



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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December 30, 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 sold by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). The 2016 annual appropriation to the department was \$937,000. Of the total funds deposited, state law requires that \$150,000 be made available to the University of Washington (UW).

The legislature addressed the need for additional revenue in the 2015 session with the passage of House Bill 1620, increasing the surcharge on recreational shellfish licenses by \$1. These additional resources allowed the department to test and monitor for the new biotoxin that causes diarrhetic shellfish poisoning.

The dedicated biotoxin account (15M) had a beginning fiscal year 2016 fund balance of \$432,159. The WDFW deposited an additional \$1,033,548 of new revenue into the account. The department spent \$897,089 conducting the biotoxin program which includes monitoring and testing. The UW spent \$170,277. The ending fund balance for the fiscal year was \$398,341. With expenditures still exceeding revenue in fiscal year 2016, as they have in the past, the department will continue to monitor and adjust expenditures in order to maintain a sufficient working capital reserve for the fund.

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

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If you have questions about the recreational shellfish biotoxin account, please contact Amy Ferris, Chief Financial Officer, at 360-236-4503.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Clark Halvorson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Clark Halvorson
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
Amy Ferris, Department of Health