



State of Washington  
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

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April 15, 2024

President Guy Capoeman  
Quinault Indian Nation  
1214 Aalis Drive  
Taholah, WA 98587

RE: Quinault Indian Nation European Green Crab State of Emergency

President Capoeman,

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) acknowledges the Quinault Indian Nation's European green crab State of Emergency (Quinault Business Committee Resolution # 24-421-101) within the Nation's Treaty-reserved Usual and Accustomed fishing areas, including northern Grays Harbor and the Chehalis River estuary. WDFW agrees that this invasive species poses a significant threat to treaty-reserved rights and resources. We recommend a government-to-government discussion between the Quinault Indian Nation, Quinault Division of Natural Resources, and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to determine how best to address this threat in the short and long-term through cooperative management and working together to achieve shared objectives.

In addition to co-management with WDFW, we invite the Quinault Indian Nation to appoint a representative to join the European Green Crab Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) Group. The MAC Group is activated as part of an Incident Command System (ICS) in support of the State of Washington Governor Jay Inslee's Emergency Proclamation 22-02 as a mechanism to address the exponential increase in European green crab within the Salish Sea and coastal bays. MAC Group members include more than twenty organizations that have legal jurisdiction, available tangible resources to support European green crab response, provide critical intangible resources such as species biological and management expertise, or represent cultures, industries, and communities directly affected by European green crab. The MAC Group is part of a broader structure that provides support to European green crab incident communications and coordination, including field support, policy support, and basic command structure including safety, logistics, and public communications.

The MAC Group meets monthly on the second Wednesday of each month, corresponding to the release of a new monthly European green crab situation report summarizing all activities, successes, and challenges of cooperative management. Additionally, the MAC Group meets for one hour on the fourth Wednesday of each month for focused discussions, such as federal financial assistance, or best practices for boat-based trapping. Many tribal, federal, state, and

local governments, including academic institutions, and industry organizations are working together to solve this cross-cutting challenge and the Quinault Indian Nation would be a welcomed and valuable addition.

In addition to strongly supporting the Quinault Indian Nation's Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Invasive Species Grant Program request in January 2023, WDFW is also aggressively seeking federal appropriations to address European green crab. We invite collaboration and partnership on efforts to increase federal funding assistance, which include seeking an \$8 million appropriation to the BIA invasive species grant program for Northwest Regional priorities including European green crab. Notably, the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2024 enacted conference budget includes \$44.5 million to BIA's Agriculture and Range Programs nationally, with language supporting efforts to address the problem of the European Green Crab that are impacting marine resources for Tribal communities in the Pacific Northwest. We were also successful in U.S. National Atmospheric and Oceanographic Administration (NOAA) receiving \$1.5 million in its Habitat and Conservation and Restoration Program for management, intervention, and mitigation.

While the FFY 2024 is a step toward adequate federal European green crab funding, additional funds are needed. Additional needs include funding to BIA for European green crab management in the Pacific Northwest [\$8 million], funds to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for management at federal wildlife areas [\$300,000], the U.S. Geological Survey Biological Threats and Invasive Species Research Program for research and development of best management practices [\$800,000], and funding to the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service's Coastal Aquatic Invasive Species Mitigation Grant Program [\$5 million].

NOAA also should re-establish its Office of Aquatic Invasive Species. The NOAA Office of Aquatic Invasive Species plays a critical role in protecting marine resources under NOAA's stewardship responsibilities from threats such as European green crab. The office, historically funded through earmarks, was terminated over 10-years ago, leaving a federal gap in marine invasive species leadership and coordination, prevention, and response, which included grants and agreements to tribal nations, states, and research institutions. Through working together, we can receive Congressional support necessary to ensure that federal financial assistance to addressing the shared European green crab is adequate and sustainable.

Finally, WDFW offers technical assistance and staff resources to fill the duties of co-management with the Quinault Indian Nation in addressing European green crab. WDFW could assist with developing an overall strategy consistent with the Legislatively mandated Long-Term [6-Year] European Green Crab Management Plan, which is under development to inform where permanent trapping efforts should occur, which agencies, tribes, or organizations require ongoing funding to support the state's eradication and control efforts, the potential for federal funding for control efforts, and a recommended funding level to implement the plan in the 2025-2027 state fiscal biennium [July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027]. WDFW could assist with communications and outreach by providing existing materials and items, modified to be co-branded with the Quinault Indian Nation, or as template for adaptation for Quinault Indian Nation use. WDFW has staff

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resources, supplies, and equipment available to support co-management whether provided to the Quinault Indian Nation or deployed cooperatively in trapping events or assessment efforts with WDFW and Quinault Indian Nation staff working together directly—as was exemplified by the coordinated trapping by Quinault, Grays Harbor Conservation District, and WDFW staff near Quinault Marina during the week of April 8. Invasive species, such as the European green crab do not respect political boundaries or legal jurisdictions and to be effective in our mutual goals of addressing the problem, we must work together.

In closing, WDFW acknowledges the Quinault Indian Nation’s European green crab State of Emergency and invites co-management and partnership to address the emergency. If you have questions or would like discuss co-management and opportunities to address this shared problem, please contact Jim Woods, WDFW Director of Tribal Affairs at [james.woods@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:james.woods@dfw.wa.gov) to schedule a discussion and take further action.

Best regards,



Kelly Susewind  
Director