

# PUGET SOUND nearshore PROJECT



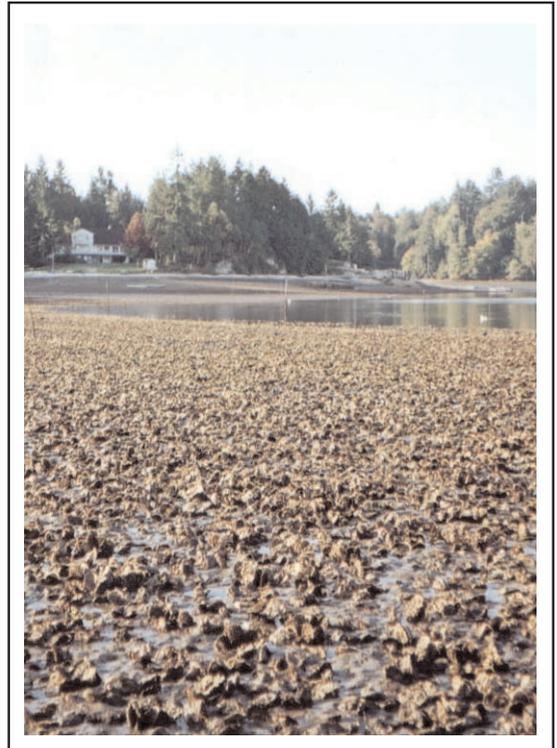
*A partnership between the citizens and governments of the State of Washington and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other federal agencies.*

## Overview of Puget Sound Nearshore Project

The Puget Sound Nearshore project is a cooperative effort among government organizations, tribes, industries, and environmental organizations to preserve and restore the health of the Sound's nearshore that generally runs from the top of bluffs on the land across the beach to the point where light penetrates the Sound's water. It includes bluffs, beaches, shorelines, mudflats, salt marshes, gravel spits and estuaries.

A General Investigation Reconnaissance Study conducted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in 2000 identified a direct link between healthy nearshore habitat and the physical condition of the shoreline. The study identified several areas that would be central in restoring nearshore processes to a more natural state:

- Providing marshes, mudflats, and beaches with essential sand and gravel materials;
- Removing, moving and modifying artificial structures (bulkheads, rip rap, dikes, tide gates, etc.);
- Using alternative measures to protect shorelines from erosion and flooding; and
- Restoring estuaries and nearshore habitat such as eelgrass beds and kelp beds.



| Timeline            | 1999                 | 2001  | 2005                   | 2008                   | Duration of Project      |
|---------------------|----------------------|---|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Project Phase/Stage | Reconnaissance Study | <b>General Investigation Assessment</b><br><b>Stage I:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt technical framework and conceptual model</li> <li>• Access existing information</li> </ul> <b>Stage II:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify needed information</li> <li>• Conduct field studies</li> <li>• Develop project criteria</li> </ul> <b>Stage III:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify restoration and protection projects</li> <li>• Begin developing and issuing permits for programmatic priorities</li> </ul> | Engineering and Design | Construction - General | Maintenance (Monitoring) |

## History of the Puget Sound Nearshore Project

In 2001, diverse organizations concerned with nearshore health and restoration recognized that a comprehensive and coordinated approach proportional to the magnitude of the tasks was needed. These organizations, which include Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, tribes, other state and federal agencies, environmental organizations, local governments, and industries, know that the nearshore problems cannot be solved through an individual effort and are committed to working together. They agreed to a collaborative approach to ecosystem restoration and protection and committed support and resources to the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project. The nearshore project team's approach has rapidly gained support and acknowledgement from industry and environmental groups who recognize the importance of the team's efforts and the promise of success.

In 1999 Congress authorized the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to do a general investigation of the nearshore with funds appropriated for the study in the Water Resources Development Act of 2000. Continued support is critical to the success of the project to restore the Puget Sound Nearshore.

The federal government has given a nod for the first phase of funding to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and U.S. Geological Survey. The first phase includes investigating current information and developing plans to do the actual restoration and preservation work.

The second phase would be a commitment of billions of dollars to restore and preserve Puget Sound. Eventually, the Puget Sound Nearshore Project could be as significant as the nearly \$8 billion authorized for restoring the Everglades in Florida and \$5 billion for restoring Chesapeake Bay in Maryland.

## Preserving and Restoring the Puget Sound Nearshore Environment

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife have entered into a 50/50 cost share agreement and, with the cooperation of a multitude of agencies and organizations, have initiated a general investigation study. This investigation has allowed scientists and engineers to begin to assess and identify ecosystem restoration and protection opportunities while developing criteria to set priorities and develop projects in the Puget Sound nearshore environment.

In addition, the U.S. Geological Survey is now helping in the Nearshore Project effort by bringing scientific expertise, as well as financial support for key studies that are intended to lead to a better understanding of nearshore processes.

### Nearshore 2002 Needs

- Adequate funding for the Puget Sound Nearshore Project, including an additional \$800,000 in federal fiscal year 2002 to implement stage one of the Project Management Plan, and
- Support for the Puget Sound Nearshore Project as a major habitat restoration project of national significance.
- Provide \$1.2 million in fiscal year 2003 to continue the feasibility phase of the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project, and
- Provide \$2 Million in fiscal year 2003 to begin construction of nearshore habitat projects under the Puget Sound and Adjacent Waters authorization.

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