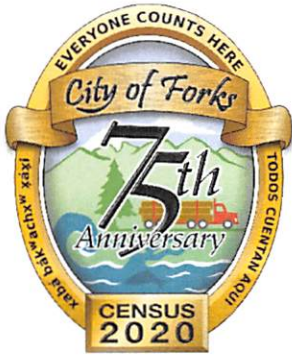


Resolution No. 484



A resolution opposing the H.R. 2642 - Wild Olympics Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

WHEREAS, various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been advocating to members of Congress their belief that there is a need for additional federally imposed wilderness set asides, as well as federal designation of portions of our rivers as “wild and scenic;”

WHEREAS, House Resolution 2642 proposes designating over 126,500 acres of the Olympic National Forest as wilderness, or potential wilderness; and, further designates 464 miles of Olympic Peninsula rivers as being wild, scenic, or recreation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act;

WHEREAS, the City’s former Mayor and their staff have expressed concerns with such NGO-driven efforts raising concerns about the impacts of such designations on working forests, neighboring state and private property owners, and questioning the NGO’s arguments of additional increases in tourism expenditures from such designations;

WHEREAS, it appears that as part of that NGO-driven effort, the eastern portion of the Reade Hill Block located to the immediate south, southeast of the Washington State Department of Natural Resources is being designated as something the U.S. Forest Service could include in any wilderness designation;

WHEREAS, while it seems efforts were made to reduce or limit impacts from such an unnecessary and unneeded action by the federal government regarding the Olympic Peninsula, there remains uncertainty as to whether the same NGOs and other third party interests could utilize these designations to reduce economic activities, timber management and harvest, construction, aviation activities, and other such things near or adjacent to such designated lands;

WHEREAS, the recently adopted Washington State Department of Natural Resources Long Term Conservation Strategy for the Marbled Murrelet and accompanying amendment to the State’s habitat conservation plan is also removing viable state working forests;

WHEREAS, the communities of the West End continue to struggle to provide economic opportunities that would reduce poverty levels, reduce higher-than-state-average unemployment levels, and increase median wages as demonstrated in the attached census materials;

WHEREAS, most of the NGOs proposing these designations do not live here, yet their voice advocating for these additional federal designations may have an adverse accumulative effect that reduces, restricts, and removes from management the very lands upon which many in the West End depend for their livelihoods;

WHEREAS, it is expected that the same urban-centered NGOs proposing these designations will be advocating for the elements of this legislation and quite possibility even more than what is found within the proposed text of the legislation;

WHEREAS, this legislation (HR 2642) appears to be headed to the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives for its consideration;

WHEREAS, it appears timely that the City of Forks, on behalf of the people who live and work here, takes a position on the proposal to be shared with those members of Congress considering this legislation;

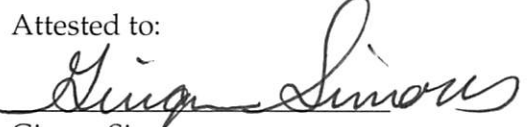
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Forks that:

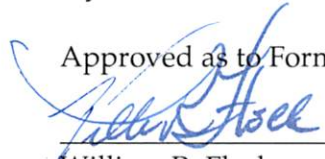
1. The City of Forks hereby voices its opposition to the decade plus effort to designate additional lands on the Olympic Peninsula as wilderness, potential wilderness, or national recreational areas as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System;
2. The City of Forks hereby voices its opposition to the multi-decadal effort to designate hundreds of miles of rivers on the Olympic Peninsulas "wild," "scenic," or "recreational" under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act;
3. The City continues to voice its expectation that its federally elected officials would work as diligently on efforts to raise the median wages, reduce the poverty levels, and reduce the unemployment levels of the rural communities of the West Olympic Peninsula; and,
4. The Mayor and his staff will provide copies of this adopted resolution to all of the State's federally elected officials; as well as, to provide additional information and statements that explain and support this position.

Passed on this ____ day of February 2020 by the City Council of Forks.



Tim Fletcher, Mayor

Attested to:

Ginger Simons
Deputy Clerk

Approved as to Form:


William R. Fleck
Attorney/Planner

A Brief Overview of the OESF - The OESF is located in the Northwest corner of the Olympic Peninsula and consists of approximately 1.3m acres or 2,031 sq. miles which would make it the 14th largest county in the state.ⁱ The OESF region has approximately 10,000 residents living within one of three tribes, two counties, or one city (Hoh, Quileute, and Makah; Clallam and Jefferson; and, Forks).ⁱⁱ With such a population, the OESF has more people than four existing counties in the state (Columbia, Ferry, Garfield, and Wahkiakum)ⁱⁱⁱ.

The OESF includes a matrix of federal, tribal, state, and private lands. Federal, non-tribal, ownership/management consists of 39% of the OESF geographic area. National Park Service manages 27% of the OESF having 355,815 acres or 556 sq. miles. The United States Forest Service manages 12% of the OESF having 158,017 acres or 247 sq. miles. The three tribal nations of the Hoh, Quileute and Makah have a combined ownership of 124,023 acres or 194 sq. miles. The remaining 385,521 acres, or 602 sq. miles, is in private ownerships that range from individual home owners in Forks to large timber lands owned by private corporations.

Five census tracts, identified by the US Department of Treasury as low income communities, account for most of the OESF. The following table provides a 2017 snap shot of the economic status of these:

Location Census Tract	Population	Median Income as % of State	Poverty Rate % of tract pop.	Unemployment % of tract pop
Makah 5300994000	1,489	53.87	19.30	17.00
Clallam Bay/Sekiu 53009000200	938	79.79	28.00	4.20
La Push/Sol Duc 53009000400	1,540	71.28	14.90	6.80
Forks 53009000300	4,657	62.06	23.70	10.90
Hoh/JeffCo ^{iv} 53031950702	1,656	62.12	23.60	16.80
	Total Population 10,280	Ave. Median Inc. 65.86	Ave. % in Poverty 21.9	Unemployment 11.14

The major economic sectors within the region include natural resources, retail & services, and government. Each of these sectors have components that cover a wide range of activities. Natural Resources includes timber extraction, private timber management, milling, commercial & recreational fisheries (tribal & non-tribal), etc. Retail & Services incorporates such activities as restaurants and groceries stores, as well as lodging, outdoor guiding, private medical, etc. The latter is a continually growing element of the region and is being singled out for further evaluation as part of this effort. Government in the OESF can range from tribal governments to the US Coast Guard at the federal level; Clallam County District Court staff to County road crews to sheriffs at the county level; to the hundreds of employees associated with established special purpose districts such as the Forks Community Hospital and its clinics, to the schools, libraries, etc.

ⁱ See Olympic Experimental State Forest Revised Draft Environmental Impact Statement, DNR at ES-7 and 8; and, the county list provided at <http://www.wa-list.com/?p=436>

ⁱⁱ See US Treasury Department’s Community Development Financial Institutions Fund mapping of opportunity zones found at <https://www.cdfifund.gov/pages/opportunity-zones.aspx>

ⁱⁱⁱ See the OFM 2017 April 1 Population Estimated for Washington State at https://www.ofm.wa.gov/sites/default/files/public/legacy/pop/april1/ofm_april1_population_final.pdf

^{iv} This census tract actually stretches the Hoh Reservation to Brinnon on the east side of the Peninsula. The entire data set is used herein.