

## **Sierra Club's concerns with the Navy's Special Use Permit from the USFS**

I speak for the thousands of SC members in your district and the over 35K members in the State of our concerns with the military use of our public lands, especially here on the peninsula. This expansion of electronic warfare training on the western peninsula imperils our local national park (also a UNESCO world heritage site), birds listed on the ESA and our "one-square inch of silence" in the Hoh that you and I hiked to with Gordon Hempton.

Sierra Club has had a consistent policy on the use of public lands since 1996 as stated by our Board of Directors in their ***Policy on Military Use of Civilian Airspace and Public Lands***. "The public, as well as Congress, should have an opportunity to review and comment on any proposal to authorize military use of public lands. Such use should be authorized only when no viable alternative exists." And our local group and the WA state chapter has consistently questioned such proposed uses of public lands by the Navy and also the Army out of JB Lewis-McChord (helicopter training in forests and wilderness areas since withdrawn), while at the same time realizing that our military's preparedness is their mission.

Our military has an extensive range and base inventory here in the west and northwest, under total control of the military. The boundaries of the Olympic MOAs are concerning in that MOAs A and B encompass the western parts of ONP and most of the Hoh Rainforest. We support your questions and concerns directed to the Secretary of the Navy Mr. Stackley regarding the choice and use of these MOAs and the geographic boundaries (including possible changes to them).

USFS manages our national forests as public lands, but they have agreed to allow military use of our public roads within our national forests for electronic warfare training: even though the USFS's own web site lists their management of our public lands for multiple uses including restoration, water, and recreation—not use by our military!

USFS letter head slogan "Caring for the Land and Serving People" rings hollow.

Conversely, WA State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) manages much of our State public lands and forests in WA. However, in 2015 DNR specifically rejected the military use of our State forest lands adjacent to the USFS managed nation forest lands for this same warfare training. Obviously, in our view an enlightened decision.