

Dear Fidalgo PSA members,

I would again like to express my sincerest gratitude for the generous scholarship you awarded me. Your recognition of my efforts to become a fisheries manager who will work hard to conserve our precious marine resources while protecting the rights of the sport fishing community has no doubt left a lasting impression on the future of my education. In a climate of ever decreasing governmental support of higher education, this scholarship will enable me to focus on my studies without financial uncertainty.

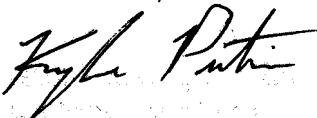
Soon after completing my environmental science degree from Western Washington University in December, I was offered a graduate research position at a marine laboratory located in the Bay Islands on the Caribbean coast of Honduras. The lab, called the Utila Center for Marine Ecology (UCME), invited me to conduct research with resident scientists to help establish a sustainable fisheries management plan for the local community, an area whose economy is reliant primarily upon diving, sport fishing, and other tourism.

I believe that this unique research experience working with a modern marine laboratory is an important first step in becoming a responsible resource manager and while it may seem that Honduras is worlds away from little Anacortes and Puget Sound, I assure you that my heart and soul remain here in the sometimes rainy, sometimes grey, but always beautiful Pacific Northwest.

My graduate research internship at the lab will last from February through April, possibly a little longer depending on how the project is going. While I am there I will hopefully be able to maintain an online journal of my work and post pictures although I have heard rumor that the Internet there works about as well as fishing for halibut in Pass Lake with dry flies in the middle of a sunny day (someone will probably smash my creative analogy and claim that they caught a record fish with exactly those conditions).

Well, thanks again and I am eternally grateful for the opportunity that you all have given me. I will keep you posted on my situation, one way or another.

Work hard, fish harder and all my warmest regards,



Kyle Pieti