

## SHELLFISH



Photo credit: Franchesca Perez

### Status of 3 Action Items

2 action items	1 action item
have progress	has no progress

### Highlights

The beaches between Kayak Point and Warm Beach in Snohomish County, and Triangle Cove, the largest pocket estuary in northern Puget Sound located in Island County, were upgraded in 2014 by WDOH as approved for commercial shellfish harvest.

### Upcoming Work

The Stillaguamish Tribe has operated the Port Susan Remote Hydrolab Project for several years. The Hydrolab, attached to a buoy in Port Susan, collects a range of water quality parameters, including pH levels. Future work could help inform how shifting water quality conditions affect shellfish. Additionally, the Tribe is intending to test soft shell clam tissue in 2015 for a suite of potential toxins, now that the beds are open to harvest.

## SHOREBIRDS



Photo credit: Lincoln Loehr

### Status of 3 Action Items

3 action items
have progress

### Highlights

In 2012, Port Susan was designated as a Site of Regional Importance by the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN). This designation adds weight to the value of Port Susan as a bird haven, which is already classified as a National Audubon Important Bird Area. The Shorebird Reserve Network recognizes sites as Regionally Important if they host at least 20,000 shorebirds annually.

### Upcoming Work

Snohomish County and Island County MRCs, as well as WSU Beach Watcher volunteers and Tribal members and staff, continue to be trained annually in oil spill response techniques. Minimizing oil spill effects is critical for the thousands of shorebirds, waterfowl, and raptors utilizing the Port Susan ecosystem. Snohomish County MRC is now working with the Snohomish County Department of Emergency Management (DEM) to integrate marine spill planning and preparedness into the county's spill response strategies and to participate in the new Statewide Vessel of Opportunity (VOO) Program.

For more information about strategies and action items listed in this publication, contact Kathleen Herrmann, Snohomish County Public Works Surface Water Management, 425-388-6414, or visit the website at [www.snocomrc.org](http://www.snocomrc.org).

Interpreter and translation services for non-English speakers, and accommodations for persons with disabilities are available upon request. Call Kathleen Herrmann, 425-388-6414. For questions regarding Public Works' Title VI Program, contact our Title VI Coordinator via email at [spw-titlevi@snoco.org](mailto:spw-titlevi@snoco.org), or phone 425-388-6660. Hearing/speech impaired call 711.

A solicitud, se dispone de servicios de intérprete y traducción para personas que no hablan inglés y acomodaciones para las personas con discapacidades. Llame a Kathleen Herrmann, 425-388-6414. Para preguntas concernientes al Programa del Título VI de Obras Públicas, póngase en contacto con nuestro Coordinador del Título VI mediante correo electrónico a [spw-titlevi@snoco.org](mailto:spw-titlevi@snoco.org), o llame por teléfono al 425-388-6660. Las personas con deficiencia auditiva o del habla, llamen al 711.



# PORT SUSAN MSA PROGRESS REPORT

January 2012 - December 2014



### Conservation Action Plan

Between 2009 and 2012, over 30 federal, state, local, tribal and non-profit partners worked to create a conservation action plan for the area associated with Port Susan. This plan is unique in that it addresses target species and habitats and looks to encompass a wide range of issues, strategies and contributors.

The final plan was adopted by the Snohomish County and Island County Marine Resource Committees, and Tulalip and Stillaguamish Tribes in 2012. The Port Susan Marine Stewardship Area (MSA) was officially designated by the Snohomish County Council in 2014.

### Strategies for Recovery

This progress report is intended to highlight partner progress since 2012 related to the six key strategies in the plan. The goals are to reconnect Port Susan partners, share and demonstrate the success that is occurring across the landscape, and galvanize new efforts.

## BEACHES & FORAGE FISH



Photo credit: Jim Johannessen, CGS

### Status of 10 Action Items

7 action items	3 action items
have progress	have no progress

### Highlights

In 2014, the Snohomish County Marine Resources Committee (MRC) worked with Futurewise to develop recommendations for shoreline incentive programs that will improve nearshore habitat. Through a stakeholder process involving interviews and a workshop, 29 shoreline landowner incentives were explored for feasibility and potential success in Snohomish County. Out of that process, four incentives were ranked highest as potential approaches:

- Establishing a Beach Management District
- Creating a Shorelines Education and Technical Assistance Program
- Offering Focused Shoreline Grants or Cost-Share Awards to Landowners
- Adding a Shoreline Component to Conservation District's Program

Work with stakeholders suggested that multiple incentives could be combined to create a program that includes three key elements: funding, permitting/technical assistance, and education/demonstration.

### Upcoming Work

Beginning in 2015, Island County and Snohomish County MRCs will be launching a new grant opportunity to seek projects along the marine shoreline for restoration and protection. These "Softshore Incentive" projects aim to promote alternative strategies for shoreline residential armoring that protects the homeowners' interests while maintaining the ecological properties of coastal ecosystems. This project will influence shoreline residents to adopt a "shore friendly" protection approach, and build understanding and develop consistent messaging among the counties' staff, realtors, consultants, and environmental educators.

## CHINOOK SALMON



Photo credit: Roger Tabor, USFWS

### Status of 7 Action Items

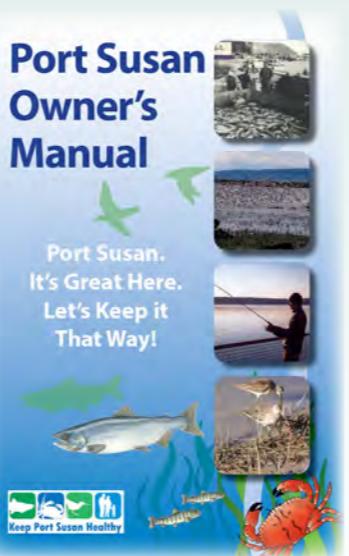
4 action items	3 action items
have progress	have no progress

### Highlights

Snohomish County recently hired an intern in the Assessor's Office to investigate the feasibility of a Public Benefit Rating System (PBRS). If implemented, this new program would provide an incentive through property tax reduction for private landowners to manage their property in ways to minimize shoreline armoring, maximize conservation and open space, improve water quality, provide recreational access, and improve nearshore habitat.

### Upcoming Work

WSU Snohomish County Extension recently completed a Port Susan Owner's Manual. The manual includes information on the natural resources in the area and educates readers on everyday practices that



## DELTA



Photo credit: Christopher Krems, WDOE

### Status of 9 Action Items

5 action items	4 action items
have progress	have no progress

### Highlights

The Marine Stewardship Area Plan called for a number of different actions that include setting back dikes and improving water quality. In 2014, the Stillaguamish Tribe was awarded \$4.3 million from the Washington State Department of Ecology Floodplains by Design program to address fish, farm and flood issues. The details of the approach include Port Susan delta habitat acquisition and restoration, infrastructure enhancement to sea dikes surrounding Stanwood, as well as the establishment of a biodigester in Silvana that will take waste from local farms in order to improve the water quality of farm drainage.

### Upcoming Work

In 2015, Snohomish County, the City of Stanwood, and the Snohomish Conservation District will partner to implement the second of two lower Stillaguamish Pollution, Identification and Control (PIC) program. These partners will be actively working to raise landowner awareness of local water quality conditions for shellfish protection and promoting agricultural and non-agricultural Best Management Practices. This \$570K project is funded by a grant from EPA's National Estuary Program, which is administered by the Washington Department of Health (WDOH) Office of Shellfish and Water Protection. In 2015 the Stillaguamish Tribe will begin design on restoring 83 acres of salt marsh habitat to Port Susan.

## DUNGENESS CRAB



Photo credit: Kathleen Hermann, Snohomish County

### Status of 3 Action Items

3 action items
have progress

### Highlights

Over 12,000 crab pots are lost annually in Puget Sound. Derelict fishing gear was removed from Port Susan on May 22 and 23, 2013. A total of 45 crab pots and one crab ring were removed. Derelict crab pots were removed from water depths ranging from 25 ft to 90 ft from mud and mixed sand/mud substrate.

### Upcoming Work

The Snohomish County MRC is working with Public Works Surface Water Management staff to develop a social marketing campaign to reduce crab pot loss in Snohomish County waters, including Port Susan. A focus group consisting of local crabbers was held on December 3, 2014 to provide information to develop a social marketing campaign to reduce crab pot loss by increasing local understanding crabbing techniques and removing barriers to behavior change.



Photo credit: Kathleen Hermann, Snohomish County