

Westport Light State Park

October 3, 2022- November 18, 2022

As a vacation property owner on the South Beach I support the creation of a golf course and hospitality amenities at the Westport Lighthouse State Park. This recreational amenity would be a boon to the economic development of Grays Harbor County and boost tourism significantly. Tourism is an eco- friendly way to provide needed jobs where the infrastructure of Westport is mostly in place. Other tourist activities would be helped by the additional option of playing golf. Restaurants struggle in the off season when there are fewer tourists visiting. A golf course will help extend the tourist season into the shoulder seasons and attract more vacationers in the prime season. Golfing is known to attract vacationers to rural areas previously not known for recreation opportunities. While Westport offers fishing, there is plenty of room for expanded recreation activities without causing problems.¹

Hello.

I do not believe that state parks land should be used for a commercial develepoment, especially a golf course and resort that will have substantial issues finding a full staff in this area. Thank you.²

Hello,

I have property in Westport, WA and love the lighthouse park. I am concerned about removing natural habitat at this location. Is there a public outreach aspect that is ongoing for this proposal? Are there any groups you know of that are active regarding this?³

To whom it may concern,

Westport is a fishing and surfing town full of working families. The cost of rent and home purchases has skyrocketed in the last several years. It's hard to find affordable housing already. Adding a golf course to this community would change what this town is and force out long time residents.

Ocean Shores has a golf course and it doesn't do anything for the city. It's too windy on the coast to golf.

The land is currently inhabited by an entire eco system of plants, animals, birds, etc. It should be protected and not demolished just so people can hit a ball into the wind. We have enough golf courses in the area. We do not need or want another one. ¹⁸

My family and I love to visit the beaches in Westport during the summer for their purity and beauty. Putting a golf course here would greatly diminish this beautiful ecosystem and potentially limit access to it from the public.

If people want to come to Grays Harbor to play golf we already have an established golf course near Cosmopolis. Instead of destroying this habitat why not make improvements to the existing course? ¹⁹

Westport is definitely not the quaint seaside town with unique gift shops for browsing and great seafood restaurants our friends expect when visiting our beach house, which is walking distance from the Park. We love Westport because it's a great place to go fishing or spend time on the ocean and we have 18 miles of uncrowded beaches - but the stores, every one of them, is stuck in 1975 with the same old souvenirs I purchased when I was kid vacationing on our now "washed away" North Cove property. Restaurants come and go, some good, most bad and regardless of where they fall in the spectrum, most never get off the ground. Westport has such potential, but the primary industry is fishing and the charter boat outfits run little stores on the side with nickle and dime trinkets for the kids. Yes, we have one store with a terrific selection of kites and one with fudge and salt water taffy...but after our friends visit, Westport tends to be the punchline for future jokes. Frankly, when our friends talk about visiting a coastal town for a day trip...it's Poulsbo, Kingston, even Ocean Shores, but rarely Westport. We keep telling ourselves "one these days the economy will improve and Westport will get its much need update". For these reasons and more, we fully support the Parks and Westport Golf project. The local economy needs a hefty commercial boost and our family and friends need another activity to enjoy while we are visiting. Please feel free to reach out. We would love to help. ²⁰

My wife and I are in full support of this plan for Westport. This golf course will be a great public/private model for others. ²¹

I think the idea of a Scottish style links golf course is a great idea. What a wonderful thing to bring to our small community. I am hoping that something productive for the community and tourists will be done with that land. As it is now the woods are filled with drug addicts and thieves. I can't even take my family on the trails and feel safe. I am also excited to see the growth of our local small businesses. ²²

I am in favor of this project in general and, as so far proposed.

My priorities going forward are as follows:

- 1: Protection of Endangered Species in the park including Columbian White Tailed Deer and Snowy Plover (which are both resident and transient).
- 2: Abatement of non native, invasive plant species including Scotch Broom and Gorse.
- 3: Limiting or banning use of noxious chemicals for weed and pest control.
- 4: Provision of 24 hour security and fire patrols by the vendor.
- 5: Limiting requests for Westport City tax abatements or other infrastructure accommodations. ²³

I am against the proposed golf course. Golfing is not an endangered activity. The Westport dune and beach area is beautiful and recreational as is. Let the money be spent elsewhere. ²⁴

To Whom it may concern,

Prior to watching all the videos of the town hall/state parks meeting online my opinion of a golf course on public land was a hard "nay." While my opinion has since softened somewhat there are some real concerns that need to be addressed. I believe that Westport citizens such as myself deserve a middle of the road option if we are to give up our public land to the benefit of the state and private business.

1. Concern over "meandering golf course throughout the entire park." By Westport Golf LLC. I believe that at least a quarter to half of the over 600 acres should be free from human interference.
2. The "small Inn of 30-40 rooms" does not sound at all insignificant. Having a clubhouse with a bar and restaurant threatens to invoke an all-inclusive situation especially for higher spending guests. This could damage local businesses greatly especially during the slower winter season. An Inn, bar and restaurant on state park public land clashes fundamentally with the values of conservation. I do not believe any business but golfing should be allowed on the premises.
3. Several participants laughed at the Westport Golf LLC representative when he mentioned that the public would be able to walk freely in golf course as long as they were not afraid of getting hit with a golf ball. This real threat could do serious harm especially to youth and should not be taken lightly. More statistical and liability research is needed. People on a budget who cannot afford the stereotypically elite sport of golf should still be able to access public land.
4. Loss of dog walking Area. Perhaps an area set aside for this intended purpose? Currently I walk my dog in the forest within the park at least twice a week and I know I am not alone.
5. Loss of shore pines while our native spruce have been dying this past summer.

6. Give the public a picnic day of no golfing on for example Sunday as mentioned in nearby Oregon golf course.

While I understand that the public will not be able to vote on this important matter, continued local participation is much encouraged. Please consider the above concerns and know that economic progress can still facilitate compromise. I appreciate that State Parks and Westport Golf LLC came to Westport to discuss their plans and we look forward to continued updates.

Thank you for your time, ²⁵

This is where many hike, walk dogs, pick mushrooms. This golf course would destroy the home of wildlife and ruin the enjoyment I'd those who love nature in favor of those who throw money around to play gold... no sorry nature is beautiful on it's own. Add some accessible trails to the park for wheelchairs and bikes if you like but dont destroy nature and animal habit for tourist funds! ²⁶

Am definitely in favor of proposed golf course and subsequent development for Westport WA. I believe it will revitalize the economy, employment and standard of living in the area. I hope everything works as planned and is approved ASAP. ²⁷

My family and I have recreated in Westport, specifically at these two state parks for over 30 years. We have property about a 10 minute walk from the lighthouse. Our friends and extended family visit often in summers. Our now adult daughters are committed to continuing the tradition with their families. Our oldest daughter could not wait to have her baby daughter smell Westport this past Memorial Day Weekend. It is a special place.

We have been saddened when we see so many hard-working business owners close their shops. I was skeptical when the first golf course and resort was being started. I would love nothing more than to see the economy improve.

I was very impressed by the approach I felt from the State Parks and the proposers when I watched the videos. I like the idea of a links-style golf course. I like the idea of a partnership with the State.

Please review this Outdoor Industry Association research report <https://outdoorindustry.org/resource/2018-outdoor-participation-report/> about the 10 year trends in outdoor activity participation, and specifically golf. The OIA includes the National Golf Association as an active member. If anyone on your team has a relationship with the NGA, they can get more detailed trends in Washington State for your review. This report includes surfing trends, too!

Thanks for soliciting comments. I'd be happy to answer any questions along the timeline. ²⁸

I support the proposal ²⁹

Best thing that could happen to Westport, would bring area up to some of its potential. ³⁰

Hello Laura, I live here in Westport and walk over 2000 miles per year. If the golf course is built, would I be able to walk through the golf course?

I would be respectful of golfers and stay well out of there way. ³¹

Good Afternoon (name redacted),

The way Westport Golf, LLC has been talking about their concept idea, the course would be open for public use and there would be trails meandering through the site. I hope this helps. Thanks so much and have a nice day!

Laura Moxham

Laura,

I am writing to support the development of a golf course and inn at the Westport Light State Park.

I believe this would be beneficial to the local economy and local residents as well as enhance the area for tourism. ³²

The plans for Washington State Parks to partner with Westport Golf LLC to build a Scottish links course is an incredible opportunity. It makes for a win-win for all involve; bring revenue to the state, a tremendous economic boost to Westport and great recreation for people of this state, people of all ages. Having David Kidd involved ensures a design that not only protects the environment, but will actually be beneficial to it.

I can not think of a better use of this particular land parcel than a Scottish link course. This is a great opportunity that the State of Washington should take advantage of.

I am really excited to see this happen. I hope I live long enough to enjoy it. ³³

I am a golfer, but destroying this ecosystem to build a links course is absolutely wrong. The Shores Pines are native and must stay there. About half of the area is public-owned wetlands, and the dune structure is an erosion barrier that will be irrevocably changed which would cause huge erosion issues.

This is one of the last large publicly owned open spaces left on the Westport peninsula.

The potential pollution to the wetlands and ground water by pesticides and fertilizers is enormous and must not be allowed in this fragile ecosystem. That toxicity will affect all on this peninsula.

Please do not agree to this proposal of a links golf course, plus buildings, that would so damage this area. ³⁴

Dear State Parks Decision-Makers-

While it is understandable that a community might wish to draw more tourism dollars to their town, the prospective Westport golf course site is overwhelmingly a poor choice for use of public lands and dollars. This is not a reflection on Westport or the game of golf.

My concerns stem from values associated with the loss of or interference with existing site natural resources (scarce wetland habitat, wetland habitat in general, wildlife corridors, rare plant habitat, razor clam habitat), as well as likely site damage due to disturbance before, during and after proposed project construction, and considering future chemical run-off into the bay associated with the maintenance of a golf course. None of these are desirable nor easy to fix once implemented.

In addition the proposed site presents many problems associated with likely habitat loss or damage. Sufficient beach erosion is anticipated for this site, then couple that with the threat of rising seas due to climate change. Neither of these are cheap fixes, nor are they likely truly be 'fixed' even with engineering. The site would be far less expensive to manage as habitat than to protect as a tourism draw. A much more reasonable use of tax payer dollars and use of our public lands.

I am particularly concerned about water quality issues associated with golf courses. They require a high chemical input and in our rainy climate we know that these chemicals will end up in the bay. Will chemicals affect sea life including migratory birds, mammals and commercial fishing? Of course they will. This is not a good strategy for dealing with our oceans, which are already in crisis.

Love what State Parks does, but cannot wrap my head around why this is a good location for a golf course. Please take a step back and look at this from a taxpayer's point of view. It is not a good investment. It is a money pit, and a destructive one at that. ³⁵

Laura,

My family and I live in Westport and enthusiastically support the idea of a Scottish links-style artisanal Golf Course in Westport Light State Park. Westport Light State Park is extremely beautiful, unique and there is no place quite like it anywhere in the world. Unfortunately, I do not take my children in the trails of Westport Light State Park fearing confrontation with squatters and exposure to illicit drug paraphernalia. A Scottish links-style artisanal Golf Course will improve enforcement, improve the economy of this extraordinary little town, provide a number of tremendous opportunities that would otherwise never exist unless this is available and It will also discourage individuals who currently live within Westport Light State Park illegally to stay there. This is long overdue and we finally have the enthusiasm, opportunity and resources to accomplish this the correct way. We are extremely excited and want this to happen immediately. ³⁶

My husband and I are in support of this Links golf project in partnership with State Parks. My mother owns the Mermaid Deli and seasonal fluctuations are quite significant. It would be great to have more reasons to draw visitors to Westport. You can see from the success of Seabrook community that Washingtonians would like better infrastructure to stay and spend their money at the beaches. Westport and Grays Harbor has fallen behind economically despite its beautiful scenery and bountiful resources. Based on the maintenance and operations agreement that a

previous developer and Audubon Society addressed for a healthy and sustainable working golf course, despite the contentious history between the two, and can be done again.³⁷

I have worked in the tourism industry for over 10 years. Prior to that I was an educator at a nature park in Seattle. I have been visiting Westport for surfing for over a decade. It is an incredible place and a treasure for our park system.

I believe strongly in the benefit of tourism. Looking at trends, I see that golf is actually dying - nearly 800 courses have been closed in the last decade. Is this really the best use for the space at Westport? While a Links Style course is much more compatible to the area than a typical golf course, you need to ask whether this is worthy of public land.

I would suggest working with the town and county do do a more thorough tourism assessment to identify what the assets are in the area, what the community wants, and what the benefits would be. Just because you have a passionate group of investors with an interesting idea doesn't mean it is the best idea for public land.³⁸

The Westport Light State Park should remain as it is, an area mostly in native vegetation, supporting local wildlife and open to the general public who 'recreate' by visiting a remnant of coastal native Shore Pine forest and associated wetlands.

We do not need another golf course, of any ilk. Nor do we need another hotel. Keep it as it was; there is precious little left of this type of native ecosystem remaining.³⁹

This is your description of Westport Light State Park direct from your website, <https://parks.state.wa.us/284/Westport-Light>

“The beaches of Westport Light State Park could have sprung from a novel. Tall dune grasses whisper in the wind. Pathways snake along low bluffs down to sandy stretches of shore. Sunlight plays on the landscape (or storm clouds roll in) and birds cry in the distance. Several hundred feet inland, a tall, lonely lighthouse peeks through the coastal conifers.

This long stretch of Washington beach is the perfect place to play in the summer and curl up in the winter with that book you wanted to read, or with a pen and your journal. You're the protagonist of your own vacation. Thankfully, this park is not fiction.”

If the golf course is built, it will be fiction. Losing this unique and valuable public asset for the benefit of a few is certainly a tragedy for all time.⁴⁰

Washington State Parks limits the use of Metal Detectors in all state parks, but your willing to consider someone ripping out a large section of a park, for the board's enjoyment. The strategic plan states:

Over the years, Washington's state parks have become known as world-class locations for recreation enthusiasts pursuing such activities as long-distance kayaking, wind surfing and

sailing, diving, paragliding and rock climbing. As new trends develop, the agency strives to meet the needs of recreation enthusiasts, while ensuring protection of natural and cultural resources.

Metal detecting is one of those new trends. Golf courses are plentiful. Stop being hypocrites, and allow the expansion of underserved recreational activities. ⁴¹

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Golf is dying, many experts say. According to one study by the golf industry group Pellucid Corp., the number of regular golfers fell from 30 to 20.9 million between 2002 and 2016. Ratings are down, equipment sales are lagging, and the number of rounds played annually has fallen.

But the bigger story involves the sport's aging demographics and the athletic tastes of Millennials, who just aren't that into an expensive, poky sport that provides few health benefits. Unless the golf industry can change its ways, the decline will mean a lot of empty greens across the country.

A prime wetland/dune structure will be displaced. With rising sea levels erosion will be unpreventable (ie. Westport by the Sea dune or Washaway Beach).

Read the July 30, 2018 article for more information on sea level rise (SLR) in Washington State.
<https://www.washington.edu/news/2018/07/30/sea-level-rise-report-contains-best-projections-yet-for-washingtons-coasts/>

Interdunal wetlands will be disturbed. This is one of the last large publicly owned open spaces on the Westport Peninsula. As a runner who frequently uses the Westport Light Trail, I appreciate the natural open space, the natural setting, and the views.

There would be a depletion of groundwater resources. Four of Westport's wells are already compromised because of saltwater intrusion (high sodium chloride levels). What are the causes of seawater intrusion? Seawater intrusion is caused by rising sea level, decreasing ground water levels, pumping water from wells, droughts, and urban development.

Armoring to protect the golf course will impact razor clam populations. The beach will steepen and the intertidal zone (razor clam habitat) will be reduced.

With sea level rise (SLR) the Seashore Conservation Line (SCL) will be relocated eastward. The Westport Light Trail will be impacted and most likely be removed.

RCW 79A.05.605 Seashore Conservation Area There is established for the recreational use and enjoyment of the public the Washington State Seashore Conservation Area. It shall include all lands now or hereafter under state ownership or control lying between Cape Disappointment and Leadbetter Point; between Toke Point and the South jetty on Point Chehalis; and between Damon Point and the Makah Indian Reservation and occupying the area between the line of ordinary high tide and the line of extreme low tide, as these lines now are or may hereafter be located, and, where applicable, between the Seashore Conservation Line, as established by survey of the Washington state parks and recreation commission and the line of extreme low tide, as these lines now are or may hereafter be located; and shall also include all state-owned nontrust accreted lands along the ocean: PROVIDED, That no such conservation area shall include any lands within the established boundaries of any Indian reservation.

Reserve the Seashore Conservation Area for: Beach walking, beach exploration, birdwatching building sandcastles, clam digging, fat tire biking, fishing, geocaching, glass float collecting, hiking, horseback riding, kite flying, metal detecting, sandcastle and sand-sculpture building, skim boarding, storm watching, sunset watching, surfing, sunbathing, swimming, picnicking, running, whale watching, and wind/sand sailing.

Please do not back this proposal for a golf course that has already been rejected before. ⁴²

I understand that WA Parks and Recreation is turning to privatizing public parks (although labeled as "amenity provision") because of funding problems. How can you/we address this issue without privatizing? Is the State Legislature fully aware of this concern? Privatizing means the priority goal is profit and not the well-being of the public.

Does Westport need another hotel and another restaurant? A golf course? Speaking of golf: golf has long been considered an elitist activity and too expensive for most. One of the values of the WA P&R is to "welcome all citizens to their public parks." Westport Light Park is too large a public area to reserve for the upper class..

This particular park is one of the last large public owned open spaces on the Westport peninsula. It is a place to enjoy undeveloped (without hotel, restaurant, golf courses,etc.) nature. As a 2019 Sierra magazine noted, access to nature is everyone's right and need.

Protection of flora and fauna is another concern. For example, loss of habitat is noted to be a factor in the significant loss of birds in WA. (And birding is a growing joy for many (consider the Shorebird Festival in Bowerman Basin). Birds need safe habitat-- not danger from golf balls hitting them and more buildings taking their space and places. This is also true for nature lovers. Also,how can walkers use the existing walkway without fear of wild golf balls?

Pollution from pesticides and fertilizer "needed" by golf courses even the Scottish courses. is a threat to the wetlands

and ground water of the area. Westport is already experiencing depletion of good ground water, a public safety concern.

Please remember the WA P&R value; "Commitment to stewardship that transmits high quality parks assets to future generations."

Thank you for reading my comments and considering my concerns. ⁴³

As full time residents of the City of Westport, my husband and I urge State Parks to select the Westport Light golf course proposal for development. Not only is this proposal an excellent fit for the site but a needed addition for the economic stability of our area. Jobs are needed in this area and anything that increases the visitor numbers benefits us all.

Historically, we did not support the previous golf course that was proposed years ago due to many issues. However, the new plan as presented recently in Westport was very thoughtful and eliminated all concerns that we had previously.

Please do the right thing and allow the plan to proceed at Westport Light State Park. ⁴⁴

Hello Laura,

I was unable to attend the community meeting back in October 8, as I was outside the country. However, I was aware of that meeting and was able to access the video that, I believe, John Shaw ran on the meeting. It was exciting to see this idea explored again for our community. I'd love to see this venture be a successful one in Westport. The park is such a large piece of land. I had no idea that such a business might affect me directly.

I live on the Northwest corner of (redacted). But my address is (redacted). I live adjacent to (redacted). Their property butts right up to the park on both the west and north sides.

I love the peace and quiet in my neighborhood with the lovely Lighthouse state Park on the west side with a great trail that takes me to the beach. I'm guessing that would change if, I have the sound of people and marketing through the trees. That does dampen my enthusiasm for this project. It would be nice if lots of options are considered for your concessions, and that the few neighbors that could be affected by this decision are NOT affected because of your collective, thoughtful decision making. ⁴⁵

I strongly oppose the proposed golf course and resort. Keep it wild. Thank you. ⁴⁶

Golf courses utilize practices that are damaging to the area. They use expanses of trimmed grass. To maintain that grass they have mow the grass, they spray the grass areas with herbicides to keep out weeds, they have to water it to keep it green, & they also have to fertilize the grass alive. Golf balls release Mercury & lead when they break down. All of those activities are destructive to the area.

You have to spend a lot to buy your clubs, & rent a caddy. A lot of people don't have the money to pay for all that so it's excluding a lot of the population from utilizing the park.

I'm not too opposed to a hotel but a golf course has too many problems associated with them. Please don't consider turning our park into a lawn.⁴⁷

As a business owner and long time resident of Westport I 100% support the links golf course. It will bring much needed year round visitors. After attending the meeting held here in Westport I left knowing that the beach and surrounding areas won't be destroyed like earlier attempts at creating a golf course. I hope this passes and is completed in a timely manner.⁴⁸

In an area with large income disparity, high unemployment, and a very limited number of living wage jobs, this seems like not a great idea. It will not do anything significant to add true value to the local or regional economy for any length of time.

Developing it would perhaps bring some living wage employment, but that would be temporary. The people who would be hired to clean, maintain, and service would not likely be able to afford to utilize it as the wages are not likely to be upward of \$25/hour.

The area already has two golf courses that I know of.

In addition to not providing long term economic health, it also does not provide environmental health. Lawns are well known for being maintenance hogs. Moles, grubs, moss are just a couple common issues. In a large scale like this, what kinds of interventions are going to be needed, particularly chemical interventions? With all the water shedding in this area, all those herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers will find their way to places they don't belong. Will the grass used be an invasive species that chokes out native plants? (see the little experiment in eastern Oregon with the golf grass that escaped)

The infrastructure of the area is already challenged by existing tourism. I see this project as being one for tourists who can afford it and a few locals. This isn't something the public at large can easily benefit from like they can beaches, hiking trails, and interpretive centers. If this somehow makes Washington State Parks much more accessible because it's going to bring in a bunch of money and we'll see trails and cabins and services being opened up that have been closed due to budgets, maybe I could see this. But I highly doubt any boon like that will happen.

Remember, for every person who takes the time to write, there are at least one hundred other people who believe similarly.⁴⁹

I have been a longtime recreational user of this park, primarily for it's surfing resource. The Washington coastline is very dynamic. I have a concern about placement of an inn and golf course in this area due to the possible erosion of of the dunes with sea level rise and storms. If a resource such as an inn were to be threatened with such an erosion condition there would likely be calls to armor the eroding location with riprap. Ultimately that changes the dynamic of sand

flow and recreational wave quality. Beyond that the use of fertilizer and pesticides and resulting runoff or infiltration to the groundwater, either slowly over time or with a storm event is a concern. The latter could damage the area where the high concentration products are stored. . There is a nearby drinking water aquifer that should be carefully protected. I hope this concession idea does not proceed without adequate studies of such impacts that could occur. ⁵⁰

I am opposed to developing the golf course that has been proposed for the Westport Light State Park. I feel that it will consume too much of the park for a purpose that only a few people will use. The vast majority of park visitors are there to enjoy an experience with nature through hiking, wildlife watching and other individual activities. The development of this proposed golf course would create lasting damage to the park by removing native trees and other vegetation, not only for the golf course itself, but also by the construction of a clubhouse, a small hotel and the associated paving of parking and driving areas. A wetland delineation has not been done and I understand that much of the property is wetlands. If wetlands are disturbed as part of this project, they cannot be functionally replaced. This area of native shore vegetation and wetland plants have been designated a “habitat of concern” by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources. It should be maintained as such. This development would also have a negative impact on our fish, shorebirds and it would break up natural passageways for land animals. In summary, I think this is a very problematic proposal with mainly negative results. We have already turned over too much of our public lands to private commercial interests and this park should be left alone for all of the public to enjoy. ⁵¹

I am a full time Westport resident and have been for the past 12 years. I am raising a child here and love and appreciate so many things about our small beach community and our public state parks. I did attend the recent public information session held at McCausland Hall at the Maritime Museum. So many community members showed up with curious minds, and left with a lot of unanswered questions. I saw the pros and cons that will come from the development of a golf course in our small town, further development of accommodations, and the influx of population of vacationers and part time dwellers. Our town has been steadily growing at an organic rate which is sustainable. This change will accelerate the development without a supporting infrastructure at an unmanageable rate. No solutions/plans in place for so many things yet. First, I do not believe a partnership should be made between a private investment company and public parks without the local community having the final decision on this matter. After all, we will be the ones to feel the positive and negative impacts of such a development. Westport currently does not have the infrastructure to handle this type of development (roads, sewage, water, etc.), nor the ability to handle a major natural disaster such as a tsunami with a major influx of people. The environmental impact on land, sea, and the animals is a huge concern of mine as well. The EIS will be ongoing for the next 10 months or so, and whatever the state parks decides is final. I for one, appreciate the undeveloped open space and myself, family, and friends whom all spend time in our public state parks daily. This will take space away from the public for private profit. Westport Golf, LLC. has a full blown plan, but chose to share only a small portion of it with the public at the meeting. This will not benefit the majority of individuals and families residing in Westport full time. Golf is a game for those who have money. What local Westport families and youth could benefit from is an affordable community center or a free pump track for bikes or a skate park where our youth could spend time at no cost and without having to be accompanied by an adult. Let's be realistic here - this will benefit a few! It will no doubt place financial stress on long time residents via an increased real-estate

market, increased property taxes, and public land turned private. This is not something I am in support after learning more about this project.⁵²

My wife attended the Public Hearing held previously and communicated with me some of the preliminary plans and concerns from the meeting. I have read articles from the daily world as well as the video from the hearing. First off I feel that this is both a positive and negative project and I understand this is the case with most developments. There are trade offs.. Westport has a struggling economy and indeed this type of project would bring additional revenue to the local businesses. However with this type of golf course brings a clientele base that can afford \$200 plus greens fees. This golf course as with most high end golf courses bring large homes, and developments which a lot of time is a secondary home and not available for the local population to have available for full time rental housing. These House are sometimes used a vacation rentals and that tax income is generally not put back into the city. Property taxes will significantly increase forcing generations of families, retirees, and residents that live here to try and find a place where they can afford to live. Westport is a very sensitive town and I feel I would have disruptive effect on the town. The developers are looking for areas where land is very affordable and they don't have large out of pocket expenses with projects of this scale. The proposed plan is just the beginning of what would be more development and then Westport is no longer the quiet simple town that it once was. It's inevitable.. These investors and developers are very business savvy individuals and didn't get this level by chance. They understand business and that's what this is. A business opportunity at Westport's expense. They are not hiding anything from you. They are Developers..... and not every piece of dirt needs to be developed. They had stated that it would be a great benefit for the youth to have a golf course in their back yard. I don't see local families being able to afford \$200.00 to send their children out for a round of golf. There is no doubt it will provide jobs for locals but these are service jobs which are the lowest paying jobs and not skilled labor jobs again.. Paying employees lower wages to maximize profits. Future plans for an Inn to be built to compliment the golf course will keep golfers in house and the money will primarily be kept in house. The environmental impact study had not been completed at the time of the public hearing. I'm curious to see what the report will find. Golf courses typically require large amounts of fertilizers, insecticides, and chemicals needed to maintain facilities. With Ocean Acidification levels in the already reaching high levels it seems like placing a golf course right next to the ocean is about the worst place you could build a course. I'm curious how the property has come available for development being that it's Washington State Parks property. When did our State Parks become available for private developments? We the people of Washington State pay taxes to keep the parks operating and available for public use. We would be required to pay upwards of \$200.00 in addition to the taxes we pay to use a private funded golf course on state land. Please explain this to me...Developers with interest in these types of developments are going to make you believe that a project like this will only be a benefit to the community. Part of this is true (jobs,tax revenue, and a beautiful golf course next to the ocean). However Developer has all of the financial backing they need to push a project through. The Environmental Impact Study is generally the developers major hurdle and dictates whether or not the project will continue forward. The State has already offered up the land and I'm sure it fair market value. Where does the revenue from the land sale go? Is this the trend of our State Parks selling our public parks off and having the taxpayers pay to use there own parks? Discover Passes, now Tee Times...⁵³

Hello Laura, We were unable to attend the Oct 8th meeting, however, my husband and I have taken this opportunity to review the posted presentation, review all the posted comments and investigate Westport Golf LCC. We are not in favor of the proposed golf course. Westport does need help economically but this is not the path to take. The sale pitch overstated the dollar potential. What was understated was the immediate and future monetary investment impact to the citizens (taxes and higher cost of living) and the destruction of natural habitat for wildlife. We could focus on other avenues to bring people to this wonderfully unique fishing town. Perhaps get the schools/students involved in stewardship programs. Create a destination experience with more camping, nature trails for naturalists, bikers, hikers and birders. If the tax payers have to come up with most of the money for something like this golf course, perhaps, this would be money better spent that would benefit all of its people. We call ourselves a state concerned with climate change and loss of wetlands due to vegetation removal and use of chemicals, yet we are willing to forego that for money and golfers! When this public land on the Westport isthmus is gone, it will never come back. State parks should be preserved as natural lands for all of us, and more importantly, for our future generations to enjoy. ⁵⁴

Putting a link's style golf course in this area is not sustainable and does not belong in our park system. The chance of saltwater intrusion into the community water supply is far to great. The powers that be are not thinking of anything but greed here in Grays Harbor. There is a real water situation coming here and Grays Harbor has not been moving forward they have not taken the time to educate themselves in anything but saving fish. I am against this on so many environmental levels but drinking water over tourism is why this should not happen. ⁵⁵

November 15th, 2019

WA State Parks Director Don Hoch

Commissioner Lucina S Whaley

Commissioner Sophia Danenberg

Commissioner Michael Latimer

Commissioner Mark O. Brown

Commissioner Steve S. Miller

Commissioner Diana Perez

Commissioner Ken Bounds

Dear Commissioners and Director Hoch,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed public-private partnership for the Westport Light State Park. Please include these comments on behalf of the five Surfrider Foundation Washington Chapters in the Commissioners packet for the upcoming work session. The Surfrider Foundation is a grassroots, coastal conservation organization dedication to the protection and enjoyment of the world's ocean, waves and beaches. In Washington, we are represented by our Northwest Straits, Seattle, South Sound, Olympia, and Olympic Peninsula Chapters, as well as over 500+ members statewide who are surfers, beachgoers, paddlers and coastal recreation enthusiasts. This proposed project seems to be moving rather quickly as is challenging to give the attention that it deserves, we first learned about the proposed project in a meeting with State Parks staff in late September. A week later we participated remotely in a preliminary stakeholder meeting with the project proponents, and a week after that several of our members attended the public meeting in Westport. In light of this rapid pace, we feel that before

any future decisions are made, a state funded comprehensive master planning process should be conducted and interested stakeholders, and the public should be invited to participate. It is important that any funding for this process not be provided by the project proponents so that the perception of a biased, pre-determined outcome for the park is avoided. In 2014 as part of the Washington Marine Spatial Planning process, the Surfrider Foundation conducted an ocean and coastal recreational use survey of the Washington Coast. This “Rec Use Study” collected data on numerous non-consumptive uses by the public including beach-going, kayaking, surfing, wildlife viewing, and camping. The full report can be found here:

<http://publicfiles.surfrider.org/P97SurfriderWACoastalRecreationReport.pdf>

Geospatial data from this study were integrated into the Washington Marine Planning Mapping Application, which can be accessed here:

<http://www.msp.wa.gov>

As you are well aware, coastal recreation provides significant economic and social benefits to coastal communities and the state—these include direct expenditures, as well as social benefits such as citizen enjoyment. In 2014, Washington residents took an estimated 4.1 million trips to the Washington coast, with nearly 60 percent indicating their primary purpose was recreation. The top five activities respondents participated in on their last trip were beach going (60.5 percent), sightseeing or scenic enjoyment (57.1 percent), wildlife viewing (35.1 percent), photography (34.3 percent), and hiking or biking (28 percent). Of all the recreational uses listed, golf did not make the list for main activities, and was only listed by a portion of respondents as part of an “other” category, which was approximately 3% of respondents. A potential explanation of this could be that there aren’t many golf courses on the Washington coast, however another could be the fact that participation in the sport of golf has been declining in recent years around the country as younger generations haven’t had the same level of interest as previous generations. Additionally, the closure of golf courses around the country has been happening at an increased rate in recent years. In light of this data on the most popular recreational uses and trends for the sport of golf, it seems like it might be putting the cart before the horse in moving forward with the development of a golf course for this public space without initiation of a planning process first. We would hope that any plans would make sure that we are enhancing and improving the access and enjoyment of the existing most popular coastal recreational uses of this special place first and foremost. A key question for this proposed public/private partnership to develop a golf course would be how would this proposed new use allow for, and potentially enhance the coastal access for the above existing uses? Any disruption to the existing uses could result in effort to shift elsewhere, or potential reductions, which could have negative economic consequences. The study found that when visiting at the coast, the average respondent spent \$117.14 per trip, translating to an estimated \$481 million dollars in total direct expenditures for coastal communities and the state, through hotel visits, shopping, dining and other trip-related expenditures. Grays Harbor County was the second most visited coastal county according to the study, and the maps indicate that the Westport Light area as a major hotspot for many recreational uses in comparison with other areas of the coast. Most respondents (34 percent) stayed one night on their last trip to the coast, and 26.4% stayed for two. 13.4% of respondents went to the coast for a day without staying overnight. While not listed above in the top 5 most popular uses, camping is definitely in the top 10 uses, and the number of available campgrounds and campsites is a known limiting factor currently. One only needs to look at availability or visitation rates at the various coastal campgrounds to know that it is a challenge to find a campground, especially during the busy summer season. As part of the

planning process, strong consideration should be given to enhancement of camping and overnight accommodation for this park. In light of a national trend towards the privatization of our public lands, we need to remember that this property was purchased with 1.9 million publicly funded dollars via the Recreation and Conservation Office less than 5 years ago. The proponents of golf development could've previously purchased it with their own money. Any partnership, or potential new use for this newly acquired public land needs to ensure that there is equitable and affordable access to all park visitors, and not creating barriers for those who are less privileged or restrictions on access and potential user conflicts. As stewards of these coastal lands, you must ensure that whatever decisions you make are in line with the public interest and the greatest benefit for a diverse set of recreational uses and users, not catering to special interests of a select few. In conclusion, we strongly believe that it is important to first conduct an independent, comprehensive master planning process for the newly acquired public park to ensure that any decisions made are in line with State Parks mission and ensure the greatest benefit for the greatest number of users. We would be happy to help support a budget request to the State Legislature in the upcoming session. ⁵⁶

Hello Laura,

I am the owner of a a condo at the Westport by the Sea complex. My condo is directly facing the wonderful Light state park. I reviewed the information on your website about the planned developments at the Westport Light State Park, including the presentation that was given at the community meeting. I was not able to attend the meeting. I would like to provide input, but would like some more information specifically:

- what areas/how much area of the state park would be developed? Is there a map/plan which indicates the planned developments?

Good Afternoon (redacted),

Currently, the idea is conceptual only. The information we have is available on our planning website for the park at this link: <https://parks.state.wa.us/1161/Westport-Light-Recreation-Concession-Are>

We will continue to update this site as well as add you to the mailing list. The intent was to ask the public what their thoughts are on the idea of this to gauge the reaction before moving into a Master Planning process for the park. Feel free to contact me with any other questions you may have. ⁵⁷

Laura Moxham
Parks Planner

Dear Ms. Moxham,

As a full-time Westport resident since 1990 and property owner since 1984, I am writing to express my concerns in regards to the proposed development of a golf course and motel in Light State Park (formerly Lighthouse and Westhaven State Parks). Since 1984, public access to the beaches within the Westport City Limits has been incrementally limited. At this time, there is public walking access down Hancock Street. Light State Park is the last public park within the City limits with access to the beach. The Lighthouse trail which skirts the edge of the beach's grassy dune where one can observe all types of bird and other wildlife. It is punctuated by lovely

stone benches donated by local families to memorialize their loved ones. It is a peaceful and revitalizing park, where an individual can wander through natural paths, utilize the concrete trail, and access the beach.

Before 2014, I visited the park as often as my busy schedule would allow. Between January 2014 and August 2018, I walked the trail twice a day with my little dog. The beach provided great fun for residents and visitors alike. I spoke with residents, out of town visitors and tourists from places around the world, including France, Australia, Sweden, England and Japan to name a few. Without exception, visitors would express their joy at being able to visit this beautiful park with its unfettered view of the land, punctuated by a historical lighthouse, gently flowing to the sea. Many visitors expressed how they re-visited the park because of its ability to recharge him or her after a stressful week, help them heal after hip or knee surgery, provide quiet smells and taste to the blind, keep them moving and vital in their autumn years, provide a safe place to walk their dogs, jog, teach their children to bicycle or skateboard, and all in all, have great family fun in a fairly pristine area. Not once did I hear a single lament about a golf course that was not developed from the people I met who were utilizing the park.

I observed many activities on my walks. Clamming, surf fishing, surfing, kite-flying, beachcombing dog walking and occasionally salvaging occur on the beach. I spoke with those who enjoyed exploring the adjacent wetlands, and heard from neighbors who enjoyed mushroom picking and finding edible mushrooms (boletus) as large as a dinner plate in the wooded areas. Seniors routinely walk the path because it is safe and they do not have to watch for car traffic. They can enjoy the ocean, birds and wildlife. Eagle, hawk, a vast array of shore and songbirds can be viewed. We have a jewel in our working class town. It is my hope that this park will be left intact so it can provide the revitalization of spirit that we all dearly need as will generations that follow. We have many people living in our town who work hard for low wages. They deserve to have a low cost place to revitalize their spirits and that of their families. A golf course and hotel would detract from the natural beauty of a piece of paradise that screams preservation. Thank you for considering my comments. ⁵⁸

We are in favor of a Scottish Style Links's golf course at the proposed site!! We sincerely believe this would be a win for our area and an opportunity that may not present itself again. We have owned property in Westport since 1995 and built a small home on the property in 2007. We love the area and the people and look forward to extended stays as we near retirement! ⁵⁹

The South beach area of Westport has been eroding away at an alarming rate in the past 5 years. I reside at the Westport by the Sea condos and we have been advocating for a long time to get federal funding to build up our beach. One of my main concerns with this project is the environmental impact it will have for our fragile dune ecosystem, which basically is what holds this whole sand spit together. The state park has been preserving the local flora and fauna which includes Deer, Bear, Coyote, rare birds, rare flora, wetlands and all the creatures that go along with that. Even though the proposal is for a Scottish Links style course, it will still have an impact I believe.

My other concern is with our local economy. If this were a business going in within the actual city of Westport, I would have a different opinion, but from what I can see, this will only benefit the parks monetarily and the plan is for the city to catch all of the traffic coming through town to benefit from the extra groceries, gas and things that these visitors purchase. But I will add, if this place has a hotel, coffee shop, gift shop and restaurant as well, then some may come down and not spend a dime in the city proper.

Furthermore, what are going to be the tax ramifications of this golf course for the community? My fear is that Westport Golf LLC chose their avenue of entry into this town via the designated parks section in order to avoid taxes and they may receive large tax breaks for being on State funded land, meanwhile, locals will not be able to afford housing because property taxes will be so high and many will be taxed out, forcing them to possibly move away, creating a ghost town that is designated a playground for the wealthy.

If Westport Golf LLC wants to truly help the locals and the kids of Westport, they could have done that already with even the smallest of gestures such as helping to fund a skate park, or a community pool, or a community gym, perhaps helping our local food bank.

Westport is a beautiful place, and it's been discovered. Many people love to visit here, but they want to bring the luxuries of the city with them, such as Starbucks, Golf, fancy restaurants and hotels with zero regard to the people who reside here, pay taxes here, go to school here and run businesses here.

I will be for the idea if I had more answers, I feel as though the town meeting was way too vague to make a decision based on that information alone. It felt more like a giant sales pitch, and they were really good at it because they convinced the majority of the people in this town that it's the answer to all their problems.⁶⁰

I feel this proposal is a bad fit for use of our public lands. Public lands should have uses open to all people.

Golf Courses, by nature & history, are largely used by wealthy, white populations.

How will this complex be made to be welcoming to all people, of all income levels? Or will it become like the "Ski Club" of my high school, only available to kids who could afford skis & lift tickets?

It will be bad for the ecosystem of these dunes. Wildlife uses this land, and they must be protected, along with native plants.

More trails and Interpretive Centers would encourage use by all of the people, who will be footing the bill for this private use of our public lands.

If this project does include public paths, will there be an admission charge for people to access trails?

Wetlands cannot simply be moved around to a landscaper's whims. The water will go where it wants.

Have any of the Golfers so enamored of this, actually been out on these dunes and realize how windy this area is? Obviously, they won't be playing a game of skill in the wind.

Will there be additional public comment periods after the plans are actually written and landscaping maps are available? It seems premature to ask comment on a proposal that has not been drafted yet.

I feel a full and comprehensive EIS should be completed on this project.

Thank you for considering my comment.⁶¹

I have lived in and visited Florida for decades, and I have seen how the natural shoreline habitats have disappeared. I have also seen how the coastline has eroded over the years, sometimes washing buildings away, as we have seen at Washaway Beach . The rare shore habitats which remain are isolated in very developed area along the shore. As sea level rises, there is even more alarm about the fate of these shores. We should learn from the mistakes made on the eastern shores of this country. It seems to me that we need to consider what benefits we now have with the natural habitat at the park. Perhaps it is protecting land beyond it from erosion and the effects of storm surges. We already have flooding beyond the jetty into the streets of Westport, and sea level rise will only increase these occurrences. Removing vegetation in order to change the landscape for golf may not be the highest and best use for this land. I have wandered through the woods there, and I can recommend that as a very interesting past-time for park visitors. It seems the mission for the park should be the natural enjoyment of nature. Leave the golf course business to private enterprise on suitable land, not on public land which should be preserved for the future. ⁶²

The concept of State Parks seeking partners in park recreational development is excellent. Free or reasonable cost recreation facilities are needed.

What ever the Parks Commission and Department can facilitate from private or other public funding should support local recreation for local residents, business development, and tourism.

A concern is not to spread the retail business over a large portion of the existing lands but concentrate buildings. Smaller maintenance buildings and support utilities should not be highly visible but screened from public view.

A links golf course would enhance the open areas and visible area near the coast line. If a hotel type facility is part of the development, the architecture type is an important consideration such as nautical or coastal in façade. A restaurant should be included and open for all as it would be a draw for all.

Hopefully, the development by Parks would include nature trails and small identification signs of coastal vegetation. There are many birds in the area, including eagles, that would be enjoyable to visitors. Deer are existing in the park and development should consider protection for their continued habitation.

To bring more use to the park, how about supporting our airport runway length expansion and development of a Ferry between Ocean Shores and Westport. !!!!

Parking should be considered away from the main recreation locations.

Overhead utility lines servicing the facilities should be concealed or buried so as not to distract from the park ambiance.

The development should not adversely impact the existing berm trail nor impact the parks surfer parking area near half moon bay.

Any environmental analysis must also include the positives of the development. The human element is sometimes lost when the supposed environmental impacts are classified as adverse

Lastly but not least, please provide FREE park entry fee and free parking. ⁶³

Hello. I live in Northern Ca, but have purchased two investment homes in Westport, WA. I feel in love with the area during a random visit several years ago. I would love to see any positive projects such as the Golf course that would draw more visitors. I know the area has been affected over recent years due to the fishing, but it is such a lovely area and I would like to see improvements to help build property values in the area and draw more tourists and businesses to Westport. ⁶⁴

It would be very beneficial if a golf course came into Westport. Not only would it generate growth, which would produce more taxes, it would put Westport on the map. The developers that want to develop the golf course are the same ones who made the Bandon Dunes famous. More people would be drawn to Washington. Many people when picking a place to travel to, look to see what golf courses are nearby. This would be a very positive step for our community. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. ⁶⁵