

PUGET SOUND

National Estuary Program

HOOD CANAL REGIONAL POLLUTION IDENTIFICATION PROGRAM – PHASE 4

The **Hood Canal Regional Pollution Identification and Correction (HCRPIC) Program** is a cooperative effort to protect Hood Canal water quality that has fostered and strengthened working relationships between its partners: Jefferson, Kitsap and Mason counties, the Port Gamble S'Klallam and the Skokomish Tribes.

What we're doing

HCRPIC Program partners walk Hood Canal shorelines to identify sites with high fecal pollution. They investigate any pollution “hotspots” to uncover the source and help property owners fix the problem. Through this voluntary approach, pollution is cleaned up and community relationships are strengthened as we work together to protect Hood Canal.



This fourth phase of the HCRPIC Program will build on the successes and lessons learned in the preceding phases. Phase 3 highlights include:

- 66 shoreline miles inspected
- 380 site visits conducted
- 55 septic system failures identified; 28 repairs completed
- Significant progress toward shellfish growing area upgrades in Hoodspout and Big Bend

WHY IS THIS ISSUE IMPORTANT?

Clean water is key to preserving Hood Canal's human health, robust tourism, recreational appeal, and rich natural resources, which offer important economic, cultural and subsistence value to residents and tribes statewide. The HCRPIC Program is focused on protecting our clean water by proactively identifying, investigating, and addressing threats to prevent further harm.



What are we protecting?

213 miles of shoreline for swimming, boating, and fishing

30,000 acres of shellfish growing areas

20,000 residents and **millions** of visitors

WHAT YOU CAN DO

There are over 32,000 on-site septic systems in Hood Canal, almost all are near waterbodies, and approximately 40% are over 30 years old. PIC programs are essential to improve water quality by identifying leaking systems through routine shoreline outfall sampling.

You can help by regularly maintaining your septic system to ensure it is functioning properly. Community support for water quality programs that protect Hood Canal is vital to their continuation and for the health of Hood Canal and its communities.

ABOUT THE HOOD CANAL COORDINATING COUNCIL

The Hood Canal Coordinating Council is a council of governments formed in 1985 in response to natural resource issues in the Hood Canal watershed. Its mission is to advance a shared regional vision with its partners and communities to protect and recover Hood Canal's



FOR MORE INFORMATION

HCCC.wa.gov/PIC | OurHoodCanal.org

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PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **66 acres** of shellfish beds opened in Hoodspport
- **12.3 miles** of shoreline surveyed for pollution
- **137 site visits** conducted
- **10 septic system failures** identified; 3 repairs completed, and 6 in progress
- **73 septic system maintenance rebates** dispersed for pumping/inspections and small repairs
- **12 south Hood Canal freshwater sites** monitored by citizen volunteers all showed good water quality
- **Mason County established its Clean Water District** providing sustainable funding for its water quality work
- **Technical assistance and training** provided to county water quality staff; **30 citizen volunteers** trained to collect water samples



HCRPIC Program team members collect a water sample from a shoreline drainage. Photo by Mason County Public Health

OUTCOMES

Hood Canal's water quality partners joined together to form a cross-jurisdictional program centered on collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and shared goals. Our regional approach enables efficient, prioritized, and coordinated responses to pollution threats.



Skokomish Tribal members harvest oysters at Hoodspport for first time in 50 years. Photo by Skokoimsh Tribe

SUCCESS STORIES

One mile of Hoodspport area beaches and 66 acres of shellfish beds were opened for harvest for the first time in five decades due to water quality improvements achieved through the coordinated work of HCRPIC partners.

Mason County established a Clean Water District which now helps fund its water quality program after years of strategic planning support from HCRPIC Program partners. Mason County joins the other Hood Canal counties in providing their own base level of stable, sustainable funding for ongoing PIC activities.

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

There are over **32,000 on-site septic systems** in Hood Canal, almost all are near waterbodies, and approximately **40% are over 30 years old**. **Regular septic system maintenance ensures it is functioning properly**. PIC programs are essential to improve water quality by identifying leaking systems through routine shoreline outfall sampling. Community support for these programs is vital.

LINKS

HCCC.wa.gov/PIC

Selected for funding by Shellfish SIL



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