

# SHORE STEWARDS NEWS

May / June 2016

Island County, Washington

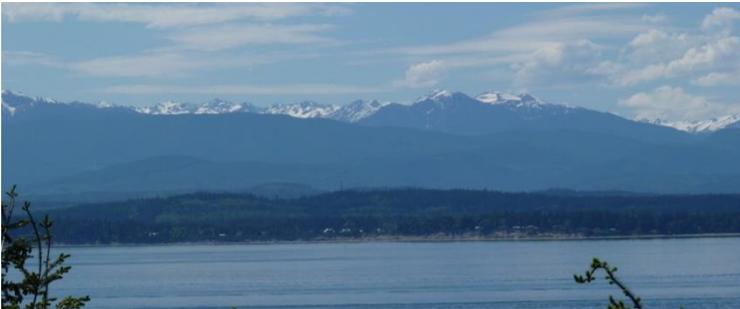
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*This edition of the newsletter was written by Cheryl Lowe, Water Programs Coordinator, Jefferson WSU Extension. All photos, except shellfish photo, were also taken by Cheryl Lowe.*

## Online Resources for Shoreline Landowners

A web search for “Shorelines in Puget Sound” gives you over 660,000 results—a wealth of information that can be fascinating... or overwhelming! Sometimes a website has good information, but it’s hard to figure out how to get to it. This issue provides a brief introduction to some resource sites that might be of interest to you. So much depends, of course, on what you like to do or want to know more about. I learned a lot in the process of compiling this list; spend a little time exploring on your own to find your own favorite links.

NOTE: Some websites, such as the WA Department of Health shellfish safety website, constantly update their site. Other websites offer access to long-term environmental data, research or summary reports and may not be updated as often. Also, bear in mind that some websites require specific browsers to work properly and a few may not be compatible (yet) with mobile devices.



## General Resources

### Shore Stewards

In addition to Guidelines and great videos, the Shore Stewards website also has a “**Resources in Your County**” page that provides useful links to county, regional and state agencies as well as the WSU Water Resources. Use your County link to see shore-related county agencies and programs. This may help you

figure out which County agency to call if you have a particular question. Topics include shoreline permits, water quality, septic systems, and salmon recovery projects. To access the County webpages, go to <http://shorestewards.cw.wsu.edu/contacts-by-county/>

This Resources page also provides links to the home page of local Tribes and the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (<http://nwifc.org>) as well as a few federal agencies. Their work to manage and restore marine and freshwater resources benefits everyone. Subscribing to the Northwest Treaty Tribes News via this website provides new perspectives on what's going on. For example, did you know that the Nisqually Tribe is using harbor seals to collect data about the decline of steelhead in Puget Sound? <http://nwtreatytribes.org/harbor-seals-listening-steelhead/>



In June of 2016, the Shore Stewards website won the Silver Award at the Association of Natural Resource Extension Professionals annual conference in Burlington, Vermont. This award was presented to the team who created the website in 2015: Scott Chase, Bob Simmons, Darcy McNamara, and Matt Brincka, all with WSU Extension, plus Don Pierce and Thomas Wayne Lundstrom with Washington State University Computing and Web Resources department.

### **Shore Friendly**



Shore Friendly is a public information website for waterfront homeowners who care about protecting both their property and the health of Puget Sound. Funded by the National Estuary Program through Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and WA Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), it is a great introduction to natural shoreline processes, managing beach erosion, and soft-shore protection strategies. Photos of real-life projects (before and after) help you visualize what this looks like and attractive illustrations make it easier to understand complex concepts. From here you can download the newly published, 45-page "Your Marine Waterfront: A guide to protecting your property while promoting healthy shorelines". <http://www.shorefriendly.org/>

### **Habitat Work Schedule**

Want to know what's happening with salmon recovery, protecting shorelines, and nearshore restoration in your community? The Lead Entity Habitat Work Schedule (HWS) system is a mapping and project tracking tool that allows Salmon Recovery Lead Entities to share habitat protection and restoration

projects with funders and the public. Pictured here is the Dabob Bay Shoreline Protection and Restoration project, sponsored by the Northwest Watershed Institute. The site is managed by Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO).

I used this site a few weeks ago, after someone told me about an old barge that had been “planted” years ago on a Hood Canal shoreline near Brinnon, WA, buried in the beach and now abandoned. Once I figured out who the landowner was (using Google Maps and parcel ownership from the my county’s Planning Office website), I used the Habitat Work Schedule’s interactive project maps to discover that the Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group and WDNR will be removing and restoring that section of shoreline this summer. What a nice surprise! You can search by project name, by county or by sponsoring organization. You can also search using a map zoomed into your area and see which projects are proposed, active or completed. See: <http://hws.ekosystem.us/>



## Shellfish Harvesting – DOH & WDFW

The Shore Stewards video [Recreational Shellfish Harvest](#) is a great introduction to this fun activity. If you are harvesting shellfish, you’ll want to know if they are safe to eat. The WA Department of Health (DOH) keeps an up-to-date website that helps you avoid problems.

### DOH Shellfish Info

The website can be viewed at:

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Shellfish/RecreationalShellfish> Be informed and be safe. **Always check to see if a beach is approved and open for recreational harvest before going to the beach.** There are 3 ways to do this:

- **Washington Shellfish Safety Map** – Searchable maps show recreational beaches closed to harvest due to biotoxins or pollution. It does NOT show harvesting seasons. If you are harvesting on a private beach, look at status reports for nearby beaches. <https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/eh/maps/biotoxin/biotoxin.html>
- The **Shellfish Safety Bulletin** is an online text version of recreational closures, listed by county. <https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/eh/portal/odw/si/BiotoxinBulletin.aspx>
- A 24-hour Shellfish Safety Hotline gives recorded information on closures: **1-800-562-5632**

If you are harvesting on a public beach, you will also need to know if the beach open for harvesting. For now, you must go to the WA Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) website to get that information. They’re now

working on an easier and more integrated system.

### **WDFW Shellfish Info**

Search by county or beach map area for info about regulations and shellfish season for your local beach or wherever you are traveling this summer. Each beach profile includes when it's open for harvesting, a little info about the site, and directions.



<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/shellfish/beaches/index.html> Or use their hotline– 1-866-880-5431.

## **Mapping Resources**

Most agencies and organizations now use some form of GIS (Geographic Information Systems) to analyze data and make it available to users and the public. Most of these on-line mapping programs use similar principles and with a little practice (and use of the basic instruction guidelines often provided) you can learn a lot. These programs may require specific Internet browsers to work well. And remember– you can always call the hosting agency and ask questions. They appreciate knowing that people are using their website.

### **Washington Coastal Atlas**



This is an amazing, user-friendly mapping portal managed by the WA Department of Ecology (ECY) that

allows you to learn more about your particular property or neighborhood. There are easy links to find aerial shoreline photos of almost every inch of Puget Sound shoreline ('oblique' or angled views that provide an interesting perspective, like the section of Whidbey Island shown here), links to a particular Coastal Map ("Quick Search"), information about slope stability, and flood hazard maps. You can also find information on this website about eelgrass beds, pocket estuaries and feeder bluffs; compare modern (2006) and historical aerial photos; and find public beach and access points.

You can also make your own customized map, choosing which layers (info overlays) you want to see as well as selecting base maps that show bathymetry, topography, or NOAA charts. Adjusting the transparency of the layers allows you can see what's underneath that layer. Plus, you can print or download the maps you've created. <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/coastalatlus/>

**Disclaimer:** Information on this database comes from a number of sources. The purpose of these Coastal Atlas maps are to inform broad-scale land use decisions and share data, but should not be used to substitute for site-specific studies carried out by qualified professionals. ECY assumes no liability for data depicted on these maps.

### **WDFW Mapping Resources**

Other WDFW interactive maps include:

- Salmon status and habitat use (SalmonScape)
- Fish passage barriers
- Priority habitats and species (PHS)
- Marine bird survey densities

SalmonScape maps, such as the one on the right, tell you which salmon species use which streams in a given area. For example, I created this map showing which streams near Quilcene, WA are being used by Coho salmon. (Blue=Coho present; red=spawning; green=rearing; purple=has potential but is blocked; brown=historic).



This program is designed to work with Chrome and Internet Explorer web browsers; it does not print maps if you are using Safari. See: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/mapping/>

## **Environmental Monitoring**

### **Department of Ecology Monitoring Portal**

The WA Department of Ecology (ECY)'s Environmental Assessment Program monitors a wide range of environmental indicators. This website makes those reports accessible to the public. Data includes:

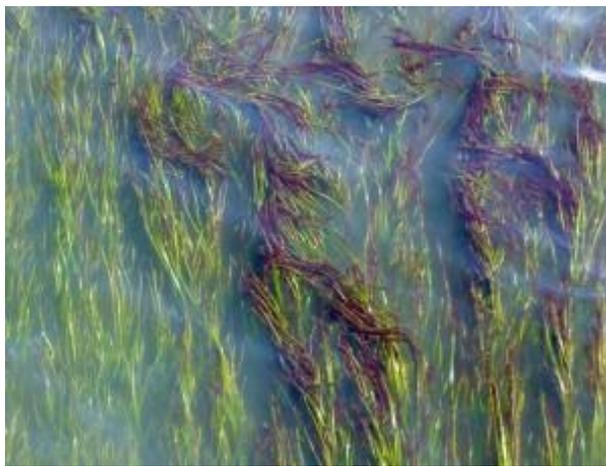
- Fresh and marine water quality, including the BEACH program
- Marine sediment monitoring

- Water quantity (i.e. stream gauges)
- Groundwater
- Stormwater

For example, on the [Marine Water Index](#) page you can see an overview chart of trends that shows which areas of Puget Sound have been getting healthier in the last 10 years, as well as places such as Oakland Bay and Bellingham Bay that have not improved much. Recent studies and publications, in the column on the right side of the website, provide more details. See the site at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/eap/>



### **Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program (PSEMP)**

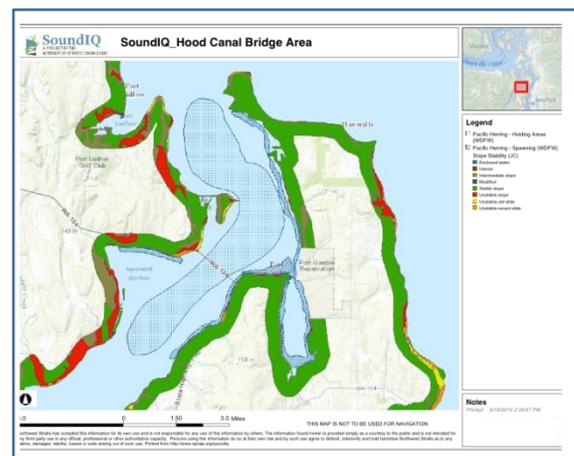


This is a more technical website. The goal of the Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program (PSEMP) is to work with agencies, universities and other partners to coordinate monitoring efforts. It provides high quality, science-based and accessible monitoring information for partners, decision-makers, and ultimately, the public.

Various technical Working Groups focus on particular areas (marine birds, stormwater, marine water quality, nearshore, toxics, etc.) Each group takes a slightly different approach, but their goal is to figure out how to measure if progress is being made toward ecosystem health. The website has a list of inventories that have been completed, and presents basic information, including program scope, objectives, focus, extent, and links to on-going monitoring programs currently operating in Puget Sound. <https://sites.google.com/a/psemp.org/psemp/nearshore>

### **SoundIQ**

SoundIQ is the Northwest Straits Commission’s easily-accessible, web-based application to share data collected by Marine Resource Committees (MRC) and the Commission (see Northwest Straits Commission below.) SoundIQ provides links to data and reports from the Northwest Straits Initiative and MRC projects. A wide range of complementary data layers



from other sources can be turned on and off to create customized maps. For example, I generated a map (below) showing Pacific herring spawning and holding areas, as well as slope stability information for upland areas. The printed map includes the legend. In a separate inquiry, when I requested information about MRC reports in the Discovery Bay area, it gave me links to seven different MRC reports about Olympia oysters, forage fish, nearshore restoration sites and a benthic algae & macro-invertebrate survey. <https://www.iqmap.org/geviewer/Html5Viewer/Index.html?viewer=SoundIQ>

## News Links, Newsletters and Blogs

### Salish Sea News and Weather

Do you like to read news articles about marine life, current issues or results of new research studies, but it's a hit or miss affair? **Salish Sea News and Weather** provides a free weekday news clipping service that filters the news for you, compiled by long-time communications professional Mike Sato. Read it online or subscribe and receive it by email. Your email information is never shared and you can unsubscribe at any time. <http://salishseanews.blogspot.com/>

### Northwest Straits Commission

The Northwest Straits Commission carries out regional conservation projects and supports the work of seven local Marine Resources Committees through funding, technical support, training and regional coordination. Their monthly newsletter not only highlights activities of the various Committees, but also provides links to recent marine-related news articles. They just initiated a "Catch More Crab" social media campaign where you can submit your photos of crabbing, highlighted on their home page this month. Go to <http://www.nwstraits.org/get-involved/join-the-mailing-list/> to subscribe to the newsletter. You can also subscribe to the Northwest Straits Foundation newsletter at that same location. <http://www.nwstraits.org/>

### Encyclopedia of Puget Sound

This website is a product of the University of Washington [Puget Sound Institute](http://www.pugetsoundinstitute.org/). It's a free, open access website where scientists, policymakers and educators find and share information about the state of the Puget Sound ecosystem — its species, its features, its health and its people. They work closely with federal and state agencies such as the EPA and the Puget Sound Partnership. <https://www.eopugetsound.org/>

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