

RCW 76.09.410 Road maintenance and abandonment plans—Fish passage barriers. (1) The state may not require a small forestland owner to invest in upgrades, replacements, or other engineering of a forest road, and any fish passage barriers that are a part of the road, that do not threaten public resources or create a barrier to the passage of fish.

(2) Participation in the forests and fish agreement provides a benefit to both the landowner in terms of federal assurances, and the public in terms of aquatic habitat preservation and water quality enhancement; therefore, if conditions do threaten public resources or create a fish passage barrier, the road maintenance and abandonment planning process may not require a small forestland owner to take a positive action that will result in high cost without a significant portion of that cost being shared by the public.

(3) Some fish passage barriers are more of a threat to public resources than others; therefore, no small forestland owner should be required to repair a fish passage barrier until higher priority fish passage barriers on other lands in the watershed have been repaired.

(4) If an existing fish passage barrier on land owned by a small forestland owner was installed under an approved forest practices application or notification, and hydraulics approval, and that fish passage barrier becomes a high priority for fish passage based on the watershed ranking in *RCW 76.13.150, one hundred percent public funding shall be provided.

(5) The preparation of a road maintenance and abandonment plan can require technical expertise that may require large expenditures before the time that the landowner plans to conduct any revenue-generating operations on his or her land; therefore, small forestland owners should be allowed to complete a simplified road maintenance and abandonment plan checklist, that does not require professional engineering or forestry expertise to complete, and that does not need to be submitted until the time that the landowner submits a forest practices application or notification for final or intermediate harvesting, or for salvage of trees. Chapter 311, Laws of 2003 is intended to provide an alternate way for small forestland owners to comply with the road maintenance and abandonment plan goals identified in the forest practices rules. [2003 c 311 § 2.]

***Reviser's note:** The reference to RCW 76.13.150 appears to be erroneous. Reference to RCW 77.12.755 was apparently intended.

Findings—Effective date—2003 c 311: See notes following RCW 76.09.020.