

PEPC 191188

Clallam Bay Sekiu Advisory Council

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OCT - 4 2006

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Carla McConnell
Olympic National Park - GMP
National Park Service
Denver Service Center - Planning
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, CO 80225

September 25, 2006

Dear Miss McConnell,

Thank you for an opportunity to comment on the Draft General Management Plan for Olympic National Park.

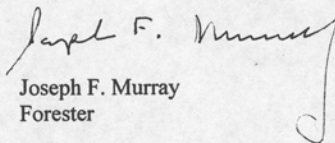
I recently attended an open house sponsored by the Park. The Park staff was on hand to inform the public of their plans. Comments were accepted in writing and by taped recordings. It was unfortunate that an open public forum at which local citizens could speak was not allowed, because the passion of an individual's position was lost to the Park as well as to the other participants.

"However, the four county region is not affected due to the size and diversity of the regional economy." This conclusion is stated in the section "Local Economies" under the part of the document titled "Impacts to the Socioeconomic Environment." This seems to show the Park's lack of understanding of our local economies. The local economy in the Clallam Bay/Sekiu area and other parts of the Western Olympic Peninsula, essentially the economy on the West End is driven by natural resources and tourism. The East side of Olympic National Park has larger more diversified economies in the urban areas. Most of commercial forest land that would become part of the Park is on the west side of the Peninsula, this will cost direct job loss to those employed in the forest as well as in the communities supported by the forest. Your preferred 'Alternative D' will cost our community jobs which are essential to our socioeconomic environment.

Reducing motorize boating would reduce local and tourist use of the Ozette Lake and corresponding economic activity. This is yet another example where the Park has overlooked the interests and economic well being of our West End communities.

Perhaps these comments will inspire the Park to reassess their beliefs about the West End and develop an understanding of the people who live and work in the area. The Park provides numerous public presentations, solicits written and taped comments, and goes to great lengths to include this input in publications to document the public process. It is unclear, however, to what extent this solicited input influences park policies. We would recommend that the Park take a less imperial approach and talk with the people, not at them. Olympic National Park should develop a plan around 'Alternative A' which allows for the maintenance of existing park lands, roads and developed areas. This will provide a balance between the concerns of local citizens and the Olympic National Park as part of our community.

Sincerely,


Joseph F. Murray
Forester