



Washington State Senate

Senator Debbie Regala
Majority Caucus Vice Chair
27th Legislative District

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June 15, 2012

Mr. Phil Anderson, Director
Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife
600 Capital Way
Olympia, WA98501

Dear Mr. Anderson,

The Pacific Fishery Management Council can take action this month to begin the process to ensure the vibrant marine economy and pristine environment for which the Pacific Northwest is famous. An important part our local economy and food web is threatened by a lack of a management plan of the forage fish resource. I am asking that you support actions to carefully manage and protect forage fish for the benefit of our commercial fishing, recreational fishing and environmental future.


The Pacific salmon have faced the brink of extinction and without our careful management we could lose them. However, important to their survival are various forage fish species – the cornerstone of the food web. As an important food source for the bigger predator fish, including salmon, and other marine creatures, these forage fish are the basis for a healthy and productive marine environment in the Northwest. Currently, many species of these fish fall outside a management framework. We need strong action on the common forage species not currently being managed to ensure that strong commercial fisheries can be established well in the future.

Fishing has been a mainstay of our regional economy, and I support its sustainable practice. But in order to continue our fishing heritage, we need to correctly manage all aspects of it, especially the feed stock. We must find the best economic and recreational use for our fishing waters, and protecting forage fish for the current maritime uses will strengthen current efforts of maritime protection and sustainability.

With action to bring these currently non-fished forage species under a management plan, the Council can protect the food web and strengthen the growth of many of the higher food chain species we have come to enjoy fishing and consuming.

Thank you for your commitment and hard work for sustainable, economic management of our waters.

Sincerely,



Debbie Regala
State Senator, 27th Legislative District
Vice-Chair, Senate Natural Resources and Marine Waters

Cc: Mr. David B. Sones, ddavid160@centurytel.net
Ms. Michele Culver, Michele.culver@dfw.wa.gov
Mr. Dale Myer, dmyer@arcticstorm.com
Mr. Frank Lockhart, Frank.Lockhart@noaa.gov
Mr. Tim Roth, timothy_roth@fws.gov
Mr. Rich Lincoln, rlincolnabroad@hotmail.com



June 14, 2012

Mr. Phil Anderson, Director
Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife
600 Capitol Way N
Olympia, WA 98501

Dear Director Anderson:

The Pacific Fishery Management Council can take action this month to begin the process to ensure the vibrant marine economy and pristine environment for which the Pacific Northwest is famous. An important part of our local economy and food web could be threatened by a lack of a management plan of the forage fish resource. I am asking that you support actions to carefully manage and protect currently non-managed forage fish for the benefit of our commercial fishing, recreational fishing and environmental future.

As an important food source for the bigger predator fish, including salmon, and other marine creatures, these forage fish are the basis for a healthy and productive marine environment in the Northwest. Currently, many species of these fish fall outside a management framework. We need strong, scientifically-based action on the common forage species not currently being managed to ensure that strong commercial fisheries can be established well in the future.

Fishing has been a mainstay of our regional economy, and I support its sustainable practice. But in order to continue our fishing heritage, we need to responsibly manage all aspects of it, especially the feed stock. We must find the best economic and recreational use for our fishing waters, and protecting forage fish for the current maritime uses will strengthen current efforts of maritime protection and sustainability.

With action to bring these currently non-fished forage species under a balanced, science-driven management plan, the Council can protect the food web and strengthen the growth of many of the higher food chain species we have come to enjoy fishing and consuming.

Page Two
Forage Fish Letter
June 14, 2012

Thank you for your commitment and hard work for sustainable, economic management of our waters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Blake". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "B".

Representative Brian Blake, Chair of Agriculture and Natural Resources
19th Legislative District

cc: Mr. Tim Roth, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Mr. Frank Lockhart, National Marine Fisheries Service
Ms. Michele Culver, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Mr. David B. Sones, Tribal Appointment
Mr. Dale Myer, Arctic Storm Management Group, At-Large Appointment
Mr. Rich Lincoln, Washington Obligatory Appointment

Washington
House of
Representatives



June 15, 2012

Mr. Phil Anderson
State of Washington Principal Official
Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife, Olympia, WA
Email: philip.anderson@dfw.wa.gov

Mr. Phil Anderson,

As you most likely know, the fish and marine environment of Washington state and the Pacific Northwest is a defining characteristic of our values, history, and economy. The Native people of the Northwest relied on salmon, shell-fish, whales, and more from the Puget Sound waters to sustain their culture and very lives. These same resources brought many settlers to the area, and we have had a thriving salmon fishery ever since.

Despite the decline of salmon and other fish from years of over-fishing and environmental degradation, we have responsibly created ways to manage and help both the variety of animals in our waters and the correct way to harvest them. Mostly through programs and groups like the Pacific Fishery Management Council. Today, I'm writing to you about the need for further action and management of our environment.

A vital part of the marine food web in our waters starts from the tiniest of creatures. The zooplankton and phytoplankton of the deep waters are fed upon by several species of schooling fish. These small fish are the crucial connection in the expansive food web; a source for the predator species – salmon, halibut, tuna – that we rely on for food and have worked hard to protect.

Unfortunately, these tiny fish, or forage fish, risk the dangers that salmon are just now over-coming. The commercial market for these forage fish as bait and food sources for fish-farming is growing. Without proper management and care, these forage fish could face extinction much as salmon. The Pacific Fishery Management Council must take steps to focus on new rules concerning forage fish.

We have learned too much from salmon over the last 40 years. Through hard work, money, volunteers, and cooperative action, we have created plans to protect salmon and ensure their longevity for generations to come. We can ensure this doesn't happen to these important fish. Through proper management, these fish can flourish without the expense of recovery, and maintain the health and sustainability of the fish that feed on them.

I thank you for your efforts and leadership on this issue.

Respectfully,

Derek Stanford
State Representative
District 1

CC: Mr. David B. Sones

Tribal Appointment

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Mr. Dale Myer

At-Large Appointment

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Mr. Frank Lockhart

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Mr. Tim Roth

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Mr. Rich Lincoln

Washington Obligatory Appointment

Olympia, WA

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