



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH

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February 16, 2016

The Honorable Kirk Pearson, Chair
Senate Natural Resources and Parks Committee
Post Office Box 40466
Olympia, Washington 98504-0466

Dear Senator Pearson:

The Washington State Department of Health (the department) provides a letter each year to the appropriate legislative policy and fiscal committees on the status of its recreational shellfish biotoxin account as required by law. This letter is intended to satisfy that requirement (RCW 77.32.555).

The Recreational Shellfish Biotoxin Monitoring Program is funded by a surcharge on recreational fishing and shellfishing licenses that the Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) sells. The 2015 annual appropriation to the department was \$662,000. Of the total funds deposited, state law requires that \$150,000 be made available to the University of Washington (UW).

The dedicated biotoxin account (15M) had a beginning fiscal year 2015 fund balance of \$516,629. The WDFW deposited an additional \$773,520 of new revenue into the account. The department spent \$639,968 conducting the biotoxin program which includes monitoring and testing. The University of Washington spent \$218,374. The ending fund balance for the fiscal year was \$431,807.

The department historically carries a fund balance in the biotoxin account due to the fact that a majority of the shellfish license fee revenue is collected early in the summer just prior to the close of the fiscal year. However, annual expenditures from the biotoxin account exceeded annual revenues in fiscal year 2015. This is due in large part to an emergent biotoxin causing an increased need for biotoxin monitoring and testing.

The legislature addressed the need for additional revenue in the 2015 session by passing House Bill 1620, increasing the surcharge on recreational shellfish licenses by \$1. In addition, the legislature approved a modest increase to the commercial shellfish license fee. These additional


The Honorable Kirk Pearson
February 16, 2016
Page 2

resources allow the Department of Health to test and monitor for the new biotoxin that causes Diarrhetic Shellfish Poisoning (DSP).

We welcome the opportunity to discuss in detail the needs these emerging biotoxins cause for the program and the health of shellfish consumers.

If you have questions about the recreational shellfish biotoxin account, please contact Ryan Black, Budget Manager, at 360-236-3007.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Maryanne Guichard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Maryanne Guichard
Assistant Secretary

cc: Members, Senate Natural Resources and Parks Committee
Members, Senate Ways and Means Committee
Members, House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
Members, House Appropriations Committee
Ryan Black, Department of Health