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January 9, 2019

Dear Commissioners,

On behalf of the Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association, (NSIA) I am sending in comments on the proposed revisions to the Commission's North of Falcon Policy C-3608.

Many of the Commission's North of Falcon policies were adopted by the Commission in order to get at complex economic and conservation problems that have plagued managers for years. The adopted policies involved months, sometimes years, of transparent public review and involvement and extensive staff briefings for Commissioners and the public. We call to your attention the specific modifications under Grays Harbor, Willapa Bay and Columbia River:

"including any modifications made to the policy, and any guidance or clarifications provided by the Commission."

NSIA is very concerned at the notion that the time, hard work, transparency and commission votes that went into resolving complicated issues could be altered merely by "guidance" provided at a single commission meeting.

Our apprehensions are grounded in some of the changes that were made and/or attempted to the NoF policy in 2018 through "guidance" with very little public notice or input. In the spirit of respecting the amount of work and process that went into developing and adopting policy, and to maintain the Commission role of a transparent decision-making body, we trust that modifications and changes made to the policy are adopted and voted on only after an appropriate public review and comment process. This also provides new Commissioners the benefit of complete briefings on the complexities of the issues.

NSIA appreciates the opportunity to comment on proposed changes North of Falcon Policy C-3608 that have the potential to be harmful to maintaining public trust in WDFW. We thank you for your service and for consideration of our comments. Do not hesitate to call if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Liz Hamilton, Executive Director
Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association