



State of Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife

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FISH & WILDLIFE
 COMMISSION:

SOUND STEWARDSHIP OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

June 2, 2016

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Brian E. Allison
 President, Puget Sound Crab Association
 Post Office Box 2257
 Oak Harbor, WA 98277

Dear Mr. Allison:

Brian

Thank you for writing to the Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) regarding your presentation to the Commission on April 9, 2016. I would like to extend our gratitude to you and your association for presenting your industry's perspective and concerns to us at the April meeting and for providing a copy of your presentation for our records.

Respectfully, the Commission must disagree with your perspective that the continued success of the commercial fishery in recent years is not associated or the result of the provisions in policy C-3609. From the Commission's perspective the allocation between commercial and recreational fisheries as prescribed in the policy has allowed for maintaining the commercial harvest at or above historic levels. The harvest data since the policy was adopted clearly show this to be the case. Discussions have and will occur as to what the harvest trends will be in the future, but these discussions are purely speculation and neither the Commission nor Department managers can with confidence predict what future crab abundance trends will be as these trends are primarily driven by environmental variables. The Commission will continue to monitor the performance of the commercial crab fishery through the annual staff briefings, and if future recreational and commercial harvest amounts deviate from current levels, the Commission may choose to take action and adjust the policy at that time.

Again, thank you for communicating your concerns regarding the management of this valuable marine resource. If you have additional questions or concerns, you may contact the Department's Shellfish Policy Lead, Rich Childers at (360) 302-3030, ext. 303, cell (360) 301-2626, or via e-mail at rich.childers@dfw.wa.gov; or the Commission support staff, Tami Lininger. Tami can be reached at (360) 902-2267, or via email at tami.lininger@dfw.wa.gov.

Sincerely,

Brad Smith

Brad Smith, Ph.D., Chair
 Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission