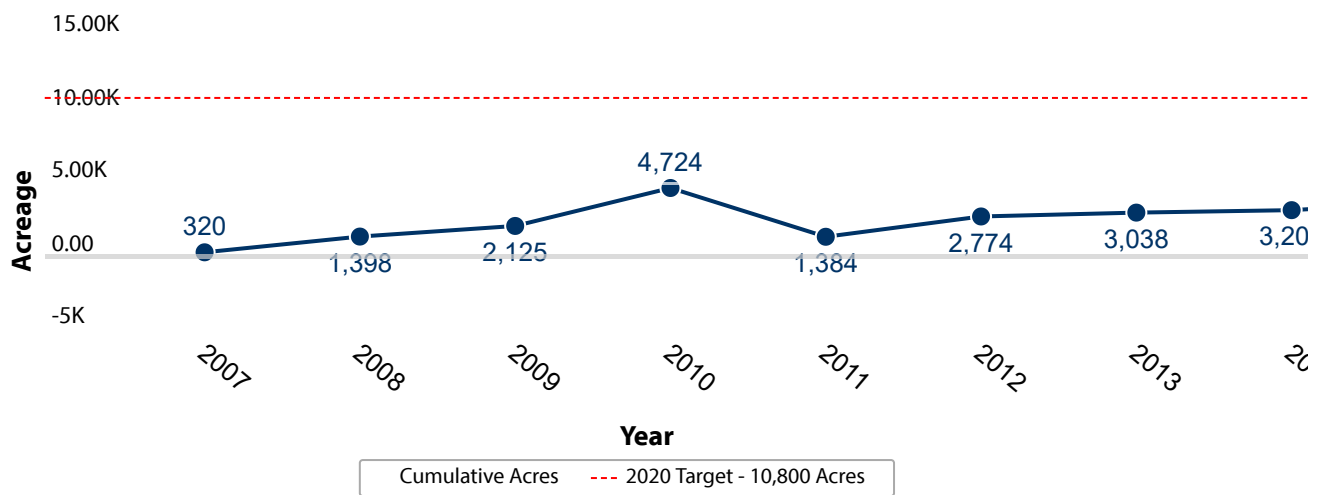




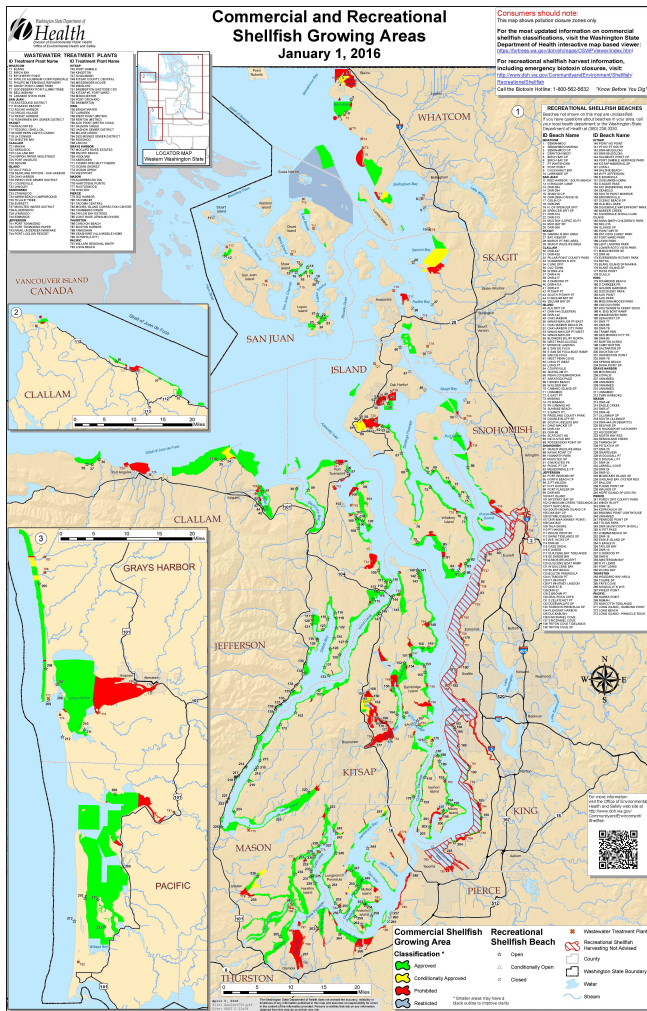
2.1 Increase improved shellfish classification acreage in Puget Sound to a net increase of 10,800 harvestable acres between 2007 and 2020



[Explore the data](#)

Supplemental Report:

- [July 13, 2015 Supplemental report \(click here\)](#).
- [July 11, 2016 Supplemental report \(click here\)](#).
- [July 2016 Memorandum of Agreement \(Response to Water Quality Problems\) \(click here\)](#).



The Washington State Department of Health regularly monitors water quality and shoreline pollution sources and uses strict standards to assure that shellfish are safe to eat.

Harvest areas are "classified" based on water quality conditions in the area. Classifications include:

- 145,170 acres "**Approved**" (green on map) – Open to harvest.
- 9,825 acres "**Conditionally Approved**" (yellow on map) – Open to harvest except during specific pollution events.
- 36,631 acres "**Prohibited**" (red on map) – Closed to harvest.

A net improvement is:

- Total upgraded acreage minus total downgraded acreage.
- It only includes changes associated with the improvement or decline of water quality.

Why is this a priority?

Based on the stringent water quality standards used to classify commercial shellfish harvesting areas, the net change in classified acres is an indicator of water quality conditions and the overall health of Puget Sound. The removal of pollution sources results in better water quality, increased opportunities to harvest shellfish, and a healthier Puget Sound. Clean water and safe shellfish are important to our state:

- Health - shellfish from polluted water are unsafe to eat.
- Economy - commercial harvesters contribute to the economy and provide jobs.
- Culture - strong connection to this natural resource and all it has to offer for Native Americans, recreational harvesters, and beach goers.
- Environment - water that is clean enough to harvest and eat shellfish is supportive of the entire ecosystem including recreational opportunities that our ecosystem provides.

How are we doing?

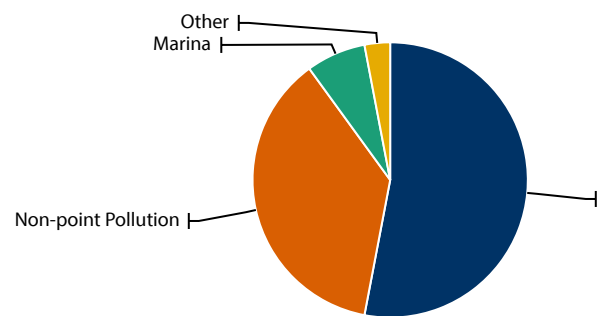
- There has been an improving water quality trend in shellfish harvesting since the late-1990s, including a net improvement of 3,038 acres since 2007.

- The number of areas "threatened" with a classification downgrade due to water quality has declined since 2005 due to pollution correction activities by many partners; however, we are currently seeking an increase in "threatened" shellfish growing areas in Puget Sound.
- In 2011 about 4,000 acres were downgraded in Samish Bay due to water quality issues. While water quality has improved, we are still not meeting the standard that will upgrade the classification of the area. Water quality improvement in Samish Bay is a high priority for the state. If Samish Bay is not reopened, the state will not meet its 2020 target.
- Marine water quality in Whatcom County's Portage Bay Shellfish Growing Area is not meeting the standard, 796 acres were downgraded from approved to prohibited in 2016.
- After 20+ years of pollution identification and correction work, 810 acres of the Drayton Harbor Shellfish Growing Areas were upgraded from conditional approved to approved in 2016.

Barriers to success:

- Insufficient farm waste management in some counties.
- Lack of sustainable local nonpoint pollution programs.
- Limited control of boaters' waste.
- Difficulty managing on-site sewage system management and repair programs.
- Wastewater treatment plant outfalls to Puget Sound.

Wastewater Treatment Plants
Non-point Pollution Marina Other
Barriers to Potential Improvements



What are we working on?

- Department of Health awarded local governments roughly \$6 million in National Estuary Program (NEP) funds for septic management programs and \$9 million to develop and implement coordinated pollution identification and correction (PIC) programs within shellfish harvesting areas since 2011.
- We are preventing shellfish bed downgrades. We evaluate all commercial shellfish growing areas each year, identify the areas that are "threatened" with closure due to pollution, and implement coordinated projects with our partners to correct pollution problems.
- We are using technology to become more transparent with our data so others can evaluate current water quality conditions and respond appropriately. Visit: <https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/eh/maps/OSWPViewer/index.html>

How can you help?

- Maintain your on-site septic system. Make sure it is inspected according to the schedule defined by your local health department and that it is functioning properly. For more

information, visit:

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/WastewaterManagement/OnsiteSewageSystemsO>

- Maintain your farm. Contact your local Conservation District to implement Best Management Practices.
- For more information about discharge of waste from boats in Puget Sound, visit: www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/nonpoint/CleanBoating/ndzwhyndz.html
- Clean up after your pets and properly dispose of their waste. For more information, visit: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/washington_waters/dogpoop.html
- For information on recreational shellfish beaches, visit: www.doh.wa.gov/ShellfishSafety.htm

Where to get more information?

[For additional charts and information, click here to view Supplemental Report \(July 2015 Goal Council Report\).](#)

Action Plan:

Problem / Opportunity	Strategies	Task	Due Date	Status
<p>Insufficient farm waste management in some counties</p> <p>Measure # 2.1.</p> <p>Partner DOH, ECY, AGR, PSP, WCC, and other stakeholders</p>	<p>Identify root causes/barriers and develop potential solutions to encourage landowners to properly manage waste on their property.</p>	<p>Continue to provide outreach and education to farmers who apply manure, develop a training accreditation program, increase inspections in watersheds impacting water quality, and identify gaps in manure management programs.</p> <p>Expected Results Improved farm waste management so that water quality standards and/or TMDL goals are met and shellfish growing areas are safe for harvest.</p>	<p>12/31/2016 12:00:00 AM</p>	<p>On track</p>

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