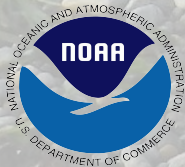


Whatcom County Marine Resources Committee

2024 Annual Report



Presentation prepared for Whatcom County
Climate Action and Natural Resources Committee

May 27, 2025

NOAA Marine Sanctuary proposed for Northwest Straits in 1990's



Northwest Straits Initiative
Project Area
& WA state rivers

● **VANCOUVER, BC**

ANACORTES

SEATTLE ●

● **PORTLAND**

**ORCAS
ISLAND**

**SHAW
ISLAND**

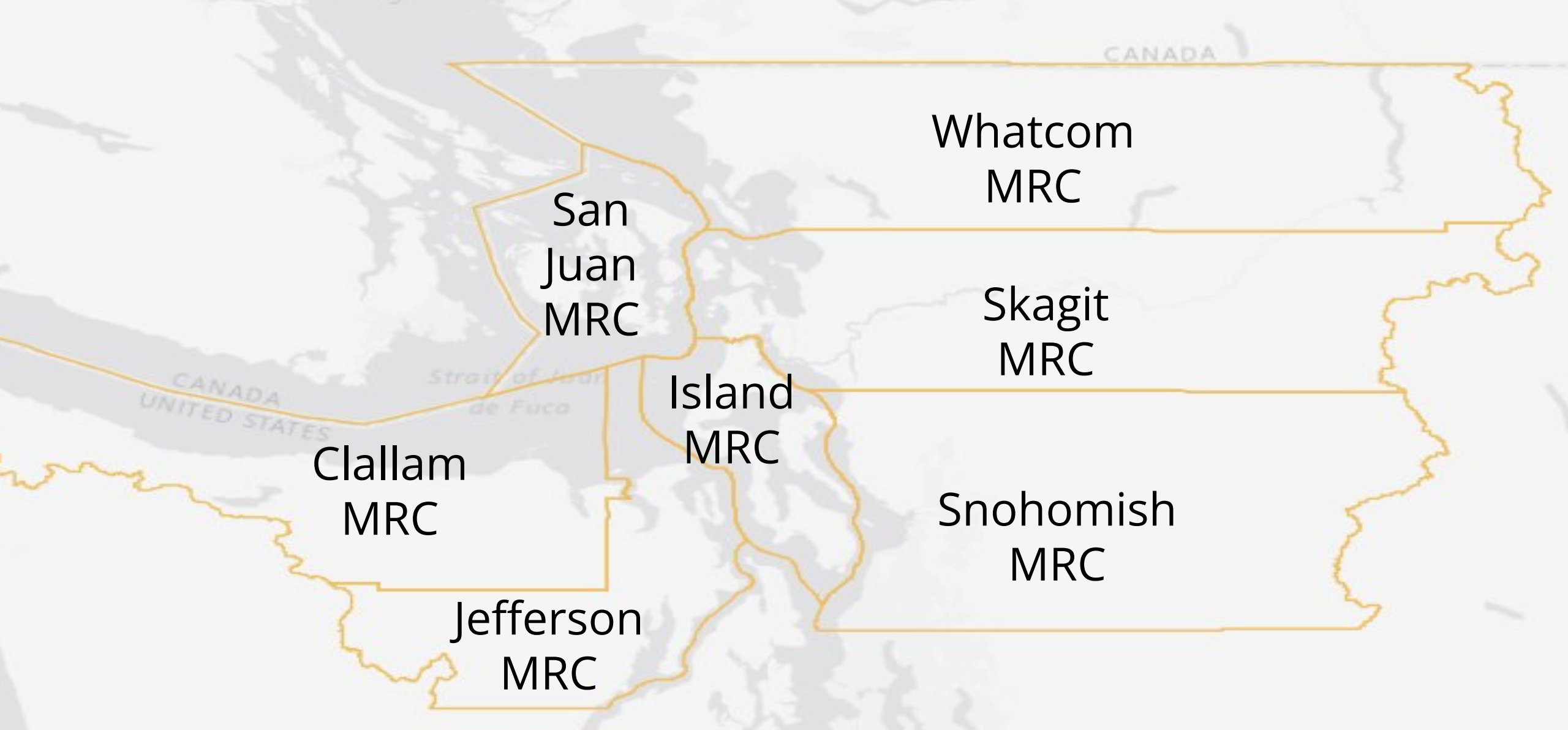
**SAN JUAN
ISLAND**

**LOPEZ
ISLAND**



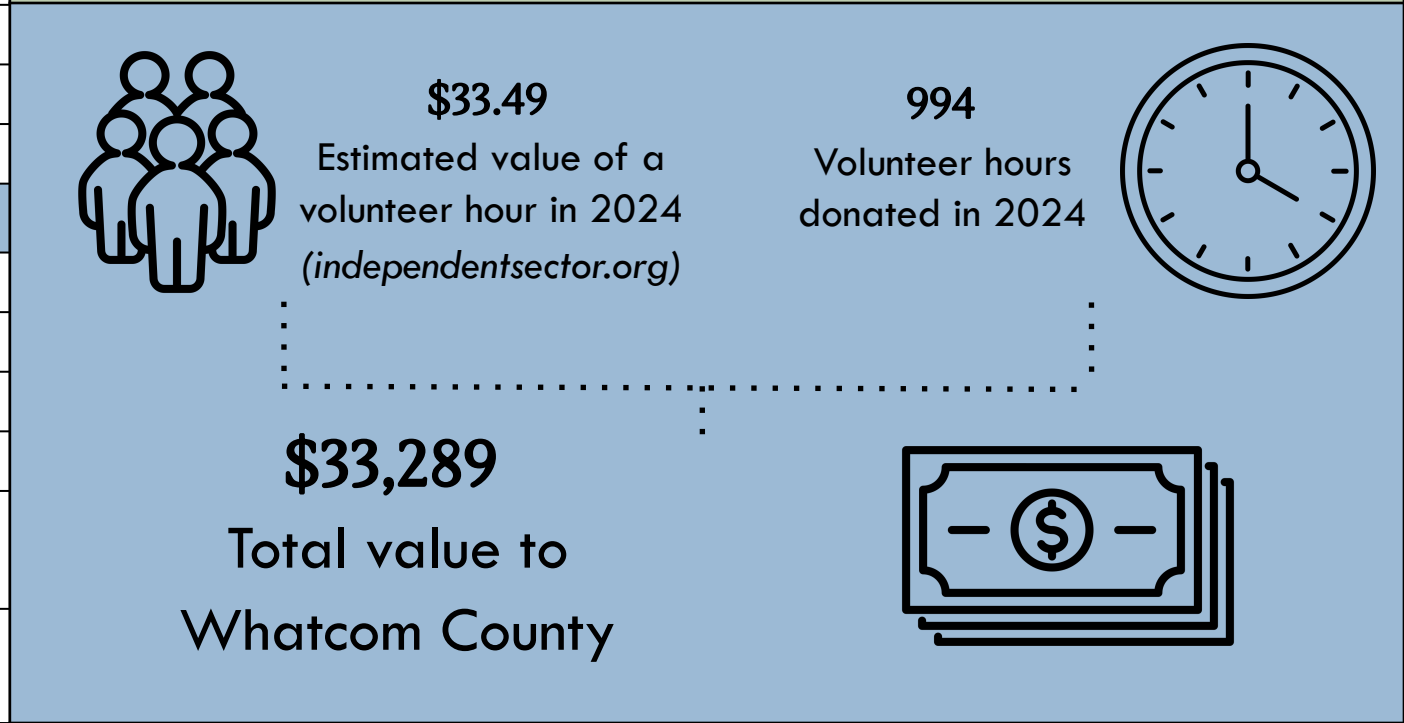
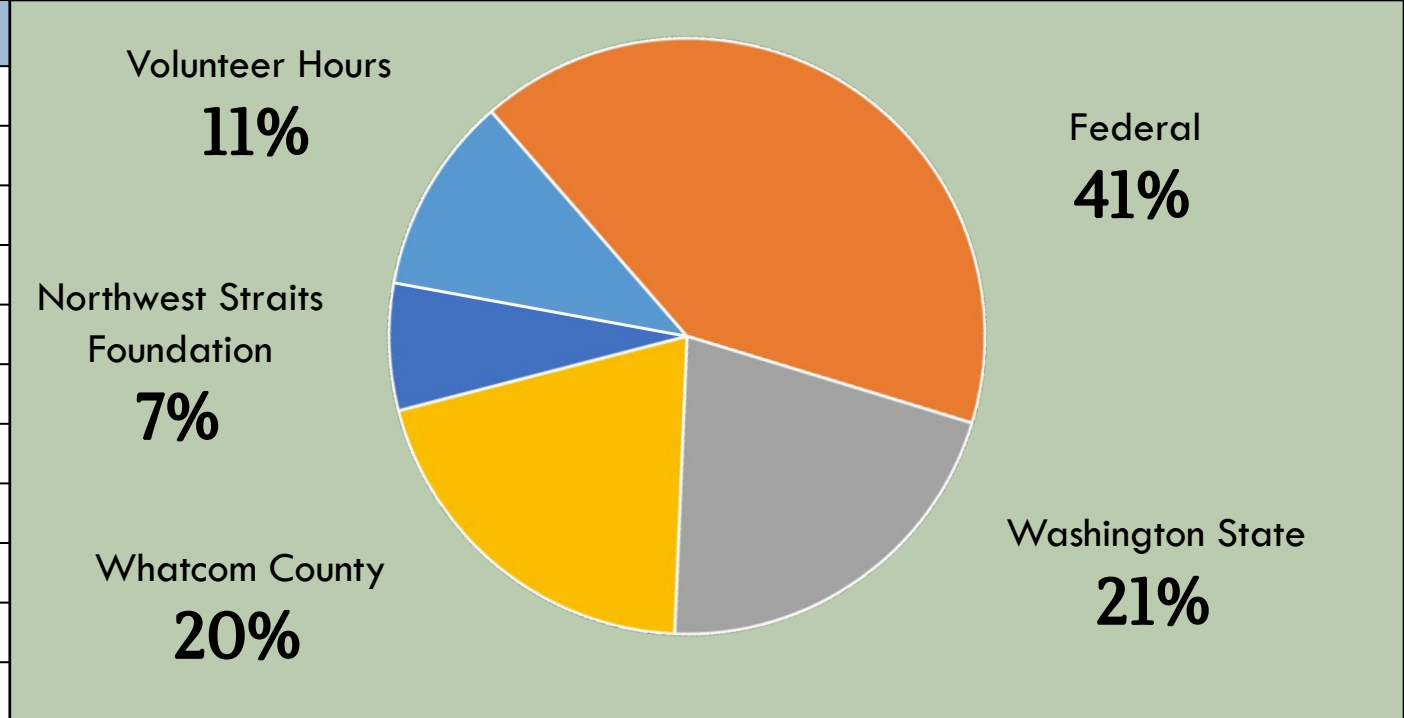
Murray-Metcalf Commission recommends replicating MRCs





<u>The Committee</u>	
<u>Member</u>	<u>Representation</u>
Glen (Alex) Alexander	Citizen-at-Large
Rick Beauregard	Scientific Expertise
Jackie Dexter	Economic
Mark Fairhart	Citizen-at-Large
Thomas (Joe) Hoats	Economic
Kathy Ketteridge	Citizen-at-Large
Elizabeth Lorence	Conservation/Environmental
Mike MacKay	Scientific Expertise
Avery Maverick	Recreational
Andrew Shelton	Economic
Heather Spore	Scientific Expertise
Dan Sulak	Recreational
Colin Wahl	Conservation/Environmental

<u>Alternates, Ex-Officio*, and Staff**</u>	
Kurt Baumgarten*	Port of Bellingham
Jace Cotton*	City of Bellingham
Kaylee Galloway*	Whatcom County Council
Mary Lou Steward*	City of Blaine (Mayor)
Austin Rose**	Whatcom County Public Works- Natural Resources
Dana Flerchinger**	Whatcom County Public Works- Natural Resources



OPERATIONAL STRATEGIES

ADVISORY ROLE

The MRC works with Whatcom County leadership and other key constituencies to help protect marine and nearshore habitat through local regulatory plans

Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan

Adopted August 9, 2016
Whatcom County Planning and Development Services
Updated June 2023



EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

The MRC focuses on work that builds community education and involvement, increases coordination with partners, and advances dialogue with policy makers.



MONITORING

The MRC leads local monitoring projects that collect data over an identified time period, using established protocols in order to answer a scientific or management-based question.



BEACH SEINE WITH KIDS



Lummi Nation and Beach Elementary School

April 19, 2024



Students: 61 (4 classes)

Catch: 5 pink, 8 chum, 2 sculpins, 1 pipefish

Lowell Elementary School

May 3, 2024



Students: 58 (2 classes)

Catch: 1 coho, 4 chum, 32 shiner perch

Eagleridge Elementary

May 15, 2024



Students: 70 (3 classes)

Catch: 68 chum, 2 pink, 13 chinook, 2 sculpins

"It's important to know that the intertidal habitat is being utilized. Here, in Boulevard Park, in the middle of the city, we have beaches that are being utilized by small salmon."

*Mike MacKay, Whatcom MRC
Member*

9

Beach Seine with Kids
events have taken place

9

Schools have participated
in the program

45

0

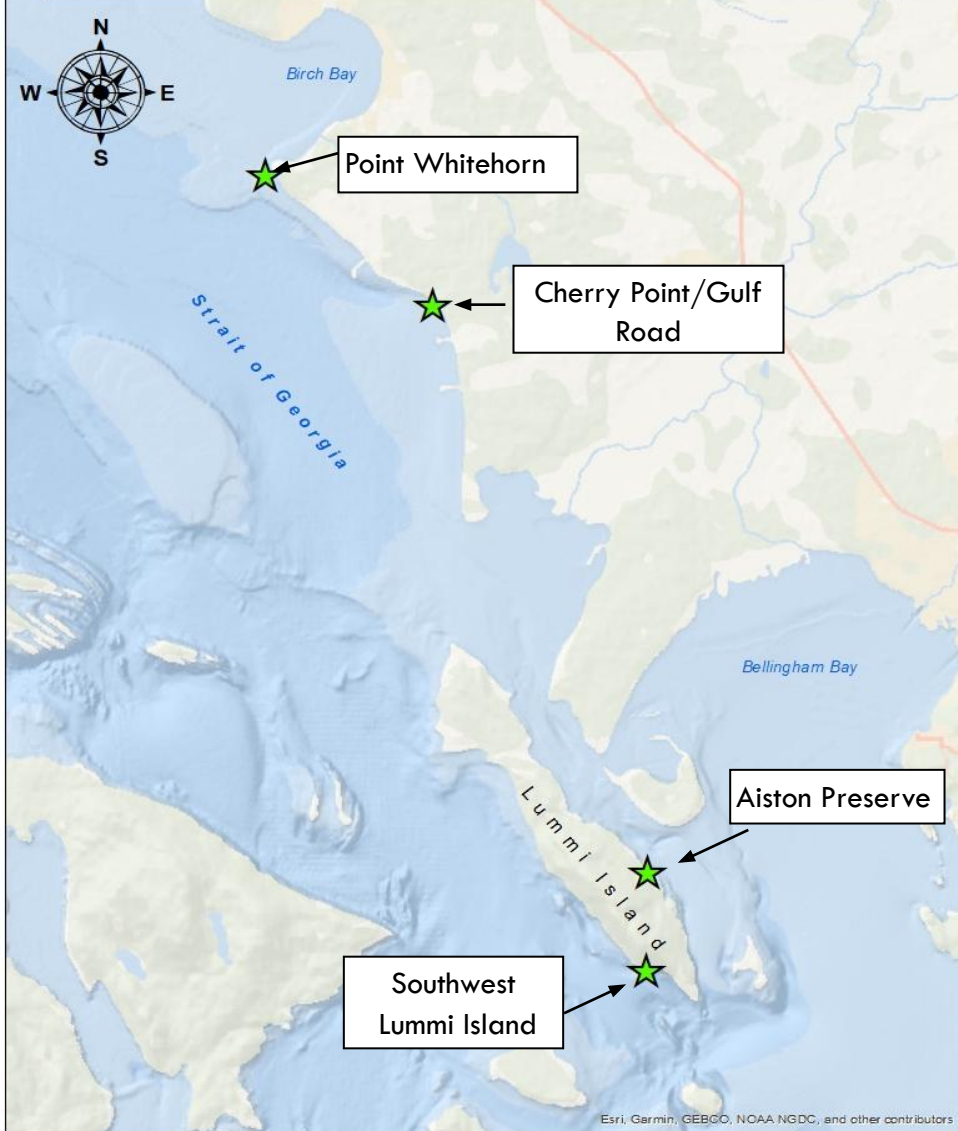
Total students have
participated

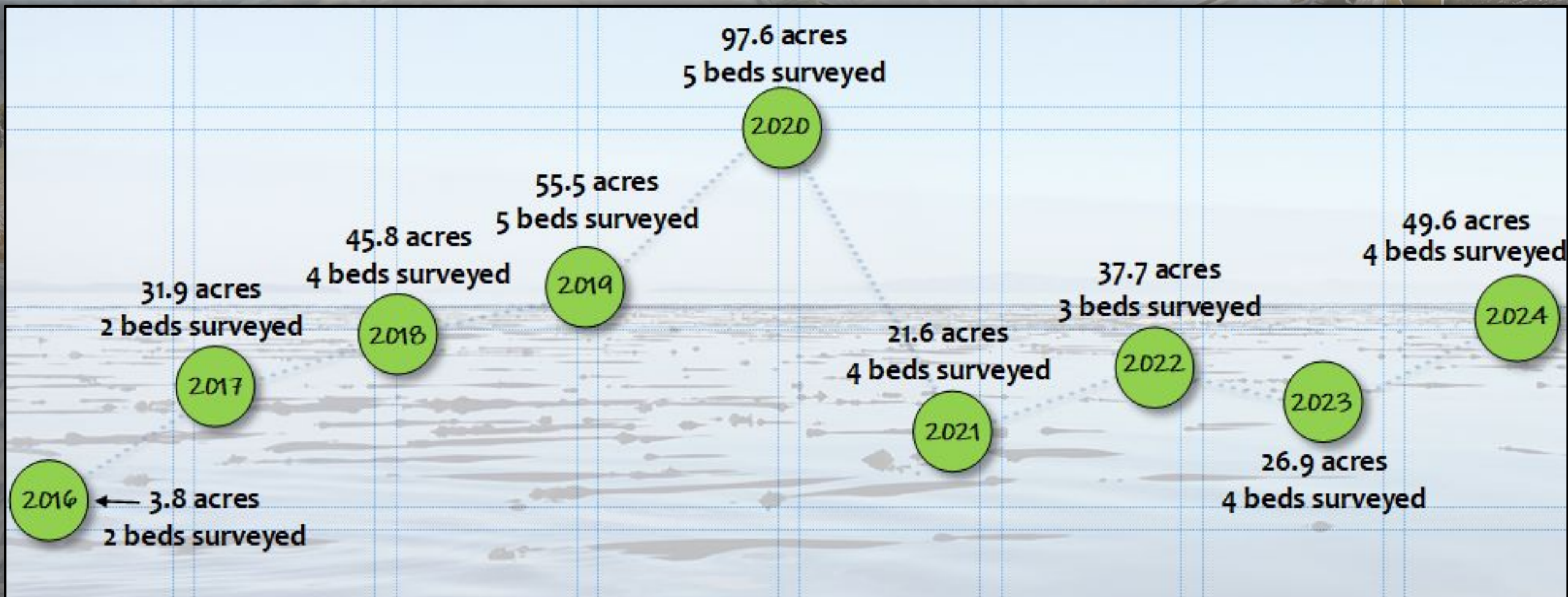
300

Hours of volunteer
time have been
contributed

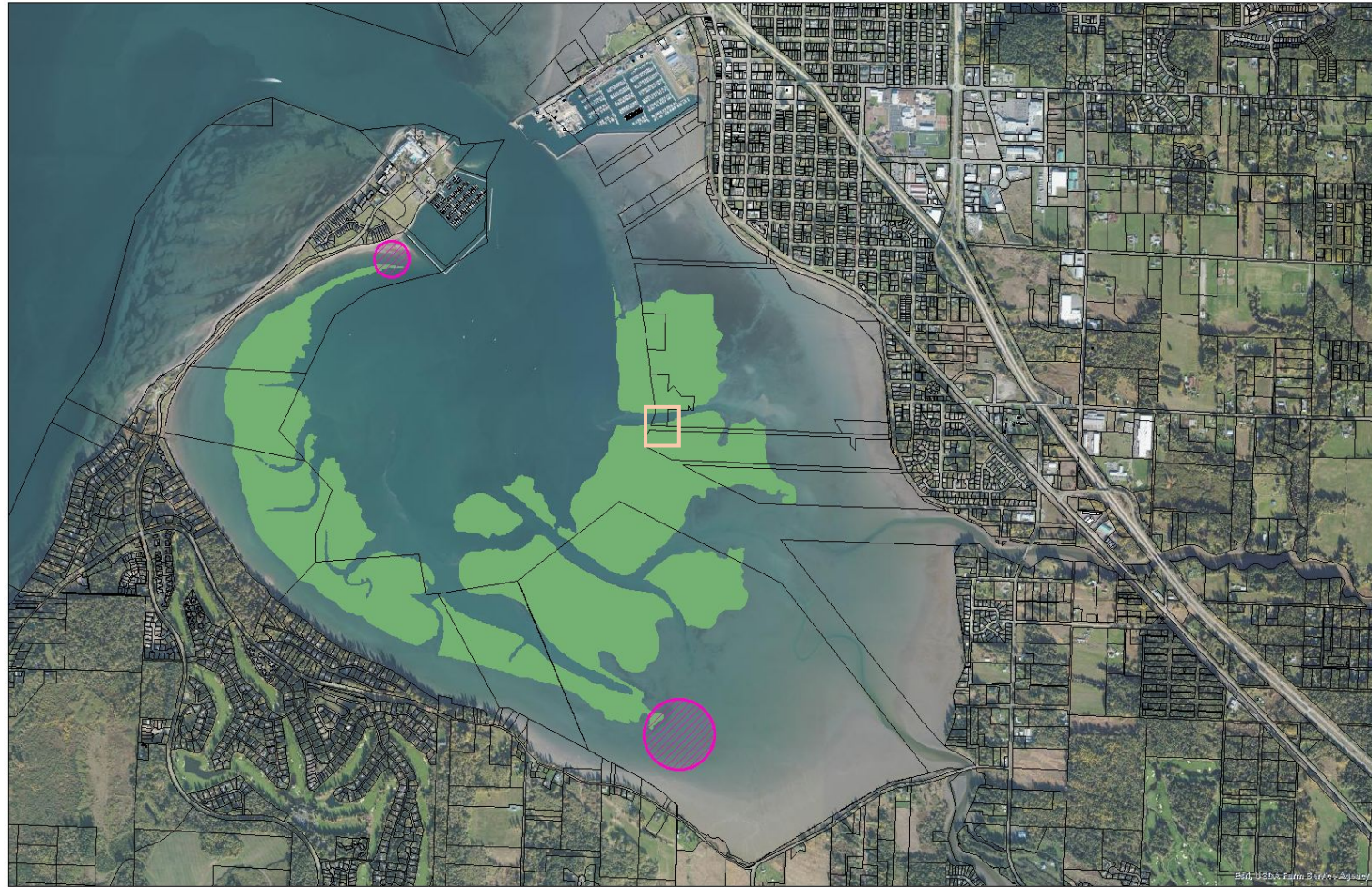
BULL KELP MONITORING

Whatcom MRC Kelp Bed Survey Locations

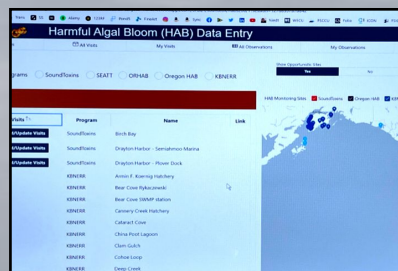
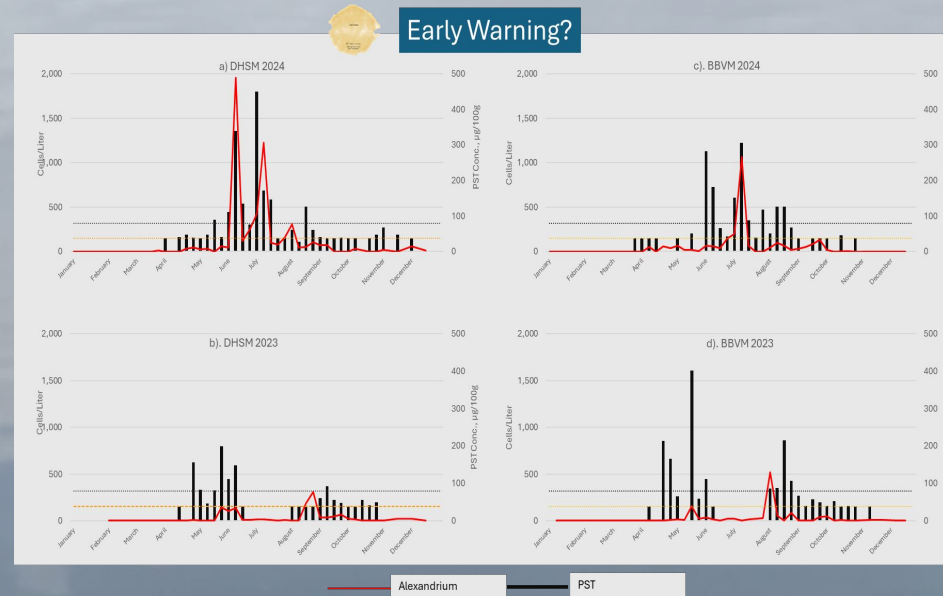
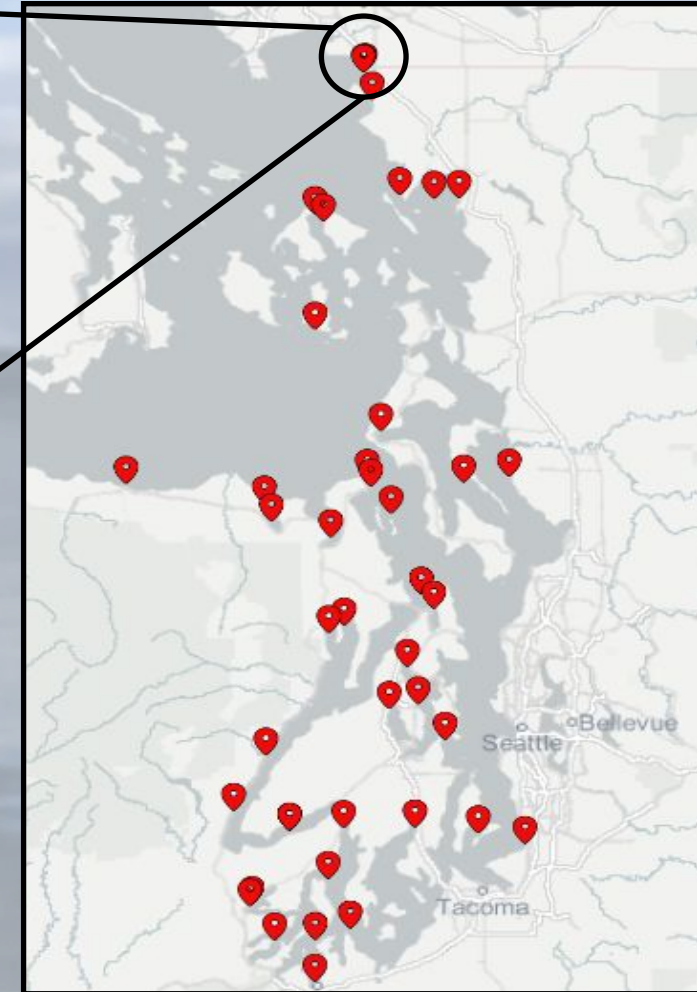
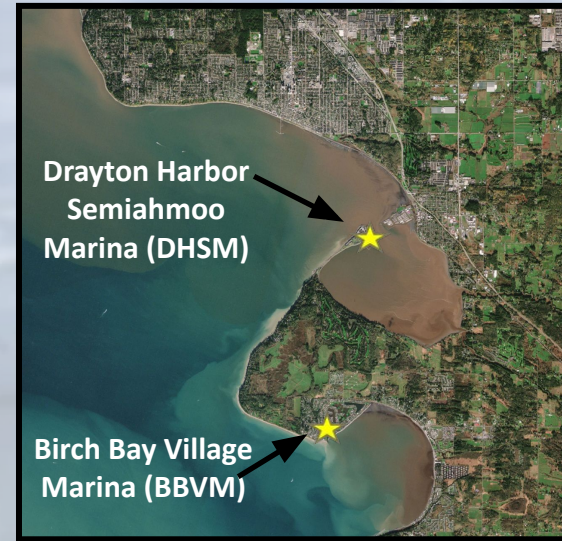
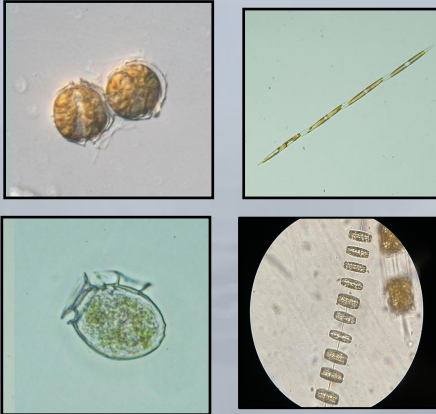




OLYMPIA OYSTER RESTORATION – Drayton Harbor



HARMFUL ALGAE BLOOMS (HABS)



EELGRASS PRESERVATION – Larrabee State Park



PRESERVE EELGRASS

 **Check tide charts first!**
Ensure you launch and haul out your boat at a 4 foot tide or higher. Avoid walking or driving across eelgrass to protect local wildlife.

 **Use a single path to access the boat launch.**
Be careful about where you drive. Try to limit your vehicle impacts to a smaller, more manageable area.

 **Avoid driving, trampling, or dragging your boat across eelgrass beds.**
Eelgrass is incredibly fragile and important. Please treat it with care!

  **preserve eelgrass to protect salmon, herring, and crab**

whatcomcountywac.org/projects/eelgrass-protection



Thank You!

Whatcom County Marine Resources Committee members

Community volunteers

Whatcom County Council

Whatcom County Executive Sidhu

Port of Bellingham

City of Bellingham

Lummi Nation

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

RE Sources

Bellingham Technical College

Whatcom Watershed Information Network

Northwest Straits Commission

Northwest Straits Foundation

Puget Sound Partnership

United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

