To:

WSDOT

Records & Information Services

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I am requesting the Project File regarding any permit(s) issued by the Washington Department of Transportation for the US Navy to use public roads on the Olympic Peninsula, for the purpose of conducting electronic warfare testing and training.  The Navy will be (or may already be) driving utility trucks and MRAPs carrying camper-sized mobile emitters for the purpose of sending electromagnetic signals to Navy jets, which according to a Navy spokesperson are to respond with “simulated harm shoots” of directed energy from their arsenal of electronic attack weapons. Naval Air Station Whidbey Island also has, for testing and training purposes, at least one flatbed trailer-sized mobile Joint Threat Emitter, but has not provided information to the public on intent for its use.  The attached files, received via FOIA from the Forest Service, indicate that the Navy intends to use, or has already been using, public roads on the Olympic Peninsula for this purpose, including roads in populated areas. According to Navy statements at public meetings, operators of these devices are contractors, not Navy personnel. Anecdotal evidence suggests that a Navy mobile emitter was parked at Point Hudson, a heavily populated campground and marina in Port Townsend, sometime in 2011 or 2012.

Specifically, please note in the attached files the third paragraph in the Navy’s email to the Forest Service, and the map of page 5 of the temporary Special Use Permit issued by the Forest Service.

No information has been provided by the Navy to the public on the nature, level or intensity of the electromagnetic signals to be issued from emitters except to say that they are harmless because they will be used only on forest roads, surrounded by a 101-foot perimeter marked with radiation hazard warnings, and that exposure beyond fifteen minutes is harmful.  Nor has any information been provided to the public on potential hazards to living tissue that may be exposed to simulated harm shoots from the jets, because no information on what constitutes a simulated harm shoot is available.  If these mobile emitters are driven on public roads or parked in heavily populated areas, it is likely that human beings and wildlife will be unknowingly exposed to an unknown amount of electromagnetic radiation.

Therefore, I am requesting any records that document the issuance of this permit, if one exists. This includes emails, applications, supporting information, and documentation of phone conversations between the Navy and the WADOT, and among WADOT employees regarding this topic. Electronic rather than paper records are preferred, but if some exist only in paper form please advise me of the copying costs.

I thank you in advance for your time.

Washington State law RCW 42.56 requires all agencies to respond to requests for public records in a timely manner and in an acceptable way. Records that are created by the department during the course of business are considered public records. The term "public records (RCW 42.56.010(2))" applies to any record, no matter the media, including electronic.

Sincerely,

Karen Sullivan

3 files:

Navy email to Forest Service

Enclosure to email

Temporary Special Use Permit issued by Forest Service in 2013