

# PUGET SOUND National Estuary Program



## Remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) and scientific scuba divers: A methods comparison to optimize bull kelp conservation and restoration in Puget Sound

### WHAT WE ARE DOING

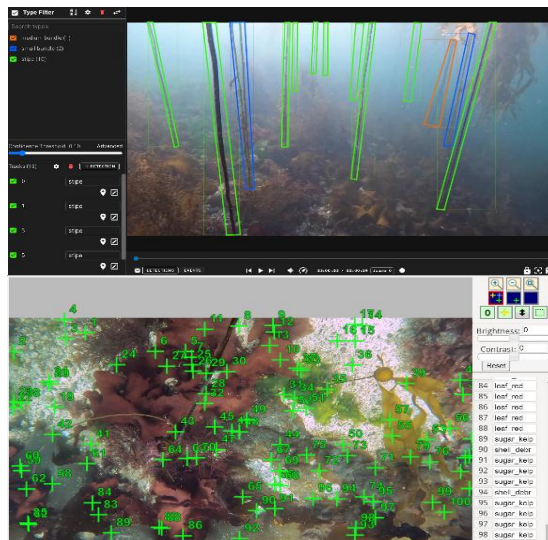
- Partner with Reef Check to conduct a kelp forest data collection methods comparison between ROVs and scuba divers.
- Partner with Puget Sound Restoration Fund to see how ROVs can expand field monitoring of bull kelp restoration sites.
- Leverage data from our *Urban Kelp Research Project* with the Port of Seattle to enhance a bull kelp habitat suitability model in order to help guide restoration.



Left to right: Randell, Bogdanova, ROV *Lutris* and Williams.

### WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Bull kelp and the other kelp species in Washington provide critical food and habitat to a variety of marine species including fishes such as salmon and rockfish, as well as numerous invertebrates. Our objective is to better understand the conditions that foster bull kelp persistence in order to help inform bull kelp restoration.




AI object detection and percent coverage analyses of bull kelp stipes (top) and understory algae (bottom).

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

Email or call your Congressional representative and ask them to support the Help Our Kelp Act (H.R.5487), which would fund new efforts to conserve and restore wild kelp forests.

### ABOUT THE SEATTLE AQUARIUM

Founded in 1977, the Seattle Aquarium is a conservation organization working to regenerate the health of Earth's one ocean. We work among global leaders to advance animal wellbeing, marine and ecosystem science, public policy, field conservation, education and species recovery programs that benefit the ocean. Help support the Aquarium's mission of *Inspiring Conservation of Our Marine Environment*.



[www.SeattleAquarium.org](http://www.SeattleAquarium.org)  
Dr. Zachary Randell, Research Scientist  
[z.randell@seattleaquarium.org](mailto:z.randell@seattleaquarium.org)  
Selected for funding by Habitat SIL



*This project has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency under assistance agreement PC-01J89501 through the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Environmental Protection Agency or the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, nor does mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation for use.*