

**RCW 79.15.540 Intent—Contract harvesting—State trust forestland with identified forest health deficiencies.** (1) The legislature intends to ensure, to the extent feasible given all applicable trust responsibilities, that trust beneficiaries receive long-term income from timberlands through improved forest conditions and by reducing the threat of forest fire to state trust forestlands.

(2) In order to implement the intent of RCW 76.06.140, the department may initiate contract harvesting timber sales, or other silvicultural treatments when appropriate, in specific areas of state trust forestland where the department has identified forest health deficiencies as enumerated in RCW 76.06.140. All harvesting or silvicultural treatments applied under this section must be tailored to improve the health of the specific stand, must be consistent with any applicable state forest plans and other management agreements, and must comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations regarding the harvest of timber by the department of natural resources.

(3) In utilizing contract harvesting to address forest health issues as outlined in this section, the department shall give priority to silvicultural treatments that assist the department in meeting forest health strategies included in any management or landscape plans that exist for state forests. If such plans are not in place, the department shall prioritize silvicultural treatments for forest health with higher priority given to the protection of public health and safety, public resources as defined in RCW 76.09.020, and the long-term asset value of the trust. [2007 c 109 § 2; 2004 c 218 § 5.]

**Findings—2007 c 109:** "The legislature finds that chapter 218, Laws of 2004 authorized the department of natural resources to utilize contract harvesting for silvicultural treatments to improve forest health on state trust lands, in accordance with RCW 76.06.140 and 79.15.540. The legislature further finds that the use of contract harvesting for silvicultural treatments has proven effective and that continued utilization is important to improve and maintain forest health. Therefore, the legislature finds that it is necessary to remove the expiration date for this authority, set for December 31, 2007, and to continue the use of contract harvesting for silvicultural treatments to improve forest health on state trust lands." [2007 c 109 § 1.]

**Effective date—2004 c 218:** See note following RCW 76.06.140.