

Commission Statement of Appreciation to Rollie Schmitten

Rollie Schmitten announced to us in December that he would not seek another term as a member of the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission. His announcement was not what we had all hoped to hear, but we wish him all the best in his coming years.

Commissioner Schmitten has served for 6 very productive and very challenging years. He has been an opinion leader who has spoken with an articulate voice, rich with experience and wisdom. He has always come prepared to engage in thoughtful deliberations. As a member of the Commission's Fish Committee, he has had a major hand in the landmark reforms and accomplishments of recent years including policies on Hatchery and Harvest Reform, Puget Sound Crab Management, Puget Sound Shrimp Management, Columbia River Salmon Management, and Grays Harbor Salmon Management.

As a longtime member and recent Chair of the Wildlife Committee, Commissioner Schmitten's imperturbable, steady hand, his formidable political skills, and his genuine humanity have been enormously helpful to the success of the wolf recovery and management program. As he has pointed out on many occasions, there is no more contentious and challenging resource issue. Commissioner Schmitten has been a force for scientific integrity, and for bridging contentiousness through actions that truly and adequately addresses the human dimensions of the issue.

We cannot allow Commissioner Schmitten to leave us without a few words on what an extraordinary human being he is. Throughout his career, he has maintained an unblemished reputation for decency, civility, compassion, and warmth. He has risen to very high levels in government without losing his humility, his curiosity, and his enthusiasm for the hard work of fish and wildlife management. We are enormously grateful for having had the opportunity to sit at the table and work with Rollie Schmitten.