

Cama Beach Planning Project

July 14 – 21, 2024

I provided an initial comment on 7/15, but thought of some additional comments. Hire a consulting firm that has completed upgrades of beachfront parks with climate concerns. Make sure that is a requirement in your RFP. While you may need to look into shoring up the bluff, one thought is to move cabins back (along with beach restoration- look at Marine Park and Boulevard Park in Bellingham.) Find a way to keep the wooden boat center, you might also need to move the little store. Instead of cabins, consider tent camping only during the summer. Seek other locations on island that might be available to have cabins. ¹

Please listen to and respect the Tribes input on this topic. Honor the cultural relevance of this site for them. Listen to their advice on how to navigate the issue. ²

You make it very hard to comment on your meeting tonight.
So what is your plan for Cama Beach? Sell it to the highest bidder?
That was never brought up tonight. ³

I was unable to attend the meeting tonight. Cama Beach State Park is why we moved here 4+ years ago from Bellingham. We had been staying in the cabins with our dogs 2-4 times a year in the off season. There are grants out there that can likely pay for some of the cost; I'm a grant writer for the Lummi Nation and can help. Sometimes you need to be creative; hire a consultant to develop some alternatives rather than trying to do this in house. (again grants can pay for this). These cabins are a jewel in Washington State, and there are limited options out there for cabins- especially during the winter.⁴

What is the plan for the Resort if not fixed???

I am so surprised and disappointed that no one asked what the plan is for Cama Beach if it's not cleaned up, repaired and restored.
Will you sell it to a Resort to recommission? Sell it to a condo consortium? Let it fall into the sea?
I really want to tell my 1k followers what your future plan is. That was never even brought up! This is so disconcerting. You need to address your future plans so I can pass this information on. ⁶

We have joined a large group of families at Cama Beach for years. The memories are so unique to this particular park. Our children learned to ride their bikes at Cama in the car free area and spent hours at the " gas station". The cabins and the perfect amount of rustic. Our family holds the memories of Cama Beach near and dear to our hearts. Please find a way to find the renovation and maintenance projects at Cama for generations to come. ⁷

I am 16 years old and I would not describe myself as someone who is particularly passionate about nature but I am passionate about Cama Beach. I have been going to this state park every year since I was 1 year old. This park has created so many memories and friendships for me and it is hard for me to picture my life without it. Cama Beach could easily be the happiest place on earth for me. From eating breakfast in front of the ocean to participating in the Junior Ranger Program to playing games on the water and in the field. Riding bikes and having water fights, to

gazing up at the stars at a campfire. The location and the cabins have a special kind of magic that cannot be found anywhere else. When I used to visualize my future visits at this park I could picture myself bringing my own family and spending a trip here to show my kids a piece of my childhood and carrying on the tradition. The possibility of Cama Beach shutting down is incredibly sad. I urge you to please save Cama Beach so others can experience the magic that comes with it. Thank you. ⁸

Yes, it sounds as if this must be done. But please mitigate this by adding new public beach facilities at other locations on Camano, including ADAC and low entry cost facilities. ⁹

I support the due diligence by state parks commission and employees. The infrastructure that had been in place (2008-2023) at the beach level of Cama Beach State Park cannot be replaced due to damaging waters of sea level rise combined with severe storms. The consequences of sewer, water, electricity, buildings and sea wall being underwater or overtopped by sea water have no easy answers. Excavation at Cama requires involvement of local tribes whose ancestors used this site for thousands of years. The tribal ancestors left behind a great wealth of evidence of their collective use of this site for generations upon generations, possibly over 10,000 to 14,000 years. During the original excavation human remains were found. New digging or more digging could uncover and disturb additional remains and remnants. It makes me sad and causes my heart to hurt when Camano community members make disparaging remarks about tribes. We should treat tribes and everyone with respect. I strongly support not replacing the underground infrastructure at the beach level, and making minor repairs to the seawall to allow visitors to access the beach. ¹⁰

I attended the special briefing by Michael Hankinson held at Cama on June 20.
I am in FULL SUPPORT of Parks' recommendation to "Not reopen the cabins where they currently sit."
My biggest worry/fear is a single winter storm will wipe out the seawall, erode the beach within hours, and cause the cabins to fall into Puget Sound.
I appreciate that the planning should be completed ... so that thoughtful informed decisions can be made. However, I worry that by the time the normal process runs its course, if the decision is to move all/most/some of the cabins to higher ground, they will no longer be there to move/preserve.
I urge you to complete the planning as quickly as possible ¹¹

My family has been staying at Cama Beach State Park for 10 years. When we started going, my husband and I were expecting a baby. That baby is now 9 and his brother 7; staying in the Cama Beach cabins is a tradition we've treasured. Whether finding a Glassquest clueball, seeing an orca pod upon arrival, being shown the "secret interpretive room" at the store, riding in the shuttle, exploring the beach at night with headlamps, or just relaxing in the cabins to the sound of the waves, we have a hundred memories at this place and are heartbroken that February 2024 may have been our last stay.

I understand that there are environmental and cultural complexities to restoring the cabins and the park to a usable form. Anything worth doing takes work. Isn't there a way to honor the past of Cama Beach and sustain it for the future? What about bringing in the Tribes as stakeholders? Adding interpretive information about native people in addition to the literature about the park as

a getaway? Perhaps scale back the number of patrons per year. We used to stay in September but have been unable to do so after September became essentially wedding parties only due to advanced booking privileges (were large wedding parties the beginning of the end for the septic system?) What about fundraising efforts and asking those who hold this place dear to chip in to help keep it? My family would be willing to support the effort.

Please don't give up on the cabins at Cama Beach State Park. Where else can you stay in historic lodging and step right outside with your future to play on the beach?¹²

We need the Camano Beach huts and center.

This is key to the economy and vibrancy of Camano Island. Without it the island will just be another small outcrop.

Please can we study all options to make this park stay open with accommodation. Maybe go fund me project, let us help you here.¹³

Please keep me updated.¹⁴

Greetings,

I just found out about the proposed issues and proposed changes at Cama Beach. These issues appear to be major and I would guess very difficult to solve. (The material that you have presented on-line is very clear and appears to be very good- thank you!).

However, if we do 'restore' the shoreline area at Cama Beach, the result will be that one of the relatively few publicly accessible Puget Sound shoreline locations will be less accessible. This is of particular concern to people with modest incomes and accessibility issues.

A part of the 'story' of Cama Beach State Park is the preservation of this piece of shoreline for public access and accommodations at more modest prices. It could easily have been developed into another private and very expensive neighborhood. We must not lose sight of this goal.

I suspect that your proposed plans will have to be carried out, as they most probably should. However, in doing so, another bit of public access will be lost. Please address this net loss and find a way to compensate for it somewhere, preferably on Camano.¹⁵

As a few years visitor and park volunteer, I find the current and long term plans for the park a big concern. Having stayed in the cabins a number of times with my immediate family and grand children, the question always comes up "when can we come back?"

Since the cabins have closed, portable restroom facilities have been placed in many areas including at the visitor center and each of the parking areas. While many park visitors will visit the beach and cabin areas, there are no portable restroom facilities on the lower level. A simple solution would be to move several from the parking area to the lower level, with no increase in cost. Additionally, what are the costs associated with the renting and servicing the current portable restroom? With no changes to the wastewater system, we all know that these costs will be ongoing and part of the cost as long as the park is in existence.

What are the minimum repairs that need to be done to reopen the cabins and what costs are associated with each repair? We all know that things fail over time, but to say that an entire system needs to be replaced makes it easy to conclude that it costs too much to move forward. Lower priority repairs can be budgeted and replacement over a multi year program.

You can see from most of the comments that the park and cabins are beloved. Do not take the easy way out. Make the hard choice and do it with a sense of urgency to reopen the cabins as soon as possible.¹⁶

I spend much of the year at this beach, weekend and holiday, walking low tides with my two young sons building memories and teaching them the importance of conservation and keeping the sound clean. Please keep these cabins open and invest in this resource for future generations to repair and keep open.¹⁷

The Cabins at Cama Beach Park are historic! The septic system and anything else that needs repair should be done now! Keep Cama Beach park the way that it was prior to the septic failure.¹⁸

As a Stanwood resident the Cama Beach State Park is my favorite beach getaway on the island. Not to mention the impact my peers have had, by working at the Cama Beach Cafe, giving local students opportunities to work can be rare. Preserve our parks, keep our beautiful mountains green and keep the sparkle of our oceans blue. Our community cares about this park and we are dedicated to preserving the history, education and stunning landscape of it. Save Cama Beach.¹⁹

Please save the cabins at Cama Beach. My mom and dad brought us here in 1960. We stayed in the big one with my great grandma, my grandma and sisters. Marge Risk would want them saved. And preserved for generations to come. Special memories. And my son was married there²⁰

We are dumbfounded as to this closure. This is such a beautiful, historic and immensely popular state park. Those forcing its closure are being horribly irresponsible with tax dollars and public trust.²¹

Please do everything possible to save the cabins at Cama Beach. They are so unique and historic. It is essential that we try to keep them.²²

I would love to see the park continue but maybe add some updates to the cabins and compound. The cabins may not appeal to some but they serve as a historic legacy and are also a staple to the island community. I would consider this park a remnant of the past that still captures our heart. Campers of all ages make reservations here. Our community wants the campground to continue please help us in doing so. Thank you²³

I have been a local resident since the Cama Beach Resort was still under private ownership. When they granted this historic property to the state, it came with explicit conditions. Originally, with the help of countless volunteers, the resort was restored to near antiquity, keeping a balance between the historic value, and the needed modernizations that gave the facility a lighter carbon footprint. The origins of the land were duly noted, and respected.

Since that inception, the Cama beach flourished. Many new traditions were created. The experience there is of another era. It is precious and a source of great community pride.

Please take note of just how many of us have involvement with the Cama Beach State Park and have invested countless hours volunteering in one aspect or another to enrich the park facilities, and enhance the memorable visitors one of a kind experience.

The considerations for the needed upgrades to keep the park fully open, is an investment. It is well beyond worth the expenditure for maintenance, to give in return to all that come to this precious park, one of Washington states most unspoiled treasures. If there is any potential compromise to the native aspect of the land, what about a consideration of cultural enrichment program via an existing building that hosts a native center/museum, that can add prized valuable education, and add to an already amazing array adventures that can be had only at Cama Beach State Park.

My hope is that you read this comment. Take my thought that is shared by the local community as a whole, and please consider how valued the entire Cama Beach State Park facility is, not just by us, but by all that come to this magical place.²⁴

Love to hear more info on what is the progress²⁵

Please keep the cama beach cabins open. There is so much history and family memories. ²⁶

Please keep the cabins and full use of the park. It is a large reason for why we moved here. Looking forward to family reunions. Please.²⁷

Every community in Washington has at least one historical relic that means the world to its residents. Seattle has over 200 such places, from the Space Needle to Gasworks Park. To dismantle any one of these is unthinkable. The public uproar would be unbearable. You wouldn't dare attempt it, much less even suggest it, even if it meant spending money to restore it. This is how Camano residents and hundreds of Puget Sound vacationers feel about this rare landmark. Permanently closing Cama's historic cabins ruins family and school traditions that have been going on for decades. It's like closing any of Seattle's favorite places. Best to fix them than close them. It's the right thing to do. It's the very essence of Washington State Park's mission. ²⁸

This is a part of the history of our island, we need to support rebuilding of the waste management water system/sewer; rebuild to support our community not only historically but financially²⁹

I think it is vitally important to keep the cabins at Cama Beach State Park in their original state, if at all possible. These cabins, along with the park, have so much history for so many people. They are one of a kind!³⁰

This project erases the history of a marginalized group. Leave peace to this area.³¹

My family has been going to Cama with a group of friends every summer for the past 8 years. It's been a wonderful tradition to look forward to every year. The cabins and waterfront location

provide such a unique and peaceful camp experience. I urge you to do the projects needed to keep this experience alive for years to come. ³²

Please reopen the cabins. Cama Beach has been such a huge, positive part of my children's lives and we would all be heart broken if it didn't come back. It's a place they can safely explore the natural world among a group of like-minded people who are all there for a beautiful experience. ³³

Save cama! Our kids have grown up going there and at the last year, our preteens rewrote the lyrics to Taylor Swift's "Karma (is my boyfriend, karma is a cat..." etc with "Cama is my boyfriend, Cama is..." etc with all the great things Cama has been to them over the years of memories! Where else can you get 30 people to stay together in such a unique beautiful kid friendly setting?

³⁴

It is a shame to close CAMA Beach State Park. While I understand the financial issues involved to repair or replace the septic system, I believe this is a worthwhile expenditure. A solution can be found to keep CAMA beach open. Could compostable toilets be installed? Could the cabins be moved to higher ground to prevent flooding? The front row of cabins could be moved behind the second row to buy "time" regarding climate change or perhaps the cabins could be put up on pier like structure? Surely the flood wall could be replaced and be built higher. Periodic maintenance is required for all properties.

CAMA beach is a happy place that families look forward to visiting year after year. Traditions are important as is the experiences of the great outdoors.

Please do everything possible to keep CAMA beach open, Thank you, ³⁵

Each summer for the last 7+ years we have visited Cama Beach campground with approximately 10 other families from Seattle. Cama has become the defining week each summer as we bunk like next door neighbors, explore the beach, play field games and share meals together. We have learned, summer after summer, that the good life has a lot less to do with the size of home that you own, your salary or the number of social media followers you track daily. The good life is really about close community, friends within walking distance, kids laughter and jumping into the cold waters of the Puget Sound. Each year our families gather round for a "whatever-the-kids-got-talent-show" and campfire. This last year the kids wrote a song (set to Taylor Swift's own hit single 'Karma') called 'Cama is My Boyfriend.' I have set the lyrics below with the explicit hope that these clever lyrics (and perhaps a prayer from St. Taylor Swift herself) might cause us to consider keeping Cama Beach experience alive and well for many more families in the future.

CAMA IS MY BOYFRIEND

By [x] Families, for Cama Beach 2023

Your talking 'are we there yet'
Guess you just can't wait to get soakin' wet
You're curious to look 'round
You see your cabin, finally here
You know gotta to run just to get there
Luggage is in a big mound

And I keep my side of the cabin clean

You wouldn't know what I mean

Cause Cama is my boyfriend
Cama is a mob
Cama is the breeze in my hair on vacation
Cama's an exciting thought
Everybody thinks that Cama's hot
Sweet like candy, Cama is the store
Bubble gum and snacks so sweet galore
Eagles flying in this habitat
Cause we and Cama vibe like that

Pretty leaves, from the trees
Falling on our heads cause it's windy
My markers made this crown
Put your toe in, take your toe out
'The water is ice-cold' you shout
Bikes are coming back around

And I keep my side of the cabin clean
You wouldn't know what I mean

Cause Cama is my boyfriend
Cama is a mob
Cama is the breeze in my hair on vacation
Cama's an exciting thought
Everybody thinks that Cama's hot
Sweet like candy, Cama is the store
Bubble gum and snacks so sweet galore
Eagles flying in this habitat
Cause we and Cama vibe like that

Ask us what we learned from all these peers
Ask us what we earned from all these years
Ask us why so many fade, but we're still here
(We're still, We're still here)

Cause Cama is the ocean
It's a scenic sound
Cama's low tide is a stinky potion
Cama's gonna see your frown
When it's time to go back to town
Sweet like road trips, Cama is gone
Cama takes all our friends to the café
Cama is the talent show
Bye, Cama, that we all know

Cause Cama is my boyfriend
Cama is a mob
Cama is the breeze in my hair on vacation
Cama's an exciting thought
Everybody thinks that Cama's hot
Sweet like candy, Cama is the store
Bubble gum and snacks so sweet galore
Eagles flying in this habitat
Cause we and Cama vibe like that

Cama is next year
Cama is a glow (oh-woah-oh-oh)
Cama's an exciting thought ³⁶

Our family has been going to Cama beach cabins for 10 years. We go in a group of around 10 families, which is roughly 20 adults and 20 kids. The experience we have every year is so unique, allowing for large groups, cabins, beach access, nature, all affordable to any income level.

We hope they can re-open for the public soon! ³⁷

Cama Beach has been my families favorite summer vacation spot for the past 5 years. We have enjoyed staying in the pet friendly cabins, hiking, playing volleyball and enjoying the water on floats and paddle boards. Our kids have enjoyed the planned activities available for kids - robotics, crafts, etc. We also loved Geocaching and historical exploration around the park by Adventure Labs.

We cannot imagine a summer without Cama Beach being a huge part of it. Cama Beach is not only a destination, but an experience. Please don't take this wonderful place away from our community. ³⁸

Please reopen the Cama cabins as soon as possible. It is a one of a kind place and has been part of my children's childhood since they were toddlers. I hope for them to continue our 10 + year tradition into their teenage years. ³⁹

I understand the challenges facing this project. I am in favor of removing the cottages PROVIDED that there remain public access to the beach. If it is decided to move the cottages upland then I am only in favor if it does not require too much deforestation. As a resident of the island since 2019, I was disappointed to discover that there are not that many public beaches readily accessible to the general population for walking and relaxation. I think this is a primary need for the island. People launching boats have a number of places to do that. I would like to see Cama being developed with trails and a modest beach area where friends can gather in chairs and picnic in the grassy areas as well as have access to the beach as we do now. If the Center for Wooden Boats could be upgraded so people can rent kayaks or other non motor boats that would be fine. I would like to see educational programs by the Forest Service and other local organizations offered again. I am not in favor of the property being sold and developed into an expensive resort. Let's keep the family and modest character of the place and also include rest

rooms with running water. It seems to me that a nice park without the cost and maintenance of sleeping facilities would be a reasonable alternative. ⁴⁰

This problematic project must have no forward movement without input from the tribes as it concerns their ancestral grounds. Overnight accommodations at this site are not necessary for public access and enjoyment. Studies already undertaken indicate that it is a high risk area with the impacts of climate change. I agree with park staff recommendations to "not reopen the cabins " and to " plan instead for a sustainable park that is in harmony with the site conditions"⁴¹

Cama Beach State Park is a gem for Camano Island residents, our neighbors, and our visitors. I always take guests there, and once had an awesome day renting a boat from CWB. Even though I live on the island, I planned soon to spend a night in one of the cabins. We do not have that many recreational options on Camano. Please, Washington State, do everything you can to preserve and restore Cama Beach State Park, and do not sell it!! Thank you. ⁴²

To whom it may concern:
Regarding Cama Beach State Park
Dear People in charge:

The Utsalady Ladies Aid is in favor of keeping the Cama Beach State Park. If the sea wall needs repair then fix it. If the septic system has failed then repair or replace it. There

Must be come septic system that would work there. Be creative
Solve the problem.

The Cama Beach Resort and now the Cama Beach State Park
Is such a blessing to others and provides monies to the State
Of Washington. Wonderful memories have been enjoyed by
many many people over the years. Many people have
donated their time, their talents, their monies to help maintain
The park. It would be a downright shame to let it just
Evaporate. "Preserving the past for the future" has been the moto of the Ladies Aid for the last 25-
30 years. It would seem that "Preserving" Cama Beach State Park is "worth" preserving for the
future.

The Cama Beach Resort was a real Camano Island secret.
Now let's let others enjoy the beauty and cherish some memories.
Sincerely, ⁴³

As a follow up to our July 15,2024 meeting, I include an expansion of my brief comment.
This report is incomplete for the following reasons:

1. It provides no alternatives. Only one recommendation is presented. No alternatives are presented. The sole recommendation is not supported with any costs or benefits.
2. It does not provide any information on costs:
 - a. There is no information on how much it costs per year to run the park. It should include budgets and expenditures for the past 5 years.
 - b. There are no engineering cost estimates prepared by independent registered engineers to repair or upgrade the sanitary collection system.
 - c. There are no engineering cost estimates prepared by independent registered engineers to

repair and/or upgrade the sea wall.

d. There are no architectural cost estimates prepared by independent registered architects to repair, upgrade or relocate the cabins.

e. There are no scientific cost estimates prepared by independent environmental scientists to preserve the ecological features

f. There are no scientific cost estimates prepared by independent environmental scientists to verify the pre-contact or post contact cultural/historical features.

3. It does not provide any information on benefits:

a. There is no information on the parks mission to “provide memorable recreational experiences that enhance their (Washingtonians) lives”. It should include some values to the lives of the 270,000 visitors per year.

b. There is no information on the benefits to preserve the beach and steep slopes in the park.

c. There is no information on the benefits to preserve the natural drainage areas.

d. There are no dollar estimates of how much the park's features enhance the lives of the visitors.

This report as written is biased as presented for the following reasons:

1. It addresses negative cultural impacts without addressing how the park does provide positive cultural impacts.

a. The report includes the word “burial” nine times but does not present any evidence that any burials exist. The report does not present any alternative preservation measures if in the future burial evidence is found.

b. The report presents “Tribal Relationships” and “Tribes” as key significant issues but does not present what those issues involve or possible alternatives to address those issues.

2. It addresses climatic change impacts without addressing the actual costs of preservation measures to provide for climate change.

a. The report does not address the 2000-year pre-contact shoreline location or the next 2000-year shoreline if the park facilities are removed.

b. There is no estimate on how much the Park provides “recreational opportunities to the public,

In summary, this report presents a good outline of the issues that need to be considered for the future but fails to present the costs and benefits that are needed to justify the recommendation. A simple benefit calculation to the lives of our children who would benefit from the recreational experience of sleeping on the beach could justify preservation of both cultural and historical knowledge for future generations.⁴⁴

As a resident of the Island, I am writing to urge you to keep Cama Beach State Park in the park system and find solutions to allow it to be open to Washington residents. There are rumours that need to be addressed by the state and the lack of transparency is notable.

Please announce if this location will even remain a park. To protect the land, wildlife and historical significance - it needs to remain.

If the septic issues at the beach cannot be addressed, build restrooms that can be pumped in a different location, open the road to the public and remove the cabins so that this area needs can remain open to all.

There is much historical importance here and it needs to continue to be preserved.

We expect more from our government officials. State parks traditionally protect the land and water; preserve history and stop privatization. Parks exist so our natural resources may be enjoyed by all. ⁴⁵

I was able to use the park last summer for the first time after trying for five years. The problem I had was these cabins are in high demand and would sell out in literally seconds after they are posted online.

The current system needs to change. These cabins and other awesome services our state offers should NEVER sell out in seconds or minutes after being listed.

Our state has a huge budget/repairs issue with ferries, parks, and other services they offer.

Either more money needs to be added to these services annual budget from our state (I don't see how that realistically happens), need to charge a rate that doesn't create a scarcity issue like the cama beach cabins, or cut back services.

Sadly, we seem to always choose option C.

Our state doesn't have a budget problem when it comes to parks and ferries. It has a management problem as they are allowing people to work the system by going online at a specific time to get an incredible deal.

Isn't it more fair to randomly release dates so these premier dates and locations are distributed throughout all residents? ⁴⁶

Please Please I would hope all involved in the committee would find a way to preserve Cama Beach 'State Park' to its best ability. If need to close cabins so be it. Just preserve the remaining park. I'm sure someone could repair the septic systems. There's even one business on the island. Something can be worked out if people are willing to do their due diligence to carry out what was promised so many years ago. ⁴⁷

I reviewed your presentation material. Nicely put together and very informative.

1) I agree with the assessment not to reopen the cabins based on all the factors stated. While not stated, the cabins will need to be removed. This will need to be done in accordance with all environmental laws. A cultural resource observer will be required. All artifacts will need to be replaced. Backfill will need to be done with a fish friendly substrate.

2) While not part of your presentation, I would propose removing the bulkhead and returning the area to its pre-resort condition.

3) While it was not offered as an alternative, I do not agree with making the cabin decision prior to making a plan for the entire site. It would be better to have an entire site plan proposal. ⁴⁸

Whom It May Concern,

The Stanwood Area Historical Society is in support of keeping Cama Beach open. Cama Beach is an important part of our local history. Cama Beach Resort opened in 1934 and has maintained an important part of our local history. The park that was owned and operated by the Risk family closed its doors in 1989. This was the last resort on Camano Island at that time.

The Risk family partially donated the resort to the Washington State Park System. Cama Beach reopened as a State Park 2008. The park has been a very popular location for members of our community as well as individuals from our State.

Cama Beach is more than just a park it is part of the history of Stanwood/Camano Island. Please help to keep the history alive for our children and grandchildren. Do not close this wonderful asset to our community.

Sincerely,⁴⁹

July 18, 2024

To the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission:

I am writing the members of your commission to share feedback regarding the current review and pending disposition of the cabins at Cama Beach State Park on Camano Island, Washington. As way of background, I became aware of the Commission's review from a news article that first appeared in the Stanwood-Camano News (d. July 16, 2024), which prompted my comments offered here today.

My own background is as a historian, author, and museum professional over the past 30 years. I have served in numerous professional roles with respect to local history, culture, and the arts, including a decade of service in the Collections Department of the Washington State Historical Society (a Washington state agency), the National Nordic Museum in Seattle, and as the Former Executive Director for the Stanwood-Camano Historical Society. I have authored eight books on the subject of maritime history, public sculpture, and Native American historical subjects. I am also originally from Camano Island, having grew up on the Island and familiar with both the Cama Beach area, and its importance as a site that has cultural and historical ties to several Native American Tribes of the Pacific Northwest. In this regard and in consideration of these Native communities, I want to express my vocal opposition to the prospect of any reopening of the cabins at Cama Beach State Park.

The area where the cabins are currently located, are the traditional lands of no less than eight (8) local Tribes: the Stillaguamish Tribe; the Upper Skagit; the Tulalip Tribes; the Swinomish; the Suquamish; the Snoqualmie; the Sauk-Suiattle; and the Lummi Nation. A verification of these are currently available through another State of Washington agency, the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) and their Tribal Interactive Map here:

<https://dahp.wa.gov/tribal-consultation-information>). The DAHP has a public charge of helping to ensure that any ground disturbance projects (i.e. new construction, repairs) that may impact Tribal lands, are afforded the opportunity to communicate with Tribes that have areas designated as historical lands. This is the case, with respect to the Cama Beach State Park site.

There is also a law of the land in effect since 1990, with respect to the cabins and their impact on Tribes that have historical ties to the Cama Beach site. The Native American Graves and Repatriations Act, or "NAGPRA" specifically calls for "the protection and return of Native

American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony” (source: National Park Service, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nagpra/index.htm>). My understanding is that after a failed septic system at Cama Beach was attempted to be repaired, subsequent discoveries of human burial grounds at the worksite prompted the cessation of this work, and closure of the cabins to the public. Washington State Parks should be commended for these measures, as the responsible, ethical, and legally correct course of action.

The logical outcome here, is that to try and restore the septic system on site in order to have the cabins habitable for visitors, would either require new work and ground disturbances to make such a system operable; or, would require the installation of temporary restroom facilities on site, that would require regular servicing in order to maintain operations and servicing for cabin patrons. The first option is untenable, given the NAGPRA considerations and negative impact such work would have on sacred burial grounds; the second option does not afford a reliable, cost-effective, or respectful means of continuing bathroom facilities, in light of the site’s historical and cultural importance to numerous local Tribes here.

There are other options available to Washington State Parks, that can both preserve the cabins as they are now in place, while promoting a positive dialogue with Tribal leaders and their communities, as a path forward. Leave the cabins in place, without the prospect of public rental, usage, or other habitation: they are historical structures, and can be treated as such, without incurring new negative impacts on the surrounding land and its importance to our values Native friends and communities. Likewise, ensure that no new ground disturbances will take place, with a moratorium on such work put into place as a policy and practice for the Cama Beach site.

Finally, engage with Tribes to help install new interpretive signage and informative measures on site, or include the site as part of the new educational initiatives occurring at the State level, to share knowledge about the site as a place of Indigenous history and identity. But do not reopen the cabins as part of a continued rental program, or undertake new work that would otherwise alter the character, land, and value of the site to our Native American friends.

Thank you, for your time and consideration. ⁵⁰

So if the existing septic system runs through grave sites, then hire some engineers who can design a system with piping buried over a permatek liner, cover it with fresh fill to protect the existing surface from ingress of waste and add a lift station and above ground holding tank sized to be pumped out to tanker on a manageable schedule. If you close the cabins at Cama Beach then get ready to close the shorelines at all the state parks. We use this liner strategy to protect burial sites below miles of our trail system that run along shorelines (e.g. Apple Capital Loop trail extension). It's not rocket science. It's not even unusual. What it is ... is a lose/lose situation if the cabins are closed. I completely sympathize with the tribes position that nobody should pump waste into burial sites (e.g. Potlatch). There are, however, reasonable ways to effectively isolate waste streams from the native soils. If the commission doesn't have civil engineers with the appropriate experience to effect an effective solution, then contract the work out to a firm that does and consider the fact that those who would be staying at the cabins are now staying in some other equally sacred sites. In my view all land is sacred.

Sincerely, ⁵¹

Would a system of composting toilets work to keep cabins open. ⁵²

One thing you didn't make clear to the public who haven't been to Cama beach is the cabins on front 2 rows near water don't have bathrooms so Septic isn't an issue just maybe a sea wall

would be needed. It is similar to campgrounds where bathrooms and showers are in a separate building and that is where septic problems are. Also, where public bathroom and showers are now; it was said there are no Native American artifacts. If that is true septic could be fixed in that area and area around it. I have spent many spring breaks there when my son was little (before there was a wedding venue on hill) and it was magical because no one would be on the beach except for people renting cabins and you were escorted by park vans to cabins. You didn't have to worry about cars or random strangers in the park because they were escorted to cabins. When it first opened, cabins were \$39 a night (with your gorgeous quilts in each cabin.) Now your prices are similar in cost to a hotel room only yours don't have private bathrooms. I could stay almost a week for \$250-300 total when you first opened. Those are some of our cherished memories seeing whales from the sea wall. With your million dollar income your septic and sea wall should be an easy fix since they are both already established. It would be a shame not to have this experience available to future generations. ⁵³

Please open Cama Beach State Park as soon as possible. A way has to be figured out to reopen this historical park that brings in \$1 million/ year. Use this money to start the process of reopening this park. ⁵⁴

My name is [x] and I and my husband have been Campground Park Hosts for WA State since 2018. We have hosted at Cama Beach St Park about half a dozen times since then and I would like you to read my perspective. One of our jobs at Cama Beach was running the shuttle to escort campers up and down the hill to the cabins. Many, many times, we have heard stories of these campers and how much they love coming to this park. One year, we met a man who had come as a child and in looking through some archive photos, we found a photo of him as a little boy looking outside the back window of a station wagon with his mother and another person. He was ecstatic that we had that photo. This man had come back to Cama Beach that weekend to meet with his son who he had been estrange from for close to 20 years and through the sharing of stories and photos, he and his son were reconciled that weekend. Another story we have is of a man who used to come to Cama Beach with his wife of over 40 years every year. This year, he was by himself as his wife had died that year and he had brought with him a vial of her ashes to scatter at Cama Beach. We were there when he did this and both my husband and I cried as he did it. A third story is of a woman who had also attended Cama Beach Resort as a child and she had suffered some sort of mental breakdown. Her companion decided to bring her back to Cama Beach for a few days so that she could experience a pleasant memory as part of her healing. This had been a favorite place for her as a child. We have actually met Gary and Sandra Worthington, whose parents opened the resort in 1934. She was literally raised here and she shared stories with my husband and I about her childhood, and talked to them about how Cama Beach became a State Park. They spent thousands of hours and I'm sure countless dollars to make sure this gift went to the State Park System for continued use as a resort. I have countless more stories of people sitting in the shuttle van as we escorted them up and down the hill, telling us what a special place Cama Beach is. This place is indeed special and what a disservice we will do for the countless generations that came before and and those yet to come by closing down the cabins. I urge you strongly to find a solution to the problems presented in the video so that many generations can continue to visit, explore and experience the cabin experience at Cama Beach State Park. ⁵⁵

I have been to historical state parks in Rhode Island USA. They have solved septic issues by installing incinerating toilets in their parks. Worth considering. In the long run it would be a money saver.⁵⁶

Hoping the State Parks Commission will explore EVERY avenue into keeping the cabins ON THE BEACH. The cabins on the beach is what gives the park so much of the charm of the retro cabins. Not to mention the easy access for those renting the cabins to the beach, the water, the store.

We held a large family reunion there in the early years of Cama Beach State Park opening and it was so fun and memorable for everyone.

It's seems very clear that the state has not protected the revenue from Cama Beach as they should have...to have (or should have) held funds in reserve to be able to take care of upcoming anticipated repairs. This seems to be what the original agreement was between the family that sold it and the Park Service.

I wonder why there was no one from the tribes at the Stanwood meeting to provide their opinion or input into Cama Beach? If the archeology aspect was so important, they should have been there to participate, correct?

There are NO other places on Camano to host & house a family reunion. There are NO other AFFORDABLE lodging that can house more than a few people.

And, yes, I attended the commission meeting in Stanwood on July 15.

Please put real, honest effort into keeping the cabins ON THE BEACH and exploring EVERY possible avenue to find grants, or funds... something...from the federal government to make repairs.

You are all intelligent people to get a place on a state commission. Please use that intelligence to come up with a plan to KEEP the cabins on the beach and find the funding necessary for repairs, even funds to build up the bulkhead wall to keep the high tides out. It can be done. This is what we pay you to do. Please work FOR us.⁵⁷