

Kitsap County Forestry Working Group

May 2026

Prepared by

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Introduction

Working forests and forest lands provide economic, environmental, cultural, and recreational benefits in Kitsap County. As land ownership, management objectives, market conditions, and development pressures continue to evolve, the County is undertaking a Rural Lands Analysis to better understand current conditions, opportunities, and challenges affecting these lands.

To support this effort, Kitsap County proposes establishing the Forestry Working Group. The Working Group will serve in an advisory capacity, reviewing information and analysis prepared by County staff and providing feedback based on the diverse perspectives of forestry, conservation, tribal governments, public land management, environmental and forestry interests, specialty forest producers, and real estate sectors. Through discussion and engagement, the Working Group will help identify key issues, evaluate potential policy considerations, and inform future recommendations related to working forests and forest lands in Kitsap County.

The Working Group is anticipated to meet from July 2026 through April 2027, with an invitation to participate in the presentation of final project findings in June or July 2027. The following sections outline the Working Group's purpose, goals, objectives, areas of focus, membership, and operational details.

Goal and Objectives

Goal: Serve as a working-advisory body to review and provide feedback on Kitsap County's analysis of working forests and forest lands and identify potential recommendations and actions.

Objectives

1. Review baseline data and existing conditions prepared by County staff.

2. Provide feedback on the analysis framework and findings.
3. Share expertise and perspectives on opportunities and challenges affecting working forests.
4. Advise County staff on potential recommendations, implementation strategies, and partner actions.

Key Areas of Analysis and Advisory Focus

The Working Group will review and provide feedback on Kitsap County's Rural Lands Analysis and related findings to help identify policies and programs that best reflect community values and long-term land use goals. Key areas of focus include:

- Rural Lands Analysis – Reviewing analysis of rural land use patterns to understand current conditions, trends, and pressures affecting forest resource lands and working forest areas, including regulatory, market, and development influences.
- Land Use Compatibility – Evaluating how forestry and rural land uses interact with surrounding development and natural systems, including opportunities to reduce conflicts, improve compatibility, and support sustainable land management practices.
- Community Input and Issues – Reviewing themes and concerns raised by the community related to forest management, timber harvesting, permitted uses on Forest Resource Lands, development pressures, and regulatory clarity, and helping identify whether policy or program adjustments may be warranted.
- Policy and Program Direction – Assisting in identifying and evaluating potential policies, programs, and implementation tools that could support the County's desired future conditions for rural lands and working forests, consistent with community priorities and the outcomes of the Rural Lands Analysis.

Working Group Timeline

The Forestry Advisory Council will meet during key milestones of the Rural Lands Analysis project from July 2026 through April 2027. Working group members will be invited to the final project presentation in June/July 2027.

Meetings

The Forestry Working Group will meet four times at the Kitsap Administrative Building. Meetings are hybrid – in-person is preferred, and an online option will be available. The following dates from 11:00am – 12:00pm:

- July 7, 2026
- October 6, 2026* (exception 9am-10am)
- January 5, 2027
- April 6, 2027

Administration and Facilitation

The Forestry Working Group will be staffed by Kitsap County Community Development Department and Parks Department

- Heather Cleveland, Long Range Planner, Community Development
- Kevin Ceder, Stewardship Forester, Parks Department

Representation

1. Industrial Forestry
2. Nonindustrial Forestry
3. Conservancy/Land Trusts
4. Public Forest Management
5. Specialty Forest Products
6. Tribal Governments
7. Environment Interests
8. Forestry Interests
9. Real Estate and Land Markets

Reference Materials

Community Forest Land, Kitsap Sun Article, September 4, 2025:

- [Green Mountain Community Forest effort lands federal support](#)
 - [PDF](#)