



Trust Land Transfer Revitalization



What is Trust Land Transfer?

Initiated in 1989 and revitalized in 2022, Trust Land Transfer (TLT) is an innovative tool for the Washington State Legislature, through the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), to address several trust land management needs:

- Transfer under-performing state trust lands out of trust status and acquire legislative funding to purchase replacement lands with higher long-term income producing potential; and
- Conserve lands that have high ecological values and public benefits.

Through a legislative appropriation from the state capital budget, TLT enables DNR to keep special places in public ownership while also improving the revenue-generating capacity of the trust lands portfolio.

What is Trust Land Transfer Revitalization?

As effective as it is, the current TLT tool can be improved to make it stronger, more transparent, more consistent, and more effective for management of the state trust lands portfolio. Revitalizing this tool was one of the recommendations of the 2021 [Trust Lands Performance Assessment](#).

In its 2021 session, the Washington State Legislature passed a budget proviso focused on strengthening and improving TLT with the help of a work group (Supplemental House Budget [SHB] 1080 Sec. 3333). DNR has completed this work in two phases with two different work groups. Work groups included representatives of trust beneficiaries, conservation groups, tribes, the timber industry, and public agencies that will receive transferred parcels.

125,968

Acres of state trust lands transferred to DNR's Natural Areas Program or other public agencies

55,546

Acres of replacement land purchased

15 Percent

Percentage (by area) of the Washington state parks system that came from TLT

43

Number of DNR-managed natural areas that owe their existence to TLT, in full or in part.

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[Click here](#) to learn more about TLT revitalization at this link

November, 2022



Major Proposed Changes to TLT

DNR and the Phase 1 and 2 work groups made **fundamental changes to TLT** that will make it far more **open, transparent, and effective** at meeting today's land management challenges. For example, DNR and the work groups develop an **improved and well-documented analysis** to ensure that each proposed transfer is in the best interests of the trust beneficiaries. DNR also will be establishing an **external advisory committee**, who will score eligible transfers according to new, standardized prioritization criteria. DNR will use these scores to create a **prioritized list of transfers**. Following are highlights of other major, proposed changes to TLT.

Discontinue the 80:20 Requirement

DNR proposes to eliminate the requirement that the timber value on all proposed transfers, combined, is at least 80 percent of the total land value of those parcels. Eliminating this requirement will **enable DNR to transfer non-forested or sparsely forested parcels**, which will make this tool more effective at managing the state trust lands portfolio

Expand Trust Land Transfer to All Trusts

The current TLT tool is limited to the Common School Trust. DNR recommends **opening TLT to all trusts, including State Forestlands**, to make the tool more flexible and effective. Expanding TLT will require statutory changes to ensure DNR can complete direct transfers of State Forestland.

Provide More Funding for Replacement Lands

Past provisos have required the timber value to be directed to the Common School Construction Account as a one-time payment, leaving only the remaining land value available to purchase replacement land. This requirement has made replacement land purchases very difficult. For federally granted lands, DNR recommends **utilizing all of the legislative appropriation to purchase replacement lands**. For State Forestlands, DNR recommends utilizing the legislative appropriation to purchase replacement lands but also providing counties the flexibility to request a portion of the appraised timber value of the transferred parcel as a one-time payment.

Increase Funding for Administrative Costs

DNR will need **sufficient funding to not only transfer the parcels but to implement the revitalized tool in its entirety**. DNR recommends funding appraisal-related expenses through the Capital budget and staff support funded through the operating budget.

Contact

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