

Open Letter to the Dive Community Concerning Sund Rock Dive Beach

I am writing this letter to the dive community in an effort to give some history and insight into the Sund Rock dive beach. As far back as the early 60's divers have been drawn to the unique underwater structure and habitat of Sund Rock. Named for my family who homesteaded there prior to statehood.

In the early days, divers were more of the hunter gatherer type. Divers would park on highway 101, hike down the steep bank at the state turnout, don their gear and set out for a long surface swim to the rock. Some would trespass and were chased out by my grandfather who had some rather creative ways to deal with a trespassing scuba diver! They often left trash, fires and over harvested the lingcod, wolf eel, rock cod and octopus to near extinction.

Fast forward to my father's generation who in conjunction with the University of Washington created the underwater preserve. As the years went on a new diver began to visit the site; observing, taking photos, doing fish counts and enjoying the underwater wonders. Divers still did not have access to the beach other than the state turn out on highway 101, same steep bank and long surface swim.

Tab to my generation who entered into an agreement with HoodSport n Dive back in the 90's and created an opportunity for divers to drive down to the Sund Rock beach, have a water entry and park off the highway. The relationship with the dive community improved and there seemed to be a mutual respect between the family and dive community. Divers appreciated the access and the family has appreciated the respect and care the divers have shown for the property, above and below the water. It is my hope that this mutual respect continues.

As the Sund Family begins to manage the entry to the beach, there may be a few changes in policy and procedure. We are hoping to build relationships with divers who truly care about the environment, and the creatures that inhabit the site above and below the water. Simply by loving the site so much, our overuse of the area has taken a toll. The family considers the beach to be a partnership of sorts. We will provide limited access, a maintained road, porta potty, gear up benches, monitored entry and continue to add amenities such as a picnic area, a campsite, better lighting and hopefully a fresh water rinse area up top. In exchange we ask that you sign in, pay a fee, take any trash you create with you, drive slowly up the road, take pictures and observe sea life from a distance, be aware the effect of excessive finning has on visibility and organisms, no harvesting of any kind, and close/lock the gate behind you.

In the short term, we plan to open access to the beach on Saturdays and Sundays thru the summer from 9am to 4pm. Registration and payment will be at the gate. We are set up to take credit cards or cash. The entry fee will be \$15, which includes tax. Weekday, night dives, off hours and group access can be arranged by emailing Cindy Sund at cindy@sundsonhoodcanal.com. Check out the Glamping camp site on Airbnb, it's perched above the rock, has power, heat and a hot shower! Ask for a tour next time you come out for a dive.

Our family feels blessed to be the stewards of this special place and we enjoy sharing it with those divers that share our respect and gratitude for the land, water and wildlife that inhabit the site.

Respectfully, Cindy Sund