

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 28, 2013

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As the 113th Congress and your second term commence, we write to renew our support for the dual-track approach to conserving certain federally-owned land parcels in the San Juan Islands that are managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). While we intend to reintroduce legislation to protect these cherished lands permanently through a Congressional National Conservation Area designation, we fully support your alternative efforts to conserve these same lands through a Presidential National Monument designation (an authority that Congress granted as part of the Antiquities Act of 1906) if such a designation ensures the same level of community involvement as the legislative effort.

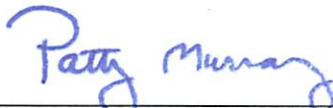
The BLM manages approximately 1,000 acres in the San Juan Islands that are important wildlife habitat and draw thousands of tourists every year. Secretary of the Interior Salazar has been particularly helpful to our efforts to preserve these lands. We greatly appreciated his visits in April 2011 and February 2012 to engage local stakeholders and discuss the best way to protect and preserve public access to these unique federal parcels. His willingness to listen to our local constituents and their concerns about the legislation and National Monument designation was instrumental in gaining local support for the dual-track approach. The volunteer community group that first developed the idea of a National Conservation Area, in addition to local, state and tribal stakeholders, now supports a National Monument designation as well. While we will continue to push for the swift passage of our legislation to conserve these areas, we want to make clear that we believe a National Monument designation offers another pathway that could expedite our shared goals.

Before Secretary Salazar leaves office, we urge you to consider designating a National Monument in the San Juan Islands, bringing his and our efforts to fruition. Thank you for your interest in the San Juan Islands. We look forward to working with you to protect these areas for future generations.

Sincerely,



Maria Cantwell



Patty Murray



Rick Larsen



Suzan DelBene