

Quilcene Fire Rescue Has Concerns About the Dabob NRCA Expansion Proposal

Let DNR Know Your Opinion

Please let DNR know your opinion regarding expansion of the Dabob Bay Natural Resources Conservation Area and its unknown effects on local revenues. The deadline for comments is end of the business day on June 28, 2024. To make a comment, go to <https://wadnr.commentinput.com/?id=JcYaDUFWk>.

Background

The DNR Proposal

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) proposes to add 3,860 acres to the Dabob Bay Natural Resources Conservation Area (NRCA). The proposed addition represents a 50% increase over the current 7,735 acres.

DNR already owns and manages 4,094 acres of shoreline, marsh and forestland in the Dabob Bay watershed. Lands located within the current or proposed boundaries only become part of the natural area if they are acquired by DNR.

For further information see: https://www.dnr.wa.gov/publications/amp_dabob_bay_faq.pdf.

DNR has provided no economic analysis of how the proposal would affect revenues for local taxing districts like Quilcene Fire Rescue.

Current Sources of Revenue for Quilcene Fire Rescue

Quilcene Fire Rescue provides Fire Suppression Services and Emergency Medical Services to the Quilcene, Coyle, and Dabob communities. In 2023, 41% of Quilcene Fire Rescue revenues came from property taxes and 30% came from trust land timber sales and timber excise tax.

How this could affect future revenues for local taxing districts like Quilcene Fire Rescue

The effects of DNR's proposal on trust land timber revenues are unclear. The situation is complicated.

Timber Harvests on Trust Lands: State Forest trust lands benefit counties and junior taxing districts. They provide revenue that supports schools as well as services including roads, libraries, fire districts, ports, hospitals and emergency management. Timber on these lands is periodically auctioned for harvesting and proceeds are distributed to the beneficiaries. DNR will refrain from harvesting timber from trust lands within the Dabob Bay NRCA and has proposed exchanging these for other timbered lands outside the NRCA. DNR has struggled to find adequate land transfers within the Quilcene Fire Rescue district. It is unclear if Quilcene Fire Rescue will see a net reduction in the number of acres of State Forest trust lands in its district and whether the timber on any transferred land is of similar value or harvestable in the near future.

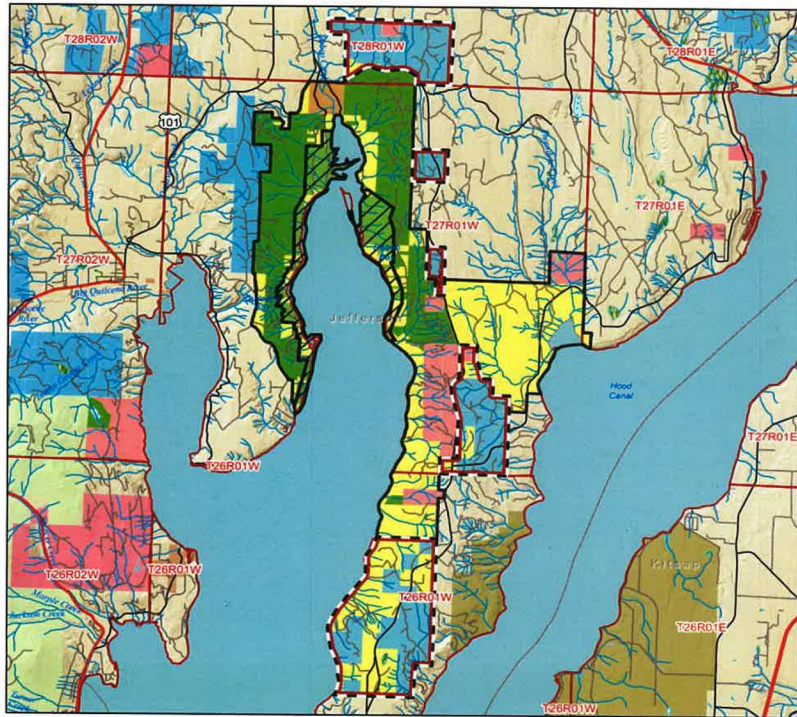
Timber Taxes on Private Timber: A timber excise tax collected on timber harvests is distributed to the county where the timber was harvested and helps fund capital projects, schools, roads, libraries, and fire districts. If DNR acquires private lands with harvestable timber and refrains from harvesting it, that will represent foregone timber tax revenue.

Property Taxes: Private property is assessed on the value of land and buildings and property taxes are based on voted levies. The state will remove buildings and improvements from property it acquires for natural areas and that will reduce the property's assessed valuation. The state does make Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) on acquired property but with improvements removed, it is at the reduced value. Since voted levies are based on a specific dollar amount, taxpayers will have to make up the difference.

Quilcene Fire Rescue's Position

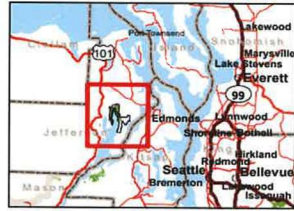
Quilcene Fire Rescue is concerned that there has been insufficient analysis provided by DNR regarding the economic consequences of the Dabob NRCA expansion proposal. Quilcene Fire Rescue urges DNR to refrain from moving forward until a complete analysis has been made that addresses the impact on junior taxing districts. Only then can an informed decision be made.

Dabob Bay Natural Resource Conservation Area



MAP LEGEND

- NAP Boundary
- NRCA Boundary
- Natural Area Preserve (NAP)
- Natural Resource Conservation Area (NRCA)
- Lands Eligible for Inclusion
- Granted Trust Lands
- Forest Board Trust Lands
- WA State Parks
- WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife
- US Forest Service
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Other Federal
- Proposed NRCA Expansion



Disclaimer: Extreme care was used during the compilation of this map to ensure accuracy. However, due to changes in ownership and the need to rely on outside information, the Department of Natural Resources cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions, and, therefore, there are no warranties which accompany this material.

Conservation Lands - Melrose - May 2024

