



HOOD CANAL

...a way of life

Hood Canal isn't just our home, it's our way of life. When Hood Canal is threatened, we face risks not only to our local wildlife and ecosystems, but to our health, recreation, and economy.

The biggest pollution threats aren't always obvious. Failing septic systems can hide unnoticed for years before we see the damage they cause. The Hood Canal Regional Pollution Identification and Correction (PIC) Program works to find and address these problems *before* they cause harm.

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HOOD CANAL, CLEAN AND SAFE

A perfect Hood Canal day means the beach and the water—smooth stones under your toes, splashing and swimming in the clear water, watching children at play. Unfortunately, just one failing septic system can leak bacteria that flow down onto the beach and make your family sick.

Well maintained septic systems do not cause water quality problems; however, they can fail as they age or if they are not maintained. The most effective way to address failing septic systems is to work within our community to find and clean up pollution at the source, before it becomes a hazard.

Every year, PIC program partners walk Hood Canal shorelines to identify sites with high fecal pollution (human or animal waste). 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 our Hood Canal.

[LEARN ABOUT OUR PROCESS>>](#)



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.

PROTECTING the Hood Canal way of life



Problem

Hood Canal is home to nearly 30,000 septic systems. While septic systems typically work for about 30 years, many local septic systems are much older. When they fail, the untreated human waste flows down to the beach.

Every failing septic system that we find and fix prevents disease-causing organisms from reaching our beaches, where they can make people sick and harm the environment.



Identification

The PIC team walks priority shorelines and samples drainage to find "hotspots." We then investigate pollution sources with additional sampling and interviews.



Collaboration & Correction

The PIC team provides free technical assistance to help property owners repair their septic systems. Most repairs are corrected through a cooperative voluntary partnership.



Outcomes

Our work keeps Hood Canal's ecosystem healthy, our beaches swimmable, and shellfish beds open for harvest.

In 2017-2019, the Hood Canal Regional PIC Program monitored 66 shoreline miles, conducted 380 site visits, found 55 septic system failures, and completed 28 septic system repairs.

Visit hccc.wa.gov/PIC to learn about Hood Canal Regional PIC Program Results.

