

From: Wendy Feltham <wfeltham9@gmail.com>

Sent: Saturday, July 18, 2020 2:27 PM

To: Pam Petranek <Pam@portofpt.com>; Bill Putney <bill@portofpt.com>; Pete Hanke <phanke@portofpt.com>

Cc: Eron Berg <Eron@portofpt.com>

Subject: concern about Mats Mats

Dear Port Commissioners,

I have never written to you before, and am writing now because I am very distressed by your decision to allow the Navy's Warfare Group to use the boat launch at Mats Mats Bay for training. I read about this in The Leader. This is a major decision that should have provided an opportunity for public input. I would have written to ask you to protect that boat launch for the public, and I am writing now to ask you to reverse this decision.

My husband and I live in District 1, but we often take our kayaks to Mats Mats. It's my favorite place to kayak because of the serenity of the bay. I love kayaking there to watch birds-- Belted Kingfishers, Pigeon Guillemots, nesting Osprey and Purple Martins; to see Harbor Seals pop up their heads; crabs, jellies, and schools of fish underwater; and the other day there was a family of River Otters with four little babies on the shore. We always see other people (including children) using the boat launch, kayaking, rowing, sailing, and motoring in the peaceful environment.

I remember in 2016 and 2017 when the Navy wanted to practice warfare in our Washington State Parks. I remember reading the fact sheet for the Proposed Naval Special Operations Training, and I strenuously opposed this use of our State Parks. I remember in 2018 when the Navy proposed increasing Special Operations training in Port Townsend on public lands and along the shores of Puget Sound. I was concerned about damage and stress to marine invertebrates and mammals, birds, and fragile plants. I volunteer regularly to protect our local shores and intertidal zones and to educate the public about the wonders of our marine environment. I am deeply concerned about the environmental impact from warfare training such as trampling on the eelgrass, seaweeds, marine invertebrates, and juvenile fish. Children would be terrified to see weapons, minisubs, or other war paraphernalia at Mats Mats, and I would be, too.

I wrote letters to Representative Kilmer, our senators, and Governor Inslee in 2016 and 2017. I wrote to our County Commissioners in 2018.

I am writing to you now with these same concerns.

I believe that warfare training should be confined to the extensive military lands already available for military use, including Indian Island. Our Port of Port Townsend boat launches are a resource for all people, and must be protected. Please reverse your decision immediately.

Sincerely,
Wendy Feltham
Port Townsend

Subject: Mats Mats Bay & the Navy

Date: Wed, 22 Jul 2020 15:02:49 -0700

From: Donald Mazzola <dmazz1952@gmail.com>

To: Pam Petranek <pam@portofpt.com>, Bill Putney <bill@portofpt.com>, Pete Hanke <phanke@portofpt.com>

Dear Commissioners,

Thanks for all you do. We read with interest the Port Townsend Leader July 15 article “Port Oks agreement for Navy special forces training at Mats Mats Bay.”

We agree with Commissioner Petranek’s concerns regarding the lack of public participation in the process and that this “agreement” (you can cancel it and they can do it anyway?) is one piece of a larger picture that should be considered as such.

We believe the following questions should be answered before any action regarding military training on public land is taken:

What safety issues and environmental effects were examined and analyzed?

How will this action fit into the larger puzzle of more Navy “requests” for access to public beaches and properties (i.e. “cumulative effects”)?

Does the agreement set a dangerous precedent regarding future Navy requests?

Also, will the public be able to comment on an after-the-fact review of the agreement on August 4th?

When we moved to Port Townsend six years ago, we were alarmed at the excessive militarization of the region (Growler jet flights, nuclear subs, the Indian Island Magazine and so on). Yes, we were naive and, yes, it's been here for years, but that doesn't mean it has to continue unquestioned.

Rubber stamping an apparently empty request from the Navy without adequate public participation is the old way of doing things.

Fearing that the Navy would fail to provide help to the citizens Jefferson County in the case of a natural disaster or other emergency is a poor basis for approving the agreement.

Here’s the Port’s chance to get it right.

Thank you.

Donald Mazzola and Lu Goodrum

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