



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.

May 13, 2017

TO: Port of Olympia Commissioners
FROM: Members, 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.

While Port of Tacoma has stated publicly that it is actively trying to sell the land, it recently refused to accept an offer on it. The offer was for the official appraised value and made by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). The Port of Tacoma has no reason to own property in Thurston County, where they are holding the land without an Interlocal Agreement.

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 due to 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 accept the WDFW offer in a timely manner.

Thank you.