

WAC 222-21-032 Eligibility criteria. (1) Qualifying small forest landowners must complete a timber harvest to be eligible for a forestry riparian easement, unless a commercially reasonable harvest is not possible according to subsection (5) of this section or the only timber available to harvest meets the criteria of uneconomic to harvest according to subsection (6) of this section.

(2) The easement premises cannot contain unacceptable liabilities as determined by the small forest landowner office. Unacceptable liabilities include, but are not limited to, the presence of hazardous substances on the land or other conditions that may create a liability to the department, any existing uses of the property that may jeopardize the protection of the easement premises and qualifying timber, and situations in which the applicant is unwilling or unable to provide reasonable protection against financial loss to the state.

(3) Where more than one person has an interest in property to be covered by a forestry riparian easement, all persons holding rights to control or affect the easement premises and qualifying timber must execute the easement documents or otherwise subordinate their interest to the easement being acquired by the state. This includes tenants in common, joint tenants, holders of reversionary interests, lien holders, and mortgages.

(4) **Commercially reasonable harvest.** The small forest landowner office will consider the following criteria to determine if an area covered by a forest practices application involves a commercially reasonable harvest. The proposed harvest must meet all five of the following requirements:

(a) The harvest unit is immediately adjacent to or physically connected to qualifying timber;

(b) The application is for a forest practice involving a timber harvest and the harvest would not result in a conversion to a use other than commercial timber operation;

(c) The landowner is not eligible for the twenty acre exemption under WAC 222-30-023;

(d) The value of the timber in the harvest unit, excluding qualifying timber, equals or exceeds one thousand dollars, which is the minimum required by department of revenue for taxing purposes; and

(e) The value of the taxable harvest equals or exceeds the value of the qualifying timber established under WAC 222-21-045 unless otherwise approved by the small forest landowner office.

(5) **Commercially reasonable harvest is not possible.** The small forest landowner office will consider the following criteria to determine if a forest practices application for harvest may qualify for the forestry riparian easement program because it involves an area where a commercially reasonable harvest is not possible. The proposed harvest must meet all four of the following requirements:

(a) The forest practices application has been disapproved because the area covered by the application cannot be harvested due to forests and fish rule restrictions;

(b) The forest practices application involves a proposed timber harvest and the harvest would not result in a conversion to a use other than commercial timber operation;

(c) The landowner is not eligible for the twenty acre exemption under WAC 222-30-023; and

(d) The value of the qualifying timber equals or exceeds one thousand dollars, which is the minimum required by the department of revenue for taxing purposes.

(6) **Uneconomic to harvest.** The small forest landowner office will consider the following criteria to determine whether timber is qualifying timber because the forests and fish rules made it uneconomic to harvest. The proposed harvest must meet all four of the following requirements:

(a) The timber could have been included in a commercially reasonable harvest unit if there were no additional requirements imposed by the forests and fish rules;

(b) The area is not reasonably accessible economically because of requirements imposed by the forests and fish rules;

(c) There is no reasonable unit size alternative which, if used, would make the area economical to harvest; and

(d) The cost to access the harvest unit plus the cost to harvest would equal or exceed thirty-five percent of the stumpage value in the portion of the unit considered uneconomic. The small forest landowner office will determine these costs and values consistent with WAC 222-21-045. Costs include harvest, construction of nonpermanent roads and/or water crossing structures, and associated expenses. When using the small harvester tax return method to calculate stumpage values and allowable costs, the landowner may include actual timber appraisal and sale layout costs incurred as part of the cost calculations.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 76.090.040 [76.09.040], 76.09.370 and 76.13.120. WSR 12-11-106, § 222-21-032, filed 5/22/12, effective 6/22/12.]