

\*\*\*\*PROPOSED RESOLUTION\*\*\*\*

Date submitted: March 25, 2010

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**Conserving the Chuckanut Mountains: The Puget Sound Region's Last, Large Coastal Forest**

WHEREAS the Chuckanut Mountains of Skagit and Whatcom Counties encompass more than 35 (thirty-five) square miles, including approximately 9,000 (nine-thousand) acres of public lands managed by state and local agencies;

WHEREAS the Chuckanut Mountains are uniquely situated adjacent to the marine waters of greater Puget Sound and the Northern Straits;

WHEREAS the Chuckanut Mountains are recognized as the only place in Washington where major foothills of the Cascades Range extend all the way to the sea;

WHEREAS the Chuckanuts region represents the last, large undeveloped green space on the map between Seattle and Vancouver, B.C.;

WHEREAS public lands within the Chuckanut Mountains are managed for recreation, wildlife, open space, forestry and other forms of public enjoyment and benefit;

WHEREAS the Chuckanut Mountains, including their highest summit, Blanchard Mountain, provide more than sixty miles of trails, spectacular views, numerous lakes, streams and wetlands, unusual rock formations, and old-growth and maturing forests that provide the foundation for one of the state's most popular year-round outdoor recreation destinations, and as such make this area a major contributor to local economies;

WHEREAS the protection and restoration of this unique coastal mountain range is paramount to healthy ecosystems, the protection of Puget Sound, addressing climate change, preserving the quality of life for surrounding communities, and ensuring continued public enjoyment of the area's outstanding parks, trails and scenic beauty;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Whatcom County Democrats support the protection, restoration and sustainable use and enjoyment of the Chuckanut Mountains, including permanent protected-area status for more sensitive public lands, such as wildlife corridors, habitats for species of concern, trail corridors, all roadless areas on Blanchard Mountain, and viewsheds from within and around the Chuckanut Mountains.

AND THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call on our elected Democratic representatives to provide such permanent protection by way of an open public process focused on land acquisitions, exchanges, transfers, and the designation of parks, natural resources conservation areas or similar means, including due compensation to any trust, where required, and that any forest lands not so designated be managed under the widely adopted certification standards developed by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

\*\*\*\*END\*\*\*\*