September 9, 2021

Pinky Feria Mingo
Environmental Health Manager
Jefferson County Public Health
615 Sheridan Street
Port Townsend, WA 98368

Dear Ms. Mingo:

A potentially devastating environmental threat from an abandoned trailer perched on an eroding bluff above Chimacum Creek has been brought to our attention. Our board has discussed this threat, and we urge the County to address this is before the fall rains begin.

I am sure your staff are well aware of the situation, which as we understand, has been getting progressively worse in recent years. We have been told that it is just a matter of time before this trailer and associated debris fall into the stream. Therefore, removal of the trailer before that happens will prevent dire impacts to the best salmon spawning habitat in Chimacum Creek, as well as shellfish growing areas in Port Townsend Bay.

With every passing day, the likelihood increases that the asbestos-laden trailer will succumb to gravity as the slope erodes beneath it. It will land squarely in Chimacum Creek, upon ESA listed summer chum redds (nests). Clean up of the wreckage from the creek will be messy, difficult and costly. We have a brief window of opportunity now as spawning season begins and before winter storms increase the risk.

Jefferson County is the only entity with a mechanism for cleanup. It is time for the County to pull out all stops and get the site cleaned up BEFORE the trailer slides to the creek.

Jefferson County Conservation District offers up our support for this effort. In fact, if we act quickly, we might be able to secure some grant funding to assist in this effort. Although, time is of the essence. If you would like to discuss this further, you can reach me by phone at 360-808-3645 or by email at jholtrop@jeffersoncd.org.

Sincerely,

Joe E. Holtrop
District Manager