

Public interest is paramount, but it is being overridden by the Navy.

By signing the Special Use Permit to allow the Navy to use roads in the Olympic National Forest for its mobile emitters, the Forest Service places itself in violation of its own [Forest Management Plan](#), and the [National Forest Management Act](#). No outside agency, including the Department of Defense, has the right to override the Forest Service's own Forest Management Plans and conduct activities that place their priorities over those of the public. The Forest Service's own regulations state that military use of public lands is not permissible if the military has other "suitable and available" lands for their Proposed Action, and Forest Service management policy states that when considering issuing such a permit, "...the interests and needs of the general public shall be given priority over those of the applicant." The Navy has **not** adequately demonstrated that it has not investigated the use of private or other lands, and its reasons for wanting to move the entire electronic warfare program from Mountain Home, Idaho to the Olympic National Forest are not enough: fuel savings and more time at home with families are insufficient justification to override the overwhelming socioeconomic and environmental interests of the public.

So, why are the needs and desires of the public not being given priority over the desires of the Navy? The Navy wants the Olympic Peninsula for an Electronic Warfare Range, but it has not proven that it needs it, because so much other land and airspace is already available and in use for the same type of training it proposes to do on the Olympic Peninsula.

Special Use Permit screening checklist: Among its 14 requirements, the Forest Service's own checklist for considering applications says, "Use will not pose a serious or substantial risk to public health or safety AND Use will not create an exclusive or perpetual right of use or occupancy AND Use will not unreasonably conflict or interfere with administrative use by the Forest Service, other scheduled or authorized existing uses on or adjacent to non-National Forest System lands." (36CFR 251.54; FSH 2709.11 12.2 & 12.3; FSM 2703)

If the Forest Service issues the permit despite all of the laws, policies, plans and overriding public concerns, what does this mean about how our government is run?