

SAN JUAN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



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August 5, 2015

Tom Slocum
Chair, SRFB Review Panel
Recreation and Conservation Office
PO Box 40917
Olympia, WA 98504-0917

Re: San Juan WRIA 2, Long Live the Kings resident Chinook study, 15-1239.

Dear Tom,

This letter is in enthusiastic support of the Long Live the Kings resident Chinook study. This project was unanimously ranked #1 by the WRIA 2 TAG in our Round 16 project list. Resident Chinook are a unique life history trait and are found in higher densities within the San Juan Islands than anywhere else in Puget Sound. Their importance to the angling community in the San Juan Islands cannot be overstated, nor can their potential contribution to genetic diversity and success of Chinook salmon in Puget Sound. The proposed work will serve as the foundation for evaluating the relative contribution of residents to ocean-going populations and how this life-history type might impact salmon recovery locally and throughout the region.

This proposed study will help address a major data gap in our recovery strategy, with potential implications for recovery efforts in other regions of Puget Sound. Our existing strategy, based on the Pulling it all Together (PIAT) project, focused on juvenile Chinook and forage fish. This study addresses adult and sub-adult Chinook. Knowing where resident Chinook are from, how they contribute to spawning populations, and what they are eating are essential pieces of information for developing future restoration and protection efforts. This proposed study could significantly change our recovery priorities; the diet information in particular may alter how we prioritize protection and restoration of forage fish spawning locales.

As a result of the PIAT project, our recovery strategy has emphasized acquisition and restoration, with little effort directed at assessment. However, the TAG has repeatedly discussed the importance of obtaining essential life history data on resident Chinook and encouraged the sponsors to consider submitting such a proposal. Long Live the Kings have responded to TAG comments throughout the review process and will continue to consult with the TAG as the study progresses. Knowing where residents come from, where they go, and especially what they are eating are essential pieces of information that will help better target future restoration and protection efforts.

Please contact Byron Rot, WRIA 2 Lead Entity Salmon Recovery Coordinator if you have any questions.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Terry Turner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Terry" being more prominent than the last name "Turner".

Terry Turner
Chair, Marine Resources Committee,
WRIA 2 Citizen Advisory Group