

# Maria M Kaniewski

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Graduate Admissions  
The Evergreen State College

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Evergreen State College Graduate Admissions,

I am pleased and excited to submit my application for the Master of Environmental Studies at The Evergreen State College. The opportunity to be a Master's degree candidate has been a goal of mine, and through this letter and resume you will see how my experience, training, and prior education makes me a strong fit as a graduate student. My experience has prepared me to excel in challenging environments and to be efficient while delivering work that yields noteworthy results. My ability to establish positive working relationships with individuals of diverse backgrounds combined with my passion for biology, conservation of fisheries, and ecological conservation will serve great purpose throughout my educational endeavors.

I have worked with management, science and research, and industry sides of various commercial fisheries totaling over 5 years with over 500 sea days, including working on, and with, several North Pacific gear types, both pelagic and non-pelagic. Within my current position as a Fish and Wildlife Biologist, at the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, I receive and analyze catch data from tribal, commercial, and test fisheries verifying that these data are correct and error-free. These data are used to make daily catch accounting reports, annual reports, in-season updates, forecasts, and run reconstructions. I assist the Puget Sound Salmon Management unit with stock assessments by analyzing and interpreting these data in Excel, MS Access, and developing R skills. Along with my main duties within the unit, in the last year, I have independently developed an iForm for the commercial observer unit, kick-started using Twilio (communication database management company) for easier communication with our constituents, and completed a project that was presented to the Intergovernmental Chum Technical Group. Through my time working as a North Pacific Groundfish Observer, and as a Scientific Technician, I have built a functional scientific repertoire in random sampling techniques, field data collection skills, and proficiency in marine fish, mammals, salmonid, and bird species identification. I believe that my current career duties and understanding of the unique challenges, both economically and politically, within the fishing and conservation industries, would be valuable while furthering my education within the Master of Environmental Studies program at The Evergreen State College.

As mentioned previously, I work as a Biologist in an intergovernmental position. I have worked in fisheries and fishery-adjacent jobs for most of my professional career post-college. I have found that my prior biology degree left me lacking some of the key knowledge of environmental and ecological structures that would be beneficial to my future career goals. As a result of this, I am pursuing a post-baccalaureate in Environmental Studies at The Evergreen State College during the 2022-2023 academic year. This is the first time in my educational career that I have felt an intense connection to my learning and a desire to seek out more. The faculty, teaching styles, and classes that this college offers encourages my academic growth through melding science, history, and creativity to provide the larger picture of topics I study. Just in my first quarter at The Evergreen State College, I feel as though I have learned more scientific, environmental, and historical context than from my prior degrees – this makes me crave higher-level learning opportunities, both within and outside environmental fields. With this graduate education opportunity, I hope to focus on subjects related to my future goals of working in ecology or botany-based conservation fields.

I have a fascination with the organisms, fisheries, and conservation strategies of the Pacific Northwest. I would be thrilled to continue my education, in this graduate program, to further my knowledge surrounding conservation and ecological management of our unique biostructures.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

*Maria Magdalena Kaniewski*