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Comments:

With regard to the overflights on the west side of the Olympic Peninsula, the airspace above Olympic National Park, a Class One Airshed, must be considered sacrosanct, inviolate.

Olympic National Park is a World Heritage Site. More than 3 million visitors arrive each year to experience the solitude and grandeur. The flights and the expansion of that activity are a contradiction to the intention of Congress when it created the Park, with President Franklin D. Roosevelt's signature, 80 years ago--long before these flights were envisioned and undertaken.

I personally was a performer in the ceremony which dedicated the Park as a World Heritage Site in 1983. I have been a visitor, a user of the Park, every year beginning in 1970 and since. Yes, I have a very personal stake in the sanctity of the Park.

It has been said that the practice airspace that could be used in Idaho is 'further away' from NAS Whidbey. Certainly; but at the speed with which these jets travel, the time difference in flight to utilize an area which is not National Park airspace, is a reasonable trade-off.

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As a four-decade resident on the Olympic Peninsula and Port Townsend I have occasionally observed flights intruding on town airspace below the minimum required altitude of 4000 feet. In consideration of the type of jets now used, their sound output, and for public safety, that minimum distance should be raised to 10,000 or more (i.e., less than 2 vertical miles minimum). The band of settlement on the North Olympic Peninsula is barely 10 miles wide; surely these flights can be excluded from intruding over that narrow area which (in two counties) is home to nearly 100,000 people.

Lastly, I found the process to be disrespectful to our American democracy. Like the proverbial camel's nose under the tent, it now appears intentional that what was initially presented as a small increase in activity, has mushroomed in a way that leads one to believe that there was intention to exploit the sense of "small" by dividing a huge increase into small increments. That has led to so many people, including myself, to distrust ALL proposals coming from NAS Whidbey and from the Department of the Navy in the Puget Sound region.

There will undoubtedly be more proposals coming toward the public in the future. I urge that the Navy become honest, straightforward, and fully engaging toward the public in this region--we whose taxes support this activity. We need Defense, and the defense agencies need a more positive relationship and true respect toward those who are being defended.