



PORT ANGELES
WASHINGTON, U.S.

321 East Fifth Street
Port Angeles, WA 98362

July 6, 2022

Representative Kilmer
2059 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Kilmer,

Re: Support for the Transfer of Lands to the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe in Trust and Reservation Status

Dear Representative Kilmer:

On behalf of the City of Port Angeles, I respectfully urge Congress to transfer to the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, in trust and reservation status, the lands outside of Olympic National Park boundaries that the Interior Department acquired to carry out the removal of the two Elwha River dams. The dam removal project provided the City of Port Angeles with an opportunity to support a worthy conservation effort for the benefit of the environment, its citizens, and its closest neighbor the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe.

The removal of the dams presented serious challenges for the City: the loss of electrical generation from hydropower, as well as a threat to its municipal and industrial water supply. In partnership with the National Park Service (NPS) and the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, the City was able to rise to these challenges and be part of a dam removal and environmental restoration project unlike anything the United States has ever accomplished before. The Tribe, the City, and NPS worked together to co-locate the City's and Tribe's points of diversion on the Elwha River for municipal, industrial, and hatchery water supply to protect the diversions from potential harm that might result from dam removal. It was difficult work that required cooperation, understanding and compromise on the part of all involved, but we are all better for having worked through it.

In addition to the parcels surrounding the Elwha Dam and Lake Aldwell, NPS acquired four parcels of land (3 parcels known as the Hill parcels and 1 parcel known as the Halberg parcel) that are in close proximity to the water intake and treatment facilities that NPS constructed for the City. Those parcels are contiguous with the Tribe's reservation and were acquired for the construction of the pipeline that supplies water to the Tribe's fish hatchery. In 2018, the water intake and treatment facilities were transferred to the City by a settlement agreement between NPS and the City. The City does not have any need for the four parcels and supports their transfer to the Tribe.

Although the City was initially opposed to dam removal, because it perceived dam removal as incompatible with the interests it sought to protect, those perceptions were changed by having worked through the dam removal process. The City is pleased to have this opportunity to support the transfer of the lands acquired by NPS for the removal of the Elwha River dams to the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe in trust and reservation status.

Sincerely,
DocuSigned by:

9F660451155E409...
Kate Dexter

Mayor