

Henderson Inlet Community Shellfish Farm

Goals

and

Best Management Practices

for

Enhancing Biological Diversity While Producing an Annual Crop of Oysters

The goals of the Henderson Inlet Community Shellfish Farm are to:

- Enhance Henderson Inlet water quality;
- Enhance and maintain biological diversity within the tidal zone leased for the farm (see Appendix map I for location and area specifics);
- Produce an annual crop of shellfish (oysters) for sale to support pollution control in Henderson Inlet and community outreach projects;
- Actively engage citizens in experiencing, preserving and restoring productive shellfish growing areas in Henderson Inlet.

Best Management Practices¹ to achieve these goals include:

- Not using pesticides
- Not using plastic netting that could possible entangle wildlife²

¹ Best Management Practices are ecologically minded practices that allow us to meet our goals in an environmentally responsible and sustainable manner. The list of BMPs provided is not static. Recommended BMPs will be updated as technical developments occur and our knowledge-base advances. The list of BMPs provided also is not all inclusive, as other practices may be equally effective and acceptable.

² Netting is not needed for oyster production. If netting is ever used for clam production BMPs will be developed to minimize the risk for the netting to become lose or become an entanglement for wildlife species.

- Not mechanically shaping the land or tidal zone or removing any existing beach structure, except that which is environmentally undesirable flotsam or considered a safety hazard.
- Regularly scheduled patrols to remove unwanted flotsam material that has washed up on the beach or materials and gear that was inadvertently left on the tidelands by shellfish farm volunteers, or is no longer being used or is not acceptable from an environmental standpoint (old rebar used for anchors, old lines, etc.)
 - Collaborate with the Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers Association to patrol Henderson Inlet to remove undesirable flotsam and lose gear of all types that could contribute to safety, esthetic or environmental degradation issues
 - Establish a contact list for landowners / Inlet users to call if undesirable flotsam is spotted so it can be scheduled for removal.
- Establishing a biological diversity baseline using scientifically accepted sampling and monitoring procedures and assess changes through time with biennial assessments (see Appendix II for monitoring and sampling procedures)
- Enhancing structure by periodically adding oyster shells on at a portion of the leased area to form “reefs” where oyster cultch or year-old oysters can be placed for grow-out (for an additional two years).
 - The amount of oyster shell additions will exceed that removed during the oyster production operation.
 - No material will be added that could be contaminated with invasive species.
- Producing an annual crop of oysters
 - Pacific oysters (*Crassostrea gigas*, *Crassostrea sikamea*) will be used for the oyster crop species, since our lease area is not in a tidal zone conducive for Olympia oyster (*Ostrea lurida*) production
 - Small (seed) oysters are to be placed in black-plastic grow bags for one to two years to protect them from predators. The grow bags will be placed in a specified area where walking traffic lanes can be established and improved (oyster shell base) to minimize tideland impact. Rows of bags will be placed on the contour and attached to anchor lines (or small plastic pipe) on no more than 1/4 of the leased area. Floats may be attached to the grow bags or lines to keep

oysters out of the sediment. Floats will be maintained at a low profile level to minimize visual aesthetic impacts.

- Monitoring grow bags monthly to ensure that they are secure and orderly.
- After one to two years in the grow bags the oysters will be scattered on the oyster shell reefs for grow-out, which may take from one to two additional years.
- Seeded oyster cultch may also be used and scattered on the oyster-shell “reefs” for a two to four-year grow-out period.
- Records of oyster seed sown and oysters harvested will be maintained on an annual basis to assess mortality and production trends.
- This method of oyster production should minimize the need for oyster predator control. No systematic effort will be made to control oyster predator species...except for the non-native oyster drills (Japanese oyster drill, *Ocenebrellus inornatus*, and the eastern oyster drill, *Urosalpinx cinera*, which are invasive. [Click here](#) for suggested ways to manage drill predation in an environmentally sound manner.

Outreach activities to achieve these goals include:

Involve volunteers from throughout the community in planting and harvesting oysters and celebrating access to healthy, locally grown food sources;

Host oyster give-aways for residents in the watershed who responsibly manage their on-site septic systems as part of Thurston County’s Operation & Maintenance Program;

Distribute key water quality tips to customers, volunteers, visitors and others to help address pollution sources (e.g., distribute information to those that purchase Community Shellfish Farm oysters from they Olympia Seafood Company; provide information about carbon sequestering and nitrogen removal from the Inlet by oyster production and harvest);

Host 5-10 education tideflat tours each year involving 250-500 students and adults;

Provide community-grown oysters at public events to showcase community-based efforts to maintain clean water;

Provide the community with a creative mechanism for reducing their nitrogen and carbon footprints and a tasty incentive for keeping the water clean.

The following community members that grow shellfish on their privately owned tidelands also agree to adhere to these practices except that biological diversity monitoring may be outside of their scope of expertise. Oyster shells will be returned to the beach at least to the levels removed by harvesting to enhance and maintain structure.

Print Name:

Signature:

