

DEREK KILMER

6TH DISTRICT, WASHINGTON

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

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March 27, 2017

Mr. Thomas L. Tidwell
Office of Chief
U.S. Forest Service
1400 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20250-1111

Dear Chief Tidwell,

The United States Forest Service plays a critical role in sustaining the nation's forests and grasslands. Given your agency's mission, I request your assistance in understanding the agency's role and activity regarding recent and ongoing efforts by the United States Navy in the Puget Sound region.

Like many of my neighbors, I want my kids – and their kids – to enjoy the pristine environment that I have been privileged to experience. I am also passionate about supporting the men and women, both active and retired, who have committed themselves to military service. My interests in protecting our environment and local economies, and supporting our military service members are not mutually exclusive. Similarly, I believe that the missions of the Forest Service and the Department of the Navy do not conflict with each other on all counts.

In order to maximize the success of both agencies and ensure effective governance, it is in our nation's best interest for the Forest Service and the Navy to work cooperatively. As a member of the House Appropriations Committee approaching the Fiscal Year 2018 budget cycle, it is important that I understand how the Forest Service is working with the Navy in my community. I therefore request your assistance with answering the following questions and providing the answers before your agency's budget hearing:

- Has the Forest Service requested information from the Navy regarding their planned activities in the Puget Sound Region throughout the past few years? If so, have you received the information you requested? If not, please share what information was requested, when it was requested, and to whom the request was submitted.
- Does the Navy utilize standards used by your agency for environmental reviews? If not, what standards are different and how does that impact results and your agency's mission?
- Does the Forest Service disagree with any of the Navy's findings on the recent and ongoing environmental reviews impacting Washington's Sixth Congressional District and findings of no significant impact issued by the Navy (EIS for EA-18G Growler Airfield Operations at NAS Whidbey Island and OLF Coupeville, EIS for Northwest Training and Testing (NWTT), and the Environmental Assessment for Electronic Warfare Range)?

- Has the Navy met all consultation requirements when processing the projects listed above?
- To what extent has the Forest Service expressed interest in discussing and working with the Navy on proposed actions to alter the plans? If so, have those efforts yielded any modifications to the Navy's plans and or consideration to your agency's mission?
- To what extent does your agency have sufficient resources to respond to notifications for public comment and independently study Department of Defense planned activities that impact the environment and your mission?
- What processes does the Forest Service utilize to ensure that the communications it has and decisions it makes with other federal agencies are coordinated with and concurred with by your staff at the local, regional, and national level?

Again, I appreciate your assistance with this request and look forward to reviewing your response before budget hearings pertaining to the FY 18 appropriations cycle occur.

Sincerely,



Derek Kilmer
US Representative