

Eyes Over Puget Sound

Summary

Critters & divers

Climate & streams

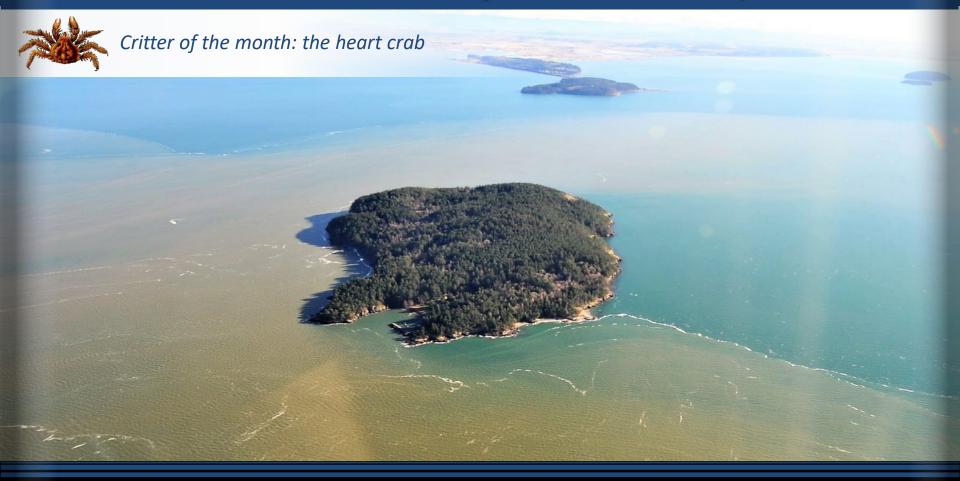
Combined factors

Marine water

Aerial photos

Data

Surface Conditions Report: February 3, 2021





Summary conditions at a glance



Summary

MONITORING

MARINE

ONG-TERM

Critters & divers

Climate & streams

Combined factors

Marine water

Aerial photos

Data



The heart crab, p. 3

Get ready to fall in love with the heart crab – a shy critter that wears its heart on its shell.

Climate & streams, p. 6-10

It has been warmer and wetter. Rivers are flowing higher than normal. Despite warmer than expected air temperatures, water temperatures are continuing to drop through winter and already exclude Northern Pacific anchovies in North Sound.

People send their observations, p. 4. 40, 41

Underwater the beauty is in the details. Puget Sound has many species worth showcasing.

The Aerial photography, p. 13-39

From patches of jellyfish and snow geese to sediment and early blooms. There is more happening in the winter than you might expect.

Editor: Dr. Christopher Krembs, editorial assistance: Valerie Partridge, Elisa Rauschl.

Dr. Christopher Krembs



Eyes Under Puget Sound 2-3-2021



Summary

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Climate & streams

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Marine water

Aerial photos

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Critter of the Month – The Heart Crab



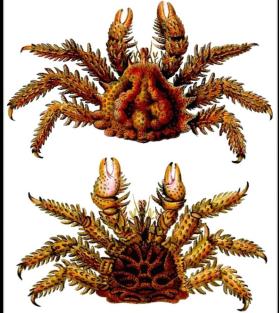
Phyllolithodes papillosus

Get ready to fall in love with the heart crab – a shy critter that wears its heart on its shell. Although it occurs in Puget Sound, we've never collected one in over 30 years of sediment sampling!

Dany Burgess

Marine Sediment Monitoring Team





Fun Heart Crab Facts

- They have a lot in common with hermit crabs
- They like to hide under stinging anemones
- One of their family members is a reality show star





Eyes on underwater species in Puget Sound 2-3-2021



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Climate & streams

Combined factors

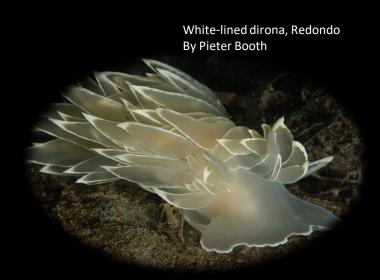
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Elisa Rauschl is reaching out to our diving community



Blob top jellyfish, Hood Canal By Kerry Edwards



Pacific spiny lumpsucker, Redondo By Jesse Miller



Juvenile PS king crab, Port Townsend By Jessica Alexanderson



Hooded nudibranchs, Port Hardy BC By Eric Askilsrud

Email erau461@ecy.wa.gov if you'd like to contribute dive photos



Supporting the diving community in Puget Sound



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Combined factors

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What was the water visibility like for divers?

Only best visibility shown for December, in form of a small diver Best and worst horizontal visibility at corresponding vertical depth

| | Best Visibility | | Worst Visibility | |
|----------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| | Horizontal Distance (ft.) | Vertical Depth (ft.) | Horizontal Distance (ft.) | Vertical Depth (ft.) |
| Location | | | | |
| 1 | 12 | 18 | 10 | 2 |
| 2 | 18 | 3 | 17 | 97 |
| 3 | 25 | 36 | 10 | 11 |
| 4 | 19 | 59 | 18 | 10 |
| 5 | 25 | 92 | 4 | 10 |
| 6 | 19 | 46 | 4 | 2 |
| 7 | 65 | 61 | 34 | 8 |
| 8 | 60 | 36 | 16 | 7 |
| 9 | 24 | 36 | 11 | 49 |
| 10 | 97 | 38 | 36 | 5 |
| 11 | 58 | 49 | 3 | 10 |
| 12 | 47 | 98 | 4 | 3 |

Find depths with high/low visibility



- Puget Sound near Three Tree Point and Dash Point (Location 10).
- Poor visibility (no diver icon)
 occurred in the top ten feet in
 several locations (Locations 5, 6,
 11, and 12), also in Central
 Sound... so get down below 40 ft!

Good Visibility Poor

This is a feature we are soliciting feedback on (skip.albertson@ecy.wa.gov).



How much water and snow did we get and will it stick?



Summary

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Climate & streams

Combined factors

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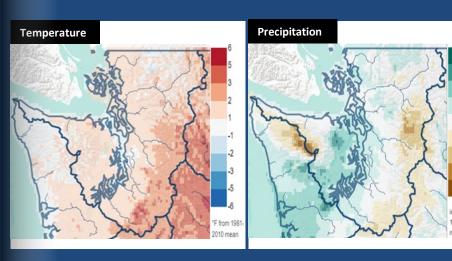
Aerial photos

Data

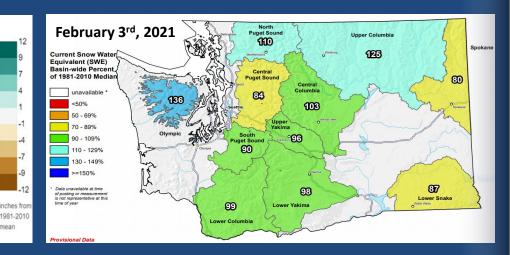


In January, Puget Sound air temperatures and precipitation were generally above normal, with some spatial variation. (A) With two months of snowpack accumulation remaining, watersheds that drain to Puget Sound hold above-normal volumes. (B) Monitoring snowpack and temperature trends will be critical as we transition to spring.

A. Northwest Climate Toolbox



B. Washington SNOTEL, USDA/NRCS



Temperature Anomaly

from historical mean daily ranged from -2 to +6 °F in the Puget Sound region during the past 30 days.

Precipitation Anomaly

from historical mean ranged from -9 to +9 inches in the Puget Sound region during the past 30 days. <u>Snow water equivalent</u> percent of median for watersheds draining to Puget Sound are just above normal. As we move toward the typical peak of seasonal snowpack accumulation, April 1st, snow water equivalents are at 105% of the historical median.



How much water flows currently into Puget Sound?



Summary

Critters & divers

Climate & streams

Combined factors

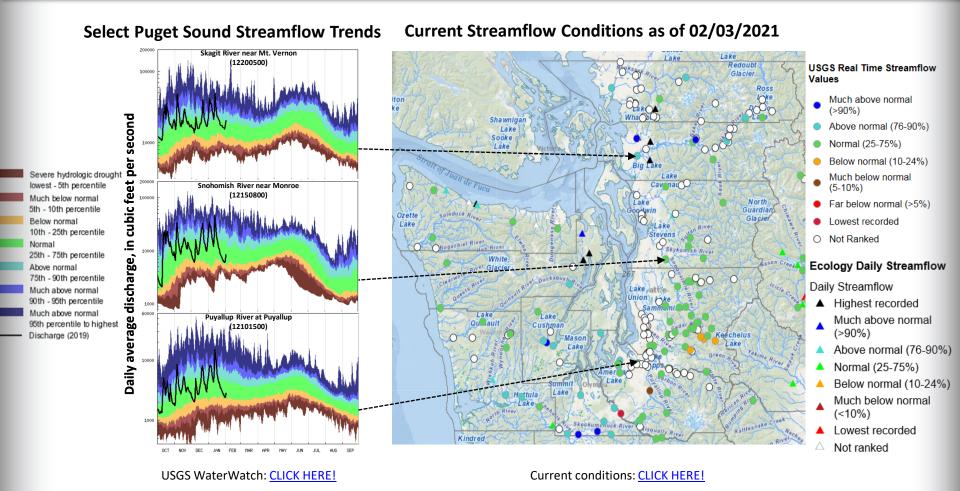
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Aerial photos

Data

Temporal: Following a series of notable precipitation events, a brief dry period resulted in a return to normal freshwater inputs from major Puget Sound rivers to Puget Sound (trend charts, left).

Spatial: Geographic variation in streamflow (map, right) is dependent on the distribution and dominant form of precipitation falling in the watershed, leading to normal and above normal conditions.





Discharge (m³ s⁻¹)

Climate: How well is the Salish Sea exchanging its water?



Summary

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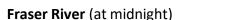
Combined factors

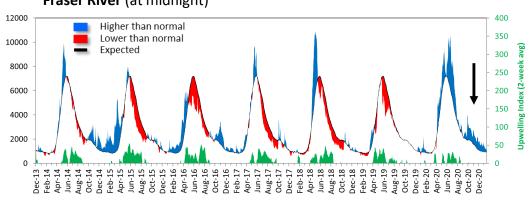
Marine water

Aerial photos

Data

Historically, the peaks of coastal upwelling and the <u>freshet</u> are in sync..





The Fraser River is the major driver of estuarine circulation and water exchange between the Salish Sea and the ocean. The Fraser River continues to flow consistently higher in 2020 even into winter 2021.

Three-year running average of PDO, Upwelling, and NPGO Indices



How do ocean boundary conditions affect the quality of water we exchange with the ocean?

Recent years' warm water is mostly gone (PDO). Upwelling (Upwelling Index <u>anomaly</u>) is relatively expected. NPGO, which reflects the surface productivity along the coast, has fallen to one of its lowest numbers (note updated past 7/2020).

Pacific Decadal Oscillation Index (**PDO**, temperature, <u>explanation</u>). Upwelling Index (anomalies) (**Upwelling**, **low** oxygen, <u>explanation</u>). North Pacific Gyre Oscillation Index (**NPGO**, productivity, <u>explanation</u>).



Climate: How well is Puget Sound exchanging its water?



Summary

Critters & divers

Climate & streams

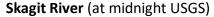
Combined factors

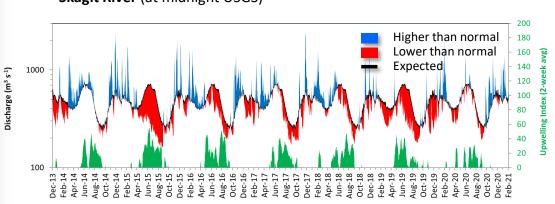
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Aerial photos

Data

The Skagit River is the largest freshwater source for Puget Sound. It is a river that is regulated.

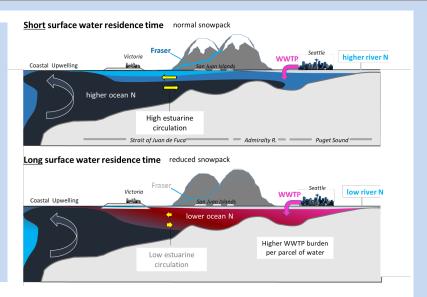




The Skagit River freshet is no longer clearly pronounced, because it is a regulated system for hydroelectric power generation. However, drought years and low flows can be seen in the river's discharge data. In the last year flows of the Skagit appear more normal than the Fraser River.

Normal river flows drive "natural" nutrient inputs and keep the water cool.

Low river flows change the nutrient balance and make water warmer.



River flows and upwelling in the summer influence our water quality.

Rivers strengthen estuarine circulation in the Salish Sea. This is important in the summer.

Upwelled ocean water provides cool, nutrient-rich water.

For that to happen, we need northerly winds and good river flows (a good snowpack) during periods of water exchange through Admiralty Reach (neap tides).



Combined factors influencing water quality



Summary

Critters & divers

Climate & streams

Combined factors

Marine water

Aerial photos

Data



In the anomaly plot, we want to connect different factors influencing water quality in the context of space and time. We do this with a heat map and anomalies by month for selected regions from north to south. For recent river and stream inflow, see page 6.

Conditions leading up to February:

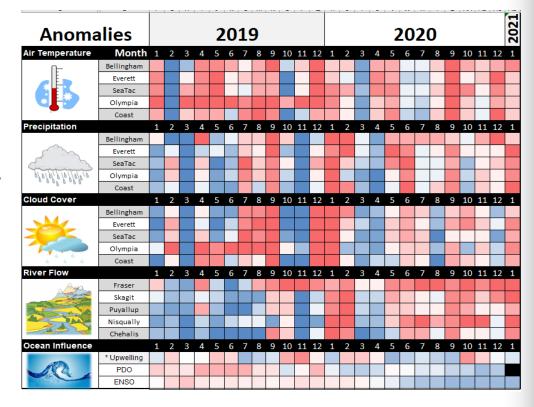
Air temperatures were generally warmer this winter through January.

Precipitation was above normal after October.

Cloud cover levels were slightly above normal, generally being closer to normal than in 2019.

River flows were higher than normal through January. Flows in 2020 were generally higher than in 2019.

Upwelling was weaker. PDO is lower and La Niña is gaining strength. Downwelling is less pronounced than normal.



All data are from public sources: UW GRAYSKIES; river flows from USGS and Environment Canada; indices from NOAA & UW (PDO).

*Upwelling/downwelling Anomalies (PFEL)

PDO = Pacific Decadal Oscillation ENSO = El Niño Southern Oscillation











Water temperature affects ecosystem performance



Summary

Critters & divers

Climate & streams

Combined factors

Marine water

Aerial photos

Data

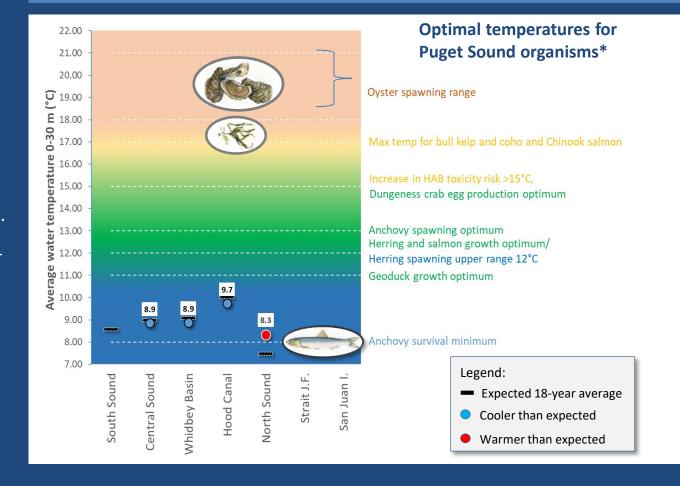


Can organisms thrive and survive?

The life cycles of organisms respond to temperature. To be successful, the timing of early life stages must line up with good growth conditions.

Temperature is important for growth, but also dictates if certain organisms can overwinter in Puget Sound (e.g., northern anchovy).

In January, average surface water (0-30 m) temperatures were slightly below expected across many regions. Water temperatures were in ranges for spawning for herring, but were approaching the minimum survival temperature for anchovies of about 8.2 °C. Coldest water temperatures in North Sound are approaching 8.2 °C. Temperatures are expected to further drop until the end of March.



^{*} Help us get these right. We scoured the literature for temperatures important to the success and survival of marine organisms.



Experts discussing marine conditions for September



Summary

Critters & divers

Climate & streams

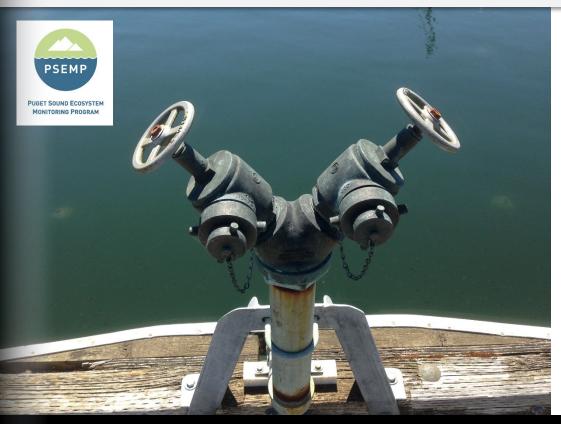
Combined factors

Marine water

Aerial photos

Data

Stay up-to-date on unfolding stories relevant to our region



The Marine Waters Work Group (PSEMP) releases a summary of its bimonthly Marine Condition Update, covering the Puget Sound region, coastal waters, and the North Pacific.

To participate in the webinar every other month, join our email list by emailing Iris Kemp (ikemp@lltk.org) or the Marine Waters Work Group (marinewaters@psemp.org).

Stay plumbed into the the information stream...

What's the story so far?

Go to the webpage and read detailed discussion summaries.



What were the conditions at the surface on 2-3-2021?



Summary

Critters & divers

Climate & streams

Combined factors

Marine water

Aerial photos

Data



Southern Hood Canal is blooming at the beginning of February. Many nearshore environments show significant amounts of suspended sediment, including sloughs in Skagit County. Jellyfish are present in Sinclair Inlet, and large flocks of snow geese are drifting at the surface of Padilla and Skagit Bays.

Start here



Mixing and fronts:

Tidal eddies around Vashon Island and Holmes Harbor; distinct fronts in the Strait of Juan de Fuca with woody debris.



Jellyfish and fish: Jellyfish abundant in Sinclair Inlet.



Suspended sediment:

Many places with suspended sediment in the nearshore. Nooksack River and Stillaguamish River both carrying very brown, sediment-rich water into adjacent bays.



Visible blooms:

Visible brown-red bloom in southern Hood Canal.



Debris:

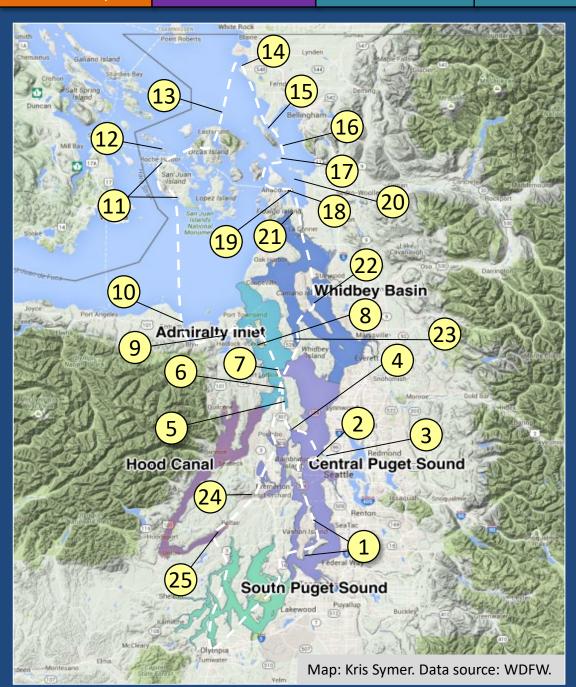
Large woody debris in Port Susan and in the Straits.



1/20/2021. Possession Sound. Rendezvous with ORCA

students and research vessel

Summary Critters & divers Climate & streams Combined factors Marine water Aerial photos Data







Aerial navigation guide Date: 2/3/2021

Click on numbers

Flight Observations
South Sound: low clouds; north of
Tacoma: broken ceiling, sunny.

Contributed observations



26)

27)

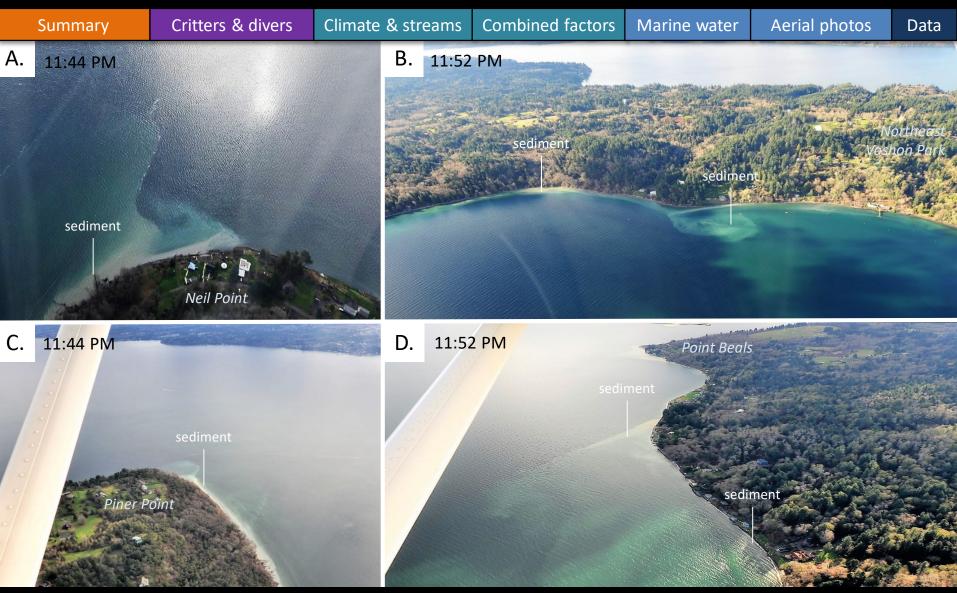
Tide data from 2-3-2021 (Seattle):

| <u>Time</u> | Pred (ft) | High/Low |
|-------------|-----------|----------|
| 01:47 AM | 8.03 | Н |
| 07:52 AM | 1.92 | L |
| 03:10 PM | 11.25 | H |
| 09:39 PM | 3.82 | L |





Navigate



Suspended sediment near the shoreline in many places around Vashon Island. Location: A. Neil Point, B. near Northeast Vashon Park, C. Piner Point, D. north of Point Beals.





Navigate

Critters & divers Summary Climate & streams **Combined factors** Marine water Aerial photos Data Bainbridge Island sediment West Point sediment sediment

Suspended sediment near the shoreline extending into Central Sound.

Location: West Point (Central Sound), 12:01 PM





Navigate

Critters & divers Summary Climate & streams **Combined factors** Marine water Aerial photos Data foam past the Ballard Locks, see pg 40 Salmon * Bay

Salmon Bay is an urban waterway. On 1/19/2021 large amounts of foam were seen past the Ballard Locks.

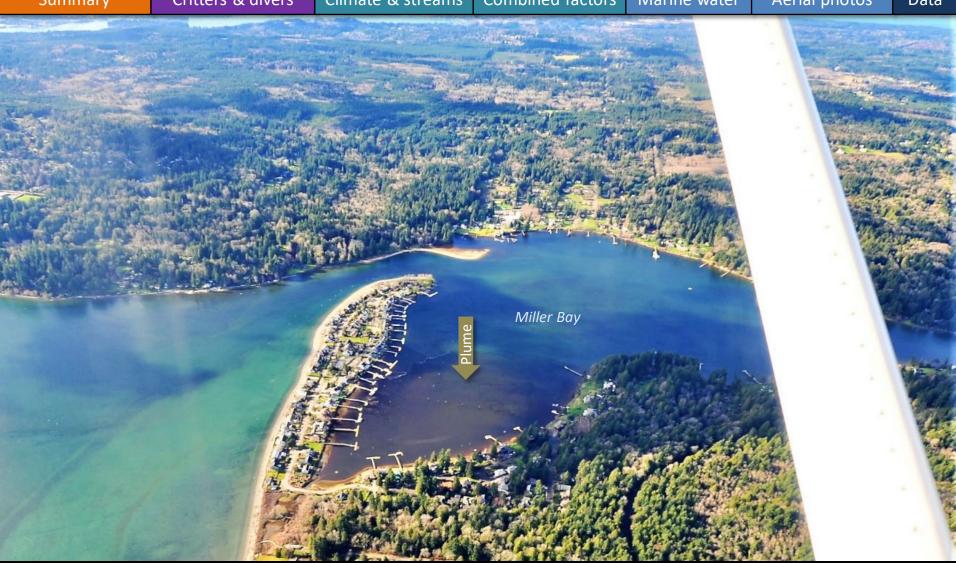
Location: Salmon Bay Seattle (Central Sound), 12:01 PM





Navigate

Climate & streams Critters & divers **Combined factors** Aerial photos Summary Marine water Data

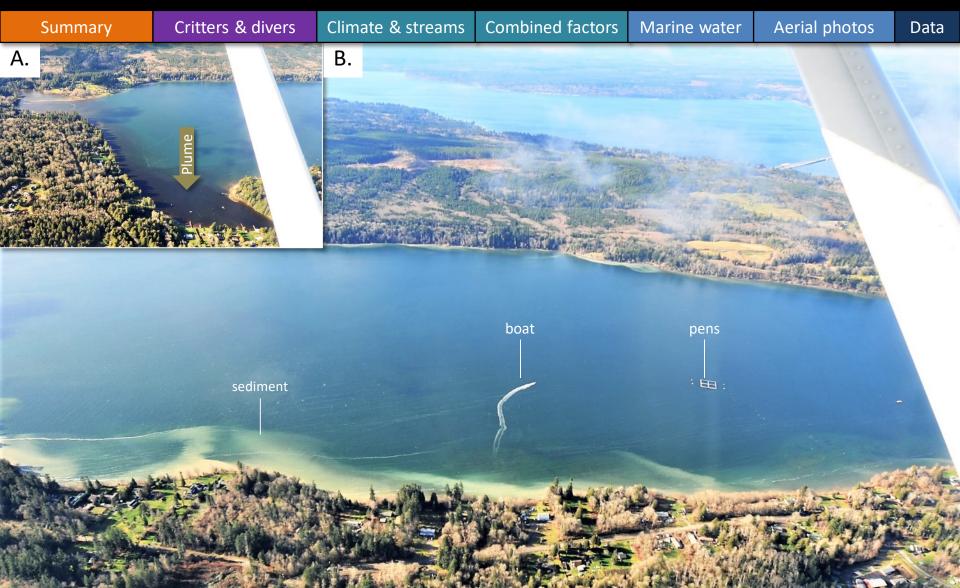


Brown boggy water, likely from a nearby creek of the same color. Location: Indianola (Central Sound), 12:07 PM





Navigate



A. River plume with brown boggy water. B. Suspended sediment near the shoreline in many places.

Location: Port Gamble (Hood Canal), 12:11 PM





Navigate

Critters & divers Climate & streams **Combined factors** Aerial photos Summary Marine water Data Hood Canal Bridge sediment

Front with organic material and suspended sediment near the shoreline.

Location: Across from Hood Canal Bridge (Hood Canal), 12:14 PM





Navigate

Combined factors Critters & divers Climate & streams Summary Marine water Aerial photos Data

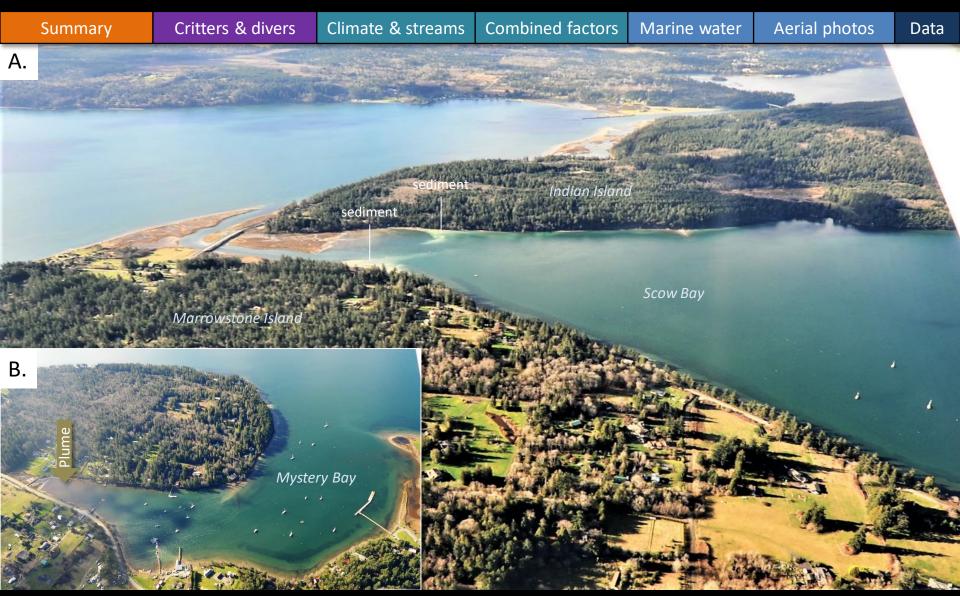
Suspended sediment near the shoreline extending into Admiralty Reach.

Location: Twin Spits, northern end of Kitsap Peninsula (Central Sound), 12:17 PM





Navigate



A. Two tidal eddies visible by suspended sediment coming from shore. B. A plume of boggy creek water. Location: Marrowstone Island (Central Sound), 12:21 PM





Navigate

Critters & divers Climate & streams **Combined factors** Aerial photos Summary Marine water Data Discovery Bay golf club sediment

Suspended sediment near the shoreline extending into Discovery Bay.

Location: Discovery Bay (North Sound), 12:29 PM





Navigate

Critters & divers Climate & streams **Combined factors** Aerial photos Summary Marine water Data Klapot Spit The Lagoon

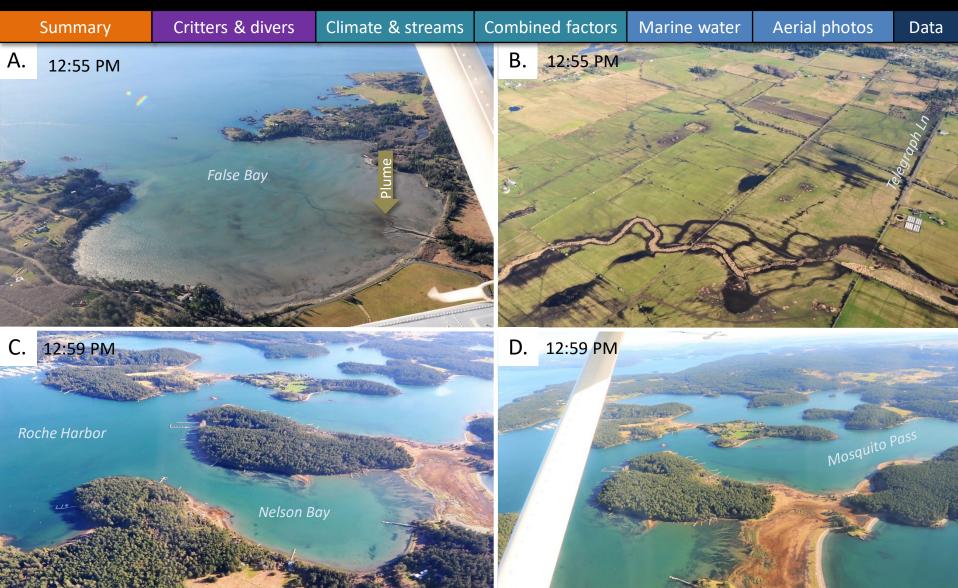
Entrance to Sequim Bay during outgoing tide. No blooming activity.

Location: Sequim Bay (North Sound), 12:35 PM





Navigate



Exploring new flight route over Friday Harbor. A. False Bay with B. creek. C-D. Roche Harbor. Location: Friday Harbor (North Sound).





Navigate

Critters & divers Climate & streams **Combined factors** Marine water Aerial photos Summary Data Stuart Island

Exploring new flight route over Spieden Island.

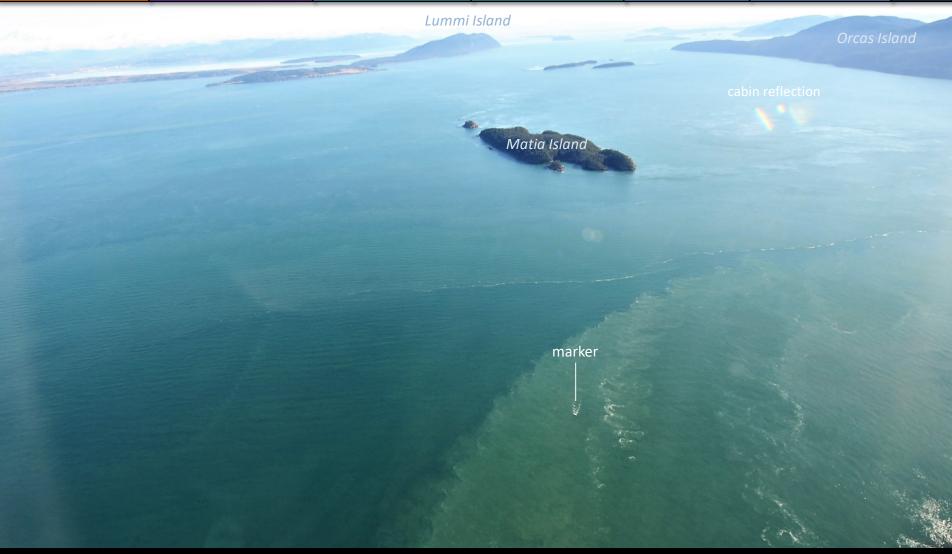
Location: Spieden Island (North Sound), 1:03 PM





Navigate

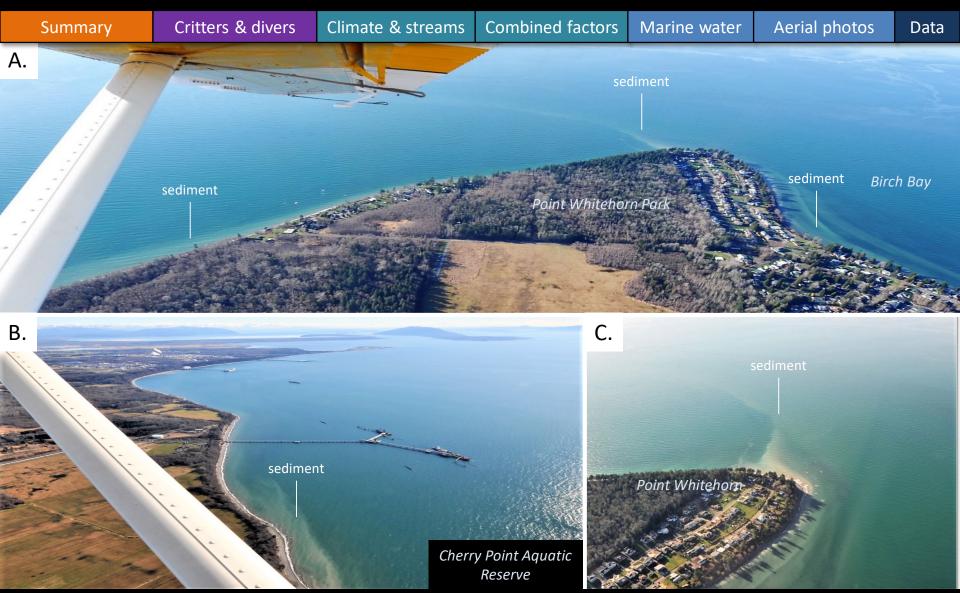
Summary Critters & divers Climate & streams Combined factors Marine water Aerial photos Data







Navigate



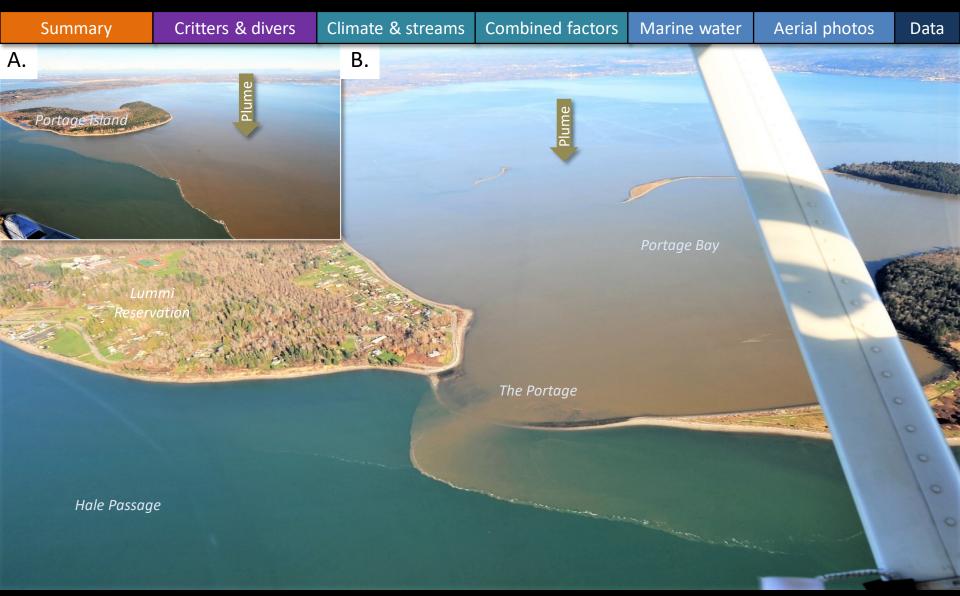
Suspended sediment near the shoreline in many places near Point Whitehorn.

Location: A. Birch Bay, B. Cherry Point Aquatic Reserve, C. Point Whitehorn (North Sound), 1:20 PM





Navigate



Nooksack River plume carrying lots of brown sediment across the portage.

Location: Portage Bay (North Sound), 1:28 PM





Navigate

Critters & divers Climate & streams Combined factors Aerial photos Summary Marine water Data A. В. Eliza Island Texwetch

Nooksack River plume carrying lots of brown sediment across Bellingham Bay. A. looking north, B. looking south.

Location: Eliza Island – Texwetch (North Sound), 1:30 PM





Navigate

Critters & divers Climate & streams **Combined factors** Summary Marine water Aerial photos Data Padilla Bay /endovi Island

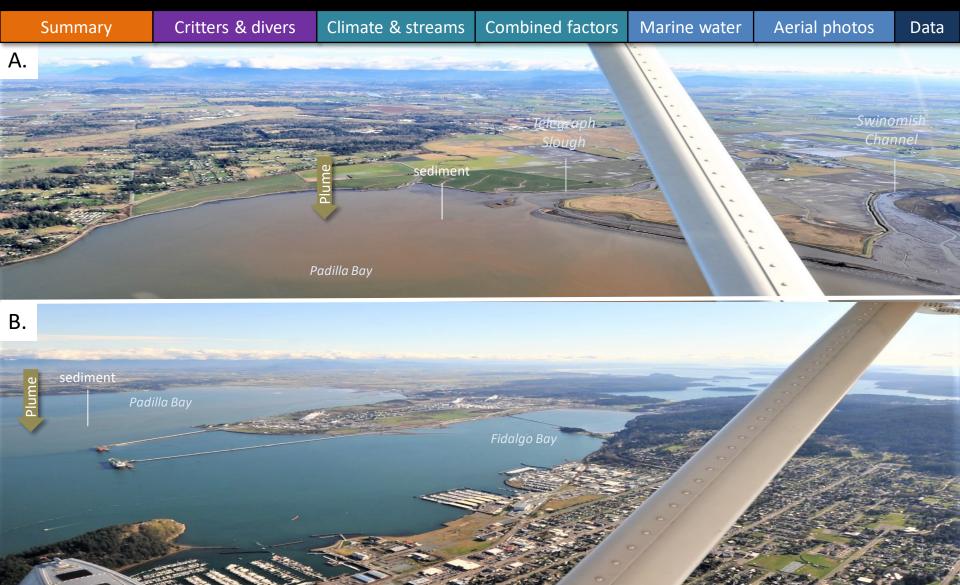
Nooksack River Plume carrying lots of brown sediment south past Vendovi Island.

Location: Vendovi Island (North Sound), 1:32 PM





Navigate



A. Sediment-rich water of Telegraph Slough entering Padilla Bay. B. Sediment-rich water extending into Padilla Bay. Location: A. Padilla Bay, B. Fidalgo Bay (North Sound), 1:35 PM





Navigate

Critters & divers Climate & streams **Combined factors** Summary Marine water Aerial photos Data Guemes Island Hat Island

A long band of sediment-rich water originating from Padilla Bay and extending into Guemes Channel.

Location: Padilla Bay (North Sound), 1:35 PM





Navigate

Aerial photos Summary Critters & divers Climate & streams **Combined factors** Marine water Data Lummi Island geese B. Skagit Bay geese 1:43 PM Padilla Bay





Navigate



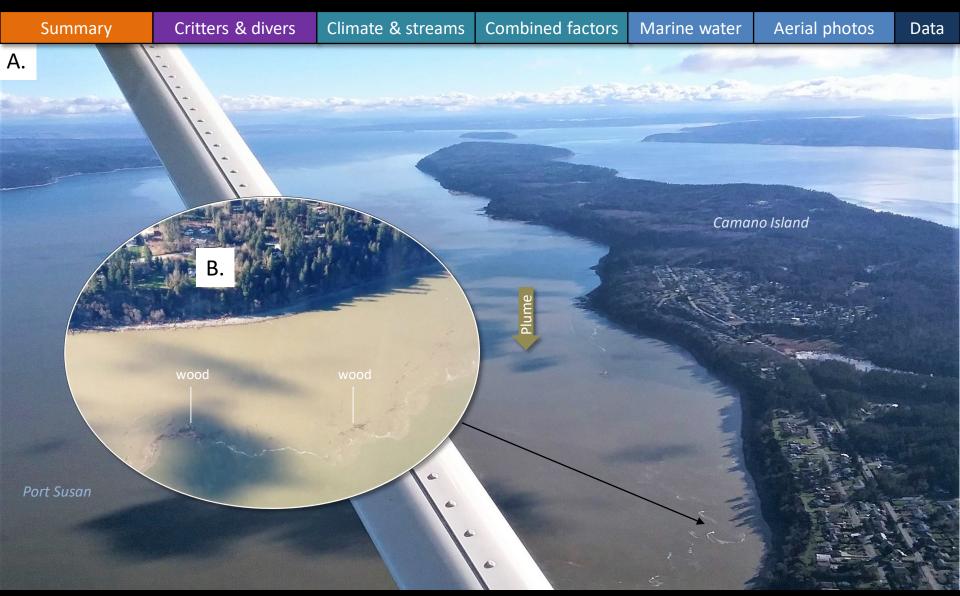
Sediment-rich water from sloughs enter A. Padilla Bay, B-C. the Swinomish Channel, and D. the Skagit River.

Location: North and south of La Conner (North Sound), 1:38 PM





Navigate

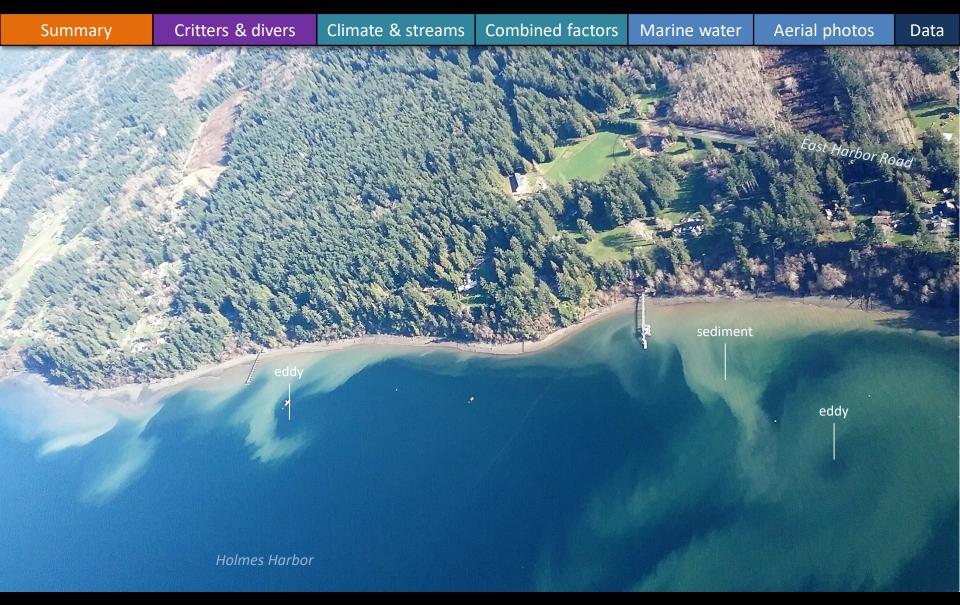




Aerial photography 2-3-2021



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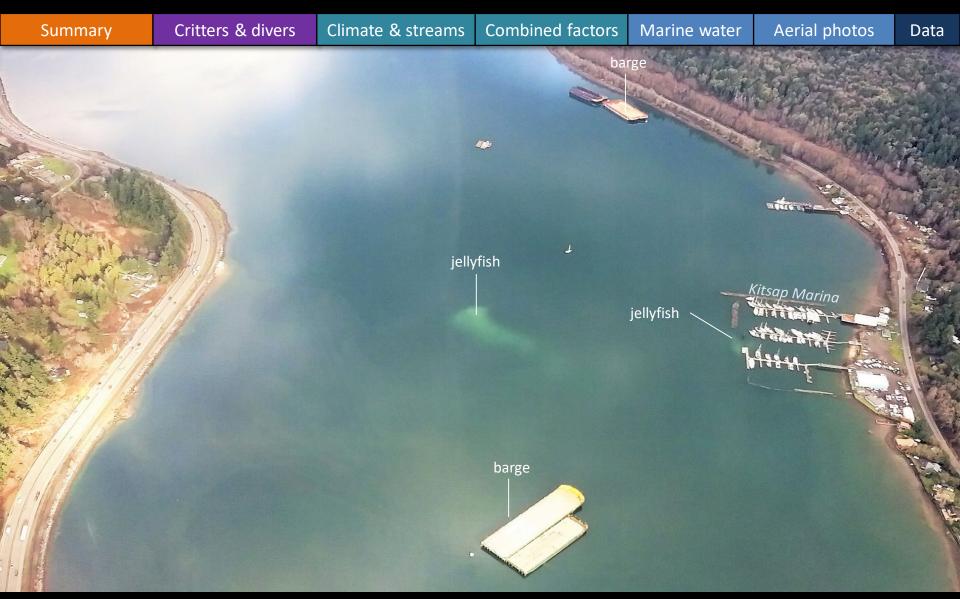




Aerial photography 2-3-2021



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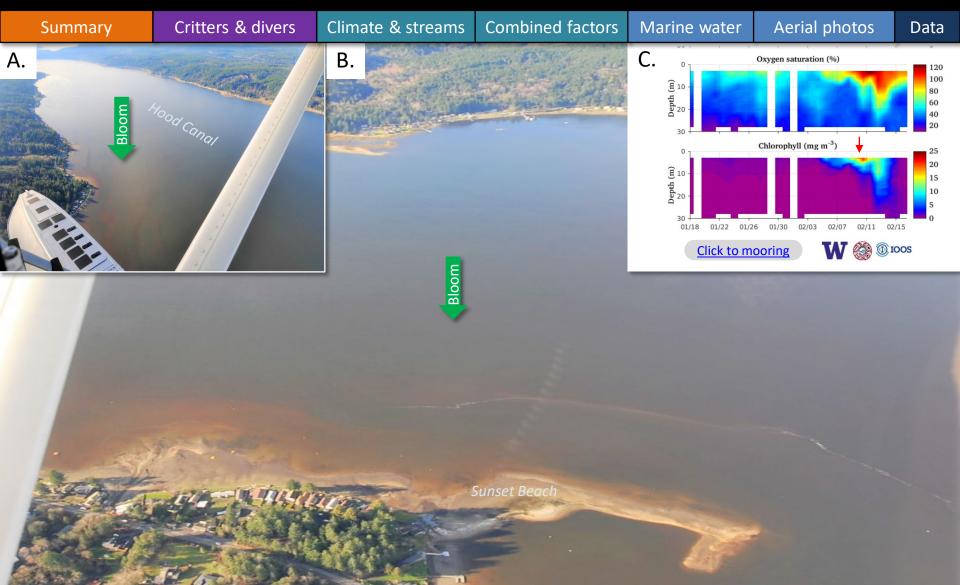




Aerial photography 2-3-2021



Navigate



A-B. Strong red-brown bloom between Twanoh and Belfair State Parks C. ORCA Twanoh mooring confirming bloom with high oxygen saturation and high Chlorophyll. Location: Sunset Beach (Hood Canal), 3:23 PM



People contribute their observations



Navigate

Critters & divers Climate & streams Combined factors Aerial photos Summary Marine water Data A. В. Salmon Bay Bridge Ballard Locks



People contribute their observations



Navigate

Critters & divers **Combined factors** Aerial photos Summary Climate & streams Marine water Data



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Combined factors Stories Critters & divers Climate & streams Marine water **Summary**

Aerial photos

Data





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Summary

Stories

Critters & divers

Climate & streams

Combined factors

Marine water

Aerial photos

Data

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Marine Monitoring Unit

Environmental Assessment Program

Washington State

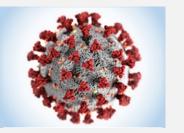
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February 3 2021 Publication No. 21-03-071

Eyes Over Puget Sound Surface Conditions Report: March 16, 2020



March_16_2020, Publication No. 20-03-071



June_4_2019 Publication No. 19-03-073



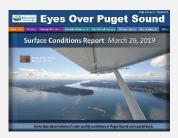
September_17_2018, Publication No. 18-03-074



January_14_2021 Publication No. 21-03-070



Jan_10_2020, Publication No. 20-03-070



March_26_2019 Publication No. 19-03-072



October_26_2020, Publication No. 20-03-073



October 30 2019. Publication No. 19-03-076



February_21_2019 Publication No. 19-03-071



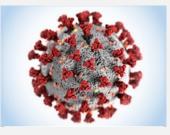
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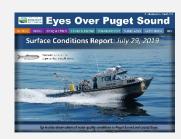
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January_10_2019 Publication No. 19-03-070



No coverage due to COVID-19 pandemic from April-September

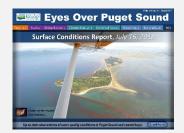


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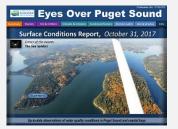


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July_16_2018, Publication No. 18-03-073



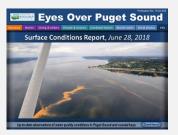
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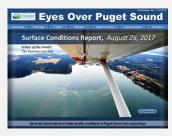
November_22_2016,Publication No. 16-03-078



May_2_2016, Publication No. 16-03-073



June_28_2018, Publication No. 18-03-072



August_28_2017, Publication No. 17-03-072



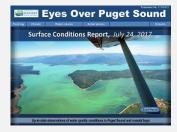
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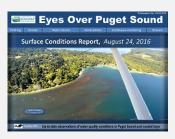
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May_22_2018, Publication No. 18-03-025



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August_24_2016,Publication No. 16-03-076



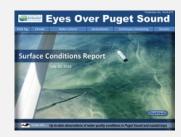
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July_20_2016, Publication No. 16-03-075



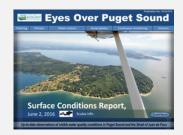
February_8_2016, Publication No. 16-03-070



Winter_2018, Publication No. 18-03-070



December_31_2016, Publication No. 16-03-079



June_27_2016, Publication No. 16-03-074



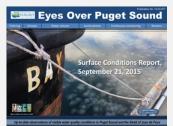
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December_14_2015,Publication No. 15-03-079



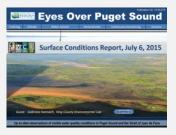
October_6_2015, Publication No. 15-03-078



September_21_2015, Publication No. 15-03-077



August_8_2015,Publication No. 15-03-076



July_6_2015,Publication No. 15-03-075



June_8_2015, Publication No. 15-03-074



April_29_2015,Publication No. 15-03-073



March_24_2015, Publication No. 15-03-072



February_17_2015,Publication No. 15-03-071



January_28_2015,Publication No. 15-03-070



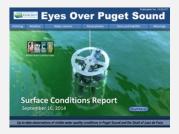
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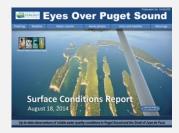
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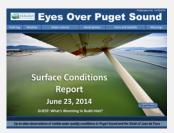
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August_18_2014, Publication No. 14-03-076



July_28_2014,Publication.No.14-03-075



June_23_2014, Publication No. 14-03-074



May_12_2014, Publication No. 14-03-073



April_21_2014,Publication No. 14-03-072



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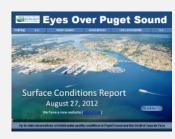
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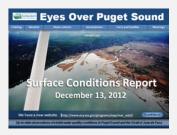
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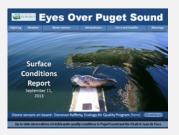
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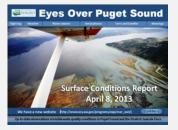
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April_8_2013, Publication No. 13-03-073



November_8_2012, Publication No. 12-03-080



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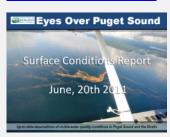
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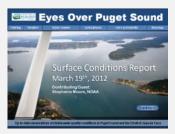
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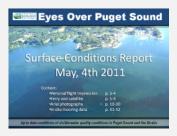
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