COLLABORATIVE NETWORKING SESSION

2025 MRC CONFERENCE

Clallam County MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Island County Marine Resources Committee

Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee

SAN JUAN COUNTY Marine Resources Committee

Skagit MRC

MRC Whatcom County

Clallam County

MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

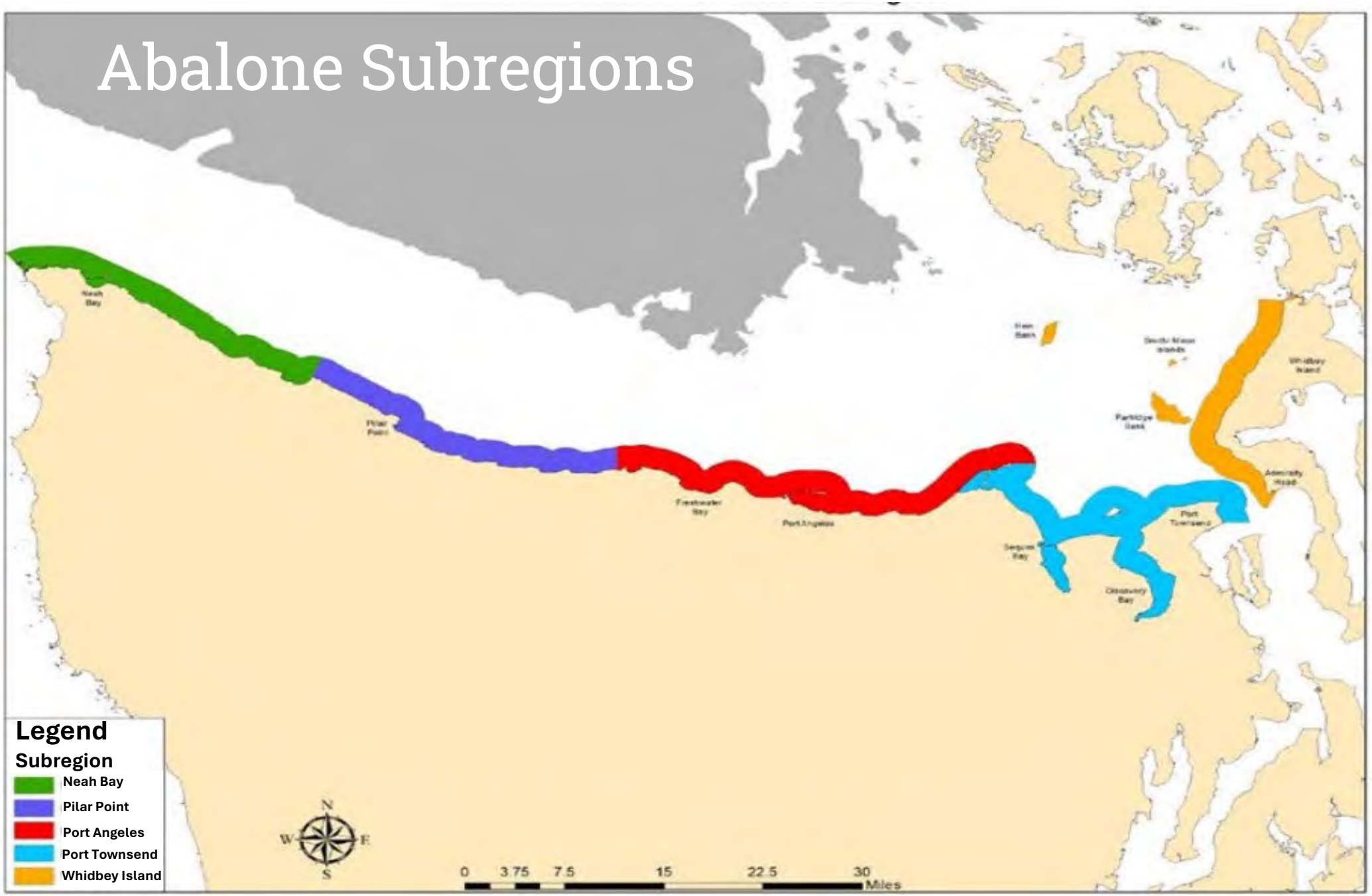
Pinto Abalone Monitoring in Clallam County

Clallam County MARINE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

PUGET SOUND RESTORATION FUND

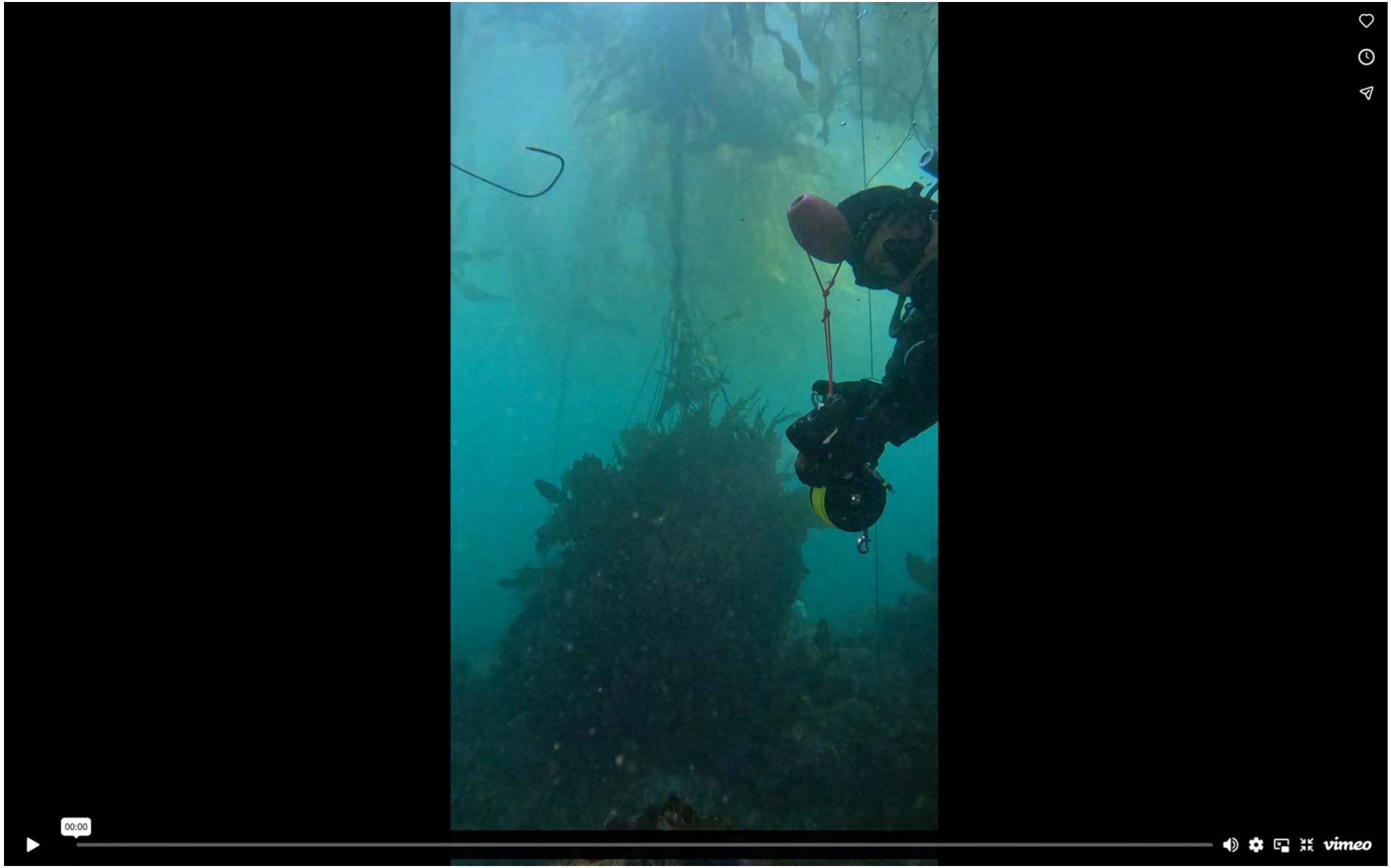
Washington Department of FISH & WILDLIFE

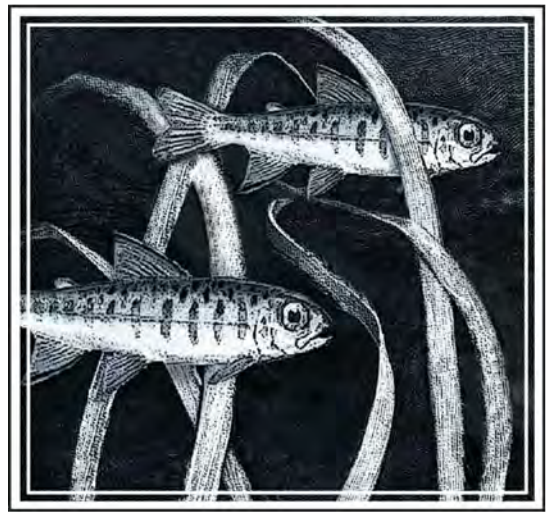
Abalone Subregions



Accomplishments & Path Forward

- 47 abalone sighted (no juveniles) in 32 dives (11 dive days) in 2024-2025
- Identification of at least one potential outplant/index site east of Port Angeles
- Continue population monitoring surveys in 2026-2027 to identify potential index and outplant sites
- Explore partnership with Feiro Marine Science Lab to support education/outreach


00:00
vimeo



Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee

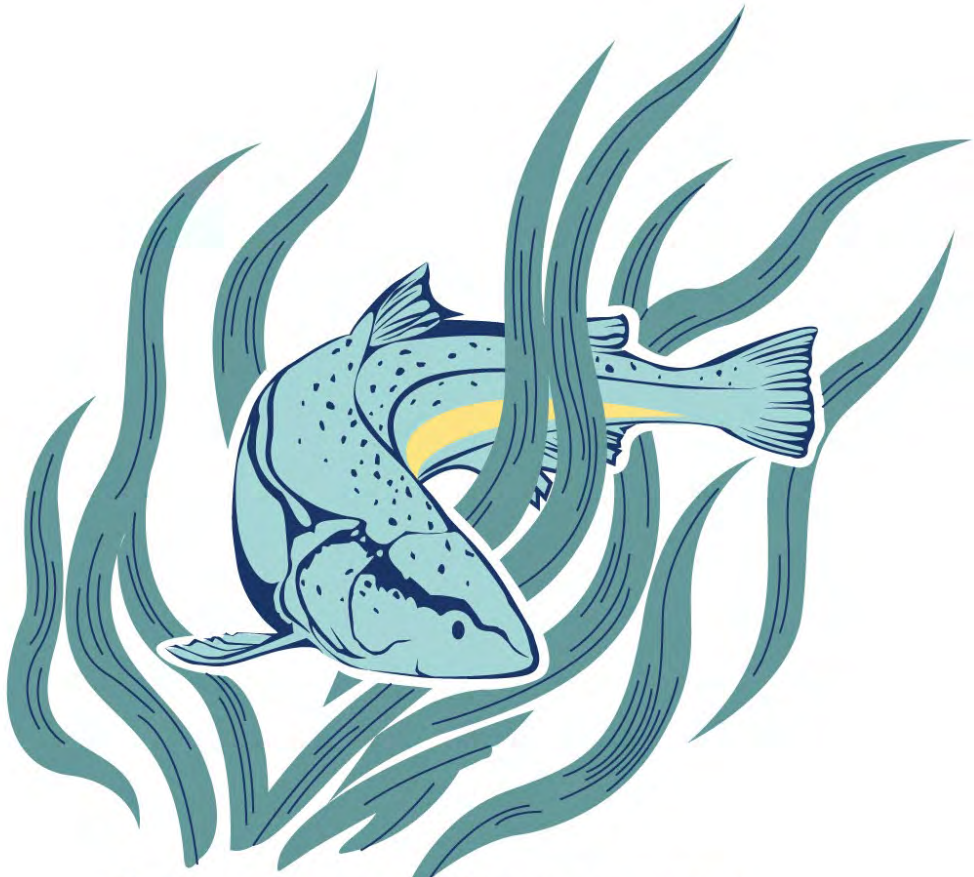
Marine Science and Stewardship Stage at the Port Townsend Wooden Boat Festival

Teaser

Partnering with a local festival to provide marine science education and outreach.

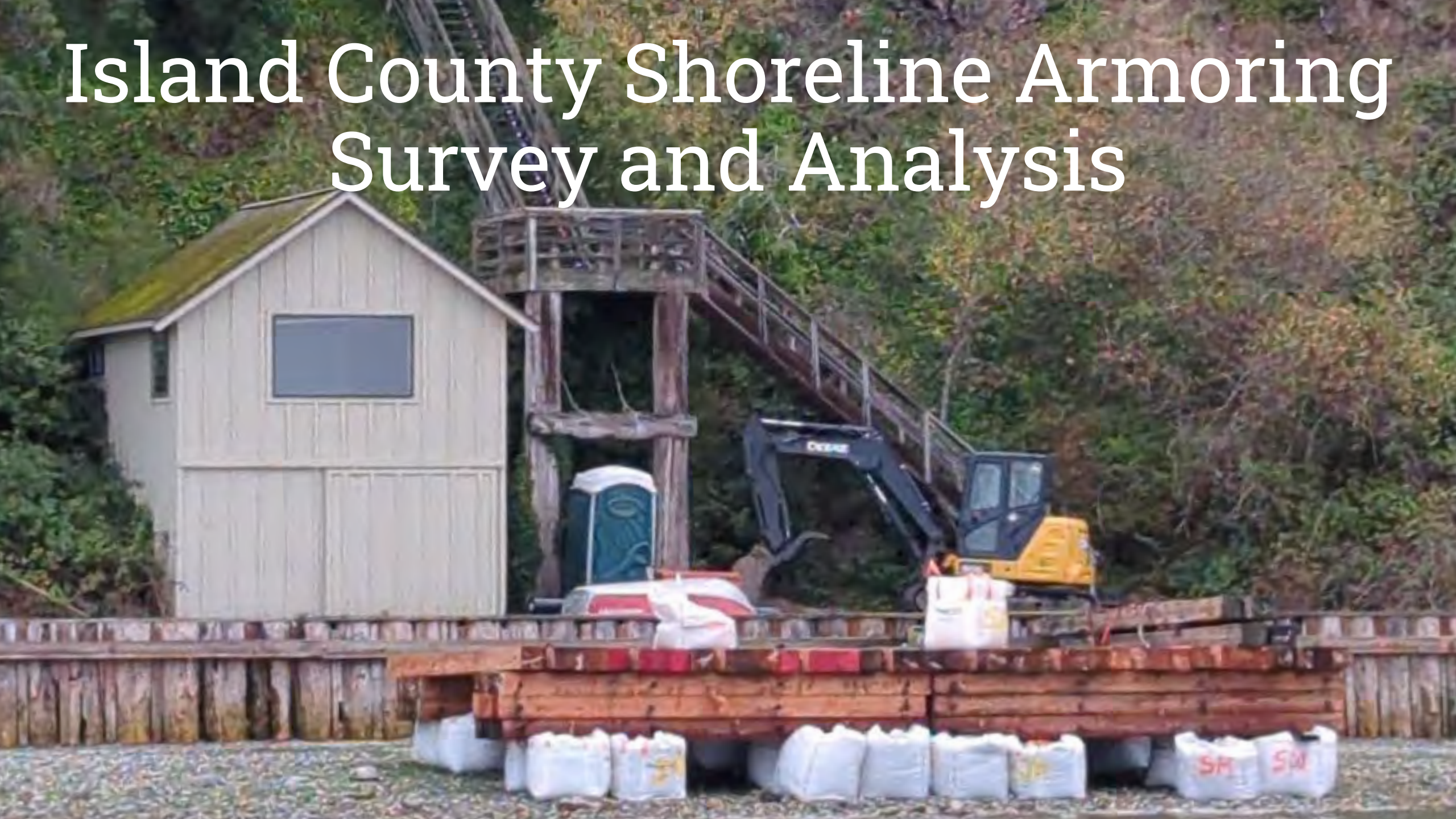
Key take aways

- Hosting a marine science speaker series at water-focused festivals/events reaches an audience already engaged in the marine environment.
- The programming enhances the overall festival experience while delivering educational value.
- The initiative benefits everyone involved: the public, event organizers, and the MRC.



Island County Marine Resources Committee

Island County Shoreline Armoring Survey and Analysis



Teaser

Island County and their contractor completed a comprehensive, boat-based shoreline survey of existing armoring and armor structures, comparing results in 2023 to those in 2016 to identify changes over a 7-year period.

The structures identified in the 2023 survey were then compared to Island County permit records to ascertain which structures were permitted, unpermitted, or under-permitted.

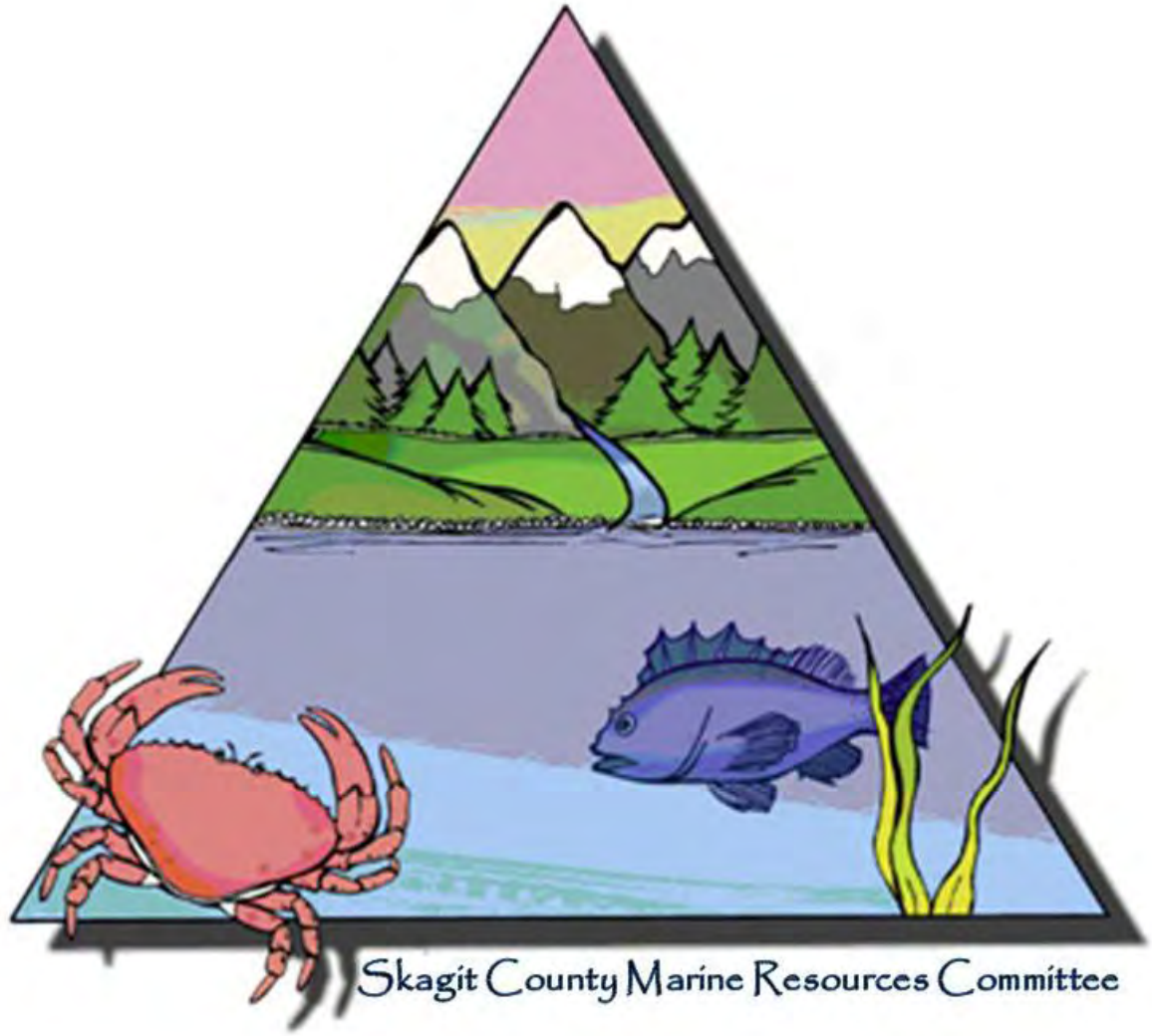
Key take aways

The results of this study created opportunities to:

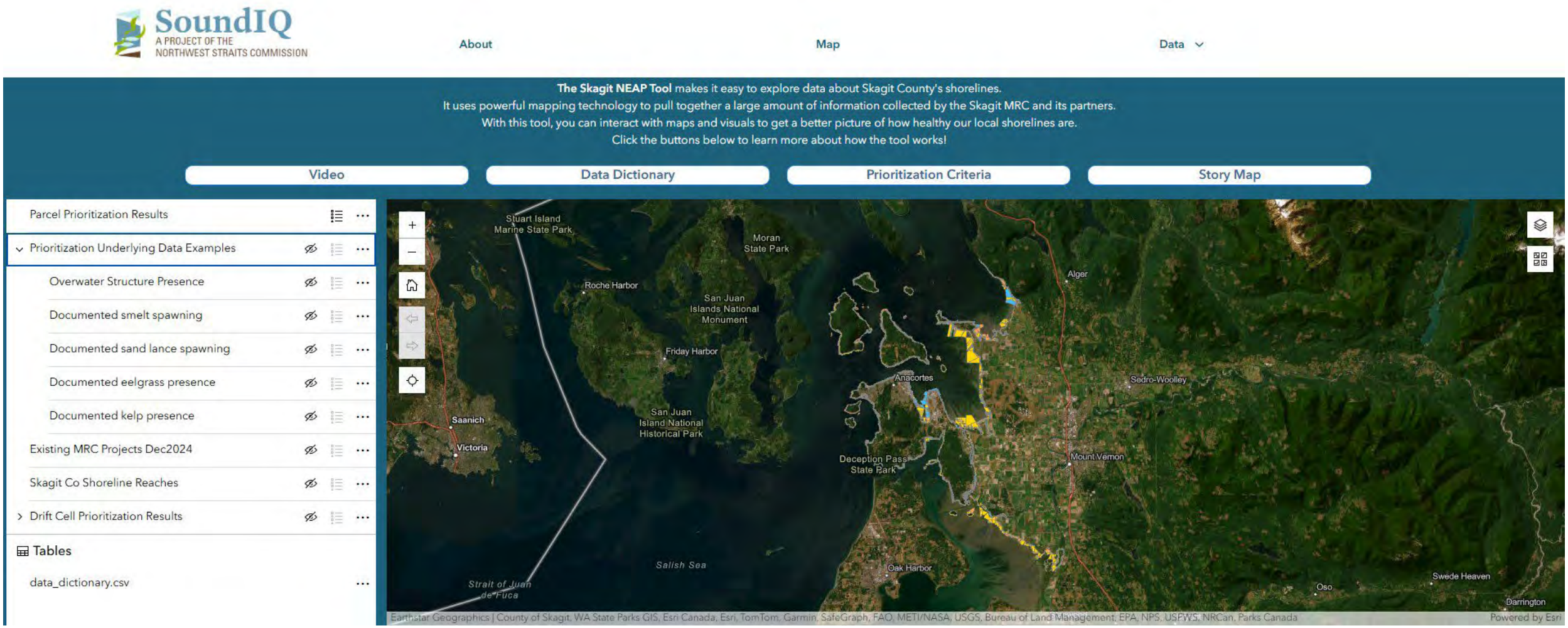
- Advise County Commissioners,
- Educate shoreline owners and permit managers, and
- Guide conservation and restoration efforts along the shoreline.

The findings have informed regulators and decision-makers at the state level, supported ecosystem recovery and enforcement efforts at regional and local levels, and even attracted federal attention.

Although the project itself was simple, its impact has been and continues to be far-reaching.


Skagit County Marine Resources Committee

Skagit Shoreline Needs Assessment



Teaser

What Skagit shoreline parcels have documented surf smelt spawning presence?

Key take aways

Know your shorelines intimately -- down to the parcel level!

Increase visibility of your MRC shoreline project accomplishments!

SAN JUAN COUNTY

Marine Resources Committee

1 boat, 2 boat, 3 boat, 4. Understanding vessel presence and use in San Juan County

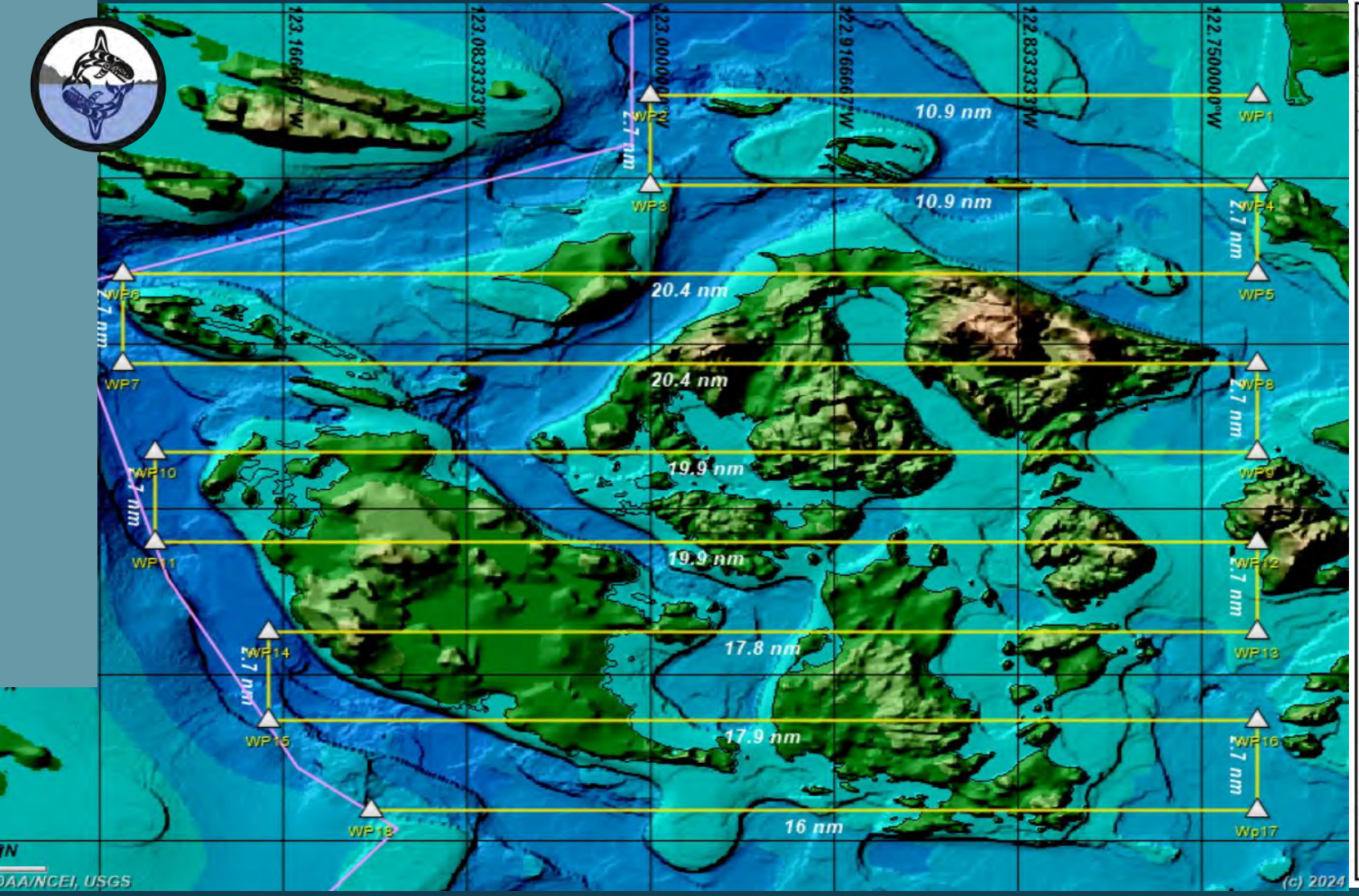
Frances Robertson, PhD
Marine Project Manager
San Juan County Marine Resources Committee

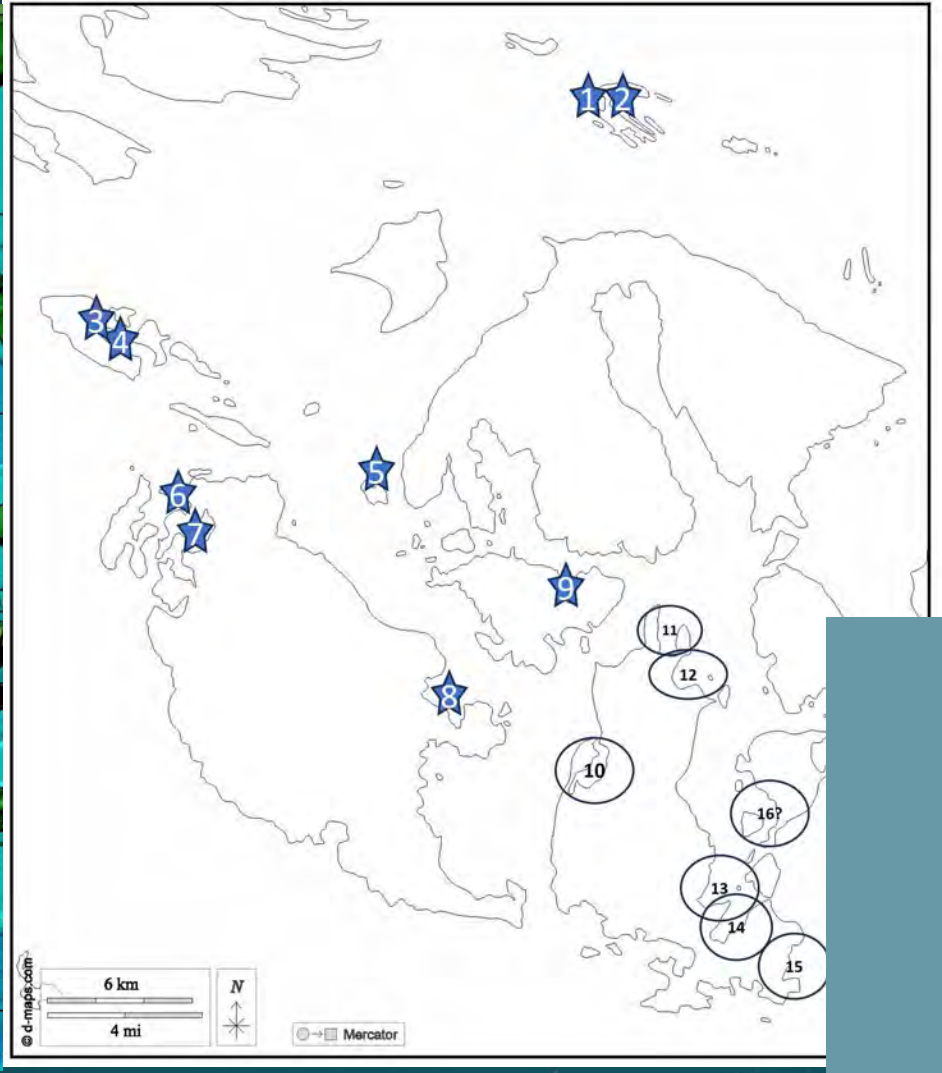
Northwest Straits Conference
La Connor
November 7-8, 2025

Photo: Frances Robertson

#1 Boating destination in the USA

- Top boating destination
- >400 miles of shoreline
- Home to critical habitats & species
- Critical habitats in decline

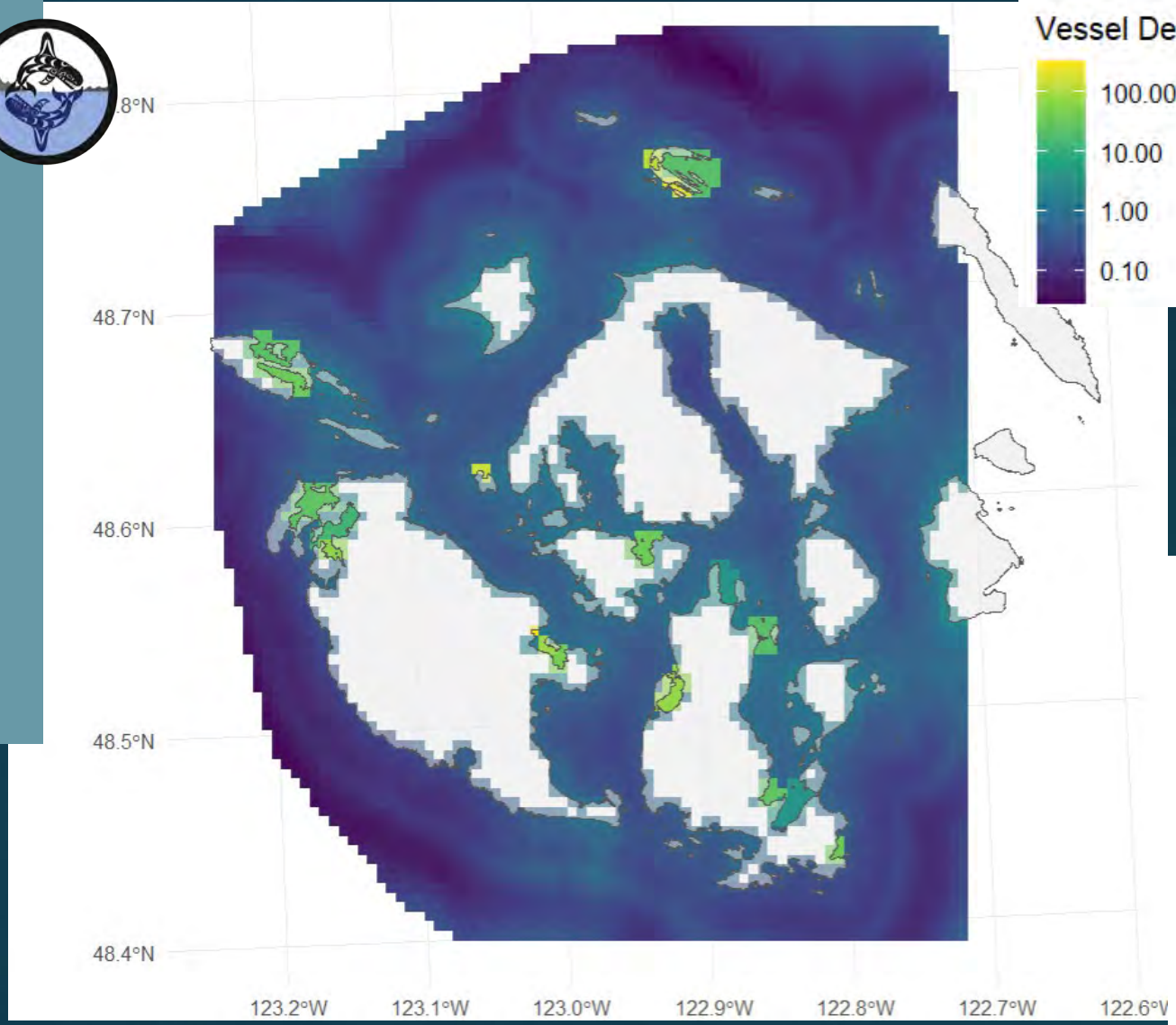




Study Methods

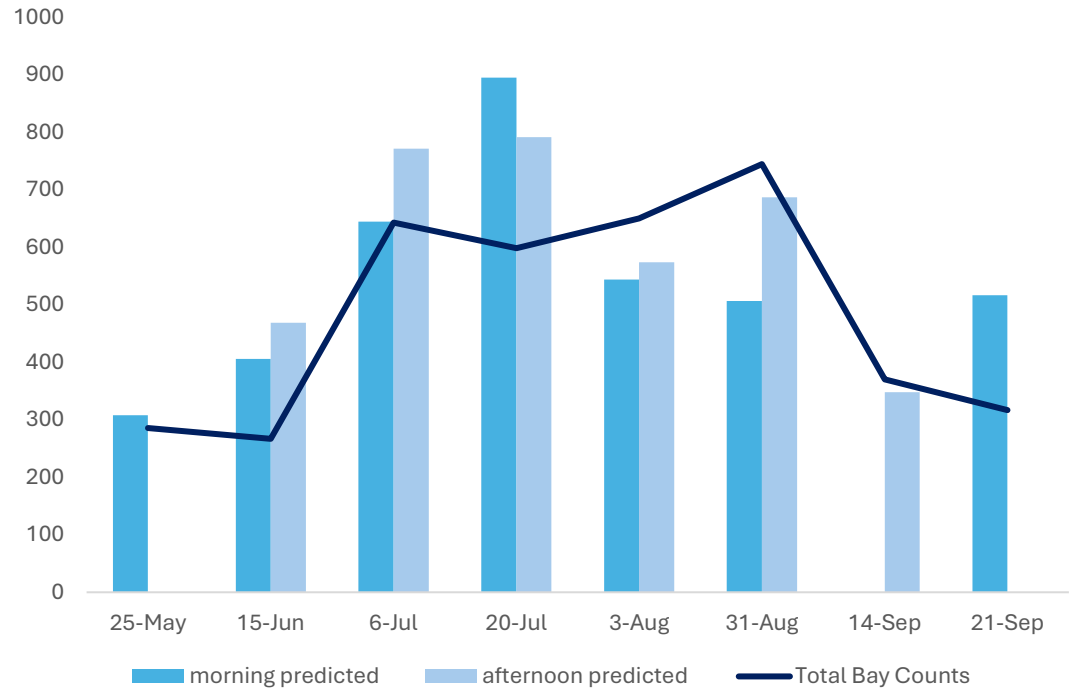
Line Transect approach:

9 survey lines, 5 km apart with a total length, including transits and connectors, of 3,065.8 km



Study Results

- 4,631 boats counted on transect
- Modeling predicted 7,464 boats during the boating season for 8 survey days
- Highest numbers during July & August
- Highest densities focused at popular anchorages



Study Conclusions

- **Distance sampling methods are well-suited to estimating the number of vessels at sea.**
- **On the order of 1,200 – 1,500 vessels in San Juan County waters most summer weekends (*not including those in marinas and at private docks*)**
- **Moderate to strong overlap of eelgrass, Dungeness crab, and red sea urchin with vessel hotspots identified.**

Teaser

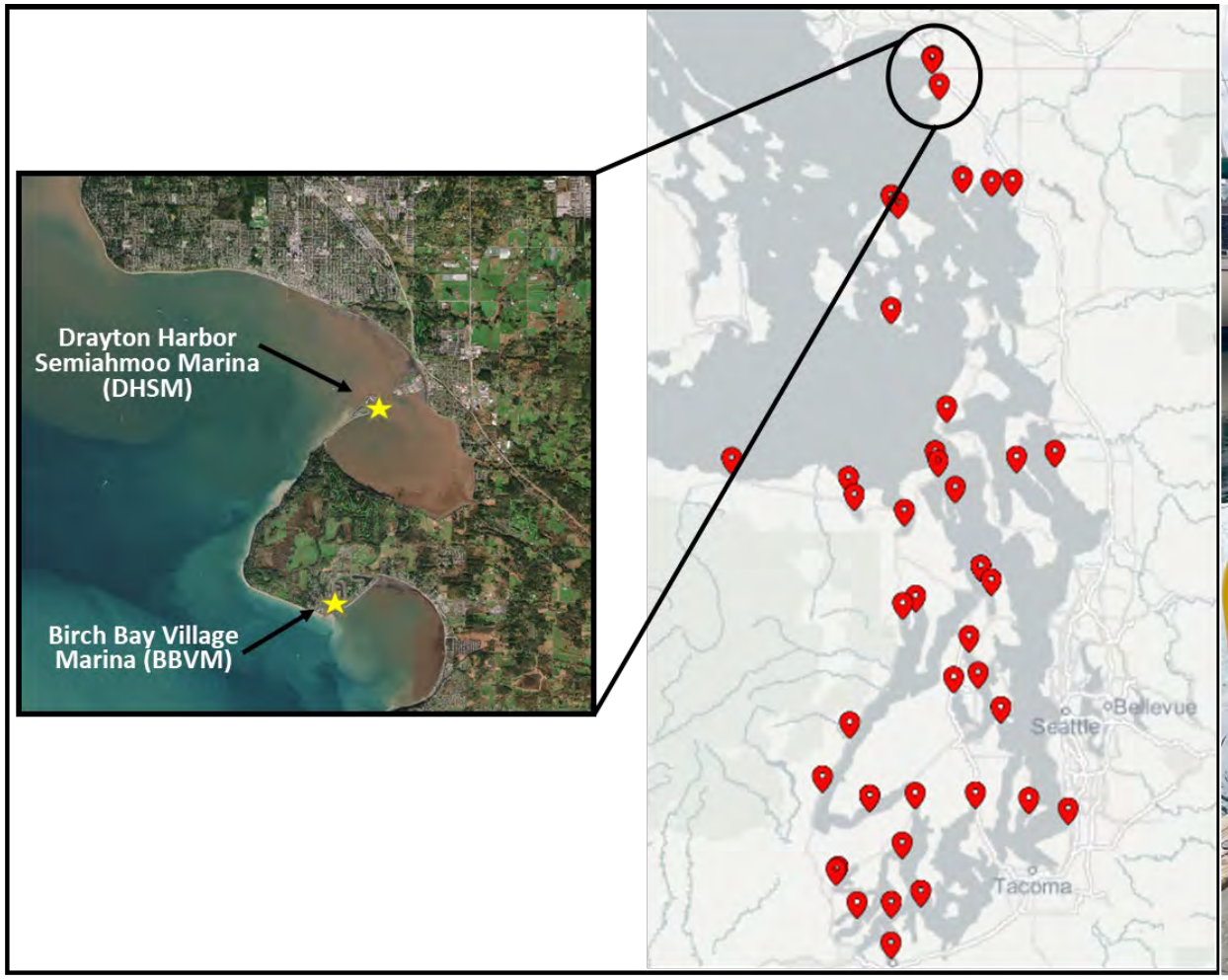
San Juan County successfully applied Line Transect sampling methodology to estimate the numbers and density of boats in San Juan County during the 2024 boating season. The surveys highlighted both daily and seasonal fluctuations in vessel numbers. There are overlaps in high-density vessel areas with sensitive marine habitats, including eelgrass.

Key take aways

San Juan County attracts a lot of boaters during the boating season, especially to popular anchorages. Management strategies that consider vessel numbers and/or density restrictions are likely needed to minimize disturbance to the San Juan County Marine Stewardship Area.


MRC
Whatcom County

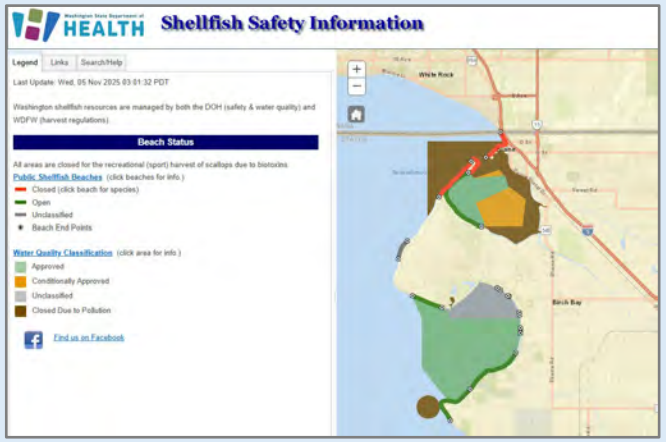
Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) Monitoring



Methods

Sample Collection: Phytoplankton samples are collected at each site. Environmental conditions, including air and water temperature, salinity, wind speed and direction, and tide height and stage, are also recorded.

Sample Analysis: Plankton samples are analyzed microscopically with a focus on HAB species.



Reporting: Results are uploaded to the SoundToxins monitoring database. When present above their respective action levels, HAB species concentrations are directly reported to SoundToxins and WA DOH.

Teaser

This project strengthens understanding of harmful algal blooms in our region while also building an informed network of citizen scientists.

Key take aways

Given the variability of phytoplankton concentrations, even on small spatial scales, a large network of citizen scientists can be utilized as a cost-effective way to provide localized information to better inform shellfish closures and public health.

STAGE

MAIN MEETING ROOM

Jefferson

Clallam

Whatcom

San Juan

Island

Skagit