



WSU EXTENSION
Jefferson County



JEFFERSON COUNTY MARINE RESOURCE COMMITTEE 2021

BY THE NUMBERS

- **\$136,584** - estimated amount the Jefferson MRC brought to Jefferson County between Oct 2020 - Sep 2021
- **1,473** - volunteer hours contributed by MRC members and community volunteers
- **27** - forage fish surveys conducted at 3 beaches (Dabob Bay-1st year, Adelma Beach-6th year, and Fort Townsend State Park-7th year)
- **3** - kayak-based bull kelp surveys at North Beach (6th year)
- **2** - new rain gardens installed at Quilcene School & Franklin/Adams St to mitigate stormwater
- **5** - cubic yards total of clean shell, which functions as substrate for Olympia oyster larvae to settle on, spread at two restoration sites in South Discovery Bay
- **52,575** - estimated number of Olympia oysters upon monitoring at one restoration site in South Discovery Bay, which when established in 2014 was just sand/ mud with no oysters present
- **2** - virtual lectures coupled with in-person stewardship events (focused on microplastics and king tides), offered in partnership with the Port Townsend Marine Science Center

ISSUE

East Jefferson County, where nearly 96% of the County's population resides, includes over 200 miles of shoreline that border the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Admiralty Inlet and Hood Canal. These surrounding waters are part of the greater Salish Sea, a biologically diverse inland international sea that has been cared for by the Indigenous peoples of the area for more than 10,000 years. However, over the last 150 years, the Salish Sea has become increasingly challenged by the cumulative impacts of global climate change, regional urbanization, and intensive development and alteration of our watersheds and seascapes. These impacts include sea level rise, warming sea temperatures, ocean acidification, stormwater contamination, eutrophication, overharvesting, habitat degradation, and profound changes in watershed and wetland hydrology. Critical biogenic habitats—such as eelgrass meadows, kelp forests and oyster beds—which provide structure and shelter for multitudes of other organisms have been declining. Addressing the many and varied threats to water quality, our marine and nearshore habitats, and marine life depends upon a well-informed and engaged community, in partnership with other entities at the local and regional levels, to steward our marine environments which are all connected by the Salish Sea.

RESPONSE

The Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee (MRC) was created in 1999 and is one of seven county MRCs affiliated with the Northwest Straits Initiative. The Jefferson MRC is a locally based advisory group appointed by the Jefferson Board of County Commissioners and comprised of volunteers representing diverse marine interests. In addition to serving the county in an advisory capacity, the MRC engages in on-the-ground restoration and monitoring projects and provides education and outreach to the public. MRC projects include:

- Citizen science monitoring of forage fish spawning at 3 locations (Dabob Bay, Fort Townsend State Park, and Adelma Beach in Discovery Bay)
- Monitoring of the bull kelp population at North Beach
- Installing and maintaining a network of rain gardens to mitigate stormwater impacts
- Maintaining voluntary no-anchor zones at 3 locations (Mystery Bay and Port Townsend Bay – near Port Townsend and Port Hadlock) to protect eelgrass and shellfish habitat
- Restoring Olympia oyster habitat in South Discovery Bay
- Education outreach for improving water quality and raising awareness of local and regional marine issues

jeffersonmrc.org

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QUOTES

“ I thoroughly enjoy being a member of the Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee. I think the one unifying factor that we all have as members is that we care about the marine environment. I think this program is absolutely making a difference. ”

PARTNERS

City of Port Townsend, Hood Canal Coordinating Council, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, Jefferson Land Trust, Local 20/20, Northwest Maritime Center, Northwest Straits Initiative, Point No Point Treaty Council, Port of Port Townsend, Port Townsend Marine Science Center, Port Townsend School District, Puget Sound Restoration Fund, Quilcene School, SeaDragons, Strait ERN LIO, Taylor Shellfish, WA Department of Ecology, WA Department of Natural Resources, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife, and more.



IMPACTS

Through grants, volunteer hours, and in-kind contributions, the Jefferson MRC brought an estimated total value of \$136,584 to Jefferson County between October 2020 and September 2021. MRC members and community volunteers contributed more than 1,473 volunteer hours engaging in monthly public meetings, advisory actions, and hands-on marine stewardship projects. In 2021, the MRC submitted a letter to the Jefferson Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) concerning potential impacts to critical eelgrass and kelp habitat posed by proposed Naval special operations training in Western WA state parks. The BoCC forwarded these concerns to the WA State Parks and Recreation Commission, resulting in the requirement that no eelgrass habitat be disturbed. The MRC also engaged in on-the-ground restoration and monitoring projects and provided educational opportunities for the public. In 2021, the MRC:

- Conducted 27 forage fish surveys at 3 beaches (Dabob Bay-1st year, Adelma Beach-6th year, and Fort Townsend State Park-7th year), in partnership with the WA Department of Fish and Wildlife, which maintains a statewide database of forage fish spawning beaches, and the Point No Point Treaty Council
- Completed 3 kayak-based bull kelp surveys at North Beach (6th year), in effort to establish a long term data set for better understanding the region's kelp populations, in partnership with the NW Straits Initiative and WA Department of Natural Resources.
- Worked with community partners to install 2 new rain gardens (at Quilcene School & Franklin/Adams St) and rehabilitate the Water/Monroe St. rain garden.
- Spread a total of 5 cubic yards of clean shell, which provides substrate for Olympia oyster larvae to settle on, at two restoration sites in South Discovery Bay.
- Monitored one Olympia oyster restoration site, which when established in 2014 was just sand/mud with no oysters present, and found an estimated total of 52,575 Olympia oysters.
- Partnered with the Port Townsend Marine Science Center to launch a new speaker series and offered 2 educational webinars coupled with in-person stewardship opportunities that focused on (1) the issue of microplastics and (2) citizen science monitoring of king tides.
- Promoted recreational crabber and shoreline property owner educational materials and workshops in partnership with the NW Straits Foundation.
- Launched a new project with a local STEM youth robotics group, piloting the use of submersible remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) for detecting and removing derelict crab pots.

Each of these projects engaged community members and partners, and have brought us closer to better understanding, restoring, and protecting the marine resources of our region.