



**DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES**

**COMMISSIONER OF
PUBLIC LANDS OFFICE**
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June 11, 2024

Nathan West
City Manager
City of Port Angeles
321 E. 5th St.
Port Angeles, WA 98362

Dear Mr. West,

Thank you for submitting your application last year to receive lands managed by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources through the Trust Land Transfer program.

Our staff at DNR has evaluated your application and found it to not be in the best interests of the trusts to transfer the parcels out of trust ownership. In addition, Clallam County and its Revenue Advisory Committee stakeholders raised concerns about the proposal, with the advisory committee unanimously asking that the application be denied on the basis that the application does not meet the parameters of the TLT program.

As such, your application has been declined and will not move forward for the 2025-27 biennium.

These parcels have generated significant revenue for trust beneficiaries and are poised to continue doing so going forward, and, per RCW 79.17.300, does not meet the Legislature's requirement that lands included in the Trust Land Transfer process be nonperforming or underperforming economically.

These parcels continue to produce regular revenue for the Common School Trust, Clallam County, and junior taxing districts in Clallam County, while also protecting and growing habitat for the Marbled Murrelet, Northern Spotted Owl and multiple fish species under DNR's State Uplands Habitat Conservation Plan. Future timber sales remain planned inside the boundaries of the proposed Trust Land Transfer indicate an ongoing potential for these lands to generate revenue for both present and future generations.

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In the future, other tools may be more applicable to achieve your goals, such as exploring siting for an off-channel reservoir on DNR-managed lands similar to the City of Sequim's project, where DNR is transferring 400 acres to the county for that facility.

DNR remains committed to working with the City to discuss your concerns about management of the Elwha River as we recommended in our October 12, 2022 letter to you regarding the Aldwell Timber Sale as well as Mona Griswold's April 14, 2023 letter regarding the TCB 23 and Power Plant timber sales. Reaching out directly to our new Olympic Region Manager, Bill Wells, will be the most productive way to foster that cooperation. Bill and his staff are charged with the management of these lands and have the best local knowledge and scientific expertise at their disposal.

I am still personally committed to attending a City Council meeting, and some members of the Board of Natural Resources have also said they will attempt to attend a meeting if their individual schedules will allow. Although my assistant reached out to your staff shortly after your October 23, 2023 letter to Commissioner Franz, we have not yet heard back.

Sincerely,

Todd Welker

Todd Welker
Deputy Supervisor for State Uplands

c: Kenny Ocker, TLT Program Manager