

Olympic National Park Draft General Management Plan

Summer 2006

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



REPC 191154

COMMENT SHEET ONP - GMP

We welcome your comments on this project. The comment period closes on **09/30/2006**. Your comments must be delivered or postmarked no later than **09/30/2006**.

You may complete this form and provide it to the NPS at one of the open houses, or you may send this form and/or your letter to:

National Park Service
Denver Service Center - Cliff Hawkes, DSC-P
12795 West Alameda Parkway
PO Box 25287
Denver, CO 80225-9901

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It is the practice of the NPS to make comments, including names, home addresses, home phone numbers, and email addresses of respondents, available for public review. Individual respondents may request that we withhold their names and/or home addresses, etc., but if you wish us to consider withholding this information you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. In addition, you must present a rationale for withholding this information. This rationale must demonstrate that disclosure would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy. Unsupported assertions will not meet this burden. In the absence of exceptional, documentable circumstances, this information will be released. We will always make submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives of or officials of organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

Personal Information

First Name:

Last Name:

Organization:

Address 1:

Address 2:

City: *Port Angeles*

State/Province *Washington*

Postal Code: *98362*

E-mail:

☐ Keep my contact information private. Provide justification:

Please use below and the back of the paper for your comments. Attach extra sheets as necessary. Please print or write clearly.

* *Please see attached COMMENT SHEETS 1 thru 5.*

MANY THANKS !

[Redacted signature]

September 29, 2006

National Park Service
Denver Service Center – Cliff Hawkes, DSC-P
12795 West Alameda Parkway
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225-9901

Attached Comment Sheets for the Olympic National Park General Management Plan
[REDACTED]

Dear Cliff:

I oppose any more land being added to the Olympic National Park and I also oppose any additional land being designated Wilderness on the Olympic Peninsula. 922,651 acres is more than enough land of which 95 percent 876,669 acres are Wilderness. It is my understanding that approximately 65 percent of the Olympic Peninsula is either in Designated Wilderness, National Park, State Park, County Park or National Monuments. I also understand that the Sierra Club, the Extreme Green and Superintendent Bill Laitner are of the opinion that there can never be enough National Park or Designated Wilderness Areas.

Please correct me if I am wrong. I believe today, nationally there is presently 106 million acres of Designated Wilderness Areas. When President Johnson signed the Wilderness Act into law there was 9.2 million acres. According to Superintendent Bill Laitner the Olympic National Park has 3 million visitors annually. At the August 18, 2006 ONP – GMP open house in Port Angeles I ask Bill Laitner out of the 3 million annual visitors to the ONP how many actually go into the Wilderness Areas. He said he didn't know. I found this a little hard to believe that the Superintendent of the largest National Park in the United States who is such a strong advocate in favor to increasing the amount of Designated Wilderness Area at the ONP didn't have a clue as to the number of annual visitors going into the Wilderness Areas.

This morning I contacted Barb Maynes the ONP spokeswoman and asked her the same question. She was polite, but was also unable to answer the question. She referred me to Butch Street in Denver, Colorado. I called him several times today but he was unavailable to speak with so I left a message requesting he call me back.

With all due respect I strongly disagree with the ONP – GMP Preferred Alternative. When I spoke with Superintendent Bill Laitner on August 18, 2006 at the open house in Port Angeles he said the ONP has a \$6,000,000.00 deferred maintenance backlog for 2006. If ONP were a private corporation I know of no Institutional Lenders that would approve your business plan and be willing lend additional operating capital on a business plan like yours. I also believe our elected officials must bare some of the blame for allowing additional money for Land Acquisition.

When they knowing perfectly well the National Parks Service doesn't have the necessary money to maintain what they already have entrusted to them by the American Public! That was taken away from the Stewardship of the National Forest Service.

More developed campsites and access are drastically needed in the ONP. Families need t places to go and enjoy Gods Country and the Pristine Beauty of the Great Outdoors that is easily accessible as a Family Unit! With America's increasing population and the aging senior population more access is badly needed. The National Park Service refuses to acknowledge that most American Tax Payers don't believe being micromanaged by the National Park Service is an invigorating outdoor experience. I was surprised by Superintendent Bill Laitner's lack of response and compassion when I mentioned the American Disabilities Act. I thought a Superintendent of a Park the size of ONP would be more considerate of the Physically Challenged and Americans Aging Senior Population. I spent quite a while speaking with Superintendent Bill Laitner. One on one and in a small group discussing the ONP Lake Ozette Land Grab Preferred Alternative! These were people who owned property at Lake Ozette! In that discussion I reiterated the need for more access and the property owners from Lake Ozette agreed and they stated more access was needed throughout the ONP. But Superintendent Bill Laitner just blew us off and kept changing the subject!!

The ONP – GMP strongly suggest Lake Ozette become non-motorized lake. They want to eliminate areas that are now used for camping and make them day use only. The ONP has repeatedly demonstrated a lack of concern for the local economy and the way of life the residence of the Olympic Peninsula love and cherish.

I believe God created this area purposely with this amount of annual precipitation to grow trees, which it does very well! The purposed increase in Designated Wilderness Areas would substantially reduce the amount of tourism dollars currently generated on the Olympic Peninsula and the low paying jobs that would be added by the ONP acquiring all of the land in their Preferred Alternative Land Garb is a drop in the bucket compared to the economic impact the Olympic Peninsula would experience if we lost all of that timber producing property and the jobs associated with it.

When I was speaking with Superintendent Bill Laitner he said the elk population in the ONP was declining. It is my understanding that elk populations thrive in areas that have recently been logged during the period the replanted trees are growing up to a point. Once the forest canopy is think and full there isn't the food for the elk so the move on. The Cougar has been a major factor with the declining elk and deer population. Once the Wolf is reintroduced these population will drop to the point that hunting will not longer be allowed outside of the park. But then again that is really what the Extreme Green would like to see. Then the cycle will start again, Preferred Alternative Land Grabs. With this in mind the ONP Preferred Alternative Land Grab wants to take over 2 thousand acres of prime hunting and recreation land on and South of the Queets River. This area supports a very strong elk population. By adding this land to the ONP and taking it out of timber production how does the ONP intend to sustain or increase the elk population once the forest canopy mature and is thick and full the elk will be gone. I really question the skill level and intensions of the entire staff at the ONP.

From my side of the Lollypop the National Parks Business Plan seems to be acquiring additional land for the Parks at every available opportunity by hiding behind some Environmental Issue's or Endangered Species Act. Than transfer the Land into Designated Wilderness Areas, which reduces the access, the number of visitors and hopefully reduces the annual operating expenses. I have to admit Cliff when one thinks of it this sounds pretty sweet for the Olympic National Park Employees.

They get to keep their jobs, continue receiving their paychecks, benefit package and they have a Government Retirement Pension to look forward too! Is it just me, or does this sounds a little self-serving for the ONP Employees to eagerly await opportunities to expand the National Parks and Designated Wilderness Areas. Could one say it also sounds like a conflict of interest or organized crime?

I also don't think the average American Tax Payer considers watching a Video or DVD a pristine outdoor a true nature experience.

The NPS has repeatedly demonstrated their inability to maintain and efficiently operate the lands entrusted to them by the owners the American Public for their use and their enjoyment as perceived by all of the American Public. Not just the NPS, Sierra Club, Extreme Green and PEERS!

According to an article by the National Parks Conservation Association dated September 28, 2006 the National Parks deferred maintenance backlog is now estimated between \$4.1 billion and 6.8 billion. Yet you still want more land!!

There are very few lake left on the Olympic Peninsula that allow freshwater fishing with only restrictions from the State of Washington's Department of Fish and Wildlife. Most of what is in the ONP is catch and release and doesn't allow barbed hooks. This even includes Lake Mills and Lake Aldwell, which as you know are scheduled for Dam Removal between 2009 and 2011.

At the August 18, 2006 OLP open house in Port Angeles I also spoke with Brian Winter who is in charge of representing OLP interest and overseeing the dams operations in conjunction with the Bureau of Reclamation including the decommissioning and removal scheduled to begin in 2009. I said I felt the cost estimate involved building a new water treatment plant; removal of both dams and all other cost associated with the overall project would at least be double of what was initially stated by the NPS.

Brian strongly disagreed with me, which is fine. I then asked him if he sincerely believed the entire project could possibly be completed and come in on budget? He answered no, but refused to venture a guess or estimate as to what the entire project might cost taking into consideration inflation. Brian also said the NPS should be coming out with a revised projected cost in early 2007 and he would abstain from commenting any further on the issue until those figures were made available!

Frankly I think the NPS and the ONP both already have an idea of what the cost of the entire project will be, but are delaying as long as possible before sharing it with the American Tax Payers. Why? I believe the ONP is trying to justify the additional expense associated with their Preferred Alternative Land Grab!

Taking into consideration that once the dams are removed the City of Port Angeles wouldn't have the ability to store water to ensure the city an adequate water supply for an unforeseen dry summers or drought. I also mentioned the need to store water to protect the Salmon and Steelhead Runs during those times. I suggested only removing one dam. I felt this would protect the City of Port Angeles Supply and the Salmon and Steelhead Runs in the Elwha River.

Brian insisted there were test and studies done taking these concerns I mentioned into consideration and the test showed there was more than enough water in the aquifer and water table to assure that would not happen. I shared with Brian that in certain areas of Sequim where some irrigation ditches had been replaced with pipe, the water wells that had produced adequate water supplies for many years were going dry because of the reduced amount of water in the aquifer and water table. Again he dismissed my concerns.

In Thursdays September 27, 2006 addition of the Peninsula Daily News, the ONP spokesperson Barb Maynes said the Elwha and Glines Canyon Dams started releasing an additional 40 cubic feet of water per second last Tuesday. This was to protect the eggs spawned by the Chinook Salmon because of low water levels. The article also said the 91 years of record keeping showed the average flow is 574 cubic feet per second. The flow on last Tuesday was 296 feet per second, or 51 percent of the average. The article went on to say the water release will continue until Lake Mills above Glines Dam drops 10 feet "or until a substantial amount of rain falls, which ever happens first." The Federal Government, the Olympic National Park and the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe have failed to make any provisions to protect or ensure there would always be adequate water levels in the Elwha River for both the people and the fish!

Prior to the Judge Bolt Decision there were plenty of fish in all of our rivers and streams. The netting of our Rivers and lack of effort or desire to protect the Salmon and Steelhead runs have really caused of the decline of our fish runs. The logging practices implemented and enforced by the State and Federal Governments requiring loggers to log to the edge of the streams and rivers was also a major factor in the decline of the fish population. This not only increased the water temperatures it was also a critical loss of fish habitat. That along with the Indians netting the rivers and streams is the two major contributors in the decline of the returning fish runs.

Hopefully this will be an eye opener for the NPS and ONP and allow them to realize that just because they have extensive formal educations and by making statements with conviction they still don't have all of the answers!

For some reason the people at the ONP and the NPS seem to think they have all the correct answers and the residence of the Olympic Peninsula are dumber than a box of rocks! Based upon the studies and tests that the ONP staff has performed and so proudly refer to along with their extensive formal educations. You people should contact the Colleges you attended and look into receiving rebates! It does not appear that you or the owners of the Olympic National Park, the American Tax Payer have been getting their monies worth!!

The ONP and the NPS need to understand that the Extreme Greenies aren't the only ones with the financial means to drag the NPS into court.

There are many other points and issues I could bring up and refer to. I could continue, but I realize you want this kept short so I'll wrap it up now.

Respectfully

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of the sender.

Port Angeles, WA. 98362

P.S. FYI, I will be forwarding this along with additional issues of concern to the big bosses! I have found when starting at the top, boulders roll much easier down hill!