

## Summary

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**Meeting dates:** March 17-18, 2017

**Agenda item:** Petition to NOAA to Establish a Whale Protection Zone for the Southern Resident Killer Whales – Briefing

**Presenter(s):** Lynne Barre, Seattle Branch Chief, Protected Resources Division, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

**Department Sponsor(s):** Hannah Anderson, Listing and Recovery Section Manager, Wildlife Program  
Deputy Chief Michael Cenci, Enforcement Program  
Kyle Adicks, Intergovernmental Salmon Manager, Fish Program

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### Background summary:

The Commission will receive a briefing on the petition that NOAA received to establish a zone for the protection of Southern Resident Killer Whales off the coast of San Juan Island. NOAA staff will review the current vessel regulations, describe the information requested through the open public comment period on the whale protection zone petition, and outline the process for responding to the petition. Department staff members have been working on a draft comment letter for NOAA's consideration and will be available for discussion and to respond to questions after NOAA's briefing.

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### Policy issue(s) you are bringing to the Commission for consideration:

- Protect and conserve Washington's native wildlife.
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### Public involvement process used and what you learned:

NOAA and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) announced receipt of the petition in the Federal Register on January 13, 2017. NMFS is requesting comments on the petition and will consider all comments and available information when determining whether to accept the petition and proceed with the suggested rule-making. The closing date for comments on the petition is April 13, 2017.

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### Action requested:

N/A – Briefing only.

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### Draft motion language:

N/A – Briefing only.

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### Justification for Commission action:

N/A – Briefing only.

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### Communications Plan:

N/A – Briefing only.

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