

U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell
Indian Affairs Committee Markup
May 20, 2026

Sen. Cantwell Remarks on the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe Project Lands Restoration Act

[\[VIDEO\]](#)

Sen. Cantwell: Thank you, Chair Murkowski, and Vice Chair Schatz for holding this important business meeting. [I] really appreciate the fact that you two continue to work together on these important policies. I appreciate S. 1513, the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe Project Lands Restoration Act, being on the agenda.

This is a very important part of our state, and the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe play an important role in a variety of issues in the state of Washington. S. 1513 would, as you said Madam Chair, transfer 1000 acres of land outside the boundaries of the Olympic National Park to be held in trust for the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe.

These lands were originally acquired by the [U.S.] Park Service to remove two dams on the Elwha River and open up more than 70 miles of salmon habitat. After decades of advocacy and the completion of the Elwha Ecosystem Restoration Project over 12 years ago, it was time to return this land to the Lower Elwha Tribe.

Taking this land into trust boosts the habitat restoration efforts led by the Lower Elwha Tribe and federal agencies. It will help us in the recovery of all five species of Pacific salmon and other native fish and preserve the tribe's cultural and natural resources along the river.

Passing this bill is an important action for the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, and I look forward to getting it signed into [law]. Again, thank you to you and the Chairman for including it on today's markup.