



Snohomish County
Planning and Development
Services

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ONLINE INFORMATION
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This Assistance Bulletin only applies to property within unincorporated Snohomish County and does not apply to property within incorporated city limits.

Forest Practices: Class IV-General Permit

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Q: What new permit is required for Forest Practices?

A: Effective June 19, 2015, Chapter 30.43F of the Snohomish County Code requires a Class IV-General Forest Practices permit for conversion of forested land to a nonforestry use (residential, agriculture, pasture, etc.). Prior to this date, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) was responsible for issuing this permit. Environmental review (SEPA checklist) is also required as part of the Class IV-General Forest Practices permit.

Q: Do I need a Class IV-General Forest Practices permit?

A: Answer the following questions to help you determine if you need to obtain a Class IV-General Forest Practices permit from the County. **NOTE:** Other permits and/or reviews may be required.

Is the subject property less than two acres with contiguous ownership by a single landowner? Provided that:

- The logging does not take place within:
 - The 200-foot shoreline area of shorelines of the state;
 - A stream or buffer; or
 - A wetland or wetland buffer; and
- The logging does not involve use of ground equipment on side slopes greater than 40 percent; and
- The operation will not impact any threatened or endangered species.

A Class IV-General Permit is **NOT** Required

If yes

If no

Do you plan to sell, barter, or trade any of the timber?

A Class IV-General Permit **Is** Required

If yes

If no

Do you plan to harvest more that 5,000 board feet in a 12 month period?

A Class IV-General Permit **Is** Required

If yes

This bulletin is intended only as an information guide. The information may not be complete and is subject to change. For complete legal information, refer to Snohomish County Code.

Q: Is there an application process for the Class IV-General Forest Practices permit?

A: The required application is the “[Land Disturbing Activity \(LDA\) and Forest Practices Activity \(FPA\) application](#)” that is available online or at the Planning and Development customer support center.

Q: How much does a Class IV-General Forest Practices permit cost?

A: The fee for a Class IV-General Forest Practices can be found in SCC 30.86.505 and the fee for SEPA review can be found in SCC 30.86.500. **NOTE:** Other permits and/or reviews may be required in addition to the Forest Practices permit.

Q: How can I calculate 5,000 board feet of timber?

A: In general, 5,000 board feet is roughly 1 - 1½ logging truck loads, depending on tree species. You may want to consult with a professional forester or timber cruiser who can assist you in estimating merchantable board feet.

For more information on how to calculate tree volume, visit the [Washington State Department of Natural Resources - Small Forest Landowner webpage](#) that provides a link to “[Basic Forest Inventory Techniques for Family Forest Owners](#)” by the Pacific Northwest Extensions. Tree species, diameter at breast height (dbh), and height are the inputs to determine tree volume.

Here are some examples of estimates from “Basic Forest Inventory Techniques for Family Forest Owners:”

| Species | Diameter at breast | Height | Volume board feet |
|---------------|--------------------|---------|-------------------|
| Western Cedar | 30 inches | 70 feet | 490 board feet |
| Red Alder | 18 inches | 66 feet | 210 board feet |
| Douglas Fir | 24 inches | 90 feet | 450 board feet |

Q: What if I have a valid DNR permit to harvest timber; can I still convert my land?

A: If you have an active DNR permit (without a conversion option harvest plan) to harvest timber and do not wish to maintain your property for timber production, then you will need to officially close-out or terminate that permit with DNR. Once DNR has terminated your timber harvest permit, you may then apply for a Snohomish County Class IV-General Forest Practices Permit through Planning and Development Services.

Q: What is a Conversion Option Harvest Plan (COHP)?

A: A conversion option harvest plan or COHP is optional. It provides a landowner, who is obtaining a timber harvest permit from DNR, the option to convert his or her land without needing a Class IV-General Forest Practices permit from Snohomish County. The application for a COHP is the “[Land Disturbing Activity \(LDA\) and Forest Practices Activity \(FPA\) application](#)” that is available online or at the Planning and Development customer support center. Once approved from Snohomish County, the landowner provides DNR with the DNR timber harvest application and the COHP; the COHP becomes a condition of the DNR’s issued timber harvest permit. The fee for a COHP can be found at SCC 30.86.505.

Q: What if I have other questions?

A: Call (425) 388-3311 or submit questions online at AskPermitTech@snoco.org.