

# Sierra Club

November 30, 2017

Amy Jankowiak  
Department of Ecology  
3190 160th Ave. SE  
Bellevue, WA 98008-5452

Dear Ms. Jankowiak:

Sierra Club is a non-profit with 3 million supporters nationwide, including 30,000 members residing in Washington State. The Sierra Club is dedicated to exploring, enjoying and protecting wild places of the Earth; to practicing and promoting the responsible use of the Earth's resources and ecosystems and to educating and enlisting humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment. The Sierra Club's concerns encompass a variety of environmental issues in Washington and beyond, including an interest in protecting Washington communities, waterways, and the broader environment. Given these concerns, we very strongly support the establishment of the Puget Sound as a No Discharge Zone.

The Puget Sound is a treasure that deserves the highest protection, as it is one of the most diverse ecosystems in the world. It is crucial to the region's economic, cultural and ecological well-being, but this is all threatened by diminishing water quality. As it stands now, boats can discharge sewage directly into the sound, thus contaminating the water with high concentrations of bacteria and pathogens putting public health, marine life and clean water dependent businesses at risk. A No Discharge Zone would significantly diminish this risk.

Studies have established, and our allies have confirmed that there are adequate pump-out stations to serve all of Puget Sound, leaving no reason why a No Discharge Zone would produce a hardship for boaters. At least 97% of boaters are already practicing proper pump-out procedures. The vast majority of commercial vessels are already equipped to comply and the cruise ship industry has been complying for several years.

We understand and appreciate that Department of Ecology has done it's due diligence on considering and studying this issue, having spent more than 6 years on the deliberation process which included input from state and federal agencies, recreational boaters, marinas, marine industries, shellfish growers, scientists, environmental organizations, and political leaders. We believe it is time to join the other 26 states containing more than 90 No Discharge Zones, and designate our crown jewel, Puget Sound, as a No Discharge Zone and give it the protection it deserves and desperately needs.

Thank you,

Stephanie Hillman  
NW Campaign Representative, Sierra Club

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