



# Hood Canal Coordinating Council (HCCC)

Jefferson, Kitsap & Mason Counties; Port Gamble S'Klallam & Skokomish Tribes

## Hood Canal Shellfish Initiative (HCSI) Workgroup Meeting #4

Date: May 7, 2020; 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Location: Zoom

Links:

- [Agenda](#)
- [Objectives](#)
- [Survey results](#)
- [Objective #2](#) ("Shellfish Habitat")
- [Objective #3](#) ("Water Quality")
- [Objective #5](#) ("Harvest Opportunities")

Attendees:

- Phil Best, Hood Canal Environmental Council
- Laura Butler, WA State Dept. of Agriculture
- Joth Davis, Baywater Shellfish Co.
- Bill Dewey, Taylor Shellfish Farms
- Jen Doughty, Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group
- Sarah Fiske, Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee
- David Fyfe, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
- Bobbi Hudson, Pacific Shellfish Institute
- Teri King, WA Sea Grant
- Paul McCollum, Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe
- Camille Speck, WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
- Dan Tonnes, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- Jon Wolf, Skokomish Indian Tribe

Facilitators:

- Haley Harguth, HCCC
- Nate White, HCCC
- Kelly Biedenweg, Oregon State University
- David Trimbach, Oregon State University

### Welcome and Introductions

HCCC staff provided an overview of the meeting

- Review Objectives
- Rank Objectives
- Brainstorm Actions

### Review Objectives

Since the last meeting, HCCC staff refined the [Objectives](#) generated by the Workgroup. They were presented to the Workgroup for feedback.

Objective 1: Restore native Hood Canal Olympia Oyster populations

*Performance Measure: Density (square meter)*

HCCC staff comments:

- The objective was changed from focusing on all native Hood Canal shellfish to just Olympia oysters because they have the most data and the most organized restoration efforts.
- Density per square meter was chosen because it is a common measurement of restoration success used by the Puget Sound Restoration Funds and others.

Objective 2: Protect and improve shellfish habitat

*Performance Measure: Net change in permitted shoreline armor (mi)*

HCCC staff comments

- There was agreement that the notion of the amount of altered shorelines and tidelands is a way to measure the progress of achieving some sort of protection and improvement of shellfish habitat.
- Shoreline armor is one way that shorelines and tidelands are altered. There is a lot of data available right now and momentum to continue collecting it due to recovery efforts related to orcas, salmon, and forage fish.
- The “net change in permitted shoreline armor” performance measure is used by the Puget Sound Partnership as an indicator to track their success in addressing shoreline armor. The length of permitted shoreline armor is compiled from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Hydraulic Permit Applications (HPA), which are updated regularly.
- One limitation of the “net change in permitted shoreline armor” performance measure is that it does not include shoreline armor on tribal or military lands.
- Other potential performance measures include Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) overwater structures data, and the Beach Strategies dataset. However, the DNR dataset does not seem to be on a regular schedule to be updated, and there is uncertainty how regularly the Beach Strategies dataset will be updated in the future.

Workgroup comments

- Remove “permitted” from the Objective language: limits reporting to just official armor?
- Include unpermitted shoreline armor, too
- Remote sensing may be a method to track unpermitted shoreline armor
- Jetties, etc. may not be captured in permitted armor (jetties starve beaches of sediment); we could include tracking jetty/other unpermitted installations and have it be something we aspire to measure rather than what we have now
- Shoreline armor might not impact shellfish as much as it does finfish and forage fish

Objective 3: Protect and improve Hood Canal’s water quality

*Performance Measure: Shellfish growing area classifications (acres)*

HCCC staff comments

- The Washington Department of Health updates growing area classifications regularly.

Objective 4: Support a sustainable Hood Canal commercial shellfish industry

*Performance Measure: Economic output: Regional value (\$)*

HCCC staff comments

- We're working with the WDFW to get aquatic farm permits that contain economic output.

Objective 5: Expand harvest opportunities for the local community, visitors, and treaty tribes

*Performance Measure: Locally harvested foods (frequency)*

HCCC staff comments

- The frequency of locally harvested foods is measured in Kelly Biedenweg’s (Oregon State University) research about human wellbeing indicators. It measures how often people are harvesting noncommercial shellfish in Hood Canal.

Objective 6: Promote cultural appreciation of Hood Canal shellfish  
*Performance Measure: Participation in cultural practices (satisfaction)*

HCCC staff comments

- The satisfaction of Hood Canal residents participating in cultural practices is also measured in Kelly’s human wellbeing research.

Note: HCCC staff removed the “Improve the resilience of Hood Canal shellfish to future pressures” Objective and incorporated elements of resilience, climate change, and other future pressures (i.e. ocean acidification, rising water temperatures, sea level rise, population growth, etc.) into the other Objectives. This was done mostly because measuring the performance of achieving resilience proved very difficult, and because elements of resilience to future pressures can be found in the other Objectives. There was agreement that this was a good decision.

Note: The Objectives are iterative and can be changed at any time during this planning process.

**Rank Objectives**

Kelly Biedenweg reviewed the [results](#) from a survey that was sent out to Workgroup participants prior to the meeting. The survey asked participants to rank how important each of the proposed Objectives is to them relative to the others on a scale of low, medium, high. The goal of the survey is to reach consensus on the rankings so that the DASEES Structured Decision Making tool can identify the best decisions and actions to take to achieve the highest priority Objectives. The survey was sent out twice to ensure it received a good response rate. 20 responses were received.

Ranking the Objectives is important because when the Workgroup selects final actions to take, those actions may differentially impact these objectives. For example, if we were to rank all of these objectives equally then we might not pursue an action that positively affects water quality but negatively impacts or has no impact on harvest opportunities. In this case, our equal Objectives rankings tells us to not do an action that actually would have improved water quality.

This will help us when we use the DASEES Structured Decision Making tool. After ranking the importance of the Objectives, we can then assign weights to them. This influences the final output in DASEES, called a consequence table. Ultimately, this process can show what actions to take to achieve the Objectives compared to the status quo.

Note: Weighting the Objectives is also an iterative process. Once actions are brainstormed, or at any other point during this planning process, the Workgroup can edit the Objectives rankings so they best reflect Workgroup values.

Workgroup Comments:

- The “Protect and improve shellfish habitat” Objective might be ranked too high. More understanding of what actions would fall under this Objective are needed to be more comfortable with this ranking.
- It was difficult to prioritize the Objectives because they all seem like priorities. Because of this, there was no expectations about what a final ranking would look like.
  - HCCC staff response: We can use weighting in DASEES to differentiate between similarly ranked Objectives to make ranking easier.
- The “Expand harvest opportunities for the local community, visitors, and treaty tribes” Objective would probably be the highest priority for tribes. But all of the Objectives are connected somewhat (water quality and habitat, for example), so pursuing the other

Objective equates to expanding harvest opportunities. Acknowledgement of how this complexity makes it difficult to rank.

- Kelly response: It is good for us to keep in mind that the Workgroup's preferences might accomplish multiple Objectives without specifically calling out those Objectives. It could also be that the group's preferences might not match or even hide other preferences. So, as we develop the actions and think more about the Objectives through that lens, we can always revisit the Objectives rankings to make sure they actually represent what it is we care about. It is probably a little too early to make a final decision on it right now.

The Workgroup acknowledged their comfort with these preliminary rankings, given the comments expressed and knowing that the rankings can be returned to at a later time for refinement.

### **Brainstorm Actions**

HCCC staff split the Workgroup up into three subgroups to brainstorm Actions related to [Objective #2 \("Shellfish Habitat"\)](#), [Objective #3 \("Water Quality"\)](#), [Objective #5 \("Harvest Opportunities"\)](#). Subgroups were instructed on what makes a good Action, including example actions. In addition to brainstorming new Actions, the subgroups reviewed, revised, and deleted actions that were generated previously. The subgroups also came up with appropriate metrics to measure the success of completing the actions. It was acknowledged that brainstorming actions is also an iterative process that can be returned to.

Note: Subgroup notes were captured directly in the Objectives spreadsheets linked above.

### Workgroup feedback:

- Most groups ran out of time before incorporating climate change and consideration of other future pressures into their actions
  - HCCC staff response: There will be time at subsequent meetings to incorporate these elements into the Actions.
- Consider adding an action addressing observed seine fishing impacts on shellfish beds for Objective #2
- Consider adding an action addressing ghost nets, traps, derelict vessels, and other manmade things left in the water that kill wildlife to Objective #2. It might not have any effect on shellfish, but it is certainly a pollution/habitat problem.
  - It was mentioned that derelict vessels can also create substrate, and that some artificial reefs are leaching.
- Consider adding seaweeds and eelgrass as a potential monitoring tool to the monitoring toxics action in Objective #3
- Consider adding an action addressing public access to conservation easements when harvesting shellfish for Objective #5. It should be known whether you can use an easement to gain access to the beach for shellfish harvesting. An example is Guillemot Cove. It was acquired through Great Peninsula Conservancy and Trust for Public Lands, but when it became a County park, a restriction was put in place to not allow public shellfish harvest. It would be good to tag these sorts of areas so the public knows if they can harvest shellfish.
  - Response: There are RCWs and WACs that address what can happen on public or privately owned lands in terms of public harvest. And there has to be agreements with the WDFW Director to allow general public use on private lands. WDFW does not have regulatory authority on those private lands for establishing harvest rates, etc. unless there is an agreement made with the landowner. WDFW did look at this once with the Nature Conservancy, but it didn't gain traction. So, WDFW only regulates harvest on public lands. They do not have any privately owned lands that are managed by the Department for access.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held May 19, from 1:00-3:30 on Zoom. The Workgroup will continue brainstorming and discussing actions.