WSR 26-18-086
PREPROPOSAL STATEMENT OF INQUIRY
DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE
[Filed September 1, 2026, 5:14 p.m.]

Subject of Possible Rule Making: WAC 458-40-530 Property tax, forest land—Land grades—Operability classes, 458-40-540 Forest land values—2026, and 458-40-660 Timber excise tax—Stumpage value tables—Stumpage value adjustments.

Statutes Authorizing the Agency to Adopt Rules on this Subject: RCW 84.33.096, 82.32.300, 82.01.060(2), and 84.33.091.

Reasons Why Rules on this Subject may be Needed and What They Might Accomplish: RCW 84.33.035(5), in relevant part, states ""Forest land" is synonymous with "designated forest land" and means any parcel of land that is five or more acres or multiple parcels of land that are contiguous and total five or more acres that is or are devoted primarily to growing and harvesting timber." RCW 84.34.020(3), in relevant part, states ""Timberland" means any parcel of land that is five or more acres or multiple parcels of land that are contiguous and total five or more acres which is or are devoted primarily to the growth and harvest of timber for commercial purposes." Currently, WAC 458-40-530(1) provides, in pertinent part, "For the purpose of this rule and WAC 458-40-540, the term "forest land" is synonymous with timberland and means all land in any contiguous ownership of twenty or more acres which is primarily devoted to and used for growing and harvesting timber and means land only." The department of revenue (department) amends WAC 458-40-530(1) to correct a typo in the acreage found in the meaning of "forest land" to reflect the correct acreage requirement as provided for in the definition of "forest land" under RCW 84.33.035(5) and "timberland" under RCW 84.34.020(3); the incorrect "twenty or more acres" in WAC 458-40-530(1) for "forest land" will be changed to "five or more acres."

RCW 84.33.140 requires that forest land values be adjusted annually by a statutory formula contained in RCW 84.33.140(3). The department anticipates amending the forest land values rule (WAC 458-40-540) to adjust the table of forest land values in Washington as required by statute. County assessors will use these published land values for property tax purposes in 2027.

RCW 84.33.091 requires the department to revise the stumpage value tables every six months. The department establishes stumpage value tables to apprise timber harvesters of the timber values used to calculate the timber excise tax. The department anticipates amending WAC 458-40-660 to provide valuations for the first half of 2027.

Other Federal and State Agencies that Regulate this Subject and the Process Coordinating the Rule with These Agencies: Although the United States Forest Service and Washington state department of natural resources both regulate forest practices, neither is involved in valuation for taxation purposes. The nontax processes and definitions are coordinated with these agencies to avoid conflict, but it is not necessary to involve them in the valuation revisions provided in this rule.

Process for Developing New Rule: Parties interested in this rule making may contact the individual listed below. The public may also participate by providing written comments throughout this rule making or giving oral testimony at the public meeting or public hearing.

Interested parties can participate in the decision to adopt the new rule and formulation of the proposed rule before publication by

contacting Tiffany Do, P.O. Box 47467, Olympia, WA 98504-7467, phone 360-534-1558, fax 360-534-1606, TTY 800-833-6384, email TiffanyD@dor.wa.gov; or Julie King, phone 360-704-5733, TTY 800-833-6384.

Additional comments: A preliminary draft of possible rule changes will be available upon request shortly before the public meeting. Written comments may be submitted by mail or email and should be directed to Tiffany Do using one of the contact methods above.

Written and oral comments will be accepted at the public meeting on October 20, 2025 [2026], at 10:00 a.m., Zoom virtual meeting only. Contact Cathy Holder at CathyH@dor.wa.gov for dial-in/login information.

September 1, 2026
Perry Stern
Rules Coordinator