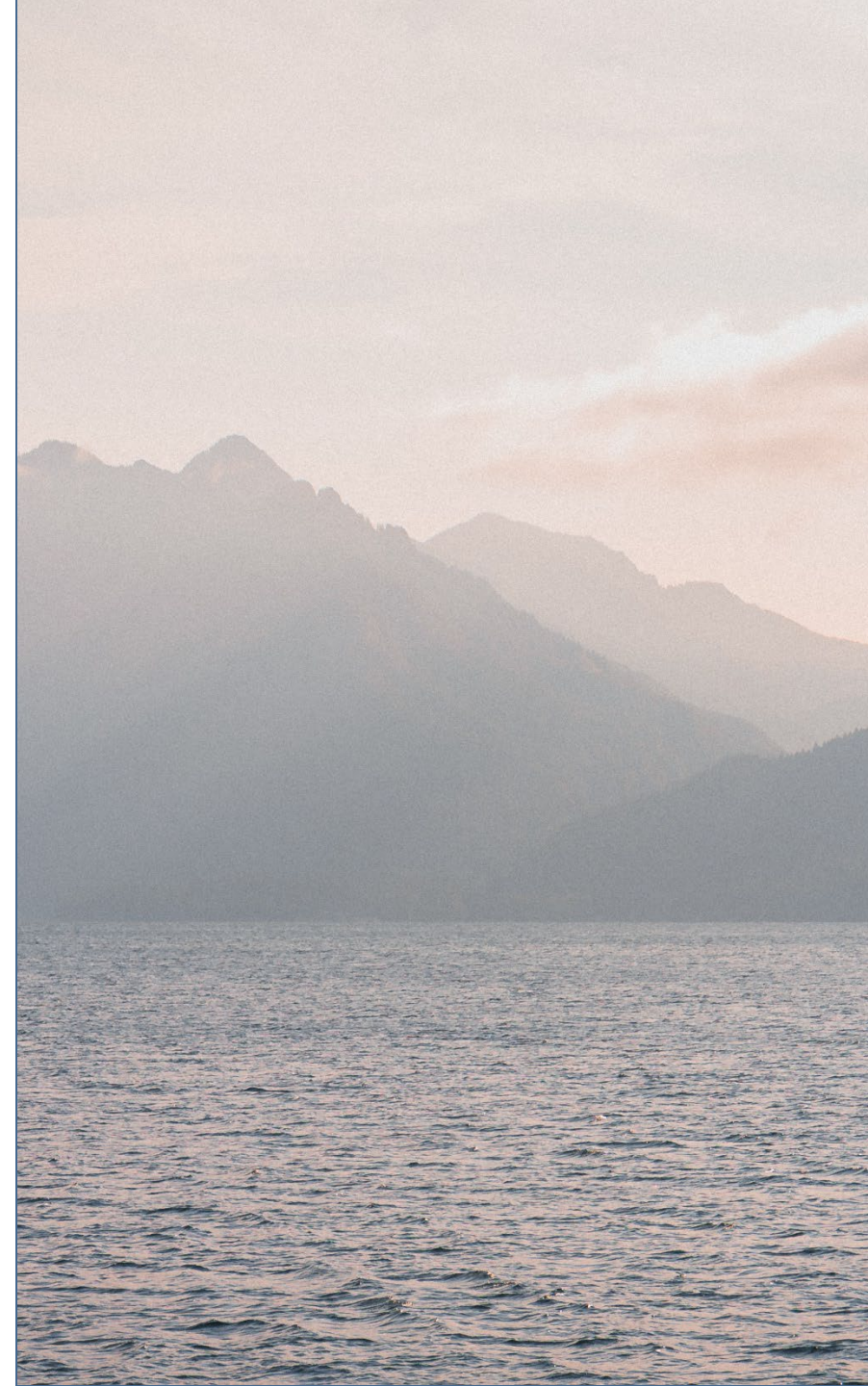


Forest Offset Protocol Technical Working Group

Meeting #1

Agenda

- Opening remarks and meeting overview
- Group introductions
- Introduce group charter, purpose, timeline, and expectations
- Discussion
- Overview of planned working group topics
- Discussion
- Introduce topics for next meeting
- Public Comment Opportunity



Welcome!

- Meeting is a part of the [446 Offset Rulemaking process](#)
- **Meetings will be recorded**
- Meetings are open to the public
- Technical Working Group members will appear as “Panelists” in the Zoom meeting
- Members of the public will appear as “Attendees”
- Attendees may unmute and provide comment in the public comment portion of the meeting
- Summary notes will be published on EZView

Offset - Forest Offset Technical Working Group



Working group description and purpose

The U.S. Forest Offset Protocol Technical Working Group is comprised of individuals with expertise in the development, registration, verification, or analysis of compliance or voluntary forest offset projects. As part of the [WAC 173-446 Offsets Rulemaking](#), Ecology is considering revisions and additions to offset protocols adopted in WAC 173-446. The purpose of this working group is to help inform Ecology's proposals related to revisions to the adopted California's Air Resources Board (CARB) Compliance Offset Protocol – U.S. Forest Projects – June 25, 2015. The working group will provide input on a series of potential revisions under consideration sourced from CARB's 2021 Offset Taskforce Report, voluntary offset market protocols, and public comments received during this rulemaking.

Meeting schedule

The working group will meet the first Tuesday of the month from 9 - 11 a.m. (PT) from July to Dec. 2024.

- Meeting dates are July 2, Aug. 6, Sept. 3, Oct. 1, Nov. 5, and Dec. 3.

The meetings will be open to the public to view and there will include an opportunity to provide relevant public comment. Register to join the [Zoom webinar](#).

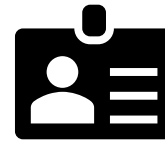
Zoom tips and tricks



Panelists please keep yourself muted unless you're speaking.



Attendees use the Raise Hand feature during public comment period.



Please rename yourself with your affiliation: Click on 'Participants,' hover over your name Click 'More' then 'Rename.'



For panelists please keep your video on as bandwidth allows.

Technical Support

Please contact Piper Tulley:

- Request support via the Q&A feature
- Or contact directly
 - Piper.tulley@ecy.wa.gov
 - 564-233-1575

Introductions

- Please share:
 - Name
 - Position and affiliation
 - Experience relevant to forestry offset protocols or forest offset project development

Statutory context

- RCW 70A.65.170(4):
- In adopting protocols governing offset projects and covered and opt-in entities' use of offset credits, the department shall:
 - (b) Encourage opportunities for the development of offset projects in this state by adopting offset protocols **that may include, but need not be limited to, protocols that make use of aggregation or other mechanisms to reduce transaction costs** related to the development of offset projects and **that support the development of carbon dioxide removal projects;**
- Adaption, development, and adoption of new offset protocols must both reflect the legal requirement that compliance offset credits be real, permanent, quantifiable, verifiable, enforceable, and additional while also meeting the needs of project developers in order to be viable in the market.

Direct Environmental Benefits (DEBs)

- All Offsets issued by Ecology must provide Direct Environmental Benefits to the State (RCW 70A.65.170(2)(a))
- All in-state projects are considered to provide DEBs to the State
- Out-of-state projects may apply to Ecology to receive DEBs designation, as in California's market

Environmental Justice – in CCA Offsets Program

- In CCA offsets are “under the cap”
 - The number of offsets used in the program is subtracted from the number of available allowances in the following year to ensure attainment of emissions targets
- Ecology has the authority to reduce offset usage limits for entities that contribute significantly to the cumulative air pollution burden in overburdened communities
- To maximize offset use, entities must source a portion of their offsets used for compliance from projects on Tribal lands
- Offset projects must demonstrate to Ecology that they will not incur significant adverse environmental impacts after mitigation

Environmental Justice – in Rulemaking Process

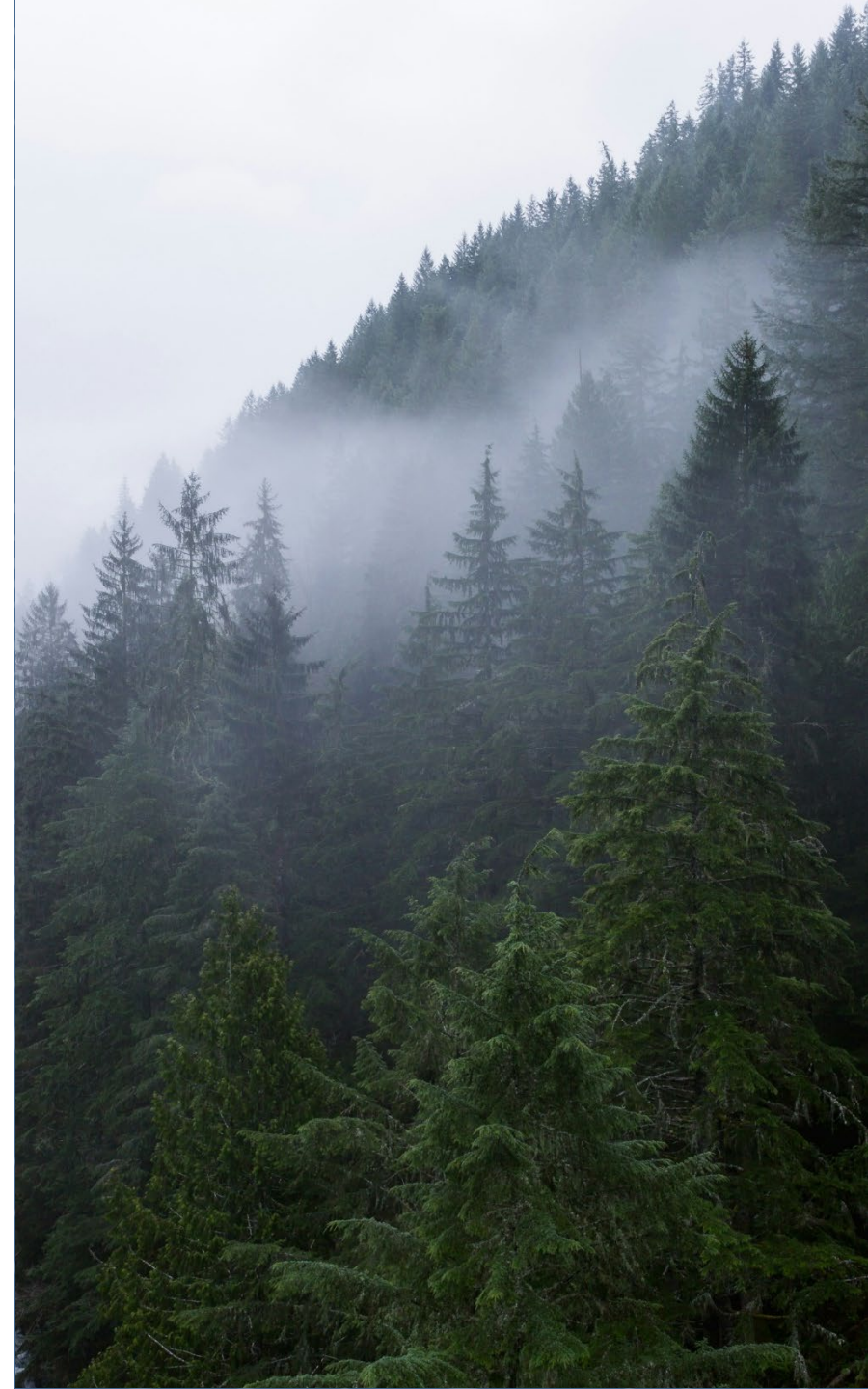
- An Environmental Justice Assessment (EJA) will be completed as part of this rulemaking process
- In addition to topic specific technical working groups Ecology will convene an Environmental Justice Working Group to inform the EJA and rulemaking decisions
- Any rule changes will be proposed in coordination with the Environmental Justice Council (RCW 70A.65.040(2)(a)(i))

Background and Purpose of Group

- The U.S. Forest technical working group is composed of up to 17 members providing input of specific technical considerations related for forest carbon offset protocols.
- Technical working group members will provide input on Ecology on specific topics related to the offset protocol, which Ecology will use to inform its rulemaking, in tandem with public comment, input from the environmental justice offsets working group, tribal consultation, and internal review.

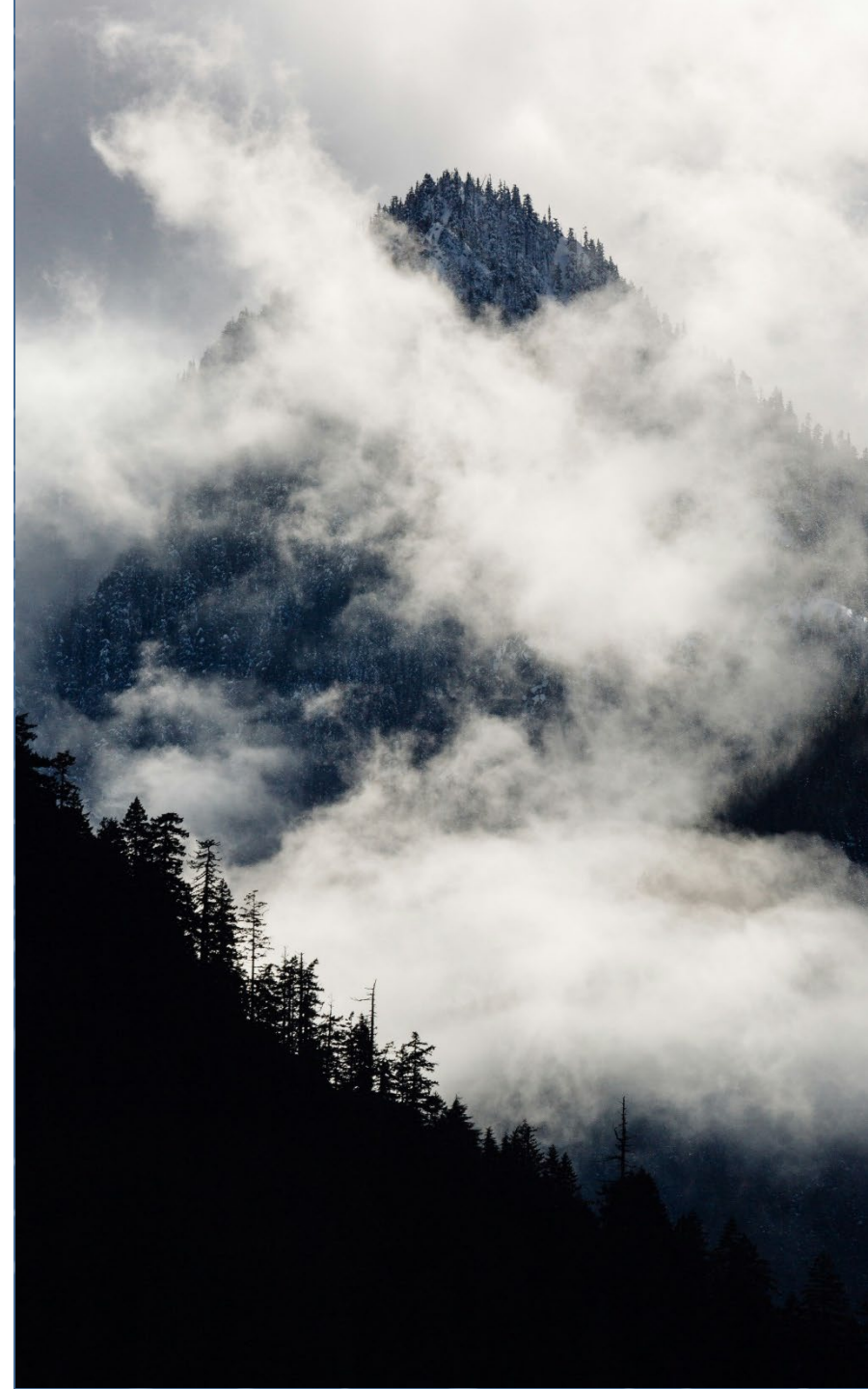
Membership

- Membership is voluntary
- Send alternatives if unable to attend
- Request members participate for the duration of the working group
 - If a member can no longer participate, Ecology may seek an alternate



Desired Outcomes

- Input from individual members on a series of potential protocol changes compiled by Ecology and informed by working group input
- Consensus recommendations are not the intended outcome
- Any rule changes will be informed by working group input, public comment, tribal consultation, and internal review
- Participation in this group will not be construed as support for or opposition to Ecology's eventual rulemaking decisions.



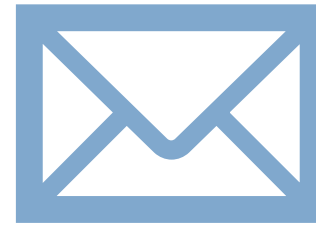
Meeting Logistics

- Meetings will be virtual
- No quorum requirement
- Agendas will be posted one week in advance
- Members will be asked to review summary notes to ensure summary adequately captures discussion

Public Participation



Meetings will be public and recordings
and will be posted publicly after
meeting



All emails to and from Ecology
are part of the public record

Expectations of Working Group Members

- Attend and engage in working group meetings
- Review meeting agenda and materials prior to meetings
- Review meeting summary notes after each meeting
- Participate actively, respectfully, and in good faith in the working group

Structure of meetings

- Ecology will present a considered revision to the working group and lead a discussion on the considered revision
- Each meeting will seek to cover 2-4 considered revisions
- Revisions will be a mixture of small-scale update to larger scale revisions
- Revisions will be sourced from:
 - Voluntary offset protocols
 - ARB Offset Taskforce report
 - Public comments
 - **Working Group member input**

Programmatic Goals of US Forest Carbon Protocol Updates

- Improve project feasibility for smaller landowners
 - Reduce fixed costs
 - Facilitate aggregation of small parcels into single project
 - Provide resources to ease administrative burden of project development
- Increase viability of less used project types (e.g. reforestation) and less used land types (e.g. public lands)
- Remove unnecessary or unintended barriers or exclusions to project development
- Improve applicability of the protocol to forests in Washington state
- Increase methodological rigor

Ecology's Process

- Input from this working group will help to inform our next steps in revision this protocol
- These next steps may include:
 - Near-term adoption of some revisions
 - Longer-term research to pursue some revisions
 - A determination that some revisions are not actionable or advisable at this time
- We anticipate we will revise this protocol multiple times over the course of the program through multiple rulemakings

Discussion

- What questions or feedback on the working group expectations, group structure or function do you have?
- What recommendations do you have for Ecology on practices or approaches that have worked well (or not worked well) in similar groups?

Overview of planned topics

- List is preliminary, and intended to cast a wide net
- Comprised of potential revisions aggregated from comparable protocols, ARB Taskforce report, public comment, published literature
- Working group members are strongly encouraged to recommend additional potential topics through the course of this working group
- Potential revisions range from small scale updates to very large scale changes
- Many revisions overlap or are alternate approaches to address the same issue

How working group members will be asked to engage with each topic

- In subsequent meetings Ecology will present 2-4 considered versions, group by subject area
 - Ecology will present a potential protocol revision, including the source of the potential revision
 - This may or may not include specific considered protocol language

Working group member engagement continued

Working group members will be asked to provide their individual perspective on:

- How the considered revision *does* or *does not* support Ecology's programmatic goals for this rulemaking:
 - Improve project feasibility for smaller landowners
 - Increase viability of less used project types (e.g. reforestation) and less used land types (e.g. public lands)
 - Remove unnecessary or unintended barriers or exclusions to project development
 - Improve applicability of the protocol to forests in Washington state
 - Increase methodological rigor
- Alternatives to the proposed revision that Ecology should consider

Eligibility

- Eligibility of lands where an offset project was previously listed but no credits were issued
- Definition of “Forest Owner”

Reversals

- Narrow definition “intentional reversals” to more accurately allocate liability
- Alternative accounting for certain types of reversals
 - “Computational reversal”, “technical reversal”, “planned reversal”
- Allow reversal insurance in lieu of buffer pool contribution

Conservation Easements

- Allow phased qualified conservation easement implementation
- Allow for multiple conservation easements over a single project area

Verification and Monitoring Accommodations

- Reduce verification frequency and intensity for small projects with few or no offset accruals

Baseline

- Within existing baseline approach:
 - Update FIA derived common practice statistics, plan periodic updates
 - Allow streamlined reforestation baseline by supersection (similar to common practice for IFM)
 - Allow streamlined approach for estimating baseline carbon stocks for IFM projects on non-federal public lands
 - Adopt streamlined baseline process for small landowners to establish a project baseline
- Consider alternative baseline approach
 - Adopt dynamic baselines responsive to exogenous factors
 - Adopt net present value method of calculating project baselines

Forest Management Requirements and Restrictions

- Implement alternative approaches to even aged harvest size restriction
- Alternate treatment of Safe Harbor Agreements as a component of project baseline
- Allow changes to project boundaries with re-verification

Inventorying and Sampling

- Revise inventory sampling design standards
- Allow of new methods of inventory and modeling
- Allow use of CARIT tool for project developers

Discussion questions

- What topics are missing from this list?
- In addition to comparable protocols, Offset Taskforce report, and public comment, are there additional sources Ecology should look to for potential offset protocol refinements?
- What additional criteria should Ecology ask working group members to comment on through these discussions?
- What information should Ecology provide related to each topic to frame the discussion?



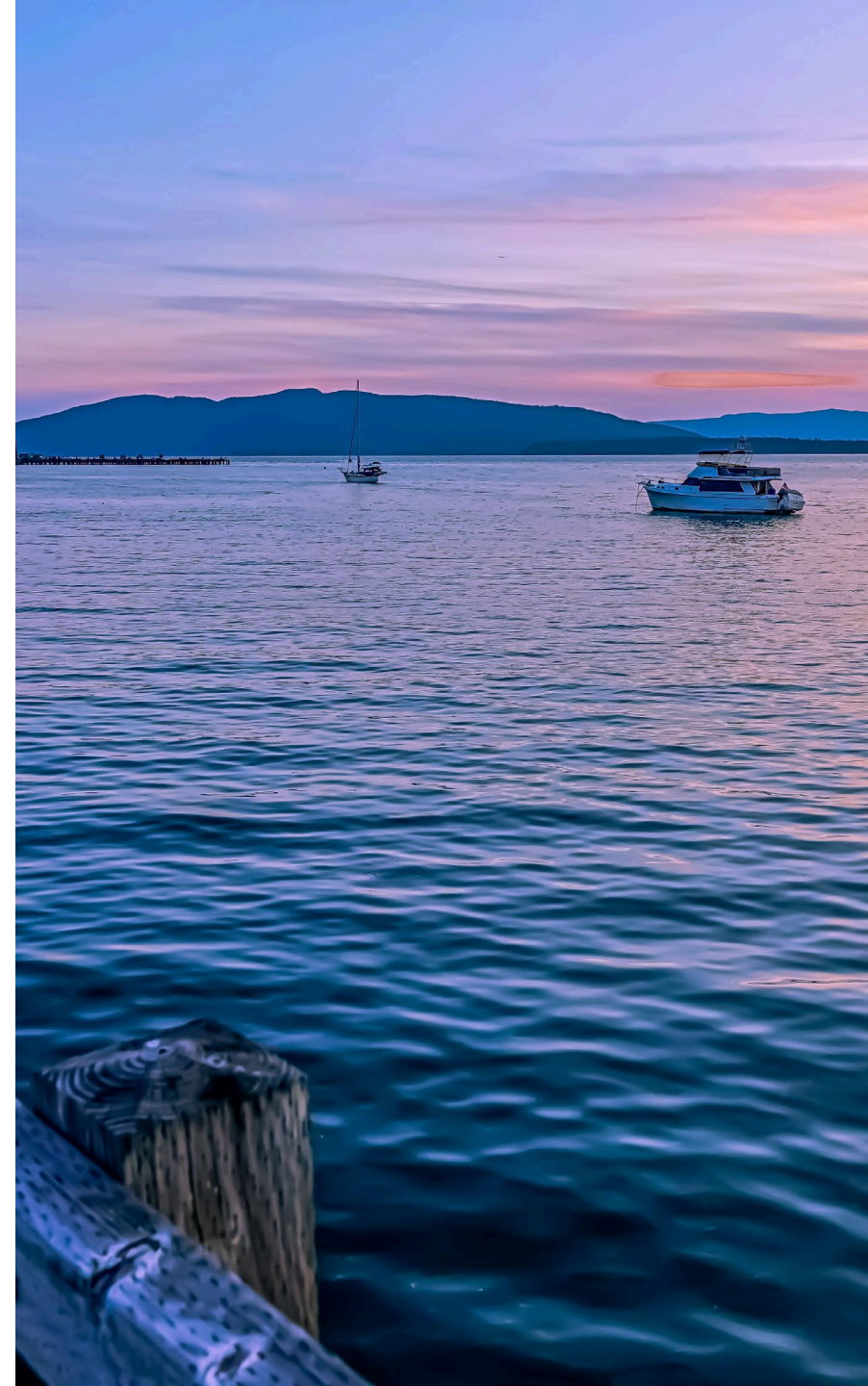
Next steps

- Meeting #2 is 8/6/2024 at 9 am (PT)
- Topics for Meeting #2
 - Eligibility of previously listed projects
 - Definition of “Forest Owner”
 - Standard of negligence in forestry reversals

Public Comment Opportunity

Guidelines for providing public comment

- Up to two minutes per person
- Host will unmute you and begin timer
- Please keep the comments related to forestry or offset projects
- Ecology will not respond to comments in this meeting
- To submit written comments, use our [digital comment platform](#)
- Please use “raise hand” button to indicate that you wish to provide a comment



Thank you!

Contact:

CCAOffsets@ecy.wa.gov

