

What is a **Voluntary No-Anchor Zone**?

A **Voluntary No-Anchor Zone** is a *non-regulatory strategy* to protect critical eelgrass habitat. Anchors, chains, and lines can cause physical damage to eelgrass beds by leaving large scour marks, which degrades eelgrass habitat. Voluntary No-Anchor Zones are designed to limit the direct physical damage caused by anchor scour to support a more resilient eelgrass meadow. Informational marker buoys are placed along the seaward edge of the eelgrass bed to encourage boaters to anchor outside of the eelgrass.

Why **anchor out** of eelgrass?



Eelgrass is a flowering plant that grows close to shore at depths where light can penetrate through the water. Eelgrass provides vital habitat for many marine animals. Salmon, Pacific herring, crabs, nudibranchs, flatfish and countless other species all call eelgrass home. Even marine birds, especially great blue herons and brant, rely on eelgrass meadows for a source of food and foraging.



Intact eelgrass meadows protect our shorelines. Eelgrass reduces erosion during storms, dampens wave impacts, and helps keep our waters clear all year long.



Eelgrass creates nursery habitat for many marine species including ones we like to eat, like Dungeness crab and salmon! Pacific herring, the preferred food source for Chinook and coho salmon, lay their eggs directly on eelgrass leaves.



Anchors don't hold as well in the softer sediments preferred by eelgrass and boats are more prone to drifting or dragging when anchored in eelgrass. Anchoring deeper than eelgrass can mean you won't pull up as much mud or plant material on your anchor and you'll help protect vital eelgrass habitat.



Northwest
Straits
INITIATIVE



PUGET SOUND
PARTNERSHIP