

21 Years Since Forests & Fish Promised SFLOs Regulatory Relief (What 21 years looks like in the life of a tree)



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Year 1

Planted a seedling with my Grandson



Year 10

My adolescent Grandson & tree



Year 21

The same tree - with Grandson
and now a Great Grandson

**Do trees progress faster than our state
bureaucracies?**

**How many more generations will it take
State Agencies to comply with Legislation?**

Key Forests & Fish Legislation References:

Small Business Economic Impact Statement **findings of Disproportionate Impacts** on small family forest owners.

Mitigations included:

- Small Landowner Office in DNR to provide technical services – **grossly understaffed & no help with stream typing, nor steep slope delineation.**
- Forest Riparian Easement Program to compensate 50% of loss – **grossly underfunded & 7 year backlog.**
- Family Forest Fish Passage Program – **progress, but hundreds on waiting list.**
- Regulatory deference to small family forest owners – **despite much effort, essentially non-existent. Achieving this Legislative intent would significantly reduce Capital Budget needs for FREP and reduce risks of land use conversion.**

Subsequent Disproportionate Impacts:

- **Thousands** of hours of volunteer effort now required over 21 years to achieve/maintain the mitigation approved by the 1999 Legislature.
- Washington Farm Forestry Assoc. is primarily about education – now we must spend inordinate resources in Olympia because we conditionally supported Forests and Fish in 1999 – in effect: **No good deed goes unpunished!**

Recent Regulatory Relief Efforts:

In February **2015** the Forest Practice Board accepted for review by the Adaptive Management Program our **science based, peer reviewed** proposal for smaller buffers for our smaller, lower impact harvests that are consistent with:

- RCW 76.13.100 (2) partial: *“the legislature further finds that small forest landowners should have the option of . . . alternate harvest restrictions **on smaller harvest units** that may have a **relatively low impact** on aquatic resources.”*
- RCW 76.13.110 (3) partial: *“alternate harvest restrictions shall meet riparian functions while **requiring less costly regulatory prescriptions.**”*

Our simple proposals are stream & harvest size appropriate – some prescriptions actually provide more stream functionality - others are equivalent, and at worst case **“relatively low impact”** compared to industrial prescriptions. **Win-Win-Win!**

For the last 21 years, and particularly since 2015, we’ve worked collaboratively, so far largely unsuccessfully with these WA State Agencies on the Forest Practices Board:

- **Department of Natural Resources**
- **Department of Fish & Wildlife**
- **Department of Ecology**
- **Department of Agriculture**
- **Department of Commerce**

What more can we do?