My name is Bob Lynette and I live at 220 Strawberry Field Drive in Sequim. I am speaking for the North Olympic Group of the Sierra Club. We have more than 400 members in Clallam County.

We will be submitting detailed comments electronically in the next 10 days, but this evening I want to speak to two important issues.

The first refers to your schedule for reviewing the SMP. Last year, The North Olympic Peninsula Resource Conservation & Development Council was awarded a $152,000 competitive grant to examine the potential impacts of climate change here on the north Olympic Peninsula, many of which we are already seeing, and how we can prepare for those changes. Citizens, experts, representatives from the tribes, our county and city departments and many other organizations are participating in the work. It’s a major effort – one that we all can be grateful is happening. A draft report with the findings is due at the end of this June. Issues like sea level rise and increased flooding will obviously impact building setbacks and infrastructure locations and requirements. To quote our Department of Ecology’s SMP Handbook, “Sea level rise will have significant effects on both human and natural systems (Shipman, 2009), increasing the risk from coastal hazards and the pressure on shoreline resources. These effects present a serious challenge to shoreline planning and coastal management.” And: “The Guidelines require local governments use “the most current, accurate and complete scientific and technical information available.”

Therefore, we urge the Planning Commission and the DCD to schedule your work on the SMP so that it addresses the findings of the Climate Change report. It makes sense for the Planning Commission to address those chapters of the SMP first that will not be impacted by climate change, and then those sections that will be impacted. Planning for climate change is the key to avoiding future damages and to ensure that the county has not exposed itself and the tax payers to later litigation for not providing the proper guidance to the public.

The second issue is aquaculture. Again, we will be providing detailed comments, but here are some of the important areas that need your attention:
1. The SMP should (but does not) provide adequate mitigation for commercial geoduck impacts such as setbacks to adequately protect eelgrass, shoreline homeowners’ visual impacts, and impacts to wildlife and recreational users.

2. It should, but does not require an adequate assessment of the cumulative impact on Shorelines of State Significance.

3. It does not give the County’s land use administrator strong language in which to assess the mitigation of a project. There are too many places in the SMP where the Administrator “may” or “should” require analyses and safeguards rather than “shall” require them.

4. There is no distinction made between small scale shellfish farming and large corporate shellfish farming, but there should be.

5. Finally, there are some places that are so important to the public’s use and proper ecological functioning of an area, that they should be designated as off limits for commercial development, including commercial aquaculture.

Thank you,

Bob Lynette
10 Strawberry Field Drive
Sequim, WA 98382