

Lands 20/20 Comments - 2020-2021 Public Review

Date	Project	Comment	Type
1/14/2021	All	Stop buying more land with our money. It takes land off the tax rolls and costs millions to manage it. STOP BUYING LAND!!!	Negative
1/15/2021	All	Why is the WDFW spending its limited funding on more land? More lands are taken away from the local tax base and increases the tax burden on the tax payers. Shouldn't those funds be used to keep the entire agency financially solvent?	Negative
1/24/2021	All	The department has more land than they can take care of now especially on the east side .the boat launches are terrible.	Negative
1/24/2021	All	We are delighted that this land will be acquired to increase habitat for wildlife and restore the land. There is just one MAJOR error. In order to create a REFUGE for wildlife someone needs to look up the definition in a dictionary NOT a hunters manual. We seem to have sold our souls to the NRA to infringe on the very areas where we encourage wildlife. Those 2 ideas are NOT compatible. You can NOT encourage wildlife and then kill them. When did this all start to fall apart? It is amazing that this could even be happening~! Please have someone on the board to represent the animals so that more intelligent minds can contribute to the discussion. Disappointed and appalled at this failure.	Negative
1/12/2021	All	I support protecting as much wildlife habitat as possible, but for the wildlife, not people. We've destroyed so much habitat for our use and abuse that what remains should be kept safe for the natural inhabitants. Not gun ranges, not hunting, not off-roading. Wildlife.	Positive

1/14/2021	All	I would support any land acquisitions that would preserve land and increase public access. I would even be willing to pay additional fees for licenses if it meant preserving and acquiring land. Good for public and environment.	Positive
1/15/2021	All	I support all of the proposed land acquisitions.	Positive
1/15/2021	All	I enthusiastically support WDFW's mission to protect land and water for public hunting, fishing, and other uses through land acquisition. I reviewed the proposed land acquisition projects highlighted in WDFW's January 12, 2021 News Release and support each of those acquisitions, in particular the Chester Butte Expansion. Keep up the good work.	Positive
1/25/2021	All	Keep up the good work. The more state land the better. WDFW has been doing a great job purchasing land for wildlife and wildlife enthusiasts.	Positive
2/1/2021	All	I have attached Conservation Northwest's organizational comments to this email. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these proposals. Please reach out if you have any questions or comments.	Positive

2/10/2021	All	<p>I am in favor of the proposed six land acquisition proposals because they support the mission, "to protect land and water for people and wildlife in Washington".</p> <p>As we now know, the Earth is experiencing a sixth episode of mass extinctions of species. This is due to human activities, primarily habitat destruction and alteration, along with climate change. The land acquisitions will help provide and protect wildlife habitat, and areas of ecological carbon sequestration.</p> <p>I have read arguments that some citizens fear that the proliferation of threatened, endangered, and sensitive species on the proposed acquisition lands will lead to those species expanding onto their own properties and limiting the development. Personally, as a land owner in Lewis County, I say "bring it on". I would be honored to host TES species on my land.</p>	Positive
2/11/2021	All	<p>It is a great thing to expand land for hunting and fishing opportunity. Our state population has been growing and so is pressure on our public lands. I have seen what happened in states like Texas where most hunting is done on private leased lands which only wealthy people can use. This helps ensure opportunity for all people to use the land. Once that land is developed it will be impossible to get back.</p>	Positive
2/13/2021	All	<p>I support acquiring and preserving land in Washington State. Create habitat and preserve ecosystems. Thank you,</p>	Positive

2/11/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>There was an editorial in the Chronicle today with very valid concerns about the loss of taxes and income Lewis County would endure if this land is acquired by Fish and Wildlife. Although I agree with that concern, I also find the use of the land, as proposed, to be an exciting and positive step toward improving the devastation we have imposed on that area over the decades of mining and power production. Looking towards the future that faces our Earth, we must consider improving the environment. We can complain about the possible job opportunities that MIGHT be lost by the exploitation of that property...but at what cost to our future?</p> <p>On the other hand, I feel that rural areas are looked upon as the resources that are necessary to combat global warming...but there is an inequality in that assumption. The urban areas have already exploited their environments - they already have their industries and jobs. The rural areas should not have to assume the total responsibility for an environmentally healthy world. Rural taxation should be adjusted to compensate for not developing areas, for not offering the industrial jobs....all of which provide a tax base for our schools, roads, and community infrastructure. Perhaps, this proposal could include the community support via taxation relief that would be lost from any possible industrial development?</p> <p>If this could be a part of the purchase, not unlike the National Park system, the land purchase and use would be a valuable solution for Lewis County and the climate.</p>	Comment
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1/20/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>Lewis County would like more information about the Centralia Mine Property acquisition. Specifically, one of our County Commissioners has concerns about the transfer of property from one land use to another and the impacts to county tax rolls. Staff was asked to look further into the acquisition. I have glanced at the information provided on the website and would like to speak with someone directly as the website does not seem to address the concern.</p>	information
1/20/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I have been trying to get ahold of someone to answer my questions regarding the land you plan on getting around transalta from studying your map for hours it looks like i am right in your future wildlife area, what effect will it have on my place and the only access to the small field behind my place that transalta owns is through my property there is no deer or elk ever in the small field its only good for hay and the big field on the other side of the creek my property line goes half way down the road i would very much like to talk to someone regarding this issue but nobody will return my calls or even answer the phone i have already contacted transalta in canada waiting on answers to my questions please get back to me asap</p>	information

2/1/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I Reside at XXXXXXXX I have some serious concerns with the State considering opening the area very near my house to the general-public if they acquire the land from Trans-Alta in the article I read. That area is currently a sanctuary for many animals. It is hunted by a few special trips put on by Trans-Alta and a few folks who don't respect private property that wonder in there and harvest animals unlawfully. If these newly acquired lands were opened for the general season and not a "very" limited walk-in unit special draw type hunt, most of those animals will be slaughtered in the first season. That in a sense would be good for me as the added hunting pressure will push some of those critters onto my land. The caveat to that is the hunters who don't mind trespassing will follow. I also want to make sure you consider the proper points of entry for those lands. Connor Road cannot be a public point of entry for those lands. That road is too narrow in many spots, and there are blind corners that would be a cause for major traffic issues. We have big enough problems with trespassers and wreckless drivers on our land/road as is, and this will greatly add to this problem. This will only create more confrontations with people for me and my neighbors on our lands that don't have the right to be there than we already have. One of the main things contributing to this problem is the state has allowed the limited access to all the lands that folks have hunted on, and paid to manage the wildlife on, for decades.... The timber companies are getting rich charging fees for access (which go up every year). It has in a sense encouraged people to search for other options to hunt which in fact is why some of the more daring take to trespassing..... Though I like the idea of some additional public land for people to hunt, I doubt it will not negatively the people that reside around this property. I will be consulting an attorney to see what my options will be if the State in fact does decide to try and use Connor Road as access for this site. The more sensible access points for these properties would be from the un-occupied Tono Road, and hopefully it will be a walk-in only unit..... I will not speak for the other landowners that reside on Connor Road at this point, but I am sure we will be discussing our option together very soon and I will not be alone if legal action is necessary. I will be watching this as it all unfolds very closely and thank you for listening to my concerns.</p>	Information
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2/1/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>Regarding: Request for comments for Land Acquisitions, Centralia Mine Project (Lewis & Thurston County) Any development of the site should consider the long term management of Lewis County Listed Noxious Weeds, along with future measures to prevent their spread associated with any construction and recreation activities.</p> <p>Implementation of a detailed plant survey (including noxious weeds) for the area described would be paramount before any consideration of land acquisition and future construction activities and uses. As noted the landscaped described is the result of past mining activities that has altered the natural landscape. The opportunities for noxious weeds to invade the landscape has been on-going since the existing timber resources were harvested and land clearing began for mining. Please add the Lewis County Noxious Weed Control Board to any information that is distributed regarding the land acquisition at the Centralia Mine Project.</p>	Information for us
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1/14/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I live near the Transalta property and I oppose the public acquisition of this land. Nearly half the state of Washington is already set aside from private use. How much more could you possibly need? (only 54 percent private land in WA) Population is increasing, and the portion of private land is shrinking. This leads to inflation, housing problems, suppression of economic opportunities and creates dependencies in a growing population living off of a shrinking resource base. There is no public interest which cannot be addressed with existing non-public lands. While we cannot afford to manage properly the existing public lands, and while parks are shuttered why would it make sense to buy more land? The government makes a bad neighbor as land which is owned by "everybody" is cared for by nobody-- burning, litter, weed spread, timber management are all blights of expansive public land. Tragedy of the commons. Please walk away from this land grab.</p>	Negative
1/31/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I wish to express my opposition to the proposed acquisition of Trans Alta acreage by the Department of Fish and Wildlife. These lands were promised to the people of Lewis County to be placed into a classification for industrial development to offset job and tax losses from the shutdown of the power plant and mine. By placing part of these lands into a wildlife reserve we are forfeiting the opportunity to develop and recoup taxes and jobs. I would prefer to see this entire property developed in a sustainable way to employ residents and grow our tax base.</p>	Negative

		<p>I am opposed to the Department of Fish and Wildlife purchasing land for Transalta near the Centralia Steam Plant. Nearly 50% of the State's land is under government ownership already, I believe that is enough. And in fact there is an argument that the State and Federal Government already owns to much as much of it is poorly managed and maintained. As usual the state is always short of annual operating monies and as a result state owned land is neglected. I believe the State Fish and Wildlife should focus on maintaining and operating properties that is already under state ownership. In addition, the WDFW should focus their resources on restoring salmon and steelhead hatchery production to augment native runs. Sport fishing has historical been a huge economic boost to the state's economy, however over the past 15 to 20 years, reduced hatchery production has reduced the sport fishery throughout the state and I am seeing many long time fisherman selling their boats and no longer buying fishing licenses. Also continued commercial and tribal gillnetting in river and in coastal bays is devastating to both native and hatchery fish returns. These poor fisheries management policies will only exacerbate the declining WDFW revenues in the near future if this trend is not turned around. Baby boomers, many of whom are sports fisherman, will just quit fishing and large numbers of fishing licenses will no longer provide revenues for the state. It is time to change priorities and focus on the responsibilities WDFW already has and not create more issues by purchasing more land.Thanks for listening to my concerns</p>	
1/31/2021	Centralia Mine		Negative
2/4/2021	Centralia Mine	Please don't acquire the Transalta property.	Negative
2/5/2021	Centralia Mine	Please do not acquire the transalta property.	Negative
2/5/2021	Centralia Mine	Please do not acquire the transalta property	Negative
2/5/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>Hello, i am all for fish and game but not for wdfw spending time and money on this property. A lot of us who live in lewis county are on fixed incomes and our property taxes are going up fast enough. If wdfw takes over this property there will be no taxes collected from it and our taxes will increase because of this</p>	Negative
2/8/2021	Centralia Mine	Please DO NOT acquire transalta property.	Negative
2/8/2021	Centralia Mine	I strongly oppose this land transaction that is proposed by WDFW.	Negative
2/8/2021	Centralia Mine	I oppose this bid for land	Negative

2/9/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>opposed to the acquisition by WDFW.</p> <p>The tax shift from the shutdown of power plant #1 will be felt by the taxpayers of the Centralia School District, Port of Centralia, and Riverside Fire Authority in 2022 tax year without the donation of the land. The second half of the closure will follow by 2025 which will be another devastating blow to those districts. We have not totally economically recovered from the shutdown of the mine in 2001. That was 19 years ago and one of the taxing districts, Riverside Fire Authority, is just now seeing recovery from that closure. Their tax base has been limited by the 5.90 levy limitation for many years. This is the first year they have been able to have their levy limit expand in many years without the cost of running special levies. Transalta's value was close to a billion dollars in value at one time. Since the negotiation with the State of Washington to shut down the mine and the coal plants, it has steadily decreased at an alarming rate. The coal plants were a huge benefit to the taxpayers of Lewis County. Since the shutdowns have begun, the value is less than half that value today. It will be less as time goes on. What has the State of Washington done to give us economic relief from that?</p> <p>Part of the land that is mentioned to be donated was set aside for industrial development to offset the loss of value due to the shutdown of the mine and the power plants. That was a law passed specifically to offset the loss of the mine and plants. If the land is donated, it will be exempt and taken off the tax rolls permanently. This creates a tax shift to already strapped taxpayers due to the pandemic and the economic losses that are already being suffered. The land will be left fallow. An example of that already exists in Lewis County where the State of Washington purchased hundreds of acres to mitigate the widening of I-5 not only in Lewis County, but up and down the corridor far outreaching this county. That land used to produce agricultural crops, cattle, and other benefits such as paying taxes and jobs. Making land exempt just makes others in the county pay more. Another example is Tacoma Power. Tacoma Power has purchased hundreds of acres of forest land in East Lewis County that will never produce a dime of timber income again. They have used this land to mitigate not only dam ownership in Lewis County, but to mitigate projects in other areas. The taxpayers of Lewis County get virtually little benefit from the power or the dams, but they get to pay the taxes Tacoma Power does not for the "right" to have the dams located in Lewis County. All of these exemptions results in a loss of employment and a loss of income from the land itself.</p> <p>Part of Transalta's responsibility of owning the land was to reclaim the property back to its original state which mostly was forest land. They knew that at the time of purchase in 2000. Even though the value of forest land is low, it is a rotational crop that will in time, produce income for schools, ports, the county, and the fire districts that the property is located upon. Harvest tax is a huge offset to the taxing districts and when the land is replanted after harvest, it promises income in the future. Exempt property typically provides little to no income.</p> <p>I strongly urge Transalta to finish its reclamation project, which by the way, produces employment in the local area for those that were laid off or retired. If those folks aren't interested, it's jobs for local folks that might not have that opportunity otherwise.</p>	Negative
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2/9/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>Cont....Making this land exempt is a very bad choice for all of the citizens in the State of Washington. We need jobs and we need places to create those jobs. Lewis County's land mass is already 60% exempt with full or partial exemptions from taxation. We don't need more exempt property to shift taxes to already strapped taxpayers. School levies and fire levies will fail continually as folks cannot afford to pay them. Industry and commercial developments pay the same tax rates but typically use 20% of the services. Residential taxpayers typically use 80% of the services and pay 20% of the taxes.</p>	Negative
2/9/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I'm very concerned about the proposed land acquisition by WDFW from TransAlta. This would greatly shortchange Lewis County. The county and citizens have poured lots of time and money into this site for the sake of the jobs produced and potential for future development. TransAlta needs to uphold its commitment to Lewis County in how it transitions out of the mining activity and power development by allowing for additional economic activity in the area, utilizing the infrastructure in place.</p> <p>I am very much opposed to this acquisition.</p>	Negative
2/11/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>While I appreciate Fish and Wildlife's role, I oppose the acquisition of Industrial property to form or create new fish and wildlife habitat. This and all property here in Washington State must already comply with WDFW rules and reg's to protect and preserve valuable habitat. But to take away an industrial area that provides a HABITAT for Employment is foolish at best, and a large waste of taxpayer money at worst. That loss of potential jobs, and added burden to the tax base will only add to homeless problem we now live in. That being said, funding for WDFW might be better spent elsewhere on un-funded and un-fulfilled needs which should be our priority these days.</p>	Negative

		<p>To whom it may concern: I am a resident of Lewis County and my family has lived in the county for almost 100 years. I love the community and how the wildlife is able to coexist with the good people of the area. I have seen the management of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife firsthand and found it lacking realistic goals and implementations. No realistic management vision of the wildlife in the area is apparent. I am totally opposed to any land transfer to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) for multiple reasons. Incompetence in species management, an apparent lack of mission goal, along with a total disregard of their actions on the local (human) communities define their shortcomings. Consider for a moment how the population of salmon has fared in Lewis and Thurston Counties under the guidance of the WDFW. Also, policies involving threatened and endangered species in the Chehalis Valley drainage seem to always involve nothing but the removal and eradication of the local human population, not the welfare and growth of the community nor that of the local indigenous animal populations. The threatened and endangered species that are proposed to be released on the proposed lands have no chance of recovery under the stewardship of the WDFW just as the salmon in the region have none. The WDFW needs to find ways to effectively help threatened and endangered species while preserving the livelihoods, culture, and private property of local residents before they are given more land and stewardship in the region. Partnerships and pride in species welfare can be built with the folks of southern Thurston and Lewis Counties through finding ways to work in good faith with the local people. Say No! to additional responsibilities and stewardships until the WDFW can prove good faith with the folks of the Chehalis River drainage. Supporting a water retention device for flood control in the Pe Ell area would be a good step forward.</p>	
2/12/2021	Centralia Mine		Negative
2/12/2021	Centralia Mine	Please see the attached letter from Prosecutor Jonathan Meyer regarding TransAlta.	Negative

2/12/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I am submitting public comment regarding this proposed acquisition. I am a Centralia City Councilor, and have several concerns regarding this transaction. My primary concern has to do with the speed and lack of transparency up to this point. This land is extremely valuable to our community and there are many possible uses. For our city, we are losing the tax revenue that came from TransAlta's activities, and this transaction would mean that we lose the potential tax revenues and economic benefits from other uses. This announcement took virtually every local leader by surprise - no one that I've spoken to even knew this was on the radar.</p> <p>Our community needs an opportunity for a much more robust public comment period so we can understand what is being proposed, what the potential benefits of a wildlife preserve would be, and what we might lose in the process.</p> <p>We need to understand the economic impacts of this land use. We need to understand the long-term potential impacts of the proposed introduction of endangered species and whether that could potentially inhibit/limit land use on local areas not included in this transaction if those species were to then be found elsewhere. We need to understand the original agreements made with our county when TransAlta purchased the property and when TransAlta began to shut down as part of negotiations with the State. And we need to know if those agreements will still be honored through this transaction or negated. This information cannot be ascertained in the current public comment period and without it, the public cannot provide meaningful comments.</p> <p>I respectfully ask that you extend the timeline and hold public workshops where local leaders and members of the public can have a thorough understanding of this transaction and provide meaningful comment that is informed and knowledgeable.</p>	Negative
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2/17/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>Please do not acquire the TransAlta property. Lewis County owns property in this area designated by the Legislature for major industrial development. Lewis County is a distressed county economically and the mandated closing of the coal fired steam plant by 2025 has further exacerbated our economic distress. Your planned use of the property is incompatible with our need to establish industry providing substantive family wage jobs.</p>	Negative
2/18/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>It should take no longer than 30 seconds to make the decision to NOT allow WDFW to use taxpayer money again to steal 9600 acres of the TransAlta land.</p> <p>Earlier this land was proposed to be for economic use. The WDFW would like to use the area for non productive use and partially for endangered species. Common sense is an endangered species. Examine the fiasco WDFW has while experimenting with the wolf and grizzly reintroduction program. Their personnel Fish/Elk/Mountain goat management has been disastrous.</p> <p>Drawing this land from the tax base is going to cause further draw down on the county's reserve fund. Many county roads need upgrades much more than WDFW needs another money pit.</p> <p>This land would be much more suitable for human habitation/ agriculture/ forest land/economic development or partial acreage for an airport. We do not need another state weed patch to contaminate our productive land.</p>	Negative

2/18/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I'm vehemently opposed to the transfer of the former TransAlta mining site to WDFW for a protected conservation area. This land has been strip mined, and is no longer native ground in a capacity that would be considered habitat without additional, costly reclamation by TransAlta, WDFW, or others. The strip mining that has occurred previously created a scenario that is much more conducive to private development, whether for commercial/industrial uses or future housing. These tax parcels also must remain on the Lewis County tax rolls, which will require TransAlta or a future owner to pay property tax on the land, and also any improvements, even if only at a low rate for timber production or other agricultural activities. I understand the desire of WDFW to protect natural habitat and create sanctuaries for various species, but this is not this right move for your agency to inflict on Lewis County's citizens. Our local job market has been maimed by the closure of the mine, and further by the phased closure of the Steam Plant which were more or less negotiated by out of touch politicians in Olympia. Do not take away the ability for future productive uses of this ground that will generate personal income through gainful employment and tax revenue to support local jurisdictions in Lewis County and surrounding areas. I'm urging you to scrap this proposed acquisition. The future of my City and County depend on family-wage jobs and local tax revenue to survive. This proposal will continue the erosion of local wages and local property tax revenues which will place a heavier burden on local families to support basics in our communities like schools, roads, and public services. Again, I urge you to scrap this proposal entirely.</p>	Negative
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		<p>I am writing this letter in opposition to the potential land purchase by the State of Washington for what could be arguably the lowest and worst possible use, especially considering the site itself, infrastructure already available, and the historical income that the company and property have brought to the citizens of Centralia, Lewis County and the State itself.</p> <p>There needs to be further consideration as to why Trans Alta may be pushing this direction. First, they are a for profit Corporation, and they have been shut down from producing power with coal by the state of Washington. They are simply doing what any corporation would do for its shareholders, and that is get out of any expense that they can, and maximize profits for their shareholders. It makes sense that they have endeavored to maximize profits for the assets that would be left and mitigate huge reclamation costs to the best of their abilities. Nobody should blame them for that, it is what a “for profit” should do.</p> <p>Trans Alta has been a good neighbor to us all in the past. When the company could actually operate a going concern with 600 miners, there was a 42 million dollar annual payroll dedicated to employees and their families. Those folks bought a conspicuous amount of dirt bikes, trucks, homes, groceries, fuel, cigarettes and beer. There was a significant amount of revenue lost to the city, schools, county and state when it was decided that that mine was to be shut down. In other words, those jobs are tough to replace. Our own Assessor Dory has brought up the fact that when the plant is completely shut down, we will all be paying more in property tax, and she is ultimately right.</p> <p>I would hope that Trans Alta would get Lewis County and IPAT involved to a large degree, and work with them to figure out what can or could be developed over time on the property before it is completely closed to future development. In other words, look for a highest and best use to the citizens in Lewis and Thurston County, not necessarily just the shareholders or management based primarily in Canada.</p> <p>There are areas that would be tough to develop on the property, but there are also areas that would serve well for many good jobs and larger scale manufacturing or green power. Once this land is turned over to conservation, we can all look back and imagine what could have been, but be unable to do anything about it. The Spotted Owl and Pocket Gopher have taught us much in Lewis and Thurston Counties. How much land does the state need to control, and how many mountain bike paths and turtle ponds need to be put on these 9000+ acres? How much can be taken out of the tax base for purposes of having a close place next to I-5 to recreate? The major fact that BPA, Fiber, major gas lines and rail services run directly through this property should make all of us pause for a minute and consider options and alternatives to allow Trans Alta a less painful reclamation cost and new future development options to replace a once viable and lucrative business in our area.</p> <p>I am not against conserving our resources needed for wildlife habitat or forests that are renewable. I just think we all need to talk with all stakeholders a little more and get some more input from those most affected by such a large transaction, when much money, time, energy, and talent has been spent over the years to identify something bigger that could affect us humans in a much more positive way.</p>	
2/19/2021	Centralia Mine		Negative
1/13/2021	Centralia Mine	I like the Centralia mine project followed Chester Butte.	Positive
1/14/2021	Centralia Mine	I saw the proposal and my girlfriend and I are for making this happen. We both hunt a lot in both counties mentioned and would like to see more opportunities for public access.	Positive

1/14/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>Centralia Mine Property. The land owner is willing to donate 6,500 ac of the property and is committed to rehabilitating the land before transfer is a great offer for the State of Washington. The area is within commuting distance to large metropolitan areas. Has potential to be a world class wildlife area. Would not want to see this site developed for housing, businesses, etc.</p>	Positive
1/15/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>Writing to express support for the acquisition of 9,600-acres from Centralia Mine property in Lewis and Thurston counties. I think this property would be a great addition to the area and benefit sportsmen and wildlife alike.</p>	Positive
1/15/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I think it is a FANTASTIC plan to acquire the mine property for a recreation area! There is not nearly enough public land near Lewis county to recreate on, so yes, that is a great plan. Thank you.</p>	Positive
1/15/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>This is the best news and you've made this Thurston Co. resident very pleased and pleasantly surprised. Both my husband and myself totally approve of this plan. It will do tremendous service toward repairing riparian stream/fish protection, reestablishing a sizeable wildlife refuge area and basically adding a bit more environmental protection against climate change. Way to go and we sincerely hope this happens!</p>	positive
1/15/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>The proposed purchase of the land from Transalta would be a great benefit to the citizens of Lewis and Thurston Co.</p>	Positive
1/15/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>By all means!!!! Get that property. I have had neighbors and a brother who worked out there for many years and they say there are some great bass ponds out there just sitting idle. Also some close in recreation property for families to enjoy. I also fly and go over that area often and it is a great location to get for public access. Please do all you can to obtain that property.</p>	Positive

1/16/2021	Centralia Mine	I totally support the departments take on acquiring the Centralia Mine property. Collaboration with Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation would be for sure helpful.	Positive
1/16/2021	Centralia Mine	I myself think this would be a great purchase. I grew up next to this property but was shut down early on after the steam plant started up. A great area for any kind of recreation	Positive
1/16/2021	Centralia Mine	I am in full support of WDFW acquiring the 9,600 acres of the Centralia Mine property owned by TransAlta in Thurston and Lewis counties to provide public access for recreation and benefit fish and wildlife conservation. I used to elk hunt in that area on Green Diamond lands in that area and am somewhat familiar with that TransAlta property although we were not allowed to hunt the TransAlta lands. I know there are a number of elk in that area as that is where they would escape to when we chased them on the Green Diamond lands. Looking forward to completing this acquisition. Please add my email to any future updates on this acquisition.	Positive

1/16/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>Just done a small amount of reading about the acquisition of the Trans Alta Mine (Centralia Mine Project Site) and am very elated! What a historic and amazing proposal! To reclaim this area for wildlife and outdoor opportunities is a great idea! Too much of our lands are being locked up and made private except to those who want to pay a small fortune, and more and more people are wanting access to a small amount of available public lands. Too much use is almost as bad as industrial use not to mention overcrowding. For many years, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife has operated and maintained the Ebsen area through an agreement with the landowner. When that landowner became interested in selling his property, our club started a campaign to acquire it in order to give it to the Department to continue to manage for public access in perpetuity. We partnered with the Wild Steelhead Coalition and reached out to the entire region and beyond. The response was enthusiastic support for the project and we received donations from 12 regional clubs and organizations and two national organizations, Fly Fishers International and Back Country Hunters and Anglers. They collectively represent many tens of thousands of members. In addition, almost 300 private donations were received directly from individuals and through a well-attended fund-raising event. The WSC was able to complete purchase of the Ebsen property and is now ready to give it to the Department. We appreciate the Department's interest in the property and strongly encourage you to complete a land transfer. We believe, as do the numerous organizations and individuals who have contributed financial support, that the best present and future use of the property is to remain as public access.</p>	Positive
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1/19/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I want to express strong support for the acquisition of over 9,000 acres in Lewis and S.Thurston Counties now owned by Trans Alta Mining Company. I am familiar with this sparsely populated area of farms, woods and former coal mines. It is conveniently located near the cities of Centralia and Chehalis and I-5, so can serve a large number of citizens with recreational opportunities. However, the 9,000 acre site lies in an area surrounded by small farms and is sparsely populated. Because of this and because of its large size, this acquisition will allow relatively free movement for all species of wildlife. The habitat is diverse, having fields, woodlots, ponds, wetlands and streams which support a wide variety of animal species. Agreed-upon restoration by Trans Alta is currently underway. All these factors and more make this acquisition a fantastic addition in the legacy of valuable lands under management by WDFW. Please pursue this project with all speed. Thank you. .</p>	Positive
1/19/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>After reading the email regarding possible land acquisition in Thurston county area, we would like to offer up our support in this proposal. As of now, the Vail area is the only land for similar use in that area. As you know, the chances of getting a permit AND the ability to afford the \$375 permit fee is not feasible for all. Also with that, the population of Thurston county has grown tremendously in the past 5 years and has resulted in Capitol Forest to become a very busy (at times) outdoor get away. Adding land with similar purpose would allow for residents to visit not so congested areas. Thank you for your time and consideration. We do hope the land is acquired for us Washingtonians to enjoy and wildlife to be preserved.</p>	Positive

1/19/2021	Centralia Mine	I am writing to tell you I completely support the acquisition of the nearly 10,000 acres of trans alta land for recreational purposes AFTER TA returns the land to its pre-mining condition. This would be a tremendous asset to Washington. Thanks!	Positive
1/20/2021	Centralia Mine	Hi, I think it would be great if we could acquire and open up the Centralia Mine property to public use and outdoor recreation. About 25 years ago I did my Eagle Scout project out there at the Centralia Mine area and we constructed and placed hundreds of nests and boxes for waterfowl, birds and wildlife in conjunction with TransAlta to help promote their comeback as part of the land reclamation efforts back then. It is a beautiful piece of land with so much potential and it would be great to preserve that land for public outdoor recreation rather than to have it fall into the hands of investors who would otherwise potentially destroy the beautiful balance of nature that exists there now. Please do all you can to acquire that property and I look forward to re-visiting it again someday.	Positive

1/23/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I wanted to share my support and enthusiasm for the proposed land acquisition of the Trans Alta property in Lewis and Thurston County. I have been conducting Breeding Bird Surveys (BBS) for the USGS Biologic Survey (BBS) Section throughout the Trans Alta Property since at least 2005. This is a unique area locally and is regularly used by numerous bird species, several of which are locally uncommon or even rare. The property itself has unique habitat features, many ponds and wetland complexes, and many opportunities for both riparian and upland habitat restoration/improvement. I am in 100% support of the State's purchase of this property for wildlife benefits as well as appropriate recreational opportunities. This would be a great addition to our states public open spaces. Good job in identifying and targeting this property for acquisition. If you would like additional information or details, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.</p>	Positive
1/23/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I am writing to strongly support WDFW in your effort to acquire 9,600 acres of the Centralia Mine property, currently owned by TransAlta. These lands in Thurston and Lewis counties could provide public access for recreation and wildlife viewing, while at the same time benefiting fish and wildlife conservation. In particular, there is evidence of diversity of bird life, including species that are uncommon. A great opportunity!</p>	Positive
1/25/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I, and the members of the South Sound Chapter Puget Sound Anglers, strongly support the proposal to acquire the Centralia Mine property from TransAlta. This is a rare opportunity to gain public ownership of what will be restored natural habitat. It will benefit endangered species, provide recreational opportunities for sportsmen and preclude future degradation of almost 10,000 acres of Lewis and Thurston Counties.</p>	Positive

1/27/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I think this is great for multiple reasons. It will alleviate stress from other public land in the area. Since there are such high populations near the area, I routinely see a lot of people while out on public lands. More land will allow them to disperse crest less footprint which is good for al involved. Will there be easy access to this property? There is other public lands that are "landlocked" by private lands in the area. Which skews how much land the public actually has access to. If we have access to this then I am fully on board. What will the hunting and fishing rules be for this area?</p> <p>Thank you and please let me know if there is anything I could help with.</p>	Positive
1/30/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>May I thank you for providing the public with this information. This is a wonderful proposal which we heartily support. This will improve fish and wildlife in the region to a tremendous degree. We also support grant project that will be necessary to pay the owners for the portion of the property that is to be sold. Please place us on the list of people who receive further information on this project. We live in Tacoma, and are happy to attend any meetings that are required. Thank you. Happy to help on this. We can do letter writing, or provide testimony as you think appropriate. In Tacoma, can get to Olympia or Centralia easily.</p>	Positive

1/31/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>My comment is that I am highly in favor of WDFW purchasing and conserving this and all other parcels of land. Anyone can see how crowded our parklands are. We have nearly 8 million residents (and growing), where we used to have only about 3 million. Animals, plants and people need conserved natural areas. In Lewis County there remain very few old growth and second growth forests or the camas prairies that you used to see. Particularly, birds and butterflies need resting places that they can return to. My opinion is that those who argue for privatization and development usually are prioritizing their own short-term profits. A better path is to provide recreation and wild areas into the future. I would like to see more public funding of our state parks and land management agencies. Recreation, wildlife and land management jobs contribute to GDP.</p>	Positive
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1/31/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>In 1978 I started my 37- year career with the WA Dept. of Game (now Dept. of Fish and Wildlife) as a Wildlife Agent. On one of my first days in the field I toured the Centralia Mine property with a fellow officer. I could not believe my eyes at the incredible diversity of habitats and abundance of wildlife. I knew that when this mining operation ran dry that they would have to restore the property to its original state which would result in filling in these phenomenal ponds and wetland and replanting the meadows and clear cuts into Douglas fir stands. Over the years, I was blessed to serve as a Habitat Biologist, an Oil Spill Biologist, a Fish Biologist and finally as a District Wildlife Biologist. I travelled to every region of the state and worked on countless land purchases for fish and wildlife habitat and recreational access. For the first decade I often worked enforcement on the Steam Plant's duck marshes and pheasant release area and, as a fanatical birder, I also led birding tours on portions of the mine when the management allowed. Over the years I relentlessly nagged my agency's managers and fellow biologists that we must obtain this incredible property for our clientele and the wildlife found there. I am sure they were glad to see me retire, but before I left, many of them were kind enough to take a tour of the property with me. I believe that once they saw it, they realized that the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife would never again have an opportunity like this in Western Washington. As we lose more and more habitat and recreational access this purchase becomes that much more critical. I know it may appear that I wrote this note to brag about the wonderful 37 years I spent protecting our fish and wildlife resources and serving the citizens who value it, but I did not. I wanted to share what I observed with the people who are involved with this purchasing process from inside and outside the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife. If you have any doubts on the value of the mine property, please arrange a tour with one of the excellent Wildlife Biologists from WDFW. Have them show you the ponds surrounded by top quality nesting soils for endangered Western Pond Turtles or the grassy marshlands for endangered Oregon Spotted Frogs. Go in autumn and see the large flocks of ducks and geese or the species of migrating sandpipers that need freshwater marshes and mudflats rather than saltwater beaches. Check the pits, now lakes, that when planted with trout, would be perfect for family fishing outings. The elk herd can show up anywhere and black-tailed deer are everywhere. Cougars, bobcats, black bear, river otters and beavers occur, as well. And the property is expansive enough to allow bird hunting units without the encroachment of houses that have restricted or closed so many of our sites. By doing your part to help this project move forward, you can feel assured that you have done something that really matters. Perhaps the greatest accomplishment in your career for fish and wildlife.</p>	Positive
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2/1/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>Please ignore the noise from anti public lands advocates. I support the acquisition in Chehalis. The majority of citizens agree with you: more land should be protected to better our environment, sustain healthy wildlife populations, and move towards a greener future where urban sprawl hasn't decimated everything in its path. I'm saddened that not everyone agrees with this. And sometimes they have good points about pushing people into urbanized areas and driving up land prices. But that's looking at the same problem and seeing a different cause. I stand with you and I'm excited to see what the future has in store for WDFW.</p>	Positive
2/1/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I'm writing to express my opinion about DFW's proposed transfer of 9600 ac. from TransAlta. I support this transfer. With one caveat: TransAlta should not be allowed to squirm out of their agreements to reclaim the lands. I worked for TA for almost 40 years. They're in it for profit and nothing else, so I'm concerned they might pull a quickie on you guys. By the way, the DFW blog about this transfer has a picture of a bullfrog. Bullfrogs are an introduced species that has done much harm to native species. Perhaps someone could remove that picture and replace with a red-legged frog or a cool picture of an ensatina or torrent salamander?</p>	Positive

2/4/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>My name is XXXXXXXX and I write you this letter as a father, conservationist, hunter, fisherman and fellow Washingtonian.</p> <p>The Centralia Mine Project exemplifies what the state had in mind when striking a deal to eventually end the use of coal at the Trans-Alta facility. By acquiring this land it not only is benefitting the animal's that call this place home, but it is beneficial to the residents of Lewis county, the state of Washington and the environment.</p> <p>As a conservationist this land can provide so much to the ecosystem that is hard to find in a world being overrun with housing developments and giant warehouses. From large elk to small amphibians and fish, the potential for sanctuary and growth in habitat for these animal's would be unmistakable if this land were to be acquired.</p> <p>As a father, hunter and fisherman I see this land as an opportunity to show my children what the land has to offer and how quickly it can rebound to be a bountiful landscape.</p> <p>As a hunter this land would provide quintessential opportunity for many species. Elk and deer already call this area home and to not aquire it could be extremely detrimental to this elk herd. This land has a forgiving topography that would be extremely well suited for youth and ADA specific elk and deer hunts.</p> <p>As a fisherman I am excited by the opportunity of the many ponds and small lakes this property has to offer. Whether it be bass, bluegill or trout the opportunity and experiences the public can have are irreplaceable.</p> <p>I conclude this letter asking that you aquire this land, allowing it to continue its recovery and return to its natural state not only for the people but for the animals.</p>	Positive
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2/4/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I am writing to express my whole hearted support for the proposal that the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife acquire 9,600 acres of Centralia Mine Property from the Transalta corporation. This is an excellent opportunity for Washington State to preserve, restore and protect a large parcel of land that provides habitat for many species, including endangered ones. The pressures of human population growth, with the associated encroachment on wild lands, has pushed many of our native plant and animal species to their limits. A biologically diverse ecosystem is vital for the health and survival of the entire planet, the human race included. The benefits of conserving wild lands include cleaner air and water, retention of carbon in the biomass, opportunities for recreation in the great outdoors and the preservation of places of beauty and harmony for the future.</p>	Positive
2/4/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I think it would be wonderful and important for habitat to have the mine set aside for wildlife and people. Both species need wild spaces. Also the area in Eastern Washington would be great.</p>	Positive

		<p>> As a "neighbor to the Centralia Mine Property I am supportive of WDFW >> purchasing some of this property. As I drive around the area I see >> far too many beautiful pieces of private property being sold and >> divided into housing or industrial projects, many because landowners >> are unable to afford to keep them. In the past I have been skeptical >> of WDFW acquiring large pieces of land because as an equestrian >> enthusiast we are often the first to be "kicked" out of the area >> because of sensitivity to the native plants/animals. Although I can >> understand that sometimes this is warranted I feel that it sometimes >> goes too far. I understand that horseback riding is planned to be >> allowed if this project is able to materialize, so I am very excited >> to see this come to fruition. We are losing more and more of our >> riding areas every year. >> >> So I enthusiastically vote "Yes" for this project I also hope that >> horses will be kept in the plans. >> >> There should be little concern for lost tax revenues as housing is >> exploding in the area. >> >> Thank you for listening.</p>	Positive
2/9/2021	Centralia Mine	I support 100% the wildlife project at the Transatlantic site.	Positive

2/9/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>Hi,</p> <p>I'm commenting my opinion in regards to the proposal of WDFW acquiring the skookumchuck transulta land. My family and myself have hunted, fished, and hiked that land for years. To me that is land of connection weather it's making new friends, or spending time with family. I look forward to spending my time out there during hunting season, while my fiancé fishes below me. I'd also like to be able to take my children on there first hunts there. Between the fishing, elk/deer hunting, and pheasant hunting, it's the most resourceful place we honestly have available around here. If the state takes that option away from us, that would be devastating to the community. It would be in everyone's best interest that WDFW can acquire that land, and keep it open to the public for everyone to enjoy.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>	Positive
2/9/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>Today I read an article from a local journalist staying that the State was considering acquiring the Trans Alta Land in Lewis County as a wildlife preserve. The city of Centralia wants another industrial park in the area. While, jobs are a consideration, we need more areas for the protection of wildlife habitat. As a Lewis County resident, I am in favor of the acquisition of this land by the State Parks department as a way to protect wildlife and prevent further degredation of the site. We have enough ugly industrial parks that mostly provide low wage jobs. We need to protect and preserve the few open areas we have left in the state. Please protect this lovely little valley.</p>	Positive
2/9/2021	Centralia mine	<p>Yes! Yes! Yes!</p> <p>The WDFW land acquisition proposal for the Centralia Mine Property is a great idea!</p>	Positive

2/9/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I am in favor of WDFW acquiring TransAlta's Centralia Mine property. Although new to the Centralia area within the last eight years, I have driven around the Centralia Mine area looking for recreational opportunities and adventures such as hiking and sightseeing. As the property was owned by TransAlta, going onto their private property was not permissible. With WDFW acquiring this property for public use, many citizens would have access to enjoy a large natural preserve. Many seek walking or biking in nature to enjoy the sights such as the behaviors of birds, to the colors of the vegetation, and to the smells in the air. I encourage WDFW to acquire this property for my enjoyment as well as others – including generations to come.</p> <p>The close proximity of this property to Centralia and Chehalis has many long-term benefits. For me, it would be a quick drive to a large natural area for recreational enjoyment. For schools, its close proximity would be great for science field trips. The property's wide diversity would allow many subjects to be covered including their thought-provoking interrelationships. The different habitats from wetlands, forests and lakes support many different types of animals such as waterfowl, mammals, reptiles and fish. Geology could also be discussed in relation to the coal mine and power plant with its benefits to humans and as well as its impact on the environment.</p> <p>I do not agree that this property should be held for development. Development and its associated impermeable surfaces such as pavements and roofs contribute to stormwater pollution. This non-point pollution is the largest contributor to water quality impairment. Coho salmon as well as many other aquatic organisms are impacted or killed due to stormwater pollution. In my opinion it is best to keep this property natural in perpetuity to help maintain the health of on-site as well as off-site flora and fauna, including people!</p> <p>Acquiring this property is in alignment with WDFW's acquisition principles. A few of these include:conserving and restoring the diversity of fish and wildlife species, providing access for fishing and hunting, and fostering experiences and exploration.This acquisition would give excellent opportunities to implement the above principles such as providing critical habitat for endangered species like the western pond turtle. Fishing and hunting opportunities could be made available and improved. Hiking and exploring would be outstanding in this diverse landscape.Acquiring this property, much of it by donation, is a golden opportunity to acquire a unique landscape with minimal tax payer dollars. I encourage WDFW to move forward with this proposal. Obtain the land now! Any needed improvements to the property such as parking areas and trails, can be installed at a later date as funds are available.</p>	Positive
2/9/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I am very much in favor of the state using the land from the former mine. It is already home to many bird species not easily found in the county. It will be a fabulous wildlife area!</p>	Positive

2/9/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I think this is a wonderful idea. No one is going to use that land for industrial purposes. It is to far out and there are plenty of areas close to I-5 Why would these city officials and county commissioners not support this. Transalta has done a lot for these communities. Let Transalta do with their land what they want to. Go for it!!!</p>	Positive
2/9/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I am very mush in favor of the dfw obtaining the land from Transalta and used for hunting and fishing. . It would be a place were people could go hunt or fish with out paying a timber company a few for access . witch is another story why should the people of this state have to pay a timber co a few to cross their property by a road that is partly paid to maintain by the state to access state public land.??</p>	Positive
2/9/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I am a Centralia resident who supports open space, recreational opportunities, and wildlife refuges. However, I find it very hard to imagine a former coal mine really represents any of those places. I hope I'm wrong and and the land is suitable for this purpose but I remember restored sites in the Hanaford Valley as oddly sloped, unevenly settled, and less than attractive. Also, I have grave concerns about the toxic legacy of this particular land and fear with DFW and Lewis County may wind up liable for environmental remediation for the damage done by coal mining and by the retention of coal ash in the Big Hanaford valley. I would like to remain informed on this issue; please add me to your interested parties list.</p>	Positive

2/9/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I'm writing in support of WDFW acquiring the 9,600 acres of the Centralia Mine property from TransAlta. As a local hunter, wildlife enthusiast, and outdoorsman, I am incredibly excited about the possibility for more public land along the I-5 corridor to hunt and recreate on. In addition, the conservation value of protecting this property will only increase as the human population and footprint in this region grows.</p>	Positive
2/9/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I think the dfw should take over any land they can get their hands on, if it's good for the environment. At this rate, we won't have any trees or wildlife left.</p> <p>Are we just going to expand far and wide until everything is polluted or concrete?</p> <p>Buy off the land that still has beautiful untouched trees, the habitat for so many creatures. Let the city officials build up instead of across. Make taller apartment buildings that fit more families than single home neighborhoods.</p> <p>I just can't believe it's 2021 and saving the environment is not our priority. Money won't matter for our towns, when climate change shows us who's boss.</p>	Positive

		<p>I am writing in enthusiastic support of the acquisition of the Centralia Mine property, especially with such a large donation from TransAlta.</p> <p>Yes, Lewis County has many public lands in the east half of the county, as Commissioner Swope comments, but that is hardly accessible to every resident of west & northwest Lewis County.</p> <p>If the mine was lucrative after many years of mining, it would not have sat unused since 2006. How long do we wait for the jobs to come back? If the mine could support many "family wage jobs" as stated by Commissioner Stamper, it wouldn't be sitting idle.</p> <p>It would be fantastic to drive just out of Centralia & enjoy the lakes & ponds. Fishing, birding, wild plant education, outdoor schools, all sorts of wonderful things could be brought to that land.</p>	
2/9/2021	Centralia Mine	Please put my name with those in favor of the state buying the Centralia Mine property & turning it into public lands,	Positive
2/10/2021	Centralia Mine	Lewis County needs family-wage jobs, not land protected for wildlife. I oppose this land acquisition. The government has already all-but shutdown the job opportunities in East Lewis County for endangered species and growth management--leave West Lewis County alone. This county has taken enough financial hits in the name of big government.	Positive

2/11/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>First of all, let me just say that I would like to express my enthusiastic support for the proposed wildlife area near Centralia at the site of the Transalta mine. Our region desperately needs more protected, publicly accessible land.</p> <p>I am currently working on a blog post about the proposed wildlife area with the aim of spreading awareness and support for the project, and was hoping you could help me out with a few details. For one, it would be helpful if you could provide me with a few scenic photos of the area in question with which to illustrate my article. Also, I was wondering if there are any plans for what recreation access might look like.</p>	Positive
2/11/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I am writing in support of the land acquisition proposal of the Centralia Mine. This would be a tremendous boost for the area, increasing much needed recreational opportunities.</p> <p>I live in the northern portion of Cowlitz County and travel frequently to the Centralia area. I have noticed a lack of outdoor opportunities there, and I would love to have new trails to walk on. We need alot more protected habitat for wildlife species in the area, since development threatens much of the wild land in the area. Being able to reclaim land that was abused by mining would be a winning situation for both wildlife and the people like myself who enjoy watching wildlife.</p> <p>This wildlife area would bring plenty of visitors to the area, since outdoor recreation is a booming industry these days, and would improve the economy of Centralia.</p> <p>I urge you to proceed with the land acquisition for the wildlife area. It would be a terrible waste to let this beautiful land go towards commercial development.</p>	Positive

2/11/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>Sent from my iPad I whole heartedly support this acquisition. This area has a sizable resident elk herd, some deer, and a good waterfowl population. More public land in this area is welcome, considering the burgeoning human population this area is experiencing. According to the local newspaper local politicians are interested only in more tax money and quality of human life is unconsidered. They have not asked for public input..."we have to nip this in the bud" is there attitude. County commissioner Sean Swope said "if people want to hunt, fish, ski they can go to east county; poor attitude. We need more public and open land to help save as much of the natural environment as we can.</p>	Positive
2/11/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I am writing in support of the proposed acquisition of the Centralia Mine property currently owned by Trans Alta in Lewis and Thurston Counties. Reclaimed mine areas can provide excellent opportunities for recreation and conservation and this property appears well-suited for both. In addition, public lands for hiking, hunting, fishing, biking, and viewing wildlife support thriving rural communities. Outdoor recreation is economically and socially important - both of which have come in strong focus during this pandemic. When I chose to move to this area, access to public lands and trail systems was an important component of my decision. Thus, growing the places to recreate and conserve imperiled species concurrently aligns with my values and desires for southwest Washington.</p>	Positive
2/12/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>As a resident of SW Washington who is always looking for new area to explore and recreate, I'm excited by this proposal. I appreciate that this location is somewhat close to I-5 and the cities of Chehalis & Centralia. I sincerely hope the Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife will move forward with the Centralia Coal Mine project. I look forward to having another place to hike and kayak!</p>	Positive

2/12/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I live in Thurston County and work in Centralia in Lewis County. I strongly support the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) acquisition of 9,600 acres of the Centralia Mine property owned by TransAlta in Thurston and Lewis counties to create a wildlife area because our local economy needs it!</p> <p>My husband and I are birders, and we know how much we spend birding every weekend and on our vacations. According to US Fish and Wildlife “Birding in the United States: A Demographic and Economic Analysis, an addendum to the 2011 National Survey, shows that bird watchers spend nearly \$41 billion annually on trips and equipment. Local community economies benefit from the \$14.9 billion that bird watchers spend on food, lodging and transportation. In 2011, 666,000 jobs were created as a result of bird watching expenditures.” That’s just birding and it’s from 2011. Birding is bigger than it’s ever been.</p> <p>Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge near our home sees about 200- 500 people a day. Also, my husband and I have been driving the wildlife loop at Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge to see and photograph a rare bird for WA. We’ve gone twice in the last month, and it has been bumper-to-bumper traffic every time. The creation of this natural area in Thurston/Lewis County is an opportunity for Bucoda and Centralia to finally have a resource that will draw people to stay and spend money in town instead of driving through on their way to a place that does have natural areas.</p> <p>It’s even more important for wildlife. That part of Thurston and Lewis County does not have a large area dedicated to supporting wildlife which is a shame because it has unique habitat and so much potential to be a draw for wildlife and the people who love to see and photograph wild things. We went to a fallow field near Chehalis last week to photograph short-eared owls that were being seen there. There were birders all over the narrow street watching and photographing the owls while dodging traffic. Again, so much untapped potential.</p> <p>My profession involves revitalizing historic downtowns. The towns that are the strongest tend to be those that are near natural attractions. I think this would be a boon to the area. Thank you for your work toward this effort. I support you</p>	Positive
2/12/2021	Centralia Mine	As a resident of Lewis County I think for the WDFW to acquire the 10,000 acres would be wonderful. Such large tracts of land should be preserved and protected for wildlife and future generations as often as possible.	Positive
2/12/2021	Centralia Mine	Please find Letter of Support attached.	Positive
2/12/2021	Centralia Mine	Please accept the attached comments on WDFW's proposed land acquisitions for 2021.	Positive

2/12/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>To Whom It May Concern,</p> <p>As President of the Woodland Trail Greenway Association, I offer our enthusiastic support for the proposed acquisition of the Centralia Mine Property site by the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife. The mission the Woodland Trail Greenway Association is to advocate for and partner in the development of a publicly - owned multiuse trails and greenways in southwest Washington.</p> <p>Further, we believe that trails connect communities.</p> <p>We view this proposed acquisition is a strategic opportunity for the State to secure critical land and habitat under public ownership. This acquisition would benefit our communities by preserving diverse natural habitat among growing communities in southwest Washington.</p> <p>Importantly, this acquisition would then allow for planning of a non - motorized public access trail on this site that would provide ease of public access and would close a remaining critical gap of a cross State bike and pedestrian interconnected trail network.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment.</p>	Positive
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2/12/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>To Those Whom it May Concern,</p> <p>I have become saddened by some of the local response to the WDFW proposal to acquire the 9,200+- acres of TransAlta property in Lewis County.</p> <p>This land is in current need of stewardship, and I don't believe we can trust local citizens to provide necessary management for these parcels.</p> <p>As a born and raised Lewis County citizen, and one who can see the clouds of steam rising from TransAlta property in view from my home, I am in FULL support of the WDFW to acquire this land.</p> <p>I will continue to tell those interested that WDFW would be the best case scenario for this land, and we need to support our DFW to maintain this land.</p>	Positive
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2/12/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I am writing regarding the opportunity for WDFW to acquire lands currently owned by TransAlta in Lewis and Thurston Counties. I understand the use of the land, under the WDFW, would involve habitat preservation and endangered species reclamation. I am truly excited about this opportunity and look forward to learning more.</p> <p>Many are opposed to the proposal, believing that a more appropriate use of the property would be something that would provide direct economic benefit to Lewis County, which has suffered economic challenges over the past several decades due in large part to restrictions on logging as a result of the spotted owl habitat priority. While I believe that the suffering of timber-dependent families and companies is real and economic vitality is much needed I would like also to see the development of green energy, recreational lands, and habitat preservation. I strongly believe they too can be an economic driver in our community.</p> <p>The success of the land acquisition is dependent on the cooperation and engagement of the community. I ask of you to please keep the community engaged, hear their concerns (sometimes people most desperately just need to be heard) and work TOGETHER to make this a viable choice for Lewis County. Together let's work to make the land continue to provide revenue, be it through recreation and tourism, mixed energy use, or strategic development.</p> <p>I'm excited about the possibilities and would like to continue to talk, share, and work together.</p>	Positive
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2/13/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I fully support WDFW's proposal to acquire 9,600 acres of the Centralia Mine property to improve wildlife habitat and public recreation in Lewis and Thurston counties. I own property in Thurston County and currently reside in Toutle, in Cowlitz County. While many people might assume there are plenty of outdoor recreational opportunities in the forested hills of Thurston, Lewis, and Cowlitz counties, the reality is something far different, especially now with the populations in these counties growing so fast. Timber companies own most of the forests in Lewis County, and they don't allow public access. Timber companies also spray herbicides to prevent non-commercial plants from competing with timber trees; they practice clearcutting, which decimates an already stressed habitat; and they allow invasive species to grow in abundance in clearcuts until they replant and spray herbicides once more. The Centralia Mine property would provide a haven for wildlife and a welcome area for public recreation. With this acquisition, Centralia and Chehalis could capitalize on the recreational and tourist economies to improve livelihoods in the area without sacrificing ecosystem health. Thank you for considering my comments.</p>	Positive
2/15/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I see the state is interested in purchasing the land at the Trans Alta mine in Centralia. I have to say this is an excellent idea. The mine has created a variety of habitat, and to see this area preserved would be great for lots of different activities, such as bird watching, walking, and hunting. I really hope this purchase goes through.</p>	Positive

2/16/2021	Centralia Mine	Dear Mr. Calkins: I support WDFW's proposed acquisition of the 9,600 acre Transalta tract in Thurston and Lewis Counties. Once it is preserved, this land has tremendous potential as recreational land and as fish and wildlife habitat in these fast-growing counties. This action would provide a valuable natural asset in the South Sound area for our children and grandchildren. Please take every action needed to advance this proposed land acquisition by WDFW.	Positive
2/16/2021	Centralia Mine	I wanted to email you in support of this aquisition. I sounds like a win for all; for threatened species, for locals, and visitors. Having access to public land is one of the most important factors in life for many Washingtonians. The push back I have heard about seems quite myopic. Communities thrive when recreational opportunities abound. I hope that you will go thru with this purchase.	Positive
2/17/2021	Centralia Mine	I bring to your attention a letter to the editor in the February 16 issue of The Chronicle (attached). I agree with the author on his very reasoned case for the WDFW to acquire the TransAlta mine property and he is very knowledgeable on the history, background and issues involved.	Positive
2/18/2021	Centralia Mine	I would like to keep this short and offer my support for what WDFW is currently trying to achieve with the old Centralia mine properties. I'm a 27 year old Chehalis resident and would love to see a project like this move forward to promote the potential expansion of fish and hunting wild life for future generations to enjoy and experience. Thank you for your efforts!	Positive

2/18/2021	Centralia Mine	I live in Lewis County and worked at the coal mine for 18 years. I think using the reclaimed mine property for a proposed wildlife refuge is an excellent idea. There needs to be more easily accessible public lands that we all can enjoy. I am in favor of creating a wildlife area that the public can enjoy, not a closed wildlife refuge that the public can't access. Having an area the public can drive through and visit and see the wildlife is a great idea.	Positive
2/18/2021	Centralia Mine	I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for WDFW to acquire the TransAlta property in Lewis County. This site would be an incredible addition of land as it supports so many important wildlife species. Lewis County needs more spaces for non-consumptive recreation, and as an avid birdwatcher and resident of Chehalis, I would love to see that opportunity come to fruition. Thank you for your effort on this!	Positive
2/18/2021	Centralia Mine	I am writing to support the proposed acquisition of the former Trans Alta mine. Western and Central Lewis County have a notable shortage of public lands and wildlife areas, and public officials should be doing more to protect and restore our natural areas in order to improve the quality of life for citizens and wildlife alike. Our County Commissioners should be ashamed of themselves for fighting this opportunity to restore natural habitat in favor of mythical business opportunities.	Positive
2/18/2021	Centralia Mine	I definitely feel this land should be designated as a wildlife preserve. We have so few of them in Lewis County .	Positive
2/18/2021	Centralia Mine	Hi DFW! As a Lewis County resident, business owner and community leader, I wanted to voice my strong support for conservation of the old coal mining lands, as well as using existing infrastructure for more solar, wind & geothermal!!	Positive

2/18/2021	Centralia Mine	Thank you for taking my comment. Yes please protect this property by making it a wildlife preserve. I live in Centralia and love to see the Elk and Bears that exist on this property. I would hate to see it become over built with industry or houses or an airport as some people are talking about. Please save this property.	Positive
2/19/2021	Centralia Mine	I am fully in support of this project. I love all of the proposed projects connected to the acquisition of this area. Bravo!	Positive
2/20/2021	Centralia Mine	I am writing in support of the TransAlta land acquisition by DFW. Our new president has made it clear that we need to be saving much more land from development for many reasons, not the least of which is climate change. If this parcel can benefit species needing more habitat, then it seems like a very good choice. I'm worried about leaving land so close to it available for development, but if your experts are comfortable with that compromise, then certainly Lewis County officials and others should be happy with that.	Positive

2/20/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I support the WDFW proposal that was listed last month.</p> <p>I have lived in Olympia for 42 years. I support WDFW buying the Trans Alta property, south, about 14 miles. We love to get out and hike, We need more recreation areas.</p> <p>This agency will decide if the plan fits into their “Lands 20/20” initiative. I hope so. We need more recreation areas. Currently hiking areas are crowded.</p> <p>So far, several conservationist groups have voiced support, such as the Sierra club, of which I am a member. The proposed refuge could be a crucial link between the Cascade mountain range and the Olympics. We need that link.</p> <p>We need that corridor.</p> <p>Conservation Northwest says the area is a “key stepping stone in a landscape-level network of wildlife corridors.” Spokesman Chase Gunnel said human development has fractured previously-connected habitats, resulting in isolated islands of wildlife that restrict natural movement.</p> <p>The Washington chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers said the project would increase opportunity for recreation close to urban areas, and would have long-term benefits for fish and other wildlife.</p> <p>For all of these reasons, we need to have our state agency buy this land.</p>	Positive
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2/21/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I am a resident of Thurston County - Rochester - and recreate by hiking and horseback riding. I am an active volunteer in trail maintenance on the areas that I recreate in Capitol Forest, trails near Scatter Creek Wildlife Area and JBLM.</p> <p>I am in support of this land acquisition for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I understand that horseback riding is one of the proposed activities on this property if purchased. There is always a need for additional places to ride at a reasonable distance from my home. - This past year has seen a boom in recreationist activity on the trails that I ride and hike on due to Covid-19 restrictions and the need to get outside where it is healthier. This boom will likely continue into the future as people have discovered our wonderful state lands. There will be a need to spread the recreational load out on new lands. - Development, both business and residential, is expanding our area. Open spaces need to be preserved to offset this development. 	Positive
2/21/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I am in favor of The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's land acquisition from TransAlta.</p> <p>This would benefit our precious wildlife-- including our struggling salmon, and outdoor sports/ recreation for the public, while conserving certain parcels of land for future development. It's a win win!</p> <p>Please count my support. Thank you for this opportunity to have my voice heard.</p>	Positive

		<p>I support The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's land acquisition from TransAlta for a public wildlife refuge.</p> <p>This is a win win win acquisition! It will benefit our precious wildlife-- including our struggling salmon, outdoor sports / recreation for the public, and conserve certain parcels of land for future development.</p>	
2/22/2021	Centralia Mine	Please count my support. Thank you for this opportunity to have my voice heard	Positive
		<p>Greetings,</p> <p>I am writing to express full support for the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife land acquisition from Trans Alta for a public wildlife refuge. This will benefit our wildlife, provide outdoor sports/recreation for the public as well as conserving certain parcels of land for future development. It provides refuge for wildlife that is a crucial link between the Cascade mountain range and the Olympics.</p>	
2/22/2021	Centralia Mine	Thanks for the opportunity to hear from Washington taxpayers like me!	Positive
2/23/2021	Centralia Mine	leave the land to the wildlife they need it more than we need industry and housing	Positive
2/24/2021	Centralia Mine	I am in support of the proposal for WDFW to acquire the TransAlta property for conservation and public access purposes.	Positive
2/28/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>Don't let a chance like this go by.</p> <p>Nurse-who-has-worked-all-over Lewis County</p>	Positive

2/28/2021	Centralia Mine	I support the Department of Fish and Wildlife acquisition of the 9,600 acre Centralia-TransAlta Mine Property. Having a large natural area close to Centralia and Olympia has great recreational value. Also, habitat restoration could aid threatened and endangered species.	Positive
2/28/2021	Centralia Mine	I support using the old TransAlta mining property as a protected wildlife habitat. Let's restore and protect the land for future generations of people and wildlife	Positive

3/1/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>To whom it may concern: I am writing to express my concern about the upcoming land purchase in the Thurston/ Lewis county area currently owned by Trans Alta. I hope I am not too late to send in my opinion of this. I will keep it short. I am 63 years old and live in Lewis county. I would like to submit that I am in favor of the purchase. I can see nothing but good for all of us if the Wildlife dept acquires this land. I realize there are a lot of people that do not want the land developed into useable land for all. And trying to make one believe the wdfw will plant endangered species on the land to keep all off, etc. I have heard it all lately. But as with all lands that the dept owns. Everyone that is legal to be there can enjoy the land, for fishing, hunting, hiking, and camping. The WDFW has done nothing short of doing an exceptional job with what they do. I love the fact that with the dollars I spend for outdoor recreation, it gets a chance to help purchase lands like this, that is put available for us, unlike private lands like Weyerhaeuser. Where you have to pay fees every year to go on it. And for the uninformed people that believe that land should be open to businesses, in a place too far from the major highways and too expensive to build, I say they have unresearched fake dreams. This land should only be used for our enjoyment. Good luck with the purchase!!!! Keep up the good work! Thank you for taking my comment, I hope that what I send makes sense. I am not some high on the hill professional person, or author of how to keep the government from taking our land kind of a guy. I just enjoy the things you do as our wildlife dept. It all takes me to a happy place.</p>	Positive
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3/2/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>With all the knowledge we have about the importance of habitat restoration and the expansion of public lands, this seems like a no-brainer. I would love to live in a world where more and more land is restored to support a diversity of life, including our own. I support the proposed acquisition of the 9,600-acre Centralia-TransAlta Mine Property to provide public recreation, wildlife viewing, and habitat restoration for threatened and endangered species.</p>	Positive
3/15/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>Hello WA State Fish and Wildlife;</p> <p>I have lived in this area 30 years. I support hiking and recreation. I support habitat for critters. I support the proposed acquisition of the 9,600-acre Centralia-TransAlta Mine Property. It will provide public recreation, wildlife viewing, and habitat restoration for threatened and endangered species.</p> <p>We as a state need to be pro-active. We need this big piece of land. Let us not lose this opportunity for habitat. This will create jobs.....we have tons of people who love to hike, this will be a great place to do it.</p>	Positive

1/17/2021	Centralia Mine	I strongly advocate for the proposed land acquisition in Lewis and Thurston counties. As our Washington state population continues to grow, it is increasingly important that we set aside properties for the benefit of the public, where people can experience wildlife and wild lands, and reconnect with nature, and in which natural systems can thrive. One component of addressing climate change is to protect more lands, with the goal of protecting 30% of our land area by 2030. These acquisitions can be a part of reaching this goal. Thank you for your work to bring this to reality.	Positive
1/17/2021	Centralia Mine	I fully support the acquisition of the Centralia Mine property by the Department of Fish and Wildlife. Properties that support an abundance of birds, such as this property, are a premium for those of us who like to look at and study the local birds. The opportunities to acquire such properties are unique and the Department should take advantage of this opportunity while they can..	Positive
1/18/2021	Centralia Mine	Friends of Grays Harbor (FOGH) is in support of your acquiring 9,600 acres of the Centralia Mine property owned by TransAlta in Thurston and Lewis counties to provide public access for recreation and benefit fish and wildlife conservation. Reclaiming this open space for wildlife and the public is a very worthwhile acquisition. Thank you for considering it.	Positive

1/20/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>Hello. I am emailing to provide comment on WDFW's proposal to create a wildlife area at the site of the TransAlta Centralia coal mine. First, let me start by saying I fully 100% support this land acquisition. I feel it is a great investment for the department and the people of this state, as large relatively undeveloped land parcels like this are increasingly rare in western Washington.</p> <p>I fully support its use for public recreation (hiking, hunting, fishing, bird watching, etc.) as well as species conservation and habitat restoration and as a wildlife travel corridor from the Cascades to I-5. I am an avid big game, small game and upland bird hunter, and I have also taken part in habitat restoration projects with the Center for Natural Lands Management, the Nature Conservancy, the Ruffed Grouse Society and JBLM, with a personal interest in restoration and conservation of native prairie and oak woodlands and their dependent species (like the streaked horned lark, Taylor's checkerspot, Mazama pocket gopher, golden paintbrush, etc.) I have also assisted WDFW biologists with harbor seal captures on McNeil Island/Gertrude Island in the south sound. I personally am also excited at the prospect of Western pond turtle introduction at the site, as I have always wanted to see them in the wild (The Oregon zoo through a window isn't the same). I do have some questions I'd like to pose, even though I probably won't get a response - Will the wildlife area have any firearm or use restrictions (examples: only shotguns at Skookumchuck, non-toxic shot, no access to Scatter Creeks' south unit during TCB flying season). I assume because there are elk/deer/bear/cougar on the site, all hunting methods would be allowed but I want to ask. Also with horned larks and pond turtles, would there potentially be land use restrictions during nesting periods, if they get established at the site? The sites that WDFW has pond turtles now is restricted to the public, like the site in Lakewood. - Would WDFW own the land outright, or would it be a land use agreement with TransAlta, like the Skookumchuck wildlife area? - For the horned lark habitat: would it just be grassland management of fallow fields (mowing, prescribed burning) or would it be creation of native prairie habitat (herbicide treatments, seeding and plugging of native prairie grasses and forbs)? Has Taylor's Checkerspot introduction been discussed as an option for this site? Are there existing larval hosts and nectar plants on site, or would they need to be seeded and plugged? - Are there any other endangered or threatened species of plant or animal that currently exist on the site? Butterflies, fish, bird, amphibian? - For the wetland/pond habitat: are there any shallow flood plains? With how open and unforested the site is, I'm curious if it can be used for waterfowl hunting, and also with its openness and remoteness, if it could become a flyway stopover or nesting habitat for sandhill cranes and trumpeter swans? - Does the soil type support potential pocket gopher introduction? - What would be done with the existing infrastructure and buildings on the parcel? The buildings, train tracks, steam towers, power lines... would they be torn down and the land reclaimed or left in place or used for parking/restrooms/target shooting? - Has there been any impact study done on what opening this land to the public would do to the elk herd? I believe the elk refuge there when pressured on adjacent green diamond timber land. Would there be any private land for them to refuge on, as not to drive the entire herd out of the area? - Would this land purchase change the existing elk areas 6011 Centralia Mine and 6069 Hanaford? Thank you so much for allowing this public comment. I sincerely hope WDFW is able to complete this land acquisition, and I support future land acquisitions in the south sound region (like the Alpaca farm in Tenino, and the port of Tacoma land next to West Rocky Prairie...hint hint...)</p>	Positive / Information
1/14/2021	Centralia Mine	YES, I fully support the proposal for additional land acquisitions by WDFW on the TransAlta Centralia Mine Property	Positive with Questions

3/1/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>To whom it may concern: I am writing to express my concern about the upcoming land purchase in the Thurston/ Lewis county area currently owned by Trans Alta. I hope I am not too late to send in my opinion of this. I will keep it short. I am 63 years old and live in Lewis county. I would like to submit that I am in favor of the purchase. I can see nothing but good for all of us if the Wildlife dept acquires this land. I realize there are a lot of people that do not want the land developed into useable land for all. And trying to make one believe the wdfw will plant endangered species on the land to keep all off, etc. I have heard it all lately. But as with all lands that the dept owns. Everyone that is legal to be there can enjoy the land, for fishing, hunting, hiking, and camping. The WDFW has done nothing short of doing an exceptional job with what they do. I love the fact that with the dollars I spend for outdoor recreation, it gets a chance to help purchase lands like this, that is put available for us, unlike private lands like Weyerhaeuser. Where you have to pay fees every year to go on it. And for the uninformed people that believe that land should be open to businesses, in a place too far from the major highways and too expensive to build, I say they have unresearched fake dreams. This land should only be used for our enjoyment. Good luck with the purchase!!!! Keep up the good work! Thank you for taking my comment, I hope that what I send makes sense. I am not some high on the hill professional person, or author of how to keep the government from taking our land kind of a guy. I just enjoy the things you do as our wildlife dept. It all takes me to a happy place.</p>	Positive
1/12/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>Have the areas that are being considered for acquisition been reclaimed as required by federal mining laws ? Could be an expensive project if WDFW had to take that on.</p>	Question

		<p>I am writing on behalf of ForeverGreen Trails, a south sound trail advocacy organization. Please see the attached letter regarding our support for the proposed acquisition of the Centralia Mine Project properties and willingness to work with the Department of Fish and Wildlife for grant funding for their purchase. We are very supportive of the proposed acquisition of the Centralia Mine Project properties and would like to engage your Department in discussions about providing non-motorized active recreation and mobility access to and through the property. We are in a position to assist Fish and Wildlife in acquiring grant funds for acquisition of these properties. We have extensive experience supporting such applications and are able to mobilize a broad array of recreation, health, and economic development stakeholders for this purpose. Additionally, nonprofit organizations like ours have access to certain grant sources that your Department does not. Please contact us to discuss a partnership to benefit active recreation, habitat restoration, and economic development for this area.</p>	
2/3/2021	Centralia Mine		Positive
2/28/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I support the Department of Fish and Wildlife acquisition of the 9,600 acre Centralia-TransAlta Mine Property. Having a large natural area close to Centralia and Olympia has great recreational value. Also, habitat restoration could aid threatened and endangered species.</p>	Positive

2/28/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I am writing to voice my support for the proposed acquisition of the 9,600-acre Centralia-TransAlta Mine Property to provide public recreation, wildlife viewing, and habitat restoration for threatened and endangered species. Our planet needs more such areas, not fewer.</p> <p>Preservation of such natural wildlife ecosystems are extremely important for the health and welfare of our people as well as the environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This property will form a new wildlife area close to urban centers allowing users to connect with nature and benefit the local economy. • Current diverse habitats support a variety of fish and wildlife including elk, deer, salmon, warm water fish, and many others. • This is an increasingly rare opportunity to manage a large landscape which allows room for creation or restoration of high-quality wildlife habitats, such as wetlands and grasslands, to benefit waterfowl, amphibians, mammals, reptiles, and fish. • This acquisition has the potential to provide habitat for threatened or endangered species, including the western pond turtle, Oregon spotted frog, and streaked horned lark. • Adding public lands to the region would provide habitat connectivity from the Cascades to the forests of SW Washington, which all wildlife needs to survive and thrive. <p>One major lesson learned from the isolation imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, is that human beings need more connection with the natural world, not less, for mental, emotional, physical and spiritual health. I urge you to acquire this precious natural resource before it is swallowed up by those who would not protect it. Once gone, it is gone forever.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration of this issue.</p>	Positive
2/28/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I support using the old TransAlta mining property as a protected wildlife habitat. Let's restore and protect the land for future generations of people and wildlife</p>	Positive
2/28/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>I support the proposed acquisition of the 9,600-acre Centralia-TransAlta Mine Property to provide public recreation, wildlife viewing, and habitat restoration for threatened and endangered species.</p>	Positive

2/11/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>As a lifelong resident of Lewis County who is tired of having to trespass on corporate land to recreate within a reasonable distance of my home, I beg of you, please do everything within your power to acquire and move forward with the Centralia mine project. While some of our local politicians which have found their ways into the pockets of our corporate overlords and have been making a fair bit of noise in opposition to this project; claiming to be speaking on the behalf of the residents of Lewis County, I can ensure you they do not. Those of us that enjoy partaking in our local great outdoors are tired of planning trips to eastern Lewis County, Mt. St. Helens, or even further just to take a stroll through the woods, and then being met with crowds upon crowds of out of county or even out of state recreators.</p> <p>Despite the completely dilapidated state of the land being potentially acquired through the Centralia mine project, the large parcel has great potential for recreation, restoration, and conservation. The parcel is situated in a unique region south of Puget lowlands at an elevated topography, but lower than the nearby Cascades. It provides year-round recreation opportunity and has immense conservation potential for a variety of species, ranging from game species such as Roosevelt Elk, to seemingly less significant, yet still ecologically important species such as the spotted owl and the western pond turtle.</p> <p>The land has already been exhausted of its resources and has little potential economic value in a county already largely owned and controlled by only a few massive corporations, contrary to the noise made by local politicians, but it has massive potential as a wildlife preserve, from recreation to conservation. Let's make it happen. I would be more than willing to volunteer many, many hours to bring this project to fruition.</p> <p>This is an issue of the enrichment of a very small, private party versus the enrichment of many people, plants, and animals for many generations to come. So please, disregard the words of our purchased politicians and the people they have rallied against this project, for they are either knowingly denying us access to our land in favor of corporate enrichment, or they are doing it out of ignorance.</p>	Positive
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2/11/2021	Centralia Mine, Chehalis WLA Expansion, Chester Butte	<p>The Washington Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers would like to thank the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife for prioritizing land acquisitions for continued perpetuation of our State's wildlife and for expanded access to public lands. BHA feels that all the land acquisitions that are being proposed would increase recreation opportunities and benefit our wildlife, but there are three that we believe would provide the largest benefit.</p> <p>Centralia Mine Project This land acquisition would expand access to hunters and anglers in SW Washington, something that is vital as Tacoma, Olympia, and the Vancouver metro areas continue to grow. Getting ahead of the curve and continuing to create new access and opportunities close to urban areas for hunters and anglers will distribute pressure and improve user's outdoor experience. Additionally, the size of the project at 9,800 acres would provide an opportunity to restore degraded habitat on a large scale, providing a long-term benefit to a number of fish and wildlife species. This geographic area is also a vital corridor for linking the Olympics to the Cascades. Further protection of land that links critical habitats together is a growing need as development and population growth fractures these areas.</p> <p>Chehalis Wildlife Area Expansion Expanding the Chehalis Wildlife Area will benefit many stakeholders. For sportsmen and women, this acquisition would expand waterfowl opportunity and improve salmonid populations by preserving vital wetlands and floodplains. In addition, the Chehalis Basin has a long history of major flood events that cause catastrophic damage to the region's residents and businesses. Keeping intact wetland that can absorb and divert water during major flooding must be a priority in this area.</p> <p>Chester Butte Expansion Expanding the Chester Butte Wildlife Area would add another large parcel of land to the network of state and federal lands in the area. These public lands offer prime hunting access for upland bird and big game hunters, and provide critical shrub-steppe habitat for sage grouse and mule deer to name a few.</p> <p>Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on 2021 land acquisition proposals.</p>	Positive
1/15/2021	Centralia Mine/	I am in favor of the Centralia Mine area acquisition and the acquisitions in Douglas County and along the Grande Ronde. Go WDFW!	Positive

2/2/2021	Chehalis Basin, Centralia Mine and Chester Butte	<p>Dear WDFW Lands Staff, I am writing in support of the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife's 2021 land acquisition priorities. In particular, I strongly advocate for the Chehalis Wildlife Area Expansion, Centralia Mine Project and Chester Butte Expansion proposals. The Chehalis Wildlife Area Expansion would create and enhance habitat linkages and riparian corridors across the Chehalis Basin, including the Chehalis River and its tributaries that provide connectivity for a suite of native species. The Satsop River corridor in particular creates a narrow bottleneck that species must cross to move between the Cascade Mountains and the Olympic Peninsula, and this acquisition would make this area more advantageous for wildlife movement. The area within the Centralia Mine Project proposal currently provides important habitat for local fish and wildlife, and further restoration could offer additional high-quality wetland and grassland habitat for threatened and endangered native species. I also welcome a new wildlife area here for increased access to recreation opportunities that will benefit current and future generations, as well as the local economy. The Chester Butte Expansion includes critical habitat for endangered pygmy rabbits, endangered sharp-tailed grouse, as well as threatened sage grouse, all of which are increasingly at-risk following last summer's devastating wildland fires. Although this area was recently burned, conserving and restoring as many remaining patches of sagebrush habitat as possible is vital for the survival of these species. With the increasing threat of development in the Chehalis Basin and Washington's shrub-steppe, these acquisitions will be critical to the recovery of native species and can even reverse the degradation of wildlife corridors. Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comments on these important land acquisition proposals. I hope to see the Chehalis Wildlife Area Expansion, Centralia Mine Project and Chester Butte Expansion properties become beneficial areas for wildlife and Washingtonians.</p>	Positive
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3/12/2021	Centralia Mine	<p>Hello WA State Fish and Wildlife;</p> <p>I have lived in this area 30 years. I support hiking and recreation. I support habitat for critters. I support the proposed acquisition of the 9,600-acre Centralia-TransAlta Mine Property. It will provide public recreation, wildlife viewing, and habitat restoration for threatened and endangered species.</p> <p>We as a state need to be pro-active. We need this big piece of land. Let us not lose this opportunity for habitat. This will create jobs.....we have tons of people who love to hike, this will be a great place to do it.</p>	Positive
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2/12/2021	Chehalis WLA Expansion	<p>I would like to provide comment on the proposed WDFW land purchases to add to the Chehalis Wildlife Areas. As a conservationist, I do not believe that this would be a good purchase for our region. These lands are well managed working lands that provide both habitat and economic value for the region. Of course, if WDFW were to purchase these lands the habitat value of the parcels may be enhanced, however I believe that WDFW land managers are already over stretched in the region and have lost the faith of private landowners as good neighbors when it comes to weed control and habitat management/enhancement. I think that WDFW should focus more on collaborative conservation with private landowners and the community, rather than continued acquisition of prime agricultural lands, which takes land out of county tax rolls (potentially increasing development pressure in other areas) and reduces regional ag viability.</p> <p>Good potential acquisitions for WDFW could be functioning habitat areas that wouldn't involve land conversion away from productive ag (e.g. - forested floodplain; section A of the proposed acquisition area), highly degraded areas that need restoration (e.g. - the Lower Satsop ponds), and areas that are potentially rapidly developing and subdividing (purchase of development rights).</p> <p>Viable agriculture and viable fish and wildlife populations can be critical partners towards long term conservation, and wholesale acquisition of productive ag lands is not a step towards a productive partnership. Acquisition can be a tool in the toolbox for conservation, however only in certain situations, and in my opinion certainly not when it will be a huge detriment to the ag community.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment,</p>	Negative
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2/12/2021	Chehalis WLA Expansion	<p>I am opposed to the ownership of prime agricultural lands by WDFW. This proposal includes approximately 367 acres of prime land in areas B and C. This land is best used to grow food crops. Agricultural land is in short supply and this particular land is needed to support the approximately 325 cow dairy that is an adjacent landowner.</p> <p>While there is talk that the land could be owned by WDFW and leased back to a farm, WDFW's strict policies against certain farming practices would jeopardize farming success. Practices such as grazing or manure applications, just to name two.</p> <p>I request that the comment period be extended to enable a much larger public conversation, creating an opportunity where ideas can be exchanged as to how all parties involved might benefit.</p> <p>Again, I oppose this proposal as presented, and implore the decision makers to reassess the total impacts of such an acquisition.</p>	Negative
1/14/2021	Chehalis WLA E	<p>Chehalis Wildlife Area Expansion. Would preserve Chehalis River floodplain and river habitat. The area is within commuting distance to large metropolitan areas. Could make Chehalis Wildlife Area premium state wildlife area. Would prevent development from encroaching on the floodplain.</p>	Positive
1/17/2021	Chehalis WLA Expansion	<p>I am in favor of any and all wildlife set asides. Wildlife was here long before man. Our culture cannot simply overrun every inch of earth at the expense of nature. It is our duty to protect what has been given to us.</p>	Positive

1/19/2021	Chehalis WLA E	<p>I am writing to strongly support the acquisition of additional lands south of Elma, bordering the Chehalis and Satsop Rivers, Vance Creek and containing ponds and wetlands. This will expand and connect already protected lands in this area. The variety of habitats, especially aquatic habitats, is huge. Fields also, flooded in the winter, further augment the ecological value of this whole area. This large area attracts large numbers of birds, especially in winter, but supports most wildlife year-round. It is expansive to allow for relatively free movement for all species, as it is interspersed with only a few farms. This is an important expansion of a very valuable habitat area connected to our major river system in western Washington. Please proceed with this acquisition project. Thank you</p>	Positive
2/3/2021	Chehalis WLA Expansion, Centralia Mine, Chester Butte	<p>I made the following comments via Twitter and was requested to email your office with same: '@WDFW I strongly support the Chehalis Wildlife Area Expansion, Centralia Mine Project, and Chester Butte Expansion proposed in WDFW's 2021 Land Acquisition projects, all of which would enhance species recovery and outdoor recreation access.</p>	Positive

2/3/2021	Chester Butte	<p>I understand that the Department is now accepting public comments for its 2021 land acquisition priorities to conserve areas important for native species and local communities.</p> <p>In particular I understand that there is a proposal to expand the Chester Butte Wildlife Area and I support that very much.</p> <p>In addition, I would also recommend that the Department look seriously at potential acquisitions in Grant County on the east side of the Columbia River where development is threatening the north-south wildlife corridor that is only partially protected by currently-owned WDFW lands. Between the Sunland Estates Road and Frenchman's Coulee, there are three private parcels that cut through the corridor. A private residence has already been constructed on the cliff-top portion of the Dyk property. Development on the Suncliffs LLC and Columbia Bluffs LLC properties would have a negative impact on deer and other wildlife trying to move north or south. There is very little area left for wildlife (and human recreationalists) to wander between the developed lands in this area and the Columbia River.</p>	Positive Questions
1/14/2021	Chester Butte A	<p>Chester Butte Addition. This would be a good link between Chester Butte and Sagebrush Flat Wildlife Areas which would enhance both wildlife areas. Need to preserve habitat for sage grouse.</p>	Positive
1/15/2021	Chester Butte A	<p>I'm writing today to support this acquisition. The area that this land is in severely lacks public land and can use all the help available, even if only one square at a time.</p>	Positive

1/15/2021	Chester Butte A	<p>I am writing to express my support for the purchase of the Chester Butte Expansion area. This area would provide critical connectivity for wildlife to move freely between the adjacent WDFW properties. Further, expanding the existing wildlife area will provide increased recreational opportunities for many user groups. Although this area burned in 2021, its previous landscape cover was indicative of a well-functioning ecosystem categorized by its mature sagebrush and bunchgrasses, which supports numerous wildlife species, especially state-listed species (e.g., greater sage-grouse, pygmy rabbits). Purchasing this land and restoring it to its previous state will ensure wildlife in our region have the habitat to survive while providing additional recreational opportunities to the public.</p>	positive
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2/2/2021	Chester Butte Addition, Maloney Mountain	<p>I am writing in support of the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife's 2021 land acquisition priorities. In particular, I strongly advocate for the Chester Butte Expansion, Maloney Mountain Expansion, and increased hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing opportunities in Benton County. The Chester Butte Expansion includes critical habitat for endangered pygmy rabbits, endangered sharp-tailed grouse, as well as threatened sage grouse, all of which are increasingly at-risk following last summer's devastating wildland fires. Although this area was recently burned, conserving and restoring as many remaining patches of sagebrush habitat as possible is vital for the survival of these species.</p> <p>Hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing opportunities are extremely limited in Benton County, particularly along Yakima and Columbia rivers and in the Horse Heaven Hills region. Public land is limited to a few small parcels of state and federal land. A number of other parcels are not publicly accessible. Most of these accessible parcels are not managed for wildlife and are fully developed for agriculture. These parcels should spare some land for natural habitat to support what little wildlife remains in the county. However, most are plowed end-to-end leaving a desolate landscape without cover or forage for wildlife for most of the year. Private land access is also extremely limited in the county as there were no properties listed on WDFW's Private Lands Hunting Access program for the 2020 fall hunting seasons. The Hanford site and neighboring Arid Lands Ecological Preserve have great potential for wildlife viewing, despite the fact that the federal government has restricted all public access. Elk, deer, and raptors are often visible from highway 240, which dissects the region. However, there are no safe locations for wildlife viewers to pull off the highway. WDFW should pursue the development of safe wildlife viewing areas along Highway 240. Enhanced Public access to the Arid Lands Ecology Preserve is currently being considered. Yet this proposal has been under consideration in some form for many years is not considered a serious consideration by many. Access to the Yakima and Columbia rivers is also challenging. Although the Columbia offers excellent fishing opportunities for boaters, shore fishing is greatly restricted. The situation is similar for the Yakima and the Yakima is closed to all fishing for much of the year. With the increasing threat of development in Washington's shrub-steppe, these acquisitions will be critical to the recovery of native species and can even reverse the degradation of wildlife corridors. Increasing opportunities in Benton Country for fishing, hunting, and wildlife viewing would greatly enhance the public's awareness and desire to protect and promote local wildlife.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comments on these important land acquisition proposals. I hope to see the Chester Butte Expansion property, the Maloney Mountain Expansion property, and properties in Benton County become beneficial areas for wildlife and Washingtonians.</p>	Positive
1/14/2021	Driscoll/Eyhott I	<p>Driscoll/Eghott Island. It is good resource management to add the last fifteen acres of Driscoll/Eghott Island to the wildlife area. Recommend moving forward with the purchase.</p>	Positive

2/3/2021	Driscoll/Eyhott Island, Chehalis WLA, Ebsen Water Access	I support all of your proposed acquisitions, especially those that involve shorelines and birds. It can be tough to find a soft beach for my kayak and much tougher for birds to find safe nesting areas for their broods. I look forward to visiting the Driscoll/Eyhott Island area. Chehalis Wildlife Area and Ebsen will surely help our water fowl's numbers stabilize and even increase.	Positive
1/13/2021	Ebsen	Please accept this public testimony in favor of the acquisition of the Ebsen Water Access, Grande Ronde River, Asotin Co. Washington.	Positive
1/14/2021	Ebsen Water Access	Ebsen Water Access. Would be a great acquisition for WDFW to provide permanent water access to the Grande Ronde River. The fact the property owner is willing to donate the property makes it even better especially with primitive camping facilities and gravel boat ramp on site. Recommend moving forward obtaining the property.	Positive
1/14/2021	Ebsen Water Access	I am supportive of containing ownership of this partial along the Grande Ronde River. The WDFW has done many improvements to this partial and the fact that the current owner is donating the partial to the landowner is a win win for WDFW and public users of this area.	Positive
1/14/2021	Ebsen Water Access	I am supportive of obtaining title to this partial along the Grande Ronde River. WDFW has made many improvements to this partial under lease. The fact that the current land owner is donating this partial is a win-win for WDFW as well as members of the public for enjoyment and access to the Grande Ronde River.	Positive

1/16/2021	Ebsen Water Ad	<p>I am writing on behalf of the Inland Empire Fly Fishing Club and its 125 members. Our goals are to encourage, promote and support the conservation and management of fish and fishing waters and to take special interest in matters that directly or indirectly affect fly fishermen. Many of our members are extremely avid steelhead anglers and the Grande Ronde River is one of the premiere fishing destinations for steelhead in the Pacific Northwest. It is critical that public access be available to ensure everyone the ability to pursue their angling passion. The influx of hundreds of anglers from surrounding areas and states also provides a substantial economic benefit to Asotin County. For many years, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife has operated and maintained the Ebsen area through an agreement with the landowner. When that landowner became interested in selling his property, our club started a campaign to acquire it in order to give it to the Department to continue to manage for public access in perpetuity. We partnered with the Wild Steelhead Coalition and reached out to the entire region and beyond. The response was enthusiastic support for the project and we received donations from 12 regional clubs and organizations and two national organizations, Fly Fishers International and Back Country Hunters and Anglers. They collectively represent many tens of thousands of members. In addition, almost 300 private donations were received directly from individuals and through a well-attended fund-raising event. The WSC was able to complete purchase of the Ebsen property and is now ready to give it to the Department. We appreciate the Department's interest in the property and strongly encourage you to complete a land transfer. We believe, as do the numerous organizations and individuals who have contributed financial support, that the best present and future use of the property is to remain as public access. Thank you for your consideration</p>	Positive
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1/19/2021	Ebsen Water Ac	<p>I wish to register my absolute support for the Ebsen Water Access project and acquisition. I was instrumental in organizing and gathering for the purchase of this property by a coalition of local, regional, state wide and national conservation and outdoor recreation groups and individuals who donated over \$30,000. Our intent was to keep this property from being sold for private development and insure its preservation as public access to the Grande Ronde River. This is an invaluable asset to the locality, region and State. Steelhead, trout and bass fishing along with boating to birdwatching; this access enables them all while offering a huge economic boost to the locality and county. And with the steelheaders visiting into and thru the winter it is especially a boost in what is usually "off season" for local businesses. This to me, is very much a win-win, as the purchase of the property has been done at zero cost to WDFW. I, as do all off the hundreds who supported this, are hopeful that WDFW will carry this forward.</p>	Positive
1/29/2021	Ebsen Water Ac	<p>I live in Spokane and have fished the Grande Ronde River for many years. Acquisition of the Ebsen Water Access will be quite an accomplishment by the WDFW. The acquisition has been supported by many organizations and individuals. The Inland Empire Fly Fishing Club that I belong to was a major player and contributor to this project. I made a personal donation to this project. Public access is ever more important as the number of people using our resources increases. The Grande Ronde is a premier steelhead stream and people come to fish it from many different places. They spend a lot of money during their stay which certainly helps the local economy. I urge the WDFW to go ahead with this acquisition.</p>	Positive

1/29/2021	Ebsen Water Ac	<p>The Asotin County Sportsmen Association supports the acquisition of the Ebsen property. The current land owner should be commended for their successful fund raising efforts to purchase the Ebsen property and then to donate this property to WDFW is truly awesome. This is a perfect example of sportsmen and women working to enhance outdoor recreational opportunities for the long-term.</p>	Positive
2/12/2021	Ebsen Water Access	<p>As an avid Outdoorsman and Fisherman, I support the acquisition of the Ebsen Water Access Proposal. Access to public land is an essential part of who we are as Washingtonians. This public access will provide Steelhead Anglers and outdoor enthusiasts with amazing new opportunities to explore and use a beautiful part of our state as well as provide education with support with groups like the Wild Steelhead Coalition to assist in bringing back a sustainable run once again. Not only is the fishing community a winner in this, hikers, wildlife viewers and campers win. We also have an opportunity to pass forward these outdoor activities to the younger generation in hopes of continuing good healthy outdoor fun for all. In today's world, this is extremely important.</p> <p>Anytime there are opportunities to expand our public lands rather than having them sold or utilized for financial gain from large corporations its a win for us as outdoor enthusiasts.</p> <p>Thank you!</p>	Positive

1/18/2021	Ebsen Water Ac	<p>We are writing in support of the proposed acquisition of the above mention property by DFW. This particular piece of property is a critical parcel for both ingress and egress to the lower Grand Ronde river for the general public, outdoor enthusiasts and fishermen alike as much of the river access above this point is limited by both geographic and private ownership limitations. We are and avid outdoorsmen and have benefitted from the generous easement provided by the previous owner for over 40 years. The recent acquisition and proposed donation to DFW by the current owners would secure this property for the public good in perpetuity. Please utilize my comments and support of the proposed as seen fit.</p>	Positive
2/1/2021	Ebsen Water Ac	<p>Sirs: I am in support of the following proposed acquisitions (in order of preference): Ebsen Water Access – Asotin County Driscoll/Eyhott Island Addition – Okanogan County Chehalis Wildlife Area Expansion – Grays Harbor County</p>	Positive
1/14/2021	Maloney Moun	<p>Maloney Mountain. Would be an excellent acquisition and would enhance the W.T. Wooten Wildlife Area. Good management practice to eliminate check board ownership.</p>	Positive
1/21/2021	Random	<p>How can we contemplate purchasing land when Orcas are starving during fishery closures and guaranteed hatchery reductions? Science? More like politics.</p>	Question