



**DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY**

NAVAL AIR STATION WHIDBEY ISLAND  
OAK HARBOR, WASHINGTON 98278-5000

5090  
Ser N44/0494  
21 May 07

Paul Cereghino  
Acting ESRP Program Manager  
Puget Sound Nearshore Partnership  
600 Capitol Way North  
Olympia, WA 98501-1091

Dear Mr. Cereghino:

On behalf of the Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (NASWI), I am pleased to submit this letter in support of the accompanying Crescent Harbor Estuarine Restoration Proposal. NASWI is currently working with the Skagit River System Cooperative (SRSC) to implement restoration activities at Crescent Harbor on Naval Air Station Whidbey Island property. This site was historically the largest open barrier island salt marsh on Whidbey Island (approximately 300 acres), but is currently largely cut off from tidal exchange and fish access through management actions that occurred prior to Navy ownership.

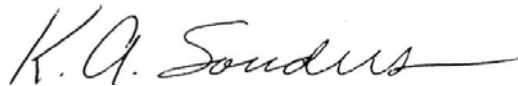
In 2000, using Salmon Recovery Funding, NASWI partnered with Island County, the University of Washington and Phillip Williams and Associates to complete a feasibility study of this site to determine restoration options. Based on the findings from this study, NASWI intends to restore full tidal exchange and fish passage to this wetland system for the benefit of Chinook salmon and other species. To demonstrate our commitment, NASWI has completed the first element of the project with support from Navy SeaBee construction detachments. Because of changes in deployment, these Navy construction units are no longer available to assist with construction of this project. In this initial phase of the project, several earthen berms in the marsh system were removed and a bridge was constructed that will eventually replace the existing tide gate at a cost over \$500K.

To facilitate completion of the restoration effort, we have partnered with the Skagit River System Cooperative, representing the Sauk-Suiattle and Swinomish Tribal Communities, to pursue grant funding to implement the remaining elements of the restoration project at Crescent Harbor. Towards our mutual end, the Cooperative has prepared the attached proposal for your consideration.

In addition to our commitment to this project, the Navy (as landowner and lead federal agency) will also commit staff resources that should be considered as our match commitment to this grant. This includes completing all of the necessary environmental permits and documentation for the project (estimated value \$10,000) and providing engineering review and expertise to assist with completing the final design (estimated value \$20,000). As the work would take place on federal property, any award of a grant may trigger a requirement for the Navy to formally accept the services on behalf of the U.S.

The Navy looks forward to working with Skagit River System Cooperative on this highly beneficial restoration project. Should you have any questions concerning this partnership between Naval Air Station Whidbey Island and the Cooperative, please feel free to contact Mr. John Phillips (Installation Natural Resources Manager) of my staff at (360) 257-8873.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "K. A. Souders". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

K. A. SOUDERS  
Environmental Affairs Director  
By direction of the  
Commanding Officer