average. However, from 1989-1992, Private forestlands harvested 104,630MBF on average each year, nearly double the historic average.

**Additional Relevant Charts:**



Of the three ownership classes who have historically actively managed their forestlands, the State is the most consistent. Harvesting on average 25620MBF each year, with the largest year being 43179MBF in 1989 and the smallest year being 9287MBF in 1984. The range of 33892MBF is the smallest of all three classes.

Only once since 1965 has the USFS produced more volume than the Private forestland, this occurred in 1965, USFS – 92700MBF vs Private – 59035MBF. Only twice during that same period did the state managed lands produce more than privately managed forests, 2008 and 2005.





## GLOSSARY

**Forest Land:** *Land has at least 10 percent canopy cover of trees of any size or has had at least 10 percent canopy cover of trees in the past, based on the presence of stumps, snags, or other evidence, and that will be naturally or artificially regenerated. Additionally, the land is not subject to non-forest use(s) that prevent normal tree regeneration and succession, such as regular mowing, intensive grazing, or recreation activities. Forest land includes transition zones, such as areas between heavily forested and non-forested lands that are at least 10-percent canopy cover with trees and forest areas adjacent to urban and built-up lands. Also included are pinyon-juniper and chaparral areas in the West and afforested areas. The minimum area for classification of forest land is 1 acre in size and 120 feet wide measured stem-to-stem from the outer-most edge. Unimproved roads and trails, streams, and clearings in forest areas are classified as forest if less than 120 feet wide. This is the domestic reporting definition, different from the definition used in international reporting (which includes a minimum tree canopy height criteria).*

**Forest Service Land—** *Federal land that, prior to 1993 was actively managed with the primary purpose of producing timber products*

**MBF (Thousand Board Feet)—** *A unit of measurement used in the timber industry to measure the volume of lumber in a tree. Timberland owners typically measure both cost and revenue in terms of MBF. Sawmills will pay the logger or tree farm owner by the thousand board feet (MBF) or by the ton.*

**Net-Harvestable Acres—**

**Active Management—**