

## **Wild Olympics Campaign support growing in Western Washington**

### **Local News**

Posted by: David Haviland

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QUILCENE, Wash. - More than 100 new local businesses have announced their support for the Wild Olympics Campaign, Campaign consultant Al Carter tells us, "We've got 84 businesses in Grays Harbor County, we've just added about 40. We're getting a lot of support for Wild Olympics, and as always the longer you talk about something the easier it is to understand and the more sense it makes. Senator Patty Murray continues to show support, but Congressman Derek Kilmer has not chosen a side on former Congressman Norm Dicks-sponsored version of the proposal. Currently, the group has over 450 endorsements from elected officials, to local farms and businesses. For a complete list, and further details visit their website at [wildolympics.org](http://wildolympics.org) A press release from the group said Nine CEOs and nearly 100 new business endorsers from the Olympic Peninsula and South Puget Sound Region are the latest local economic leaders to urge permanent protection of Olympic National Forest's scenic backcountry, rivers and streams. In a letter to Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) and Congressman Derek Kilmer (D-WA06), the heads of Pasha Shipping (Aberdeen), Paladin Data Systems (Poulsbo), HOPE Roofing & Construction (Port Townsend), Rice Fergus Miller Inc (Bremerton), The Holiday Inn Express and Conference Center (Sequim), SAGE Fly Rods (Bainbridge Island), Grounds For Change (Poulsbo), Green Mountain Technologies (Bainbridge Island) and Taylor Shellfish (Shelton) urged the lawmakers to quickly reintroduce The Wild Olympics Wilderness & Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to safeguard the Olympic Peninsula's ancient forests and free-flowing rivers.

The CEOs point out that the area's natural treasures, which provide world-class outdoor recreation, clean water and the area's high quality of living "give us a competitive edge over other regions in attracting and retaining the talented people our companies require; Wilderness and wild and scenic river protection "would help protect the 500-plus local jobs that depend on our ability to compete for talent against other regions, and they would enhance our recruitment efforts to grow our businesses in the future." Nearly 100 new local business endorsements were also sent in a separate letter urging swift reintroduction of the Wild Olympics legislation to protect and grow local jobs in multiple sectors of the economy. The business owners and economic leaders say the legislation would both protect and create local jobs in shipping and trade, construction, real estate, fishing, information technology, the shellfish industry, tourism, manufacturing and other sectors of the region's economy. "Wild Olympics would protect and promote the same spectacular public lands and high quality of life that are helping to drive growth and create local jobs in real estate, construction and many other sectors of our economy today" said Harriet Reyenga, an independent Realtor for Windermere Real Estate in Port Angeles, one of the nearly 100 local business owners who signed the letter in support of Wild Olympics. "Our ancient forests, salmon, rivers and stunning scenery are the north Olympic Peninsula's competitive economic advantage over other regions" said Reyenga, who recently won the 2012 Realtor Achievement Award from the Port Angeles Association of Realtors. "We should do all we can to protect and promote these natural treasures. Wild Olympics would do both." In urging early reintroduction of the measure, the CEOs point to the findings in a November 2012 report by the independent, non-partisan Headwaters Economics Institute

“West Is Best: Protected Lands Promote Jobs and Higher Incomes -How Public Lands in the West Create a Competitive Economic Advantage.” The report found that protected public lands are key to attracting companies, entrepreneurs and workers and that national parks, monuments, wilderness areas and other protected public lands in the Western US have enhanced the competitive advantages of high-tech and professional services companies — a major reason why the western economy has outperformed the rest of the U.S. economy in employment, population, and personal income over the last four decades. The CEO letter also notes another 2012 Headwaters Institute report that found similar trends locally. It showed growth of over 5,000 new jobs on the Olympic Peninsula over the last ten years in trade and shipping, health care, education, business services, real estate, construction and other sectors, and found strong population growth from new residents drawn by the Peninsula’s high quality of living. The study reported job growth across multiple sectors of the local economy including those represented by the 225 local businesses now backing the Wild Olympics Campaign. The new CEO and local business endorsements capped a wave of additional support pouring in for the Wild Olympics Campaign in recent weeks from Visit Kitsap Peninsula, mountain bike, climbing, paddling, hunting and fishing organizations and more than 80 local faith leaders representing 10 different religious denominations. Currently, over 450 elected officials, local farms and businesses, conservation and recreation groups and faith leaders have endorsed the Wild Olympics proposal. BACKGROUND: The conservation measure introduced last Congress would permanently protect more than 126,000 acres of wilderness in the Olympic National Forest and designate 19 rivers and seven tributaries ---totaling 464 miles - as Wild and Scenic. The Wild Olympics Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (S. 3329/H.R. 5995), was introduced by Senator Patty Murray and Congressman Norm Dicks on June 21, 2012 but awaits reintroduction in this Congress. The legislation would protect the first new wilderness on Olympic National Forest in nearly 30 years and mark the first-ever Wild and Scenic River designations on the Peninsula. The measure has been the subject of more than four years of discussion and public input, and as a result of this unprecedented community involvement, numerous and significant changes to the proposal were made before legislation was introduced in 2012, including the removal of the Parks addition component originally included in the campaign's proposal. The compromise legislation introduced in 2012 did not include any roads in the proposed Wilderness and preserved all access to trailheads. These and other revisions ensured that the final proposal will not cost any timber jobs, earning the compromise legislation the backing of Port Angeles Timber Company Merrill and Ring. Cosmo Specialty Fibers, owners of the Cosmopolis Pulp Mill in Grays Harbor also issued a statement praising the inclusive process and stating the currently proposed legislation would not affect their fiber interests. A 2012 bipartisan poll found overwhelming support for the Wild Olympics proposal among likely voters in Washington’s 6th Congressional District. Nearly two out of three (64 percent) likely voters support the Wild Olympics plan proposed by Rep. Dicks and Sen. Murray. Only 15 percent are opposed. On the Peninsula, support was nearly 2-1, with 50% supporting, and only 28% opposed.

### **Grays Harbor Wild Olympics Campaign Endorsements**

**Current and Former Elected Officials (7)** WA State Representative Steve Tharinger (Dist.24) Grays Harbor County Commissioner Frank Gordon Ocean Shores City Councilmember Ed Engel Ocean

Shores City Councilmember Dan Overton Westport City Councilmember Desiree Dodson Westport City Councilmember Louis Summers Former Grays Harbor County Commissioner Al Carter Former Ocean Shores Mayor Garland French **Business Endorsements (84)** Michael Pasha, Pasha Automotive Services (Aberdeen) North Coast Surf Inc. (Ocean Shores) A Natural Approach (Aberdeen) Amore Restaurant (Aberdeen) Arlan's Oven (Westport) Backstage Café (Hoquiam) Backstage Espresso (Aberdeen) Beach Boutiques (Ocean Shores) Books on 7th (Hoquiam) Brady's Oysters (Aberdeen) Christian Kazimir Construction (Ocean Shores) Coastal Serenity (Ocean Shores) Coastline Signs (Aberdeen) D-L Summers Inc. (Westport) Dennise Wells, Premier Realty Westport, LLC (Westport) Dolores's & Fay's (Ocean Shores) Econolodge Inn & Suites (Hoquiam) Elton Bennett Art (Hoquiam) Emerson Grocery (Hoquiam) Emily's Confections (Pacific Beach) Everybody's Store (Hoquiam) Frank Gordon Electric (Aberdeen) Fusions Art Gallery (Hoquiam) Gallerie Timbaktu (Ocean Shores) Game Freaks Videogames (Aberdeen) Give Me Paws (Ocean Shores) Gordon's Antiques & Collectibles (Ocean Shores) Grays Harbor Dance (Hoquiam) Gray's General Store (Hoquiam) Hair by Nancy G (Ocean Shores) Half Moon Bay Bar & Grill (Westport) Handcrafter's Hideaway (Ocean Shores) Harborwood Designs (Montesano) Heartland Handicrafts (Aberdeen) Hoquiam's Castle (Hoquiam) Hoquiam Chiropractic (Hoquiam) Impact Studios (Hoquiam) Islander Resort and RV Park (Westport) Jackson Street Books (Hoquiam) Jaiwa Web Design & Consulting (Aberdeen) JLS Partners LLC (Hoquiam) Laurie Christian Real Estate (Ocean Shores) Little Hoquiam Childcare (Hoquiam) Lorna Valdez & Realtor (Ocean Shores) Lytle Seafood (Hoquiam) Ma and Pa's Kettle Corn (Montesano) Museum of the North Beach (Moclips) North Beach Community TV (Aberdeen) North Beach PAWS (Ocean Shores) Ocean Companies (Westport) Ocean Shores Electric Boats (Ocean Shores) Ocean Shores Kites (Ocean Shores) Olympic Inn (Aberdeen) Pat's Style and Trim Inc. (Aberdeen) Peabody's Paradise Pizza (McCleary) People's Emporium Antiques (Aberdeen) Pic-A-Roon Pelican Gift Shop (Westport) Plackett Enterprises (Ocean Shores) Porthole Pub & Grill (Ocean Shores) Pure Clothing (Hoquiam) Queen B Quilts (Hoquiam) R. Vanyi Photography (Hoquiam) Roberta Myers, Premier Realty Westport, LLC (Westport) Roy Nott, Business Leader (Hoquiam) Running Wolf Studio (Moclips) Sandcastle Restaurant (Ocean Shores) Scoops Ice Cream (Aberdeen) Seashore Ceramic Café (Ocean Shores) Seagulls Nest Motel (Westport) Silver Sands Motel (Westport) Simonson Miller Flowers (Hoquiam) Simply Said Flowers (Hoquiam) Snore & Whisker Motel (Hoquiam) Sucher and Sons Star Wars Shop (Aberdeen) The Dusty Trunk (Ocean Shores) The Reppery (Aberdeen) The Strip Steak House (Shelton) Tijssen Designs (Ocean Shores) Top of the Cork (Allyn) Treasure Way Antiques (Hoquiam) Tsunami Gems & Beads (Ocean Shores) Vogue Café (Hoquiam) Westport Inn (Westport) Woofs Dog Boutique (Ocean Shores)