

RCW 76.13.100 Findings. (1) The legislature finds that increasing regulatory requirements continue to diminish the economic viability of small forestland owners. The concerns set forth in RCW 77.85.180 about the importance of sustaining forestry as a viable land use are particularly applicable to small landowners because of the location of their holdings, the expected complexity of the regulatory requirements, and the need for significant technical expertise not readily available to small landowners. The further reduction in harvestable timber owned by small forestland owners as a result of the rules to be adopted under RCW 76.09.055 will further erode small landowners' economic viability and willingness or ability to keep the lands in forestry use and, therefore, reduce the amount of habitat available for salmon recovery and conservation of other aquatic resources, as defined in RCW 76.09.020.

(2) The legislature finds that the concerns identified in subsection (1) of this section should be addressed by establishing within the department of natural resources a small forestland owner office that shall be a resource and focal point for small forestland owner concerns and policies. The legislature further finds that a forestry riparian easement program shall be established to acquire easements from small landowners along riparian and other areas of value to the state for protection of aquatic resources. The legislature further finds that small forestland owners should have the option of alternate management plans or alternate harvest restrictions on smaller harvest units that may have a relatively low impact on aquatic resources. The small forestland owner office should be responsible for assisting small landowners in the development and implementation of these plans or restrictions. [2003 c 39 § 36; 1999 sp.s. c 4 § 501.]

Part headings not law—1999 sp.s. c 4: See note following RCW 77.85.180.