



# OFFICE OF FARMLAND PRESERVATION

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## APPROVED MINUTES

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The Farmland Preservation Task Force met on April 2, 2008 at the Washington State University's Northwest Research and Extension Center in Mt. Vernon, Washington. Chair Bob Hart called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

### **Task Force Members**

Bob Hart, Chair  
Sheryl Cox  
Jeff Emtman  
Richard Thomason  
Jacob Anderson  
Greg Schoenbachler  
Senator Jim Honeyford  
Representative Larry Springer  
Commissioner Rudy Plager  
Commissioner Don Munks  
Fred Colvin  
Lynn Bahrych  
Lee Faulconer  
Gus Hughbanks  
Dee Caputo

### **Commission Staff**

Steve McGonigal, OFP Manager  
Mark Clark, Executive Director  
Mary Anderson, Executive Assistant  
Ron Shultz, Special Assistant to the Exec. Director  
Stu Trefry, Regional Manager  
Tom Salzer, Technical Services Manager  
Lori Gonzalez, Administrative Assistant

### **Guests**

Carolyn Kelly, Skagit CD	Allen Rozema, Skagit Preserving Farmland
Nova Gattman, Senator Haugen's Office	Eliza Buck, Ag. Resource Cttee. of San Juan Co.
Kim Mower, Ag Advisory Skagit	Judy Herring, King Co. Farmland Preservation
Don Stuart, AW Farmland Trust	Dan Wood, Washington Farm Bureau
Gina Bull, Senator Haugen's Office	Mike Shelby, Western WA Agriculture Association
Colleen Kerr, House AGNR	Ralph Heft, Farmland Legacy of Skagit County
Andrea Faver, Public Citizen	Kendra Smith, Skagit Co. Legacy Program
Paul Grey, Whatcom Co. Farm Friends	Ryan Hembree, Snohomish County
Ron Zee, San Juan Co. CD	Bob Rose, Past Exec. Director of SPF
Craig Johnson, 4 Horse Ranches	Corina Hayes, Thurston Co.
Bob Lee, Senate Analyst	

### **Approval of Agenda**

Chair Hart noted that the Skagit County Farmland Legacy Program presentations be moved to earlier in the morning.

Fred Colvin requested discussion on the Conservation Commission biennial budget proposal.

**Jeff Emtman moved to approve the agenda with noted changes and addition.**

**Don Munks seconded.**

**Motion passed.**

1 **Skagit County Farmland Legacy Program**

2 Presented by Carolyn Kelly and Kendra Smith.

3 **Meeting Minutes from February 6, 2008**

4 **Don Munks moved to approve the February 6, 2008 Task Force Meeting**  
5 **Minutes with noted correction.**

6 **Lynn Bahrych seconded.**

7 **Motion passed.**

8 **Ground Rules**

9 The Office of Farmland Preservation Task Force Ground Rules was presented to the Task Force  
10 with the noted changes from the February 6, 2008 meeting and was finalized.

11 **Mission Statement**

12 A sub-committee was formed at the February meeting which consisted of Chair Hart, Lynn Bahrych,  
13 John Mankoswki, and Steve McGonigal. Three versions were brought forward for consideration.

14 **Jacob Anderson moved to approve the mission statement.**

15 ***“Our mission is to promote the vitality of farming, farmers, and***  
16 ***ranchers by ensuring that we will continue to have productive***  
17 ***agricultural lands in Washington State. We will achieve this through***  
18 ***policy recommendations to the Governor, the Legislature, the Office of***  
19 ***Farmland Preservation and others and by enlisting public support.***  
20 ***Programs will be voluntary, recognize local priorities, and provide for***  
21 ***economic incentives.”***

22 **Greg Schoenbachler seconded. Votes: 13 Yes 2 No (Bahrych and Springer)**

23 **Motion passed.**

24 **Factors Leading to the Loss of Farmland**

25 The Task Force reviewed feed back from five additional Conservation Districts, in addition to the  
26 feedback reviewed at the last meeting. Sheryl Cox submitted to Steve McGonigal survey results  
27 she received from the Palouse Conservation District. Results will be copied and distributed to Task  
28 Force members.

29 Conservation Commission staff presented a matrix of issues raised through the conservation  
30 districts from the conservation district surveys, tours, letters, and other sources. The matrix was  
31 used to create categories by issue, background, lead group, etc. This will be a continual working  
32 document as the Task Force moves on. Mark Clark described the development of the matrix. In  
33 order to ensure efforts are not duplicated, some of the issues brought forward will be worked on  
34 collaboratively with other agencies and groups which may include the Future Farming Committee  
35 and the Ruckelshouse Center.

36 Lee Faulconer is a member of the Future Farming Committee and stated that the group are having  
37 listening sessions around the State. The outcomes will be compared with the Office of Farmland  
38 Preservation’s matrix.

39 Mark Clark hopes by next meeting to have further recommendations from the collection of  
40 information from these groups and agencies to present to the Task Force.

41 Also presented to the Task Force was a document entitled “Regulatory Hammers and Agriculture  
42 provided by Washington Farm Bureau, per Sheryl Cox’s request from the February 6, 2008  
43 meeting.

1 **Staff Activity Report**

2 Steve McGonigal shared information from the conference he attended at the State Farmland  
3 Preservation Program Directors Roundtable in New Jersey. There were discussions on purchase of  
4 development rights programs, Farm and Ranch Protection Program, the Farm Bill, and other  
5 subjects. Another meeting is scheduled for July, 2008, in Virginia to discuss farmland transition.

6 Task Force members were asked for feedback on the brochures and exhibits that are nearly ready  
7 for production. Text had been sent to members March 13. Any comments or suggestions could be  
8 given to Steve McGonigal or Lori Gonzalez as soon as possible so that they can be printed. Sheryl  
9 Cox suggested that the same information could be used as a placemat in restaurants and meetings  
10 as an educational piece.

11 **Skagit Delta - Collaborative Farmland and Resource Stewardship Solutions**

12 Presented by Mike Shelby, Executive Director of the Western Washington Agriculture.

13 Mike Shelby was asked to provide a letter to the Task Force identifying how the Task Force could  
14 support the program.

15 **Correspondence**

16 Task Force members went over the incoming and outgoing correspondence from Mr. Jeff Eitel  
17 regarding open space program and the issues his family is currently facing. Task Force members  
18 will obtain more information on the open space program to assist in creating a response to Mr. Eitel  
19 and his family.

20 **Preserving British Columbia's Agricultural Land**

21 Presented by Brian Underhill of the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission in British Columbia.

22 **Northwest Regional Profile**

23 Presented by Ron Shultz. Additional data and corrections were promised and will be distributed to  
24 Task Force members before the next meeting.

25 **Definition of Farmland/Farmland Preservation**

26 Ron Shultz provided a list of definitions from various sources to help the Task Force define  
27 "farmland" or "farmland preservation".

28 A lengthy discussion followed. The Task Force agreed to discuss definitions at a later time when  
29 programs are developed.

30 **Focus on Farming in Snohomish and King Counties**

31 Presented by Ryan Hembree of Snohomish County.

32 **2009-11 Biennium Budget**

33 Fred Colvin informed the Task Force members that at the March 2008 Conservation Commission  
34 Meeting a motion was passed for the Conservation Commission to seek funding in the next  
35 biennium budget to fund a conservation easement account established by the legislature in 2002.

36 A letter from Senator Mary Margaret Haugen was submitted to the Task Force in support of the  
37 easement account funding. Chair Hart read the letter to the Task Force.

38 There was a substantial discussion about agricultural conservation easements and other tools of  
39 farmland preservation.

1 Mark Clark talked about budget time lines the Conservation Commission needs to meet.  
2 The agency begins to look at budget objectives now for submitting budget packages in September.  
3 Occasionally, budget packages are submitted as placeholders to secure funding.  
4 The Conservation Commission has programs and funding in place that will meet some of the topics  
5 and issues discussed by the Task Force.  
6 Mr. Clark welcomed participation and input from the members on developing the budget. A budget  
7 and timeline will be provided at the next Task Force meeting. Chair Hart recommended that  
8 members contact Steve McGonigal to share their thoughts and/or ideas regarding the budget.

9 **Acronyms**

10 At the request of Sheryl Cox, a list of acronyms will also be supplied to the members.

11 **Adjournment**

12 Chair Hart adjourned the meeting at 4:25 p.m.