

PEPC 191153

RECEIVED

OCT - 3 2006

DSC-P

[REDACTED]  
3654 North Stevens Street  
Tacoma, WA 98407  
253-756-9163

September 29, 2006

Olympic National Park General Management Plan  
National Park Service  
Denver Service Center  
P.O. Box 25287  
Denver, Colorado 80225

Attention Plan Administrators:

The following are my comments on the Olympic National Park Draft General Management Plan (GMP) dated May 2006.

Alternative A gets my approval. While there are some appealing recommendations, they come with many more serious flaws. I also note I have little confidence my voice will be heard, since my experience over 40 years with Olympic National Park causes me to conclude the park management has already made all the key decisions. Going through the comment process only gives the illusion of considering citizen input. In fact, ONP specifically ruled out accepting or considering comments signed in petition format by effected citizens groups such as the inholders in the Lake Ozette area. Nevertheless, as a good and concerned citizen and in the hope of actually making a difference, I offer the following:

I oppose inclusion of additional lands as an unwise use of taxpayer money. No specific evidence is offered to show the necessity for additional land acquisition and, indeed, ONP does a generally poor job of maintaining the lands and facilities it currently owns. Additionally, removal of additional lands from local and state tax rolls places an unfair burden on those governments and their citizens. It is a fact ONP does not pay its fair share to maintain local and state services even considering the PILT (payment in lieu of taxes) payments. PILT payments are far below what would be derived from a fair tax assessment. Additionally, lands locked up under ONP management or Legacy Forest produce no income leading to job loss in an already economically depressed area. It must be clearly stated that all land acquisition will occur under the willing seller-willing buyer policy.

While it is popular and politically correct to vilify logging operations, in fact no clear evidence exists to connect any logging under current forest practices with degradation of spawning grounds in the Lyre River origin and Lake Crescent outlet area. Rather the silting more correctly occurs as a result of atmospheric particulates into lake water where it accumulates on the lake bottom. What sediment does enter from runoff is naturally occurring as a result of rainfall on all slopes surrounding the lake not just those north and west of the ONP boundary in this area.

I specifically object to removal of back country shelters. These shelters are an historic part of the Park and provide visitors with a safety net otherwise unavailable. While they do concentrate visitor impact, they serve to protect surrounding areas from adverse impact that would otherwise occur.

There is considerable discussion of the perceived lack of appropriate funding for Park operations. Actually it is a matter of where and how the available funding is expended. The Park has received increased funding each year for the past 5 years. The real question is one of operational priorities. The priority should be in support of the greatest number of visitors and users which is the front country and road side areas. These have been conspicuously neglected in the past.

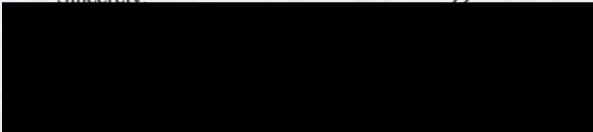
I also see no mention of performance audits anywhere in the document. These operations reviews are essential in delivering an appropriate level of services at the most economical cost. The recommendations improve the level of efficiency. They answer the questions: "Are we doing the right thing? Are we doing them in the most efficient manner? Are we doing things we should not be doing?" I strongly recommend independent performance audits be conducted of all Park activities. I have serious questions whether leasing of Rosemary Lodge as well as other ONP property on Lake Crescent to Olympic Park Institute for \$1 per year is good use of citizen assets. I request an independent performance audit of ONP preferential treatment of ONI.

I encourage retention of motorized watercraft on Lake Ozette. Inholders routinely access their property using them. I support maintaining road access to all inholdings.

Removal of the Elwha dams, while politically correct and well intentioned, removes a low polluting source of electrical power and fails to address the impact of Native American fishing policies and the effects of international fishing practices on the high seas. I see no reasonable probability of restoring the Chinook salmon runs to pre dam levels despite the cost of dam removal and silt mitigation. There are too many unaddressed negative factors that degrade the restoration process.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covers the signature area of the letter.