

## ADDITIONAL VIEWS

The Committee is to be commended for favorably considering H.R. 1061. In moving this legislation, the Committee sets a valuable precedent by transferring without consideration 37 acres of lands within Olympic National Park to a non-federal owner—in this case the Hoh Tribe—to meet a legitimate need. The National Park Service has expressed support for transferring lands from Olympic National Park to the tribe without requiring a land exchange or other compensation. We are not aware of any opposition expressed by environmental groups to this national park land transfer.

The Hoh Tribe has demonstrated a compelling need to add lands to its existing Reservation to provide a safe area in which to construct housing and other facilities for its members. At present, the Tribe's Reservation, which was created by Executive Order in 1893, lies within one of the rainiest areas of the country located on the Olympic Peninsula of Washington. Classified as a tsunami zone and prone to major flooding, the Reservation receives 140 inches of rain per year. The transfer of land authorized by H.R. 1061 enables the Tribe to expand the eastern side of its Reservation a little further upland and a safe distance from major flooding. The lands so transferred are currently part of Olympic National Park, one of the most beautiful and pristine parks in the United States.

One might wonder why Congress would give away national park lands. We sometimes hear a refrain from environmental special interest groups, and occasionally from Members of Congress, that the government should never just give away public lands, let alone national parklands.

Perhaps it is fair to turn this question around: why did Congress designate a national park where it would hem in lands reserved to an Indian tribe? Shouldn't Congress pass more land transfers when the right for a community to have safe, accessible lands for homes and economic development is at stake?

The tribe's reservation was established prior to the park. Many other communities, mostly in the West, were also settled prior to later federal wilderness and park designations. Such communities often prize their national parks but they also prize their prior right to build safe, affordable towns and cities with the same opportunity and good quality of life that is generally taken for granted in urban areas and in the East. H.R. 1061 sensibly incorporates this view.

It is important to note the Committee adopted an amendment that, among other changes, clarifies that if the existing road in the Hoh Reservation is washed out, a new one can be re-built. The bill also includes a provision allowing the Tribe and the Park Service to construct a multi-purpose, non-motorized trail linking Highway 101 to the Pacific Ocean. These measures are very important, and Congress would be wise to consider other pending bills to ensure

safe and convenient access in communities where roads are washed out by floods, especially in National Parks.

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