



Thomas O'Keefe  
Regional Coordinator  
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January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2004

Senator Patty Murray  
173 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Representative Rick Larsen  
1529 Longworth HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Murray and Representative Larsen:

We wish to express our support for the Wild Sky Wilderness Act and thank you for the leadership you have shown in working to designate 106,000 acres of new wilderness in the State of Washington.

The North Fork of the Skykomish is an internationally-recognized whitewater river and tributary streams such as the Rapid River and Silver Creek are popular with many local paddlers. Protection of this watershed is a high priority for our 8,000 individual members and local club affiliates. The North Fork of the Skykomish is known for its convenience to the City of Seattle, high quality whitewater suitable for intermediate to expert paddlers, and an incredibly scenic river corridor with high water quality and impressive mature riparian forests. This river is a personal favorite for many of our members living in the region.

As we watch development encroach upon river corridors throughout the country it is refreshing to know that the North Fork of the Skykomish will retain its wild character and be managed for recreational use. Local communities will be able to take advantage of economic opportunities based on recreational activities in our National Forests, and a river well known for both these recreational opportunities and impressive salmon runs will be protected for enjoyment by future generations.

Sincerely,

Thomas O'Keefe, Regional Coordinator

cc:

Washington Wilderness Coalition  
4649 Sunnyside Avenue North . Suite 520  
Seattle, WA 98103