

**RCW 77.85.190 Federal assurances in forests and fish report—
Events constituting failure of assurances—Governor's authority to
negotiate.**

(1) Chapter 4, Laws of 1999 sp. sess. has been enacted on the assumption that the federal assurances described in the forests and fish report as defined in RCW 76.09.020 will be obtained and that forest practices conducted in accordance with chapter 4, Laws of 1999 sp. sess. and the rules adopted under chapter 4, Laws of 1999 sp. sess. will not be subject to additional regulations or restrictions for aquatic resources except as provided in the forests and fish report.

(2) The occurrence of any of the following events shall constitute a failure of assurances:

(a) Either (i) the national marine fisheries service or the United States fish and wildlife service fails to promulgate an effective rule under 16 U.S.C. Sec. 1533(d) covering each aquatic resource that is listed as threatened under the endangered species act within two years after the date on which the aquatic resource is so listed or, in the case of bull trout, within two years after August 18, 1999; or (ii) any such rule fails to permit any incidental take that would occur from the conduct of forest practices in compliance with the rules adopted under chapter 4, Laws of 1999 sp. sess. or fails to confirm that such forest practices would not otherwise be in violation of the endangered species act and the regulations promulgated under that act. However, this subsection (2)(a) is not applicable to any aquatic resource covered by an incidental take permit described in (c) of this subsection;

(b) Either the national marine fisheries service or the United States fish and wildlife service shall promulgate an effective rule under 16 U.S.C. Sec. 1533(d) covering any aquatic resource that would preclude the conduct of forest practices consistent with the prescriptions outlined in the forests and fish report. However, this subsection (2)(b) is not applicable to any aquatic resource covered by an incidental take permit described in (c) of this subsection;

(c) Either the secretary of the interior or the secretary of commerce fails to issue an acceptable incidental take permit under 16 U.S.C. Sec. 1539(a) covering all fish and wildlife species included within aquatic resources on or before June 30, 2005. An acceptable incidental take permit will (i) permit the incidental take, if any, of all fish and wildlife species included within aquatic resources resulting from the conduct of forest practices in compliance with the prescriptions outlined in the forests and fish report; (ii) provide protection to the state of Washington and its subdivisions and to landowners and operators; (iii) not require the commitment of additional resources beyond those required to be committed under the forests and fish report; and (iv) provide "no-surprises" protection as described in 50 C.F.R. Parts 17 and 222 (1998);

(d) Either the national marine fisheries service or the United States fish and wildlife service fails to promulgate an effective rule under 16 U.S.C. Sec. 1533(d) within five years after the date on which a fish species is listed as threatened or endangered under the endangered species act which prohibits actions listed under 16 U.S.C. 1538;

(e) The environmental protection agency or department of ecology fails to provide the clean water act assurances described in appendix M to the forests and fish report; or

(f) The assurances described in (a) through (e) of this subsection are reversed or otherwise rendered ineffective by subsequent federal legislation or rule making or by final decision of any court of competent jurisdiction.

Upon the occurrence of a failure of assurances, any agency, tribe, or other interested person including, without limitation, any forestland owner, may provide written notice of the occurrence of such failure of assurances to the legislature and to the office of the governor. Promptly upon receipt of such a notice, the governor shall review relevant information and if he or she determines that a failure of assurances has occurred, the governor shall make such a finding in a written report with recommendations and deliver such report to the legislature. Upon notice of the occurrence of a failure of assurances, the legislature shall review chapter 4, Laws of 1999 sp. sess., all rules adopted by the forest practices board, the department of ecology, or the department of fish and wildlife at any time after January 1, 1999, that were adopted primarily for the protection of one or more aquatic resources and affect forest practices and the terms of the forests and fish report, and shall take such action, including the termination of funding or the modification of other statutes, as it deems appropriate.

(3) The governor may negotiate with federal officials, directly or through designated representatives, on behalf of the state and its agencies and subdivisions, to obtain assurances from federal agencies to the effect that compliance with the forest practices rules as amended under chapter 4, Laws of 1999 sp. sess. and implementation of the recommendations in the forests and fish report will satisfy federal requirements under the endangered species act and the clean water act and related regulations, including the negotiation of a rule adopted under section 4(d) of the endangered species act, entering into implementation agreements and receiving incidental take permits under section 10 of the endangered species act or entering into other intergovernmental agreements.

(4)(a) It is expressly understood that the state will pursue a rule delineating federal assurances under 16 U.S.C. Sec. 1533(d) and may concurrently develop a Sec. 10(a) habitat conservation plan by June 2005. The department of natural resources must report regularly to the house of representatives and senate natural resources committees on the progress of the program, and on any technical or legal issues that may arise.

(b) The forest and fish agreement as embodied in chapter 4, Laws of 1999 sp. sess. and this chapter, the rules adopted by the forest practices board to implement this chapter, and all protections for small forestland owners, are reaffirmed as part of the extension of time granted in chapter 228, Laws of 2002 and will be collectively included in the federal assurances sought by the state of Washington. [2002 c 228 s 1; 1999 sp.s. c 4 s 1301. Formerly RCW 75.46.350.]

Part headings not law—1999 sp.s. c 4: See note following RCW 77.85.190.