



HOOD CANAL SHELLFISH INITIATIVE

June 2020 Progress Update

The Hood Canal Shellfish Initiative (HCSI) is a multi-beneficial approach to support and enhance our valued shellfish resources

The Hood Canal Coordinating Council (HCCC) is working with Hood Canal shellfish community partners in a collaborative and inclusive process to support and expand Hood Canal's thriving shellfish resources and identify coordinated and multi-beneficial strategies and actions that honor tribal treaty rights, build resilience, pursue ecosystem protection and restoration, and support careful stewardship of commercial shellfish activities and recreational harvest now and into the future.

The effort includes a comprehensive review of the barriers and opportunities to sustain robust shellfish resources that support a healthy ecosystem and community, and will result in an actionable workplan to achieve desired ecological and social outcomes.



Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe's youth help spread oyster seed, photo provided by Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe

Our Opportunity

Hood Canal is characterized by its iconic shellfish, which are culturally, ecologically, and economically important to local communities and of critical significance to the indigenous community. The opportunity to promote the resilience of Hood Canal shellfish to environmental and human pressures is uniquely served by a collaborative, diverse network of partners invested in Hood Canal's long-term vitality and identity.

A workgroup representing Hood Canal tribes, local, governments and community members, state, and federal shellfish interests was formed to harness this broad collective expertise. HCCC has also partnered with Oregon State University researchers to apply a Structured Decision Making (SDM)¹ framework to facilitate a transparent process and an action plan that represents our shared values.

¹SDM is a collaborative decision-making framework combining stakeholder engagement and value elicitation with alternatives analysis. SDM ensures that diverse values are surfaced and incorporated into proposed actions and priority-setting.

HCSI Objectives

The workgroup has developed the following objectives to achieve our goal and guide HCSI Action Plan development:

- > **Protect and improve Hood Canal's water quality**
- > **Protect and improve shellfish habitat**
- > **Support a sustainable Hood Canal commercial shellfish industry**
- > **Restore native Hood Canal Olympia Oyster populations**
- > **Expand harvest opportunities for treaty tribes, the local community, and visitors**
- > **Promote cultural appreciation of Hood Canal shellfish**



A shellfish worker shucks oysters, photo by Kristian Marson

Hood Canal Shellfish Initiative materials can be found at HCCC.wa.gov/ShellfishInitiative

Learn more about the status of Hood Canal shellfish resources at OurHoodCanal.org

Next Steps for HCSI Completion

The workgroup is reviewing and refining the action plan content generated to date. Next, the group will consider packages of actions for prioritization. These recommendations will go to the HCCC Board of Directors for review and approval.

HCCC is planning the Hood Canal Shellfish Summit, a broader public event, to present the draft HCSI Action Plan and gather feedback. Plans are currently being re-scope due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Following the summit, the HCSI Action Plan will be finalized and presented to the HCCC Board for final approval and funding selection. Funded projects will then be implemented with remaining funds in our current HCSI project grant and any other funding contributions from shellfish partners.

Monitoring of performance measures and adaptive management will begin while additional funding is sought for project implementation. The timeline below summarizes our remaining work.



Harvesters head out to the shellfish bed at the Hama Hama Oysterama, photo by Haley Harguth

Project Timeline

Activity	Outcome	Timeframe
Engage shellfish partners & form workgroup	Workgroup formed with high interest and engagement from important stakeholders	Complete
Develop HCSI Action Plan using SDM	A detailed strategic action plan with recommended implementation priorities	Now - Summer 2020
Host a Hood Canal Shellfish Summit	HCSI outreach; feedback gathered from a broader audience of stakeholders and the public	Late Summer 2020
Finalize the HCSI Action Plan	Revised HCSI Action Plan presented for final HCCC Board of Directors review	Late summer/Fall 2020
Make implementation funding decisions	HCSI actions selected for implementation	Fall/Winter 2020
Implement HCSI priority actions	HCSI actions implemented with project funds while other funding sources sought	2021 and ongoing
Monitor & adaptively manage HCSI progress	Data collection; Implementation progress evaluated	2021 and ongoing

The Hood Canal Coordinating Council is a council of governments formed in 1985 in response to water quality problems and related natural resource issues in the Hood Canal watershed. Its mission is to work with partners and communities to advance a shared regional vision to protect and recover Hood Canal's environmental, economic, and cultural wellbeing.



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PORT GAMBLE S'KLALLAM TRIBE



SKOKOMISH
INDIAN TRIBE
SqWux'Wa'S'q'at "People of the River"



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