

## Ashbrook, Charmane E (DFW)

---

**From:** Gariepy, Erin K (DFW)  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 07, 2013 9:38 AM  
**To:** Burley, Craig C (DFW)  
**Cc:** Ashbrook, Charmane E (DFW); Davidson, Cathy A (DFW)  
**Subject:** FW: Comments on Proposed Regulation Changes

Hi Craig – Here is another one, not sure if Fish Program got it. ~Erin

---

**From:** Norm Baker [mailto:ntbakerphd@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 25, 2012 11:30 AM  
**To:** Commission (DFW)  
**Subject:** Comments on Proposed Regulation Changes

October 25, 2012

Dear Fish and Wildlife Commission:

Sierra Club wishes to provide some comments regarding two proposed marine sports fishing rule changes currently under consideration by WDFW: #69 and #65. These proposed rules will definitely assist the state's efforts to manage our marine bottomfish more sustainably and responsibly. However, the proposals need some fine-tuning to reduce the documented bycatch of endangered species of rockfish in Puget Sound.

First, Sierra Club supports the proposed change #69 which reduces the Lingcod season in Area 4B to align with the rest of Puget Sound. This step is necessary due to the significant protected rockfish bycatch associated with the Area 4B Lingcod season in July, August and September documented in the WDFW 2011 Area 4B test fishery. Data from the test fishery shows that for every legal Lingcod caught during the test fishery, thirty-five 'protected' rockfish were caught and probably killed or damaged due to barotrauma and possible physical injury. This should not be allowed to happen.

Second, to more effectively address the WDFW-documented high rate of protected rockfish bycatch associated with the Lingcod fishery at Neah Bay, Sierra Club also encourages you to change daily Lingcod limit there from two (2) to one (1) Lingcod per person per day.

Third, Sierra Club also supports proposed change #65 which provides a minimum size limit on Cabezon. Although Cabezon are not a species of concern, WDFW data shows that Puget Sound's Cabezon population is a fraction of its historical abundance. Reducing the fishing pressure on Cabezon populations will benefit them immediately.

Fourth, because of the reduced abundance of Cabezon in Puget Sound, and also because of the high protected rockfish bycatch associated with the Cabezon fishing (WDFW 2011 Area 4B test fishery), we want you also consider:

- Adding a maximum size limit on Cabezon to protect larger older, more fecund females.
- Reducing the daily limit of Cabezon within Puget Sound from two (2) to one (1) per person per day.

- Shortening the Cabezon season in Puget Sound to six weeks to align with the Lingcod season.

Cabezon are relatively sedentary and spawn year round but peaks in March and April and apparently have multiple spawnings. They are reported to live to about 19-20 years. Large old female fish are known to produce at least 2-1/2X the number of eggs of younger smaller fish. With these biological factors to consider, given adequate protection, Cabezon populations should begin to rebuild relatively soon. These changes to the proposed rules will improve the status of the Cabezon populations. They will also and improve regulations enforceability, and help rebuild sensitive rockfish populations by reducing rockfish encounters.

I have to point out that creating a network of marine reserves throughout Puget Sound (as specified in the Puget Sound Rockfish Conservation Plan) would be a more cost effective and easier way to generally rebuild Puget Sound ecosystems and fisheries. It would also help alleviate much of the constant fine-tuning of regulations necessary to current species by species management protocols.

Enacting these rule changes now is consistent with Department of Fish and Wildlife and Fish and Wildlife Commission conservation management policies and goals. Enacting these rule changes will help restore the health of Puget Sound's rockfish and Cabezon populations, improve the ecological integrity of Puget Sound and restore its fisheries. Washington has two unique distinctions that are not desirable. According to the American Fisheries Society, our Puget Sound fisheries are the most depressed in North America. Enacting these rule changes will help correct that distinction. Washington also has the most endangered marine species of concern of any state or province in North America. That is due mostly to historical overfishing. WDFW fisheries managers have inherited this unenviable position. Now is the time to continue to improve the regulations and management policies for real conservation and restoration of our Puget Sound ecosystems and fisheries.

Thank you,

Norman T. Baker, PhD

Washington State Sierra Club

Water and Salmon Committee

*Life is being curious, knowing, experiencing, and acting.*

(Dr Sai Bhaskar Reddy - sensu latu)