

HOOD CANAL: *Our Place*

Clean water is essential for our health and way of life. A big part of that is making sure human and animal waste doesn't get into Hood Canal because it contains disease-causing viruses, bacteria and other organisms, as well as nutrients that fuel potentially harmful algal blooms.

ENSURING SAFE, CLEAN WATER

By routinely monitoring Hood Canal's water quality, we can detect pollution and fix it. The **Pollution Identification and Correction Team**, or PIC Team, plays a critical role in this work by focusing on preventing and reducing pollution from human and animal waste.

The Hood Canal region is home to more than 29,500 septic systems and most of them are working fine. But sometimes systems can leak or fail, and waste goes directly into the water. The PIC Team searches the shorelines, looking for pollution that puts Hood Canal at risk. When they find pollution, they track it to its source, and work with residents to stop the pollution. They help ensure our waters and beaches are safe, protecting public health and shellfish growing areas from contamination. PIC team members represent local health departments, tribes, non-profit organizations and conservation districts who focus on keeping human and animal waste out of our waters.

HOOD CANAL IS THE
largest fjord
IN THE LOWER 48 STATES—IT'S OVER
68 MILES LONG AND AVERAGES 1.5
MILES WIDE, WITH DEPTHS
OVER 600'.



ABOVE: HOOD CANAL BRIDGE *Flickr WSDOT*.
RIGHT: GIANT ACORN BARNACLES CAN GROW
TO OVER 5 INCHES IN DIAMETER! *Barbara Erickson*.

DETECTING POLLUTION

It's low tide and the PIC team is pulling on rubber boots, getting ready to go to work. Each field day, PIC team members across three counties and two tribal areas sample water that comes from streams, drainages, ditches, and storm water outfalls along Hood Canal shorelines. The team collects a water sample from each flowing drainage they find and sends it to a laboratory to check for fecal bacteria. They focus on places where people harvest shellfish, swim, and fish because that's where human health is most at risk. They've partnered with the State Department of Health and others to gather data and identify pollution hot spots—drainages with potentially high fecal pollution levels.



SOLVING POLLUTION PROBLEMS

If lab analysis determines fecal bacteria is present, the team will collect additional samples to confirm the pollution problem. If those tests come back positive, the team has a mystery. To solve it, they'll investigate the drainage to find the source(s). The cause of the pollution is usually one or more failing septic systems.

Once they've located a failing septic system, they work with the landowner to address the problem. Many people don't even know their system is causing harmful pollution and want to do what they can to fix the problem. The PIC Team can provide free assistance specific to the site and help connect the landowner with affordable loans if repairs are needed.



Learn more!

Hood Canal Regional Pollution Identification & Correction (PIC) Program: www.hccc.wa.gov/content/pollution-identification-correction
Become a Shore Steward: www.shorestewards.wsu.edu



LEFT: GREEN DYE IS USED TO REVEAL A FAILING SEPTIC SYSTEM *Michael Dawson.*
ABOVE: A HUMPBACK WHALE MADE A RARE VISIT TO HOOD CANAL IN 2012
Connie Gallant.

HOOD CANAL RESULTS

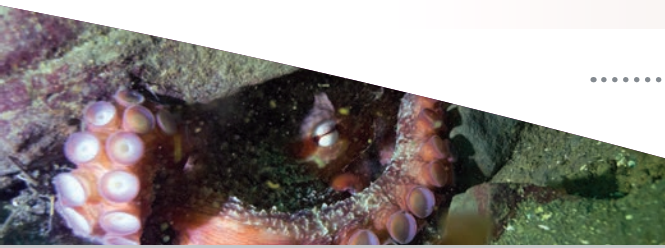
Since 2012, nearly 85 miles of Hood Canal shoreline have been surveyed by the regional PIC team in both wet and dry seasons. They met with more than 450 landowners and inspected their septic systems and drainfields looking for sewage leaks. The PIC team identified 55 failing sewage systems, many of which were discharging pollution into Hood Canal. They worked with the landowners to voluntarily fix the sewage failures. The good news is 39 systems have been repaired or replaced and are no longer polluting Hood Canal. The remaining landowners are working on their systems in order to stop pollution.



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The PIC team is exploring new pollution identification tools. To confirm whether a source of pollution is human or animal, PIC team staff from the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe are exploring the use of DNA testing and laundry brightener screening. If they prove beneficial, these emerging tools will be added to proven methods already in use.

The team will be updating maps of their work in early 2017. Maps will be available at www.hccc.wa.gov. PIC grant funding has been requested for 2017. The team hopes to transition over time to a sustainable local and regional funding plan for this important work.



PHOTOS, ABOVE CLOCKWISE: BEACHCOMBING AT SCENIC BEACH; HELMET CRAB; CLAM SHELL WITH A HOLE MADE BY A DRILL SNAIL *Barbara Erickson*. LEFT: OCTOPUS UNDER ROCK *Flicker, Ratha Grimes*.

OTHER LOCAL PARTNERS

Craft3 (Affordable Loans) 888-231-2170
www.Craft3.org/CleanWater • CleanWater@Craft3.org
 Jefferson County Conservation District . . . 360-385-4105
 Kitsap County Conservation District 360-204-5529
 Mason County Conservation District 360-427-9436
 Washington State Department
 of Health Shellfish Program 360-236-3330



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PIC TEAM PARTNERS

Hood Canal Coordinating Council:
www.hccc.wa.gov • 360-328-4625

Jefferson County Public Health:
www.jeffersoncountypublichealth.org • 360-385-9444

Kitsap Public Health District:
www.kitsappublichealth.org • 360-633-9019

Mason County Environmental Health Division:
www.co.mason.wa.us/health • 360-427-9670 ext 400

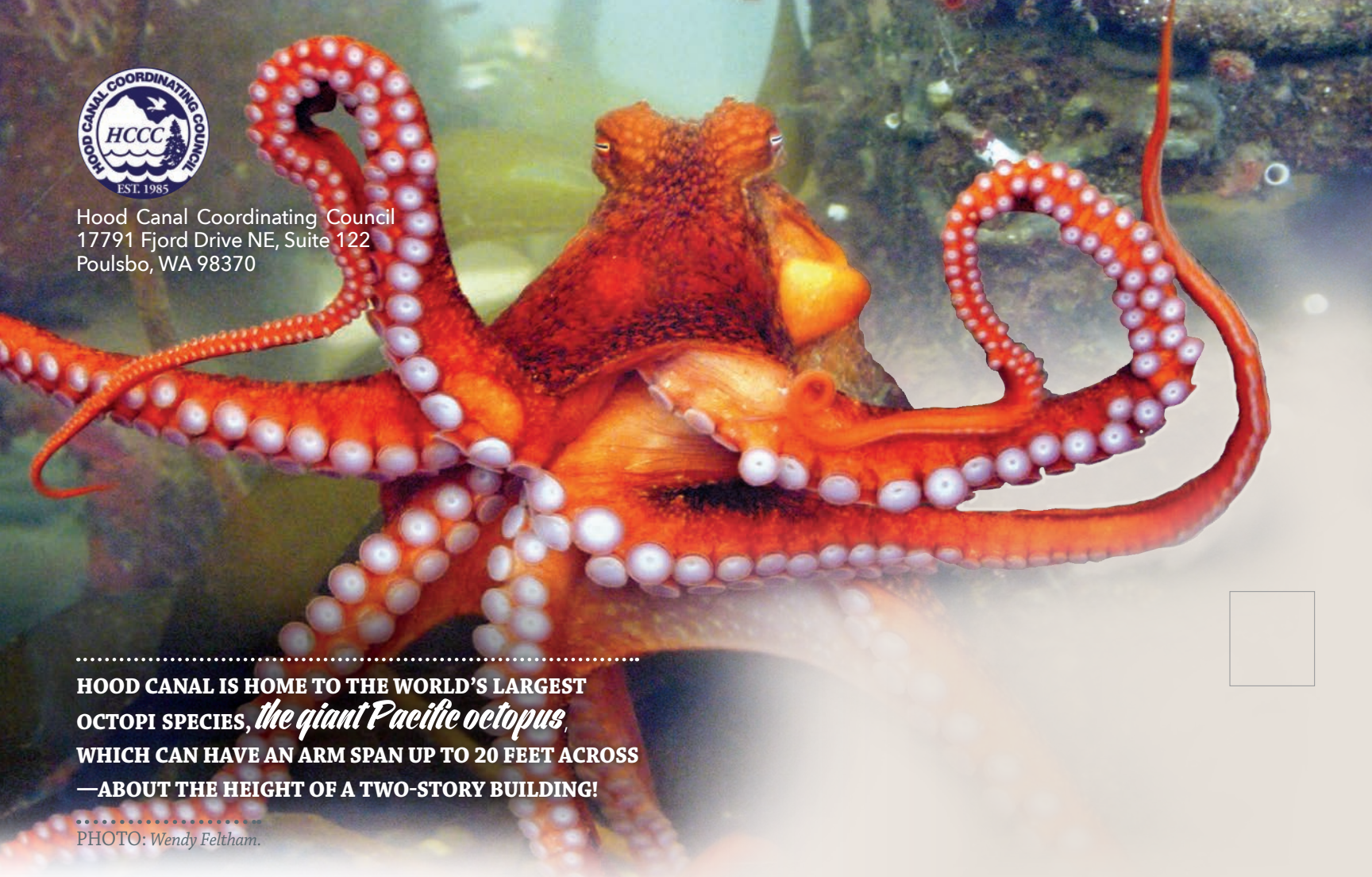
Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe:
www.pgst.nsn.us • 360-297-2646

Skokomish Tribe:
www.skokomish.org • 360-877-5213 ext 2204





Hood Canal Coordinating Council
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Poulsbo, WA 98370



HOOD CANAL IS HOME TO THE WORLD'S LARGEST
OCTOPI SPECIES, *the giant Pacific octopus*,
WHICH CAN HAVE AN ARM SPAN UP TO 20 FEET ACROSS
—ABOUT THE HEIGHT OF A TWO-STORY BUILDING!

PHOTO: Wendy Feltham.



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The Hood Canal Coordinating Council is working to protect Hood Canal's waters from harmful pollution. The Hood Canal Regional Pollution Identification and Correction Program brings local governments, tribes, and other partners together to investigate sources of pollution on our shorelines, and find adaptive solutions to correct the problems at their source.

www.OurHoodCanal.org

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: HOOD CANAL BRIDGE *Flickr WSDOT*. TWANOH BEACH *Rae McNalley*. ROCKFISH ARE AMONG THE LONGEST-LIVED FISH IN THE WORLD. SOME CAN LIVE OVER 200 YEARS! *Flickr Ratha Grimes*.

