

May 7, 2013

Dear Washington Sea Grant reviewers:

I have spent more than a decade studying the bioacoustics of mammals, and have developed significant expertise in passive acoustic monitoring. Most recently this has involved using C-PODs to understand the factors that drive porpoise presence in the Bay of Fundy, Canada, as well as Admiralty Inlet and the San Juan Islands in the Salish Sea. I am writing today to express my enthusiasm for joining a collaborative network using acoustic monitors with Pacific Biodiversity Institute and to urge Washington Sea Grant to support this innovative research project.

As a collaborator on this proposal, I will place an additional C-POD as a permanent point transect acoustic monitor to collect data near Washington's San Juan Islands. The effort to obtain a probability of detection for these C-PODs will be crucial to comparisons of porpoise habitat use in the different areas of the Puget Sound and eventually in estimating porpoise density in these different areas. A collaborative effort at monitoring, spanning from the north Puget Sound near the San Juan Islands and at Burrows Pass to south Puget Sound, will provide data that is much stronger than three separate efforts.

These data will be used to develop an acoustic point survey network to contribute to NOAA's stock assessments of the harbor porpoise in the inland waters of Washington State. Having access to regular stock assessments of the harbor porpoise is a top priority for the researchers and wildlife managers who deal with this species in the Salish Sea. Passive acoustic monitoring allows for the continuous monitoring of permanent point transects, thus providing a more detailed estimate of harbor porpoise density in a very cost effective manner. This continuous monitoring allows for a deeper understanding of habitat use and density across season, something that would be cost prohibitive with current density estimate techniques.

Again, I am eager to participate and I hope you will fund Pacific Biodiversity Institute's proposal to spearhead this collaborative effort.

Sincerely,

Jason Wood
Affiliate Assistant Professor, Psychology
University of Washington