

B. LAND TRANSACTION

September 8, 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Item 1: Proposed Acquisition of Home and 5(+/-) Acres for Enforcement Housing
Forks, Clallam County, Region 6**

Project Summary/Decision Sheet	1
Location Map	1A
Parcel Map	1B



Fish and Wildlife Commission Presentation Summary/Decision Sheet

Meeting date:

9/8/2023

Agenda item:

B. Land Transaction

Presenter(s):

Thom Woodruff, Property Acquisition Supervisor

Background summary:

Item 1: Proposed Acquisition of Home and 5(+/-) Acres for Enforcement Housing Forks, Clallam County, Region 6

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife staff request Commission approval of the proposed acquisition of [5\(+/-\) acres, home, shop, and all supporting structures, in Forks](#), Clallam County, Region 6, pursuant to [RCW 77.12.037 Acquisition, use, and management of property—Condemnation—When authorized](#).

Background summary:

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) proposes to acquire this 5(+/-)-acre property and all improvements, which includes a home, shop, and supporting structures, for enforcement housing.

[WDFW's Enforcement Program](#) is primarily responsible for enforcing [Title 77 RCW Fish and Wildlife](#) and their mission is to protect natural resources and the public they serve. With more than 160 commissioned law enforcement personnel around the state, WDFW officers enforce laws and regulations related to human-wildlife conflict, hunting, fishing/shellfishing, and the protection of fish, wildlife and habitats. Their unique capabilities, assets, and jurisdiction mean WDFW officers respond to public safety issues such as dangerous wildlife encounters, natural disasters, and search-and-rescue operations. WDFW officers have the authority to enforce all criminal laws, including traffic violations, drugs, and warrants for arrest in state and federal waters, parks, and forest land. WDFW officers also assist city and county law enforcement agencies, tribal authorities, and federal agencies, and enforce federal laws, state statutes, and county ordinances through memorandums of agreement.

Furthermore, WDFW officers hold federal [U.S. Fish and Wildlife](#) and [National Marine Fisheries Service](#) commissions, and have jurisdiction over federal violations, the most important of which are the [Endangered Species Act](#), [Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act](#), and the [U.S. Department of Agriculture Lacey Act](#). WDFW officers collaborate and coordinate with these agencies and the [U.S. Coast Guard](#) routinely.

The Northern Coast of Washington consisting of Western Clallam and Jefferson Counties plays host to vast herds of elk, hundreds of miles of pristine freshwater rivers, home to salmon and steelhead, and vast expanses of marine waters consisting of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the Pacific Ocean. The Port of Sekiu is the busiest recreational marine salmon port anywhere in the state, with over 32,000 angler trips recorded in the 2019-2020 salmon season. Approximately half of the state's recreational halibut quota is landed into North Coast ports. Neah Bay and La Push are home to thriving commercial fishing fleets. For example, about half of the troll caught Chinook for the state of Washington were harvested along the North Coast in 2020. The rivers around the town of Forks offer some of the last places in the State where recreational anglers can target wild steelhead. This catch and release fishery employs a large fishing guide community. The area is home to several treaty tribes with ancestral fishing and hunting rights.

WDFW Enforcement has struggled for over a decade to retain officers in the Forks duty station. The isolation, overwhelming workload, lack of available housing, high cost of living, and limited employment for spouses/partners have led to high turnover in this important post. The local tribes, angling/conservation groups and fishing guide community have been vocal in demanding more Enforcement presence. In 2022, the Enforcement Program built two residences for officers and their families to live in at the Sol Duc hatchery near Forks. With this opportunity, two WDFW officers voluntarily chose to lateral to the Forks Duty Station. In September of 2022, Chief Bear created a new WDFW Police Detachment to be based in Forks with a Sergeant assigned to supervise the officers, and added a 3rd officer position to the Forks Detachment. Further, the Enforcement Program is close to finishing construction on a detachment office/shop to house equipment at the Sol Duc hatchery.

Currently housing is only available to half of the officers assigned to this detachment. One of these unhoused positions is filled with an individual commuting weekly from Forks to Elma. The other commissioned officer position has been vacant for over 6 months with recruitment under way, which has been challenging due to the lack of available housing. The 5(+/-) acres consists of two 2.5(+/-)-acre lots and includes a home suitable for enforcement housing on one of these lots. The second lot could be used to develop additional enforcement housing.

This proposed acquisition project is exempt from Lands 20/20. The current list price is \$599,000. The property will be appraised to determine its just compensation amount and will be acquired in compliance with federal CFR, law, statute, and WDFW policy. Once the final purchase price is determined, funding from WDFW's Enforcement Program will be used to acquire the property.

Per [RCW 77.12.203](#), this property will be exempt from PILT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) as *"This amount may not assessed or paid on department buildings, structures, facilities, game farms, fish hatcheries, water access sites, tidelands, or public fishing areas."*

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommend Commission approval to acquire the 5(+)-acre property, including all improvements thereon, for enforcement housing pursuant to [RCW 77.12.037](#).

Policy issue(s) and expected outcome:

Providing enforcement housing.

Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:

Operation and maintenance.

Action requested and/or proposed next steps:

Approval of this land transaction.

Draft motion language:

Motion: I move to approve the land transactions as presented by staff.

Is there a "second"?

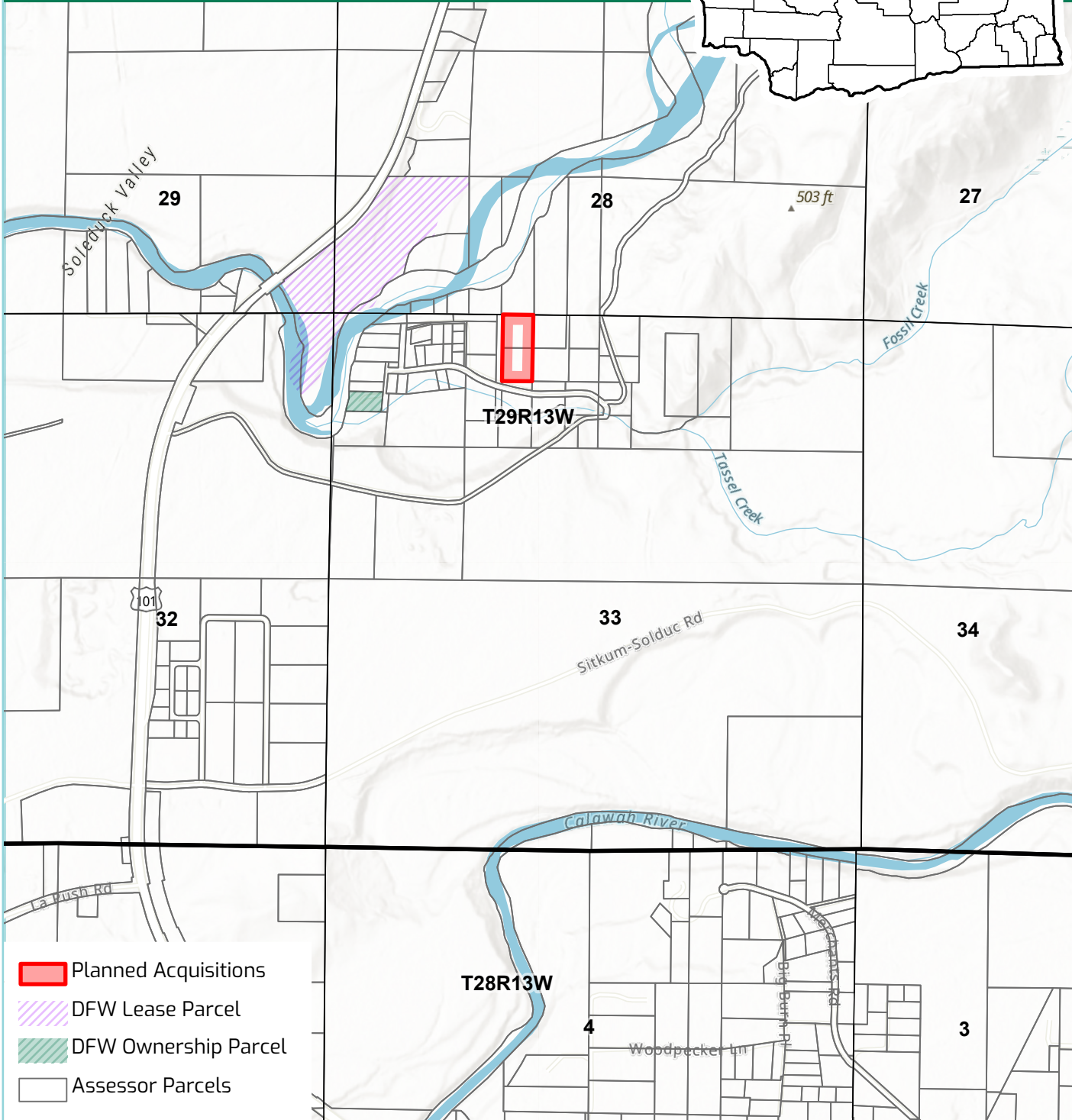
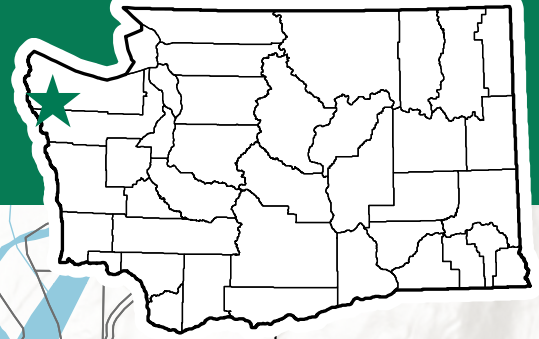
If so, then motion maker discusses basis for motion; other Commissioners discuss views on motion; amendments, if any, proposed and addressed.





Post decision communications plan:

WDFW will distribute a press release informing the public of this action.

Item 1: Enforcement Housing

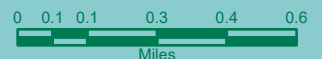
Legal Description: Township 29N,
Range 13W W.M., Section 33
County: Clallam



-  Planned Acquisitions
-  DFW Lease Parcel
-  DFW Ownership Parcel
-  Assessor Parcels



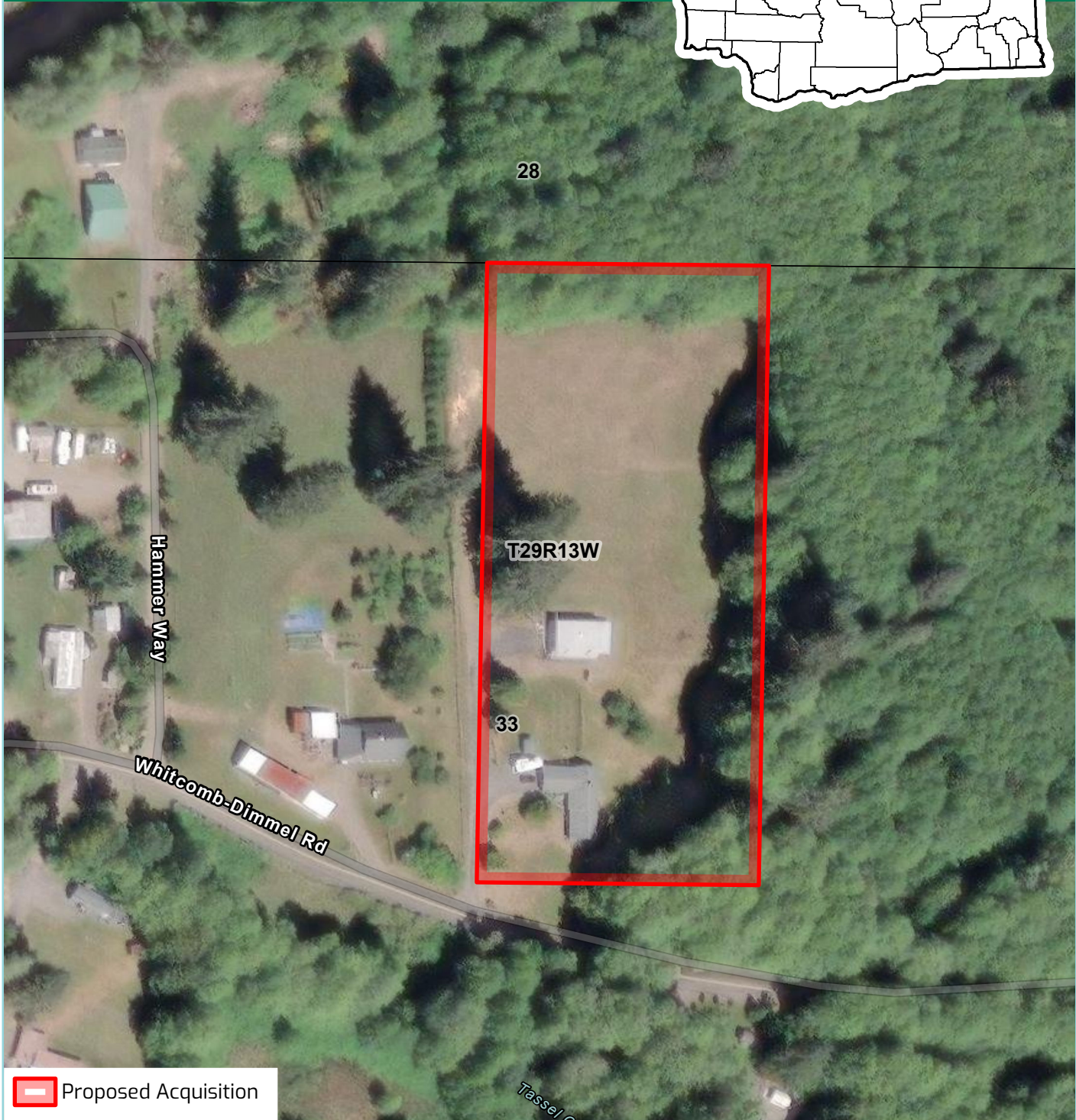
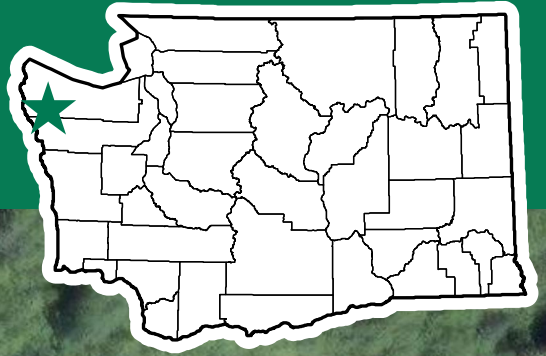
Department of Fish and Wildlife




This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.

ITEM 1: Enforcement Housing

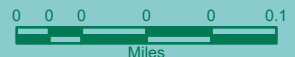
Legal Description: Township 29N,
Range 13W W.M., Section 33
County: Clallam



 Proposed Acquisition



Department of Fish and Wildlife



This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.