



**Washington State  
Department of Transportation**

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June 24, 2022

The Honorable Derek Kilmer  
US House of Representative  
2059 Rayburn House Office Bldg.  
Washington, DC 20515  
Email: [mai.nguyen@mail.house.gov](mailto:mai.nguyen@mail.house.gov)

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

Dear Representative Kilmer:

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) respectfully urges 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. Section 3 of the Elwha River Ecosystem and Fisheries Restoration Act, P.L. 102-495, 10 Stat. 3173, October 24, 1992, authorized the Secretary of the Interior to acquire the property necessary to carry out the dam removal and the restoration of the ecosystem and fisheries on the Elwha River. That section also directed the Secretary to address the suitability of, among other things, the transfer of those lands to the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe.

WSDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Olympic National Park (ONP) have been working together on a project to replace the U.S. Highway 101 Elwha River Bridge, which passes through the southern end of the Lake Aldwell parcels. WSDOT, FHWA and ONP worked with the Tribe to protect the Tribe's investment in the recovery of the Elwha River and its fisheries, as well as its interest in cultural resources impacted by the bridge project. The Elwha River dams blocked anadromous fish access to 45 miles of pristine habitat. The Tribe performed a large share of the actual restoration work on the Elwha River, both before and after dam removal, by such activities as construction of numerous engineered log jams, revegetation of the former reservoir sites, and operation of on-reservation hatchery programs that have preserved the native Elwha genetics of four species of anadromous fish.

WSDOT is pleased to have this opportunity to support the transfer to the Tribe, in trust and reservation status, those lands outside of Park boundaries that the Secretary acquired in order to accomplish the historic removal of the two dams.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. M. Millar', is written over the typed name.

Roger M, Millar, PE, FASCE, FAICP  
Secretary of Transportation

RM:jd