

Industrial shellfish aquaculture is dramatically changing the face of our tidelands and waterways



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Our concerns:

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Interference with recreational uses

Interference with navigation

Habitat destruction

Marine debris

Industrial zone on the beaches and waterways



People come to Puget Sound for the natural beauty and recreational opportunities.



Shellfish aquaculture is changing the shoreline into an industrial zone.

Geoduck and oyster bag operations – Totten Inlet 6/06

Industry says:

Department of Ecology
“...should protect
geoduck farming, and
all shellfish
aquaculture, from
conflicting commercial,
residential and
recreational uses.”

--Attorneys for the
Pacific Coast Shellfish
Growers Association,
10/25/06

Zangle Cove 2006





**Geoduck and oyster bag
operation – Totten Inlet**

Shellfish Growers say:

“Private tidelands are misrepresented as residential/recreational beaches. The county must recognize that the primary purpose of privately held tidelands is shellfish farming and not residential recreation.

**Peter Downey, Pacific Coast
Shellfish Growers
Association. 1/15/07**

Thurson County tidelands are being converted to agriculture use.



Nisqually Reach, 6/30/07



Nisqually Reach – According to DOH and WDFW, at least 40 parcels in this area are under geoduck production on two large swaths of beach stretching hundreds of feet along the shoreline.



Two methods of geoduck planting adjacent to one another—4” diameter PVC tubes in the upper left corner and Vexar plastic tunnels. Growers claim that these have little effect because they are removed after 18-24 months, but at the end of harvest, they go right back in.



Operations on any given low tide day include planting, harvesting, raking the beach, re-stomping PVC tubes into the tidelands, maintaining seed nurseries, removing netting and other operational activities.



Unmarked barges and rafts are a hazard for boaters and recreational users.

Geoduck barge,
Zangle Cove

Citizens in Mason, Thurston and Pierce Counties are reporting that shellfish growers leave barges such as this one for prolonged periods of time in front of shoreline properties. We can only guess that based on the amount of time this barge was left in Zangle Cove over the last year that it is a “Public Storage” unit for this grower.



Mussel rafts in Totten Inlet preclude boating or kayaking.



Mussel rafts are a congregation point for invasive Colonial Tunicate, Gallagher Cove. USGS photo.

The Agenda of The Shellfish Industry:

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“Explore options under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) Sections 7 and 10, to develop a regional general permit in cooperation with the Army Corp to provide growers with protection from prosecution under the ESA, Clean Water Act, Rivers and Harbors Act and Marine Mammal Protection Act.”

“Establish connections to the regulatory community through a special committee...”

Research new techniques including: suspended oyster culture, bottom and bag clam culture, mechanical clam harvesting.

Grow “other species not yet commonly grown for aquaculture purposes.”

Implement pest management using “deterrents, exclusions or DESTRUCTION” of species such as Dungeness crab, diving ducks and starfish.

Modify substrate “(cultching, graveling, tilling, harrowing, mowing).”

--Excerpts from Pacific Shellfish Institute West Coast Shellfish Research and Education 2015 Goals and Priorities.



Huge canopy nets can create hazards for boaters, scuba divers and wind surfers as well as bald eagles.

Nets, ropes, rebar and plastic stakes go out to -4.0 tide. They can float up and get caught in boat props.



Rebar and vexar fences make access to the water difficult at low tide.



Industrial shellfish aquaculture debris after storm – British Columbia. --Association for Responsible Shellfish Farming



Part of the large swatch of geoduck farms in Nisqually Reach. Marketed as environmentally friendly and a money maker, property owners lease their beaches without a permit or any government agency oversight. Neighbors must content with debris and having the quiet enjoyment of their homes disrupted.



More of the same.



DNR is allowing leases of state-owned tidelands for intensive geoduck aquaculture in forage fish spawning areas.

One study from France says that siltation from shellfish farms can clog gills of fish.

Geoduck operation, Eld Inlet



‘Predator Exclusion’ netting in Case Inlet alters the habitat for marine species.



Exhausted juvenile Bald Eagle after rescue by boaters from large geoduck net – Harstene Island



Otter with a rubber band around its waist near geoduck farm. Citizens unable to help – Case Inlet



Shellfish industry believes that shoreline development permits and regulation are not needed.

Shellfish attorneys recommend a “complaint system” rather than a permitting system.

What will be our legacy?

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We are fighting to protect the shorelines for boaters, swimmers, kayakers, scuba divers, windsurfers, endangered species, fish habitat and all the marine life that share their home with us.





Totten Inlet Vexar Fencing

Join with us!

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We are a bipartisan group of property owners, environmentalists, boaters, fishermen, scuba divers, recreational users, and other concerned citizens who live in different areas of South Puget Sound.

We are urgently requesting the following:

- (1) Identification and documentation of all existing shellfish farms on a county basis;**
- (2) Assessment of current and future expansion of shellfish farming as to CUMULATIVE impacts;**
- (3) A programmatic environmental impact study before additional plantings using new shellfish farming techniques are allowed.**
- (4) Public comment regarding interference with recreational and residential uses before expansion occurs.**

Express your concerns:

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Join with us to urge the Governor and the Department of Ecology to require a Programmatic Environmental Impact Study on industrial aquaculture in Washington State.

Governor Chris Gregoire, Office of the Governor

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For more information go to:

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Coalition to Protect Puget Sound

<http://www.ProtectOurShoreline.org>

<http://www.APHETI.com>

<http://www.NoGeoduckFarm.com>

<http://www.HendersonBayShorelineAssociation.com>

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**For summaries of worldwide studies related to
environmental impacts of intensive shellfish
aquaculture, go to:**

http://ProtectOurShoreline.org/articles/Studies_IntensiveShellfishAquaculture.pdf

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