

## Forest Land Resolution

**WHEREAS** the commons in the United States have shrunk considerably; much like the commons in England have as a result of the Enclosure Acts;

**WHEREAS** timber companies, and DNR and National forest and other public lands now require special passes and/or permits to be purchased for entrance to said land;

**WHEREAS** many people cannot afford these fees for access to land the people already own, and cannot afford the permits to enter private timber land, thereby American Citizens are denied access to land and activities enjoyed by generations of Americans;

**WHEREAS** we respect private ownership of all individual citizens, farmers and small timberland owners;

**WHEREAS** Washington State residents are the “owners” of the wildlife, and water that timber companies, DNR, and the National Forest deny access to;

**WHEREAS** timber companies enjoy property tax reductions, and fire protection placing unreasonable financial burden on the public;

**WHEREAS** timber companies activities negatively impact surrounding property, streams, people and air sheds causing further financial, environmental and health problems as well as other harmful effects on the public;

**WHEREAS** activities such as slash burning are not confined to the property of the timber company, as smoke permeates total air shed, causing health risks to people for which they are not compensated nor has their permission been given;

**WHEREAS** streams silted up from timber company activities such as vegetation removal and road building, resulting in harm to fish runs and water quality in bays and rivers; and

**WHEREAS** these various costs are born by the public in general, without compensation, and that outdoor recreation is a requirement for public health and a human right;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Washington State Democrats call for timber companies to only receive tax reductions to the extent that the public enjoys the common good through public access, and government agencies such as the DNR, National forests and other public lands eliminate fees for public access to lands already owned by the people.

---

Submitted by the Cowlitz County Democrats.

The Platform Committee recommended that this resolution be passed at their June 15, 2018 meeting.

The 2018 Washington State Democratic Convention passed this resolution on June 16, 2018.