

RCW 79.10.520 Prioritizing investments on forest health treatments. (1) (a) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department shall, to the extent feasible given all applicable trust responsibilities, develop and implement a policy for prioritizing investments on forest health treatments to protect state lands and state forestlands, as those terms are defined in RCW 79.02.010, to: (i) Reduce wildfire hazards and losses from wildfire; (ii) reduce insect infestation and disease; and (iii) achieve cumulative impact of improved forest health and resilience at a landscape scale.

(b) The prioritization policy in (a) of this subsection must consider whether state lands and state forestlands are within an area that is subject to a forest health hazard warning or order pursuant to RCW 76.06.180.

(2) (a) The department's prioritization of state lands and state forestlands must be based on an evaluation of the economic and noneconomic value of:

(i) Timber or other commercial forest products removed during any mechanical treatments;

(ii) Timber or other commercial forest products likely to be spared from damage by wildfire;

(iii) Homes, structures, agricultural products, and public infrastructure likely to be spared from damage by wildfire;

(iv) Impacts to recreation and tourism; and

(v) Ecosystem services such as water quality, air quality, or carbon sequestration.

(b) The department's evaluation of economic values may rely on heuristic techniques.

(3) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section and RCW 79.10.530 and 79.64.130 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Forest health" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 76.06.020.

(b) "Forest health treatment" or "treatment" means actions taken by the department to restore forest health including, but not limited to, sublandscape assessment and project planning, site preparation, reforestation, mechanical treatments including timber harvest, road realignment for fire protection and aquatic improvements, and prescribed burning. [2017 c 248 § 1.]