

Letter to the Editor—The Olympian. May 21, 2008

Geoduck farming is not good for Puget Sound

As a third generation tideland/shoreline property owner in Mason County, I have grown up with the diversity of life David Jamison described in his Sandy Beach habitat article in The Olympian. I have also seen the diversity of life which is dependent on it. I have also witnessed the impact which geoduck farming has on this critical ecosystem. Its very structure is what attracts the 44,000 PVC pipes per acre, netting, and liquefaction of sediments to the depth of three feet geoduck farming requires. These actions displace the diversity described with a monolithic structure of geoducks in densities found nowhere. It is far from benign and cannot be mitigated. It is unregulated in any meaningful way. The Army Corps of Engineers is caught in a bureaucratic mess; the Department of Ecology cannot act; most counties will not act; and the ones who do are threatened with lawsuits from the shellfish industry, consuming counties' limited time and resources. This, at the expense of the diversity of life described in the article.

In this election cycle, citizens need to let those running for election know that in the case of geoducks, what's good for the shellfish industry is not good for Puget Sound.

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