



PORT ANGELES BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
PO BOX 545
PORT ANGELES, WA. 98362

Dear Congressman/Senator

12/13/11

For the past several months the PABA has endeavored to become better informed about the proposals for national park and wilderness expansions. We have invited and carefully considered presentations from the following speakers:

Dean Millett, US Forest Service District Ranger, who helped us understand the minuscule commercial timber harvest on Forest Service lands.

Jon Owen, Pew Foundation and Deputy Campaign Director for the Campaign for America's Wilderness, who presented what was essentially the same proposal now being promoted by your staff.

Carol Johnson, Executive Director for the North Olympic Timber Action Committee (NOTAC) who presented an alternative proposal that would result in no net loss of working forests or family wage jobs.

Additionally, we are aware of new and relevant information:

- The Port of Port Angeles economic impact study that estimated the loss 72 family wage jobs and the loss of \$3.7 million in wages if the WOC proposed plan is implemented. Additional secondary job losses are estimated to range from 216 to 288.
- New thoughts from several nationally recognized forest ecologists about the role of federal timber harvest in maintaining forest health and resiliency. For example:

Robyn Thorson, Director of the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Pacific Region— "Active forest management is needed to make forests more resilient to the effects of environmental change that can result from catastrophic wildfire, invasive species, disease, insect outbreaks, and climate changes anticipated and already documented. We believe, based on the best data available, that a hands-off approach to managing forests is not the best way to promote the overall health of the ecosystems or the broader Northwest forest landscape. "

Jerry Franklin, Professor of Forest Ecology at the University of Washington's School of Forest Resources—"Thinning can be good, but the openings in the forest canopy created by regeneration harvest are increasingly scarce. There is a deficit of early-successional habitat that can only be eliminated by allowing federal forest managers to do more than thinning."

The PABA now understands that all current proposals are simply the most recent efforts in a long series of reductions of working forests on the Olympic Peninsula. Since working forests provide important economic and ecological products and values, we urge you to implement the concept of No Net Loss of Working Forests by:

- For each acre reclassified as wilderness or recreation reserve, transfer an acre of USFS land into a county managed trust that is managed under our State Forest Practices Law and Habitat Conservation Plan.
- Identify sufficient USFS land for land exchanges with private landowners in order to accomplish Olympic National Park expansion

We believe that these accomplishments will substantially increase family wage job growth and sustainable ecological benefits here on the Olympic Peninsula.