



US Forest Offset Working Group (Meeting #4)

Agenda for October 8th | 9:00 am – 11:00 a.m.

Location: Zoom, the public may view the meeting in a webinar format

Registration link: https://waecy-wa-gov.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_2meS_ye-QMm00G8gU7lctg

Welcome and overview

- Welcome to the meeting
- Disclosure of financial interest related to topics to be discussed
 - Please come prepared to share any relevant financial interests or professional engagements **not previously shared** related to the changes discussed in this meeting such as:
 - Intention or consideration of development of a forest offset project in Washington's market
 - Ownership, involvement, or other interest in an offset project has had an intentional or unintentional reversal, or has used an alternative risk mitigation mechanism approved by a registry
 - Any other financial interests that may be perceived as pertinent to this this discussion
 - Please note that the existence and disclosure of a financial interest **does not** preclude you from full participation in this discussion and meeting

Topic 1 – Buffer pools

- Ecology will share a broad scope of considered revisions and concepts related to the buffer pool risk mitigation mechanism and seek working group input related to opportunities to strengthen unintentional reversal risk mitigation in the protocol. We intend to revisit the topic of buffer pools in a future meeting with specific considered revisions informed by working group input from this meeting.
- Relevant materials to review (**repeated from last meeting**):
 - [CARB Offset Taskforce Report \(p.79-80\)](#)
 - [Badgley, Grayson, et al. "California's forest carbon offsets buffer pool is severely undercapitalized." *Frontiers in Forests and Global Change* 5 \(2022\): 930426.](#)
 - This a longer form resource than I typically ask working group members to review, but I wanted to include this study as it is particularly pertinent to this topic. Key results are shown in figures 3 and 4 on p.8 and a summary can be found in the conclusion on p .12.
- Topic 1: Discussion questions:
 - What alternative approaches should Ecology consider to set buffer pool contribution limits?
 - Is the itemization of risks comprehensive and appropriate in the existing protocol? Are there itemized risks that may be under or overestimated? Are there alternative approaches that Ecology should consider?

- Are there alternative approaches to quantifying reversals that Ecology should consider?
- How can Ecology further incentivize forest resilience activities? What metrics, measures, or methods should Ecology consider to quantify forest resilience activities?
- Should Ecology consider allowing the use of qualified insurance products in place of buffer pool contributions? How may this impact developer decision making?
- Should Ecology consider allowing non-forest offsets to be used as contributions to the buffer pool? How would this support project development?

Topic 2 – Project Baselines

- Ecology will share a broad scope of considered revisions and concepts related to approaches to establishing project minimum baselines, which will continue in the next meeting. The focus of the discussion in this meeting will be to establish a shared understanding of the status quo of the baseline approach in the existing protocol, and gauge working group member views on the status quo.
- Relevant materials to review:
 - [CARB US Forest Protocol 2015 – Establishing Baseline Onsite Carbon Stocks – Private Lands, Section 5.2.1 \(p.55 – 66\)](#)
 - Note: to begin discussion on this topic we will focus on baseline calculations for IFM projects on private lands as this is the most common type of project, which is covered in the section listed above. Baseline calculations methods for different project types and ownership types differ, which I intend to discuss in the next meeting.
 - [Badgley, G., Freeman, J., Hamman, J. J., Haya, B., Trugman, A. T., Anderegg, W. R., & Cullenward, D. \(2022\). Systematic over-crediting in California's forest carbon offsets program. *Global Change Biology*, 28\(4\), 1433-1445.](#)
 - The entirety of this study is pertinent to this topic. Key sections include 1.3, 2.6, 3, and 4.
 - [CARB Forest protocol FAQ Document \(relevant sections p.3, p.6-7\)](#)

Public comment opportunity

Public participants, Ecology's facilitator

- There will be a 15-minute public comment period. Public members are welcome to speak for up to two minutes. The comments should be focused on the content of the Forestry Offset Technical Working Group topics. Ecology will not respond to comments made by the public. Members of the public may provide written comments on the rulemaking process through the [digital comment platform](#).

Next Steps and Action Items

Next meeting: November 12th, 2024, 9 am – 11 am (Pacific Time)

Topics:

- Alternative approaches to baseline calculations

Resource and Assistance

- Contact Jordan Wildish at CCAOffsets@ecy.wa.gov or 360-280-6488
- [US Forest Offset Working Group Webpage](#)