I am writing about the recent news about Westport Light State Park in Westport. I am appalled that developers want to build a golf course at this location. The Westport Light State Park is the only park without vehicle access on the beach. I have visited the park several years ago and found it to be a beautiful beach with outstanding sunset and sunset views of the ocean. I especially would like to save the park from development for it’s wilderness value for wildlife and wildlife connectivity.

I have concerns about erosion and sea level rise along the coast. In watching your recorded meeting of December 8, 2022, it was mentioned that hydrologists were considering the impact of 100 year impacts of sea level rise and climate change. Recent research from NOAA and NASA using new satellite data and climate models along with improved evaluations of historic data from tide gauges dating back more than 100 years indicates that Americans, on average, can expect sea levels on their coasts to climb 10 to 12 inches in the next thirty years and 2 feet by the end of the century. These are conservative estimates, according to the researchers. “A profound increase in coastal flooding with storms or heavy rainfall with high tide flooding” is to be expected, according to Nicole LeBoeuf, director of NOAA’s National Ocean Service. Please see the report here: https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/hazards/sealevelrise/sealevelrise-tech-report.html Furthermore, along some coasts, natural features like dunes and marshes may be holding back the sea a bit, but once the sea rises about those berms, it can spread inland. Hydrologists need to consider the impact of 500 year sea level rise, as opposed to only 100 year level rises in considering the feasibility of this huge economic project. It would be devastating for the community of Westport to lose the parcel of land on which the proposed site stands.

Another of my concerns is related to the use of the golf course during winter months. I spent 3 years living in Long Beach, Washington and golfed regularly at a par 3 course on the peninsula. I agree that golfing was and is a great sport with many benefits; however, I would like to know how many golfers, especially women and minorities actually golf in rainy, cold, and wet winters along the coast. I rarely would golf during these times when I resided along the coast. I doubt that it would get much use during the November through March months.

The idea of erosion was introduced at the public meeting and the concern is valid. Taking out trees which may block golf shots will increase erosion and continued flooding during spring times. Furthermore, the driftwood which is increasingly sparce along the beach and dunes area creates habitat for species like sand fleas and other arthropods which are important food for fishes, cetaceans, shore birds, and shrimp. Removing driftwood impacts an entire ecosystem and should not be permitted.

The Golf Links project is a huge economic undertaking for the community which would be devastating if lost due to the aforementioned reasons. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.