

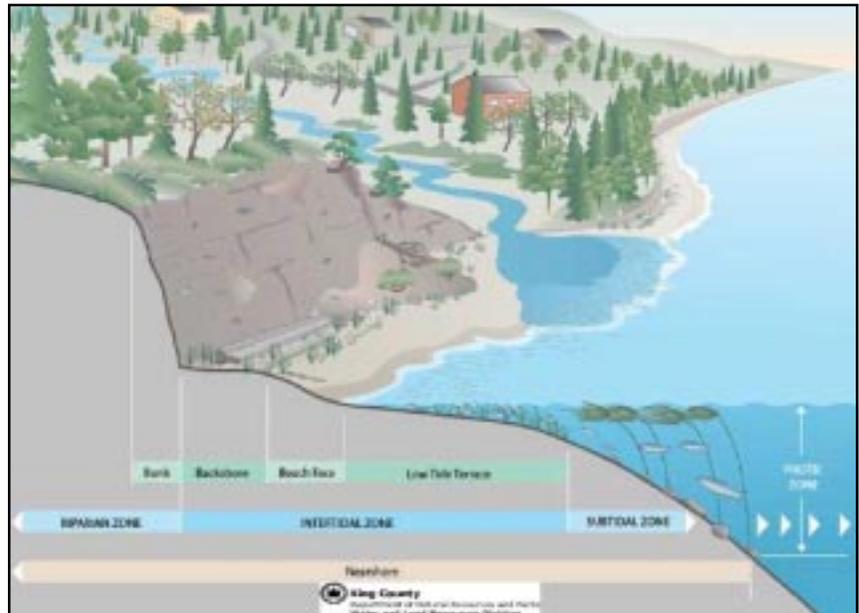
A partnership among local, state and tribal governments in Washington State, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other federal agencies, industries and environmental organizations

Puget Sound defines much of the Pacific Northwest region. The health and robustness of the local economy and local residents can be traced to the Sound. Until recently, there has been little scientific information on the marine nearshore, the shallow fringe where sunlight can reach the floor, essential for the lives of many marine plants and creatures.

In 2001, a convergence of factors turned a common vision of a major nearshore project into a reality: tribal, federal, local and state governments, along with private sector and nonprofit organizations began to work together by combining their talents and funds; the Endangered Species Act listing of salmon and eight other species in the nearshore added urgency; technology became available for monitoring, conducting remote sensing and working with historic data; and groups with common interests created a coalition-building atmosphere.

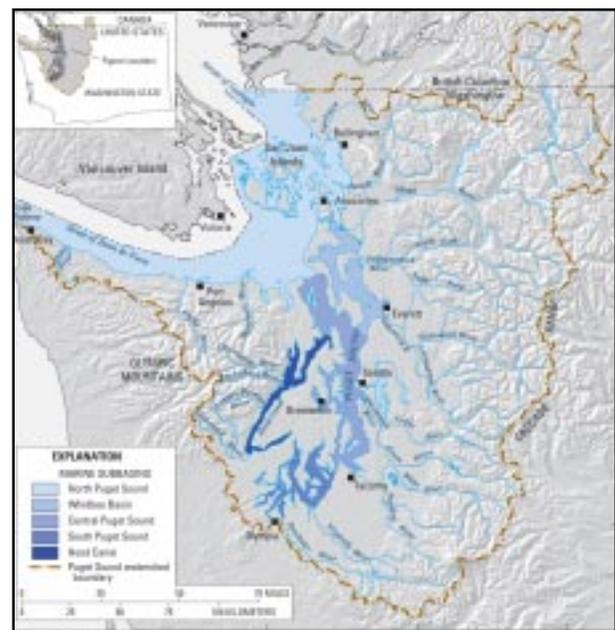
The result was the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project, a cooperative effort among government organizations, tribes, industries and environmental organizations to preserve and restore the health of the Sound's nearshore.

This document answers several frequently asked questions. If you would like more detailed information, please visit www.pugetsoundnearshore.org



Q What and where is the Puget Sound Nearshore?

The Puget Sound nearshore is defined as the area of United States marine and estuarine shoreline extending approximately 2,500 miles from the Canadian border, throughout Puget Sound, Hood Canal and the Straits of Juan de Fuca. It generally extends from the top of shoreline bluffs to the depth offshore where light penetrating the Sound's water falls below a level supporting plant growth, and upstream in estuaries to the head of tidal influence. It includes bluffs, beaches, mudflats, kelp and eelgrass beds, salt marshes, gravel spits and estuaries.



Q What's wrong with the Puget Sound nearshore?

The Puget Sound nearshore is being loved to death. People have impacted crucial natural movements of sand, gravel, water and animals that live in the Puget Sound nearshore. Man-made structures are common and widespread, with overlapping effects that jeopardize the Puget Sound nearshore ecosystem.

Q What is the purpose of this project?

The purpose of the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project is to identify significant ecosystem problems in Washington State's Puget Sound Basin, evaluate potential solutions, and design and implement actions to preserve and restore the health of the Sound's nearshore. Project partners are working cooperatively to complete a General Investigation study of the nearshore ecosystem to gain Congressional support and associated restoration funding.

Q Who is involved in the project?

The Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project is a cooperative effort among the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the local sponsors, who are lead by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Partners include other state and federal government agencies, tribes, industries and environmental organizations.

Q How significant is this project?

The project is one of the largest restoration and preservation



endeavors undertaken in the United States.

The federal government has approved funding for the first phase of the project that is being undertaken by the Corps, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and other project partners. The first phase includes investigating how the nearshore has changed over time, how these changes affect the things we care about, and what we can do to protect and restore the nearshore.

The second phase would be a Congressional commitment to restore and preserve Puget Sound. Eventually, the Puget Sound Nearshore Project could be as significant as the restoration of the Everglades in Florida, Chesapeake Bay in Maryland and the Louisiana Coast.

Q Who needs the Puget Sound nearshore?

You do! In addition to the marine life that makes its home in Puget Sound, the millions of citizens living and working in the Puget Sound region also are attached to the nearshore. For centuries, people have been drawn to the nearshore for economic and recreational purposes. Today, our Northwest lifestyles and economy rely on the Puget Sound nearshore. Shellfish and salmon industries, ports and refineries and recreational activities all depend on the tidelands and shoreline.

Q What are some specific problems with Puget Sound, and why is this project needed?

The integrity of the nearshore ecosystem is in jeopardy, resulting in many real and potential future effects throughout the Puget Sound. Shellfish can be further contaminated and marine habitat reduced, endangering the livelihoods of people who depend on shellfish and fish harvests.

Species listed as endangered or threatened



within the Puget Sound region inhabit the nearshore. Pollution in parts of Puget Sound has

caused lesions and tumors in flatfish that orcas, eagles, seals, birds and porpoises eat.

Residential developments and marine commerce along the Puget Sound shoreline have altered or damaged critical shoreline, estuarine and nearshore habitats. These changes alter the natural processes that support healthy nearshore life, including limiting food and nutrient sources for marine life, stopping the flow of beach sediment, and altering the flows of surface and groundwater.

Q What can be done to restore the Puget Sound nearshore?

A Early restoration efforts have been encouraging, yet these efforts have been small compared to the widespread, ongoing environmental deterioration. A broad systematic approach to reverse and prevent the harm is needed. The next step is to understand conditions within the nearshore and what's causing the environmental problems.

The Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project is completing a Sound-wide analysis of these problems and associated feasible solutions. The nearshore team also is implementing on-the-ground actions through the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program, learning from the results as projects progress.

Q What's happening now?

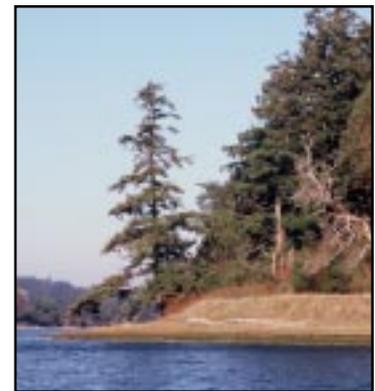
A The project has finished an analysis of how the features of the nearshore have changed since

the earliest records. The project is currently documenting how these changes will continue in the future if they aren't addressed, as well as how these changes affect ecosystem functions, goods, and services that the region depends on. The study will expand collaborations with stakeholders and the public to recommend a portfolio of restoration and protection solutions to address these problems and improve the condition of nearshore ecosystems.

The nearshore team has made a long-term commitment to the restoration and preservation of the Puget Sound nearshore. The scope of this commitment includes presenting the feasibility study report to Congress in 2010 and continuing to implement early action projects. Large-scale restoration projects could be underway by 2012. A key outcome of the Nearshore Project is to determine the fundamental causes of ecological decline and conduct feasible actions to restore the ecosystem.

Q How much does this cost and who's paying for the project?

Through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers General Investigation Authority, the Corps and Washington Department of



Fish and Wildlife maintain a 50/50 cost share agreement for the feasibility study, which will cost approximately \$19 million. Most of the local costs are being shared by the local partners, including tribes, state and local government organizations, environmental groups and industries. The Estuary and Salmon Restoration Project has invested nearly \$14 million in early action projects, to date.

Q What is the relationship between Washington State's Puget Sound Partnership and the Puget Sound Nearshore Partnership?

In 2007, Washington State created a new state agency, the Puget Sound Partnership. Governor Christine Gregoire and the Washington State Legislature gave the Puget Sound Partnership the task of creating a real Action Agenda that turns things around and leads to a healthy Puget Sound. The Action Agenda will prioritize cleanup and improvement projects, coordinate federal, state, local, tribal and private resources, and make sure that everyone is working cooperatively.



Washington State's Puget Sound Partnership is studying the health of the entire Puget Sound ecosystem. Whereas, the Puget Sound Nearshore Partnership, established in 2001, is looking at significant ecosystem problems in the Puget Sound nearshore, which extends from the top of shoreline bluffs to the water depth where light still penetrates to the bottom.

The Puget Sound Nearshore Partnership has become an integral part of Washington State's Puget Sound Partnership. Many members of the

Puget Sound Neashore Partnership also serve on the Puget Sound Partnership. The two groups will continue to work together to create the best plan for a clean and healthy Puget Sound.

Looking for more information?

The best way to keep up-to-date on the Nearshore Project is to visit www.pugetsoundnearshore.org. The Web site includes an events calendar, current data and technical documents. Questions can be addressed to the project managers at info@pugetsoundnearshore.org. Or you also can contact the project managers directly:

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