



A Washington State Chapter of the National Audubon Society
P.O. Box 2524, Olympia, WA 98507
(360) 352-7299 www.blackhills-audubon.org

Black Hills Audubon Society is a volunteer, non-profit organization of more than 1,300 members in Thurston, Mason, and Lewis Counties whose goals are to promote environmental education and protect our ecosystems for future generations.

June 13, 2017

TO: Port of Olympia Commissioners

FROM: Black Hills Audubon Society

SUBJECT: Encourage Port of Tacoma Sale of Maytown Property to WDFW

We the undersigned support the protection and conservation of the 745-acre Thurston County property known as West Rocky Prairie, or the Maytown site, currently owned by the Port of Tacoma. The Port of Tacoma has no reason to own property in Thurston County, where they are holding the land without an Interlocal Agreement.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is in negotiations with the Port of Tacoma to purchase the property which is adjacent to their existing West Rocky Prairie Wildlife Area. WDFW has worked for years in conjunction with other conservation agencies to raise the necessary funds to purchase Rocky Prairie. The site is of very high value to the conservation community because of its rare native outwash prairie, oak stands, wetlands and endangered species. The \$7 million in state and federal acquisition grants raised for this purchase will be forfeited by WDFW if this sale does not occur soon.

Several years ago, thousands of Thurston County citizens signed petitions asking that this property be protected due to its unique character, the important habitat and species found there, and its proximity to an adjacent wildlife preserve and neighboring Millersylvania State Park. Given the local public support for saving this property from any further degradation, and given that the Port of Tacoma has publicly indicated that they know they need to divest themselves of this land and are actively trying to do so, we request that the Port of Olympia strongly encourage the Port of Tacoma to sell the property to WDFW in a timely manner.

Thank you.