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Masters of Environmental Studies Admissions
The Evergreen State College
2700 Evergreen Parkway NW
Olympia, WA 98505

Dear MES Admissions Council,

My name is Cynthia Garcia. I am a 2022 Washington State University graduate with a Bachelor's in Earth and Environmental Science. Since graduating I have been pursuing a career in sustainable aquaculture, where I have had the privilege of working hands-on with Trout and Salmon. My time in aquaculture has allowed me to hone my laboratory skills, contribute to aquatic research initiatives, and obtain extensive knowledge on salmonid rearing and health. My time in aquaculture has not only solidified my commitment to conservation sciences but also shown me the importance of sustainable practices in preserving aquatic ecosystems. Working with Salmonids for the past two years has shown me their fragility as a species and given me valuable insight into what a delicate balance they require in their habitats for survival. While my career thus far has focused on commercial aquaculture, I aspire to transition into freshwater fish conservation. Pursuing a Master's degree in Environmental Studies will equip me with the advanced skills and knowledge necessary to contribute meaningfully to conservation efforts and the long-term protection of freshwater species.

Conservation has always been a passion and a constant academic interest throughout my life. I was fortunate to grow up in a family that actively participated in and advocated for conservation efforts, inspiring me to carry these values into my higher education. During college, I became deeply engaged in my environmental science coursework, developing a strong interest in both field and laboratory research.

Through my classes, I gained experience in a wide array of skills both inside and outside the classroom. I conducted riparian, overstory, understory, and stand density surveys, becoming proficient in camera trapping, field identification, and other essential hands-on wildlife techniques. In laboratory settings, I excelled in skeletal species identification, stomach content analysis, and mapping projects using ArcGIS. In all areas of Environmental Science, I not only thrived but also found deep satisfaction and continuous curiosity in the work I was doing. I know my well rounded passion for environmental science will make me a successful member of the MES program at Evergreen.

The skills I developed during my undergraduate studies have translated directly into my career, allowing me to build upon them in a professional setting. I began my career in aquaculture as an aquaculture technician intern at Hudson Valley Fisheries and currently work as a lead incubation technician at Riverence Brood. My experience in aquaculture has provided me with extensive hands-on training in aquatic husbandry methods, fish health and behavior monitoring, and the opportunity to contribute to

cutting-edge scientific research within the companies I have worked for, as well as in collaboration with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

As a lead incubation technician, I have extensive experience in monitoring fish behavior, administering vaccines, performing PIT tagging, testing water quality parameters, and supporting our health certification process, which includes participating in tissue collection and learning proper sampling techniques. More than anything, my involvement in multiple research projects has driven me to pursue a graduate degree. At Hudson Valley Fisheries, I conducted an independent study on rainbow trout deformities in recirculating aquaculture systems. At Riverence Brood, I have had the opportunity to collaborate with NOAA on a study focused on developing neomale tetraploid rainbow trout. Additionally, alongside our Chief Science Officer, I have contributed to research exploring the use of morpholino as a means of mass-producing triploid rainbow trout.

These scientific opportunities have been exhilarating, reinforcing my passion for research and conservation. I know that pursuing graduate studies will allow me to further explore my scientific interests and expand my contributions to the field. Earning my master's degree will elevate my career and open new opportunities in conservation science.

Fish are remarkable and resilient creatures, playing a vital role not only in our ecosystems but also in culture and human livelihoods. Contributing to the sustainment of their populations is a cause I am deeply passionate about. I am a driven and dedicated individual eager to make a meaningful impact through research. With the skills I have gained through both my education and career, I am confident that I can contribute to this program and thrive within it.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Cynthia Garcia