

RCW 76.44.070 Addressing issues facing the forest sector. The legislature finds that there are many issues facing the forest sector, such as climate change, forest health and fire, carbon accounting, habitat and diversity, timber and water supplies, economic competitiveness, and the economic health of forest dependent communities. Enhancing the capability to effectively address these forest issues is critical to the state of Washington. To meet this need, the University of Washington school of forest resources will continue to work with the various interests concerned with the state's forest resources, including the legislature, state and federal governments, environmental organizations, local communities, the timber industry, and tribes, to improve these entities' ability to competitively recruit, educate, and train a high quality workforce. In order to meet these goals, it is important to our state, and in particular the University of Washington, to continue to have strong undergraduate and graduate programs in forestry and natural resources to provide well-trained professionals to meet workforce needs. [2011 c 187 § 2; 2010 c 188 § 2.]

Findings—Intent—2011 c 187: See note following RCW 76.44.020.

Findings—Intent—2010 c 188: "(1) The legislature finds that sustainably managed commercial forestry produces jobs and revenue while also providing clean water, clean air, renewable energy, wildlife habitat, open space, and carbon storage, among other ecological values. For these reasons, maintaining a base of forestlands that may be utilized for sustainably managed commercial forestry is of utmost importance to the state.

(2) The legislature finds that the promotion and fostering of the economic success of the forest products industry with the goal of keeping sustainably managed forestry as a priority land use, and helping to secure the timber managing, growing, harvesting, transporting, and manufacturing jobs is made possible by a vibrant working forestland base.

(3) The legislature further finds that maintaining sustainable working forests is important for the quality of life of all Washingtonians, and that sustainable forest practices can help to maintain and restore the vitality of Washington's communities while also helping to preserve Washington's natural landscapes and ecosystems.

(4) The legislature further finds that it is necessary to assist landowners in gaining access to additional sources of revenue, such as emerging ecosystem services markets, and to help landowners diversify their incomes, improve the ecological functions of their lands, and pass their lands and the lands' associated benefits to future generations.

(5) The legislature further finds that the conservation and restoration of forest ecosystems provide services to the residents of the state that help improve water and habitat quality, help avoid carbon emissions, help address impacts associated with climate change, and help natural resources adapt to these impacts.

(6) The legislature further finds that ecosystem services markets can lead to efficient, innovative, and effective conservation and restoration actions and facilitate improved integration of public and private investment.

(7) Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature to develop tools to facilitate small and industrial forestland owners' access to market capital from existing and emerging ecosystem services markets.

(8) The legislature further intends to enable forestland owners who provide ecosystem services access to financing to protect, restore, and maintain the ecological values provided by protection of public resources." [2010 c 188 § 1.]