

PUGET SOUND DAY ON THE HILL

MARCH 1, 2016

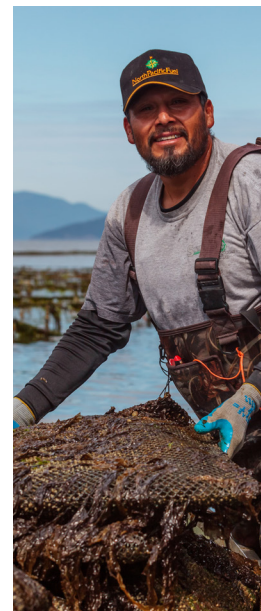


As the nation's largest estuary, Puget Sound is a complex ecosystem with exceptional biodiversity that brings value to the region as a productive economic engine and an inviting destination for recreation.

- Washington State is the leading U.S. producer of farmed bivalves, a majority of which come from Puget Sound, generating nearly \$150 million in 2013.
- Imports and exports at the ports of Seattle and Tacoma totaled \$77 billion in 2013. Taken together, the two seaports were the equivalent of the 4th largest seaport by export value in 2013.
- In 2014, total economic contribution of outdoor recreation to the 12 Puget Sound coastal counties totaled just over \$10.1 billion and supported about 118,000 jobs.

The income derived from these industries is a significant economic boost to the state and has a multiplier effect as it moves through the local communities. Puget Sound restoration projects also boost local economies through support of jobs and the ultimate economic benefit derived from recovered species and habitats.

Part of what makes Puget Sound special is that it is home to 17 treaty tribes, each of which has treaty-reserved rights to the region's natural resources to sustain their cultures, traditions and economies.



1 RECOVERY EFFORTS YIELD RESULTS BUT MORE RESOURCES ARE NEEDED AS DAMAGE STILL OUTPACES RECOVERY

The Puget Sound Action Agenda, the region's shared plan for a healthy Puget Sound, prioritizes local, state, tribal, and federal actions that focus on three major priorities: reducing pollution from urban stormwater runoff, protecting and restoring habitat, and re-opening healthy shellfish beds. This collective recovery effort has yielded measurable, science-based results. For example:

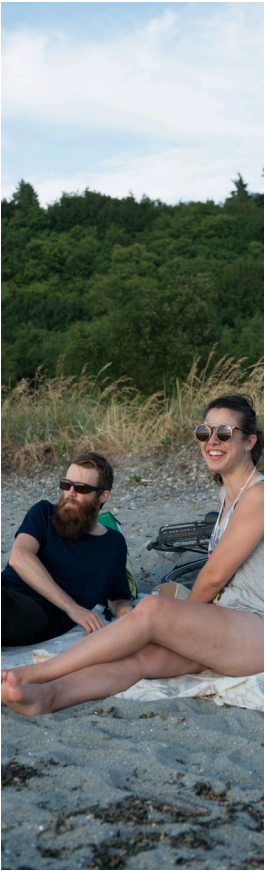
- Between 2013 and 2015, the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Program (PSAR) funded projects to restore and protect 2,024 estuary and nearshore acres, 1682 floodplain acres, and 189 river and stream miles.
- In 2014, more shoreline armoring was removed than added.

- PBDE (flame retardants) in herring from all sampled regions continue to decline.
- Since 2007, more acres of shellfish beds were upgraded than downgraded resulting in a net increase of 2,851 acres of harvestable shellfish beds.

Despite these significant efforts, Puget Sound is degrading at an alarming rate. Water pollution, sediment contamination, habitat decline and reduced water flow continue to produce devastating effects. There are 119 species at risk in the Salish Sea, including dramatic declines in salmon, shellfish, marine birds, and harbor porpoise populations. Some salmon runs have fallen to less than 1 percent of their historic numbers. These losses threaten our regional economy and put tribal treaty rights at ever-greater risk.

We request \$35 million for Puget Sound in the EPA Geographic Fund. We also request that the Administration and Congress work to increase federal investment in future years to address the remaining funding gap and support the region's long-term recovery plan.





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WE NEED FEDERAL PARTNERS TO ALIGN THEIR ACTIONS WITH EXISTING RECOVERY EFFORTS

The Puget Sound Partnership, a state agency coordinating Puget Sound and salmon recovery efforts, is working with more than 750 public and private partners invested in the restoration and protection of Puget Sound. These partners collaborate to identify, prioritize and fund recovery efforts critical to the long-term viability of the species, ecosystems, economy and communities in this region. Similar to the tribes' Treaty Rights at Risk request, federal agencies need to coordinate their actions and investments with this coalition of partners to optimize recovery efforts, to ensure that the federal-tribal trust responsibility is fully met and upheld, and to prioritize Puget Sound recovery in a way that is commensurate with its national significance.



To improve federal coordination, Congress should pass legislation such as the Promoting United Government Efforts to Save Our Sound (PUGET SOS) Act. This legislation, introduced by Representative Denny Heck and Representative Derek Kilmer, will integrate and align federal restoration efforts with the ongoing efforts of state, local, and Tribal governments.

Specifically, the PUGET SOS Act:

- **Amends the Clean Water Act** by adding a new section dedicated to Puget Sound recovery, providing lasting and structural recognition of the Puget Sound as a waterbody of national significance on par with the Chesapeake Bay and the Great Lakes.
- **Establishes a Puget Sound Recovery Program Office** in EPA Region 10 to better coordinate recovery efforts within the EPA and among Federal, Tribal, State, and local partners.
- **Requires Federal agencies to ensure their activities are consistent with the Puget Sound Action Agenda** upon its adoption as the Federal Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP) for Puget Sound. This consistency obligation includes permitting and regulatory activities.
- **Protects tribal treaty rights** by reaffirming the supremacy of Federal treaty obligations and creating new requirements for the CCMP to support, propose to carry out, and be consistent with treaty rights.

We urge Congress to increase coordination of federal Puget Sound recovery efforts by adopting and implementing legislation such as the PUGET SOS Act, which is supported by the entire Washington State House Delegation, the Congressional Puget Sound Recovery Caucus, Governor Jay Inslee, the Puget Sound Partnership, and the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission.

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