

2023 LWVWA Resolution Submittal Form

Your Name

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League

Snohomish County

League President

Jen Winckler

Short Title for the Resolution:

FINAL VERSION: Protection of Mature Forests in Washington

1. The proposed Resolution (include specific action requested and who will take the action):

WHEREAS, LWVWA supports the conservation of all remaining mature and old growth forests on public lands in Washington State and

WHEREAS, LWVWA should advocate to immediately protect these carbon-dense structurally complex public forests from needless logging that would threaten the forests' survival and

WHEREAS, Such advocacy may include:

- Authoring and sending a letter in support of an immediate moratorium imposed on any further commercial harvest of carbon-dense, structurally complex mature forests on public lands in Washington State. The letter would be sent from the League no later than August 15, 2023, to those who have the discretionary authority to act including the Governor, The Washington State Legislature, the Commissioner of Public Lands, the Board of Natural Resources, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Public University Presidents and Boards of Regents, to immediately cease such harvests.
- Requesting that the Legislature take action to protect older forests on state lands that would be clear-cut due to near-term harvest plans in 2023-2025, including actions such as:
 - o Permanent conservation of approximately 77,000 acres of unique older forests on public lands (this represents less than 5% of the forest lands managed by the Department of Natural Resources [DNR]).
 - o Acquisition of replacement land for the trusts, to maintain or expand the state trust land base with new land managed as working forests.
 - o Climate-Smart Forest management on replacement lands for more carbon sequestration and timber production.
 - o Compensation to trust land beneficiaries to ensure essential local services are maintained, and

WHEREAS, Climate change is a crisis recognized by both LWVUS and LWVWA. Preservation of mature forests is one of the most powerful tools to reduce CO2 emissions,

WHEREAS, There are 13 relevant LWVWA positions under Forests, in Program In Action, p. 32-33, and

WHEREAS, The Washington State Department of Natural Resources is planning to harvest 6,500 acres of mature forests in the near future. This would be detrimental to the state's emission reduction plan and would harm important biodiversity. Advocacy is urgent to educate policy makers and the public about the benefits of mature forests, the harm in logging them and the alternatives that are available.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the delegates attending the LWVWA Convention in Pasco Washington on May 5-7, 2023 demand that action be taken now to ensure the protection and conservation of all remaining mature and old growth forests on public lands in Washington State.

2. Background information on the Resolution:

Please see below

3. The essential LWV position(s) on which the Resolution is based:

There are 13 relevant positions under Forests, in Program in Action, p. 32-33. The most important include these:

FO-1: That all benefits of the forests—ecological, human and economic—are inextricably interconnected. Healthy forests are essential to habitat for a diversity of plant and animal life, to the hydrologic cycle, and to carbon storage to mitigate global warming. In addition, healthy forests are essential to a forest products industry with the jobs and goods they provide, and to the economic and aesthetic values of their recreational opportunities.

FO-8: Forest management must be responsive to scientific research and knowledge and should include:
• mapping, classification and protection of all streams, • more and better data—including total watershed analysis, • evaluation of cumulative effects of various activities in the forest in the consideration of individual forest practice permits, and • planning for sustainability of forest ecosystems.

FO-9: The State should consider ecological protections the most important factor in deciding which activities to allow on state forest lands.

FO-15: Washington schools must be fully funded with less reliance on timber harvests.

4. Rationale, including pros & cons, for proposing resolution at this time:

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources is planning to harvest 6,500 acres of mature forests in the near future. This would be detrimental to the state's emission reduction plan and would harm important biodiversity. Advocacy is urgent to educate policy makers and the public about the benefits of mature forests, the harm in logging them and the alternatives that are available.

Pros: This resolution will support League taking action on a time-critical climate change strategy, supported by existing League positions.

Cons: Some people do not recognize the urgency or the value of public education and advocacy on this topic. Additionally, there may be concerns about the loss of revenue to schools from reducing DNR timber sales. However, a recent lawsuit addresses this concern.

5. Evidence that issue is a current priority:

This resolution will support League taking action on a time-critical climate change strategy, supported by existing League positions.

6. Evidence that the issue is time sensitive and requires state governmental action:

In Timber Sales through 2024, the Washington State Board of Natural Resources lists over 6,500 acres of state-owned mature forests

(https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1GQUwB_OeMNTGRUhmJUubeVQIOiw1MkGd/edit?usp=share_link&ouid=111132838089022556265&rtpof=true&sd=true).

State leaders have the discretionary authority to act. Comments or Questions for the Committee: An eight-page background paper will be available for Convention participants. It provides much more detail than is possible in this proposal format.

The Resolution proposer has drafted a letter (attached) to be sent by LWVWA.

Comments or Questions for the Committee:

An eight-page background paper will be available for Convention participants. It provides much more detail than is possible in this proposal format.

The Resolution proposer has drafted a letter (attached) to be sent by LWVWA.

Please see below.

DRAFT letter

Governor Jay Inslee

Office of the Governor

PO Box 40002 Olympia, WA 98504-0002

<https://www.governor.wa.gov/contact/contact/send-gov-inslee-e-message>

Members of the Washington State Legislature

Commissioner Hilary Franz

Office of the Commissioner of Public Lands

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Dear _____, The League of Women Voters of Washington supports the conservation of all remaining mature and old growth forests on public lands in Washington State. LWVWA requests that you as a state leader and policy maker act to immediately protect these carbon-dense, structurally complex public forests from needless logging that would threaten the forests' survival.

LWVWA calls for you to support an immediate moratorium on any further commercial harvest of mature forests on public lands in Washington State. Over 6,500 acres of state-owned mature forests are listed in the Timber Sales through 2024 1. Protection of these mature forests on state lands is an urgent matter.

It is possible to defer harvest, while still satisfying DNR's near-term commitments to generate revenue for designated beneficiaries.

LWVWA supports an interim guideline that maintains mature forests within DNR planning units as structurally complex forests. Protection of these mature forests on state lands is possible with these actions:

- Permanent conservation of approximately 77,000 acres of unique older forests on public lands (this represents less than 5% of the forest lands managed by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR)).
- Acquisition of replacement land for the trusts, to maintain or expand the state trust land base with new land managed as working forests.
- Climate-smart forest management on replacement lands for more carbon sequestration and timber production.
- Compensation to trust land beneficiaries to ensure essential local services are maintained.

Respectfully,
President

League of Women Voters of Washington

A copy of your submission will be emailed to you, the Resolution Committee and all LWVWA local League presidents.