

Bringing back South Sound's Native Oyster

Progress, Priorities, and a Path Forward

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Puget Sound Restoration Fund · Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
South Sound Science Symposium

Why this oyster, and what we lost

- Our only native oyster
- A First Food & Industry
- Filter-feeder
- Beds are habitat

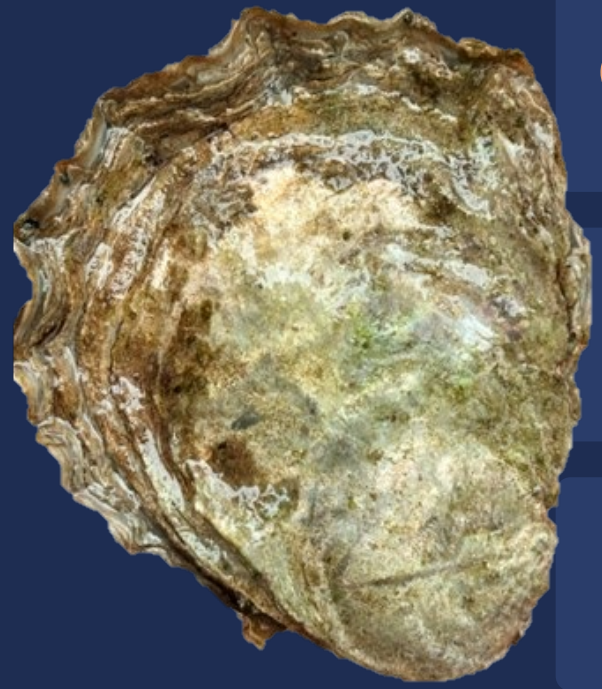


~8%

of estimated historical abundance

Where we started, and where we are now

- **1997** State Candidate species; PSRF founded
- **1998** Stock Rebuilding Plan
- **2012** 19 priority sites
- **2013** Chew Center opens
- **2020** Greatest Conservation Need
- **2027** New 10-year plan



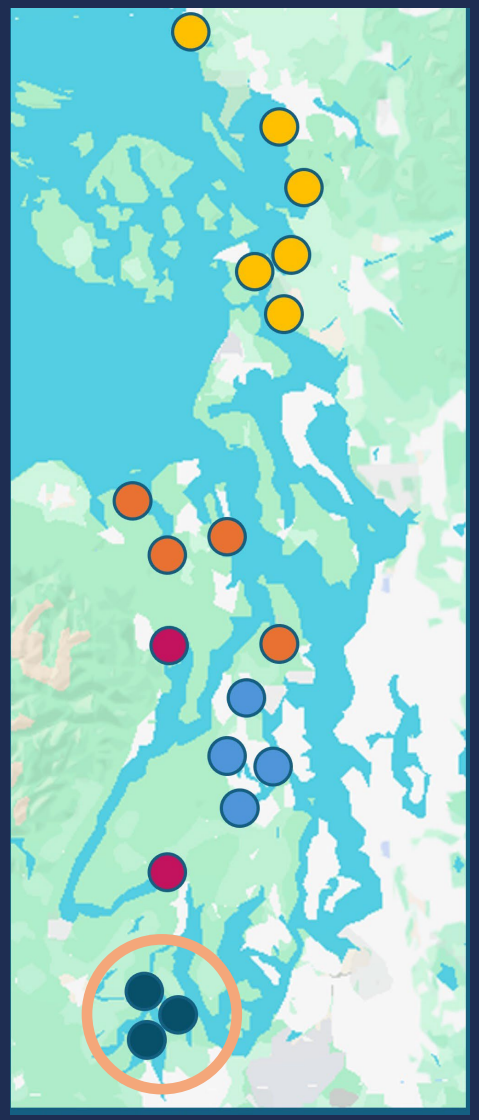
90% of priority sites saw work

150+ acres of habitat restored

30M+ Olys produced

Source: PSRF and partners

South Sound and Olympia oysters



Nisqually Tribe & Squaxin Island Tribe

3 of 19

priority sites are in South Sound

Budd Inlet

Henderson Inlet

Harstine / Squaxin inlets

19 priority sites

North Sound	6
Strait & Admiralty	4
Hood Canal	2
Central Sound	4
South Sound	**3**

2027–2037 restoration goals, 1–5

1. Partnerships & co-management
2. Self-sustaining populations
3. Alternative shell & substrates
4. Hatchery capacity
5. Climate & human-impact resilience



2027–2037 restoration goals, 6–10

6 Disease & invasive species

7 Tribal sovereignty & First Foods

8 Education & learning

9 Monitoring & storytelling

10 Coast-wide network



Future directions for South Sound

Goal: 2–3 self-sustaining populations in South Sound



Engage industry

Continue to involve shellfish growers in restoration & commercial production



Expand existing sites

Build on Palela Bay, BC1 and S13 led by Squaxin Island Tribe



Support North Bay

Key for broodstock and as benchmark for South Sound healthy beds

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NEW!

Mapping Olympia Oyster Restoration Across Puget Sound

CHOOSE MAP VIEW

ENHANCEMENT | RECRUITMENT

See where we have taken restoration action to improve habitat and rebuild Olympia oyster populations in Puget Sound. These actions could include:

- ***Bulk shell:*** *Adding bulk Pacific oyster shell to enhance available Olympia oyster habitat*
- ***Seeded cultch:*** *Boosting habitat and larval presence by placing Pacific oyster shell seeded with juvenile Olympia oysters*
- ***Singles:*** *Planting single small-adult Olympias on the beach*

READ A STORY

Select a site...

Zoom to a site and view its restoration story

FILTER BY ENHANCEMENT TYPE

✓ Bulk Shell | ✓ Seeded Cultch | ✓ Singles

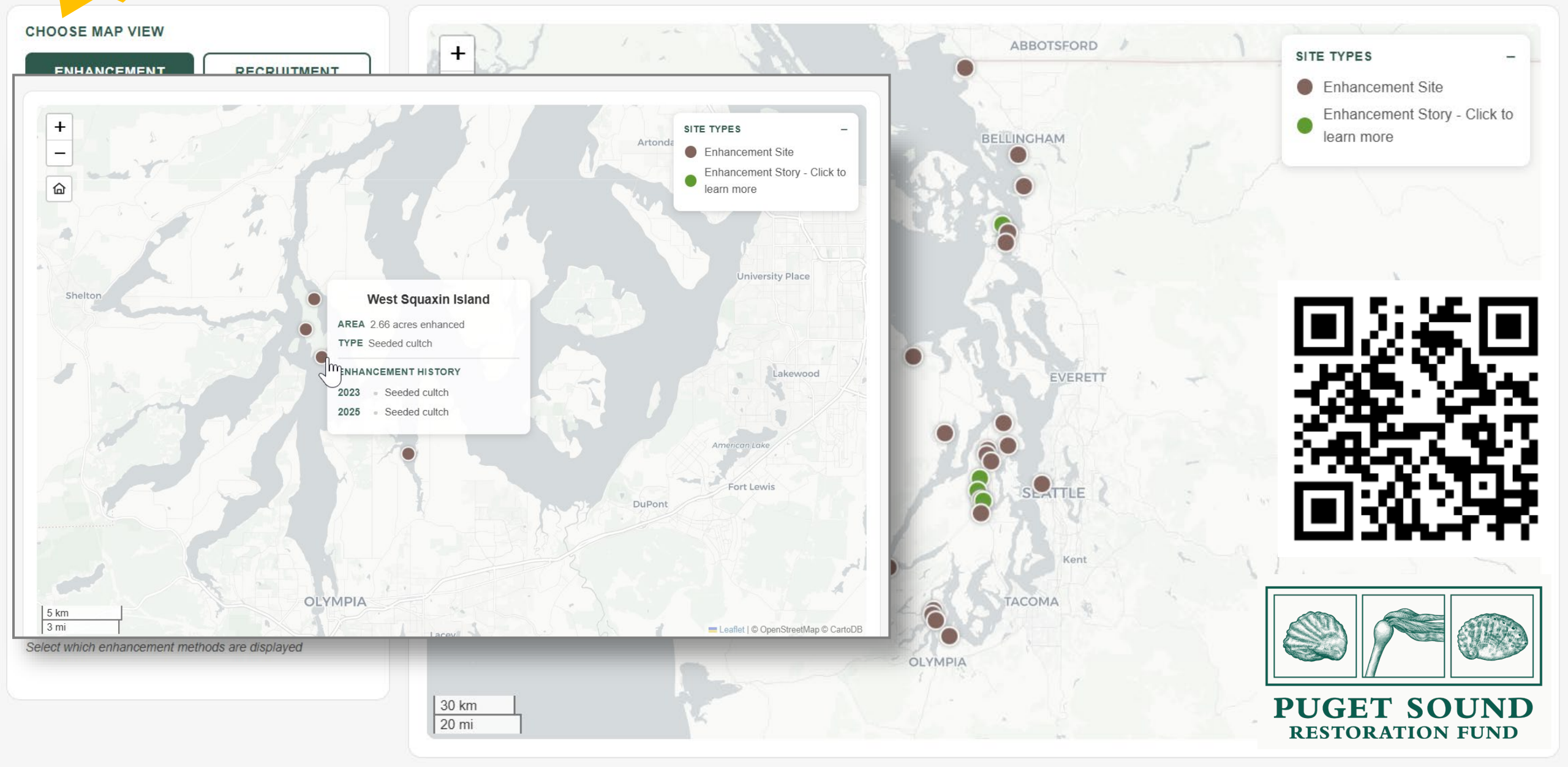
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PUGET SOUND RESTORATION FUND

NEW!

Mapping Olympia Oyster Restoration Across Puget Sound

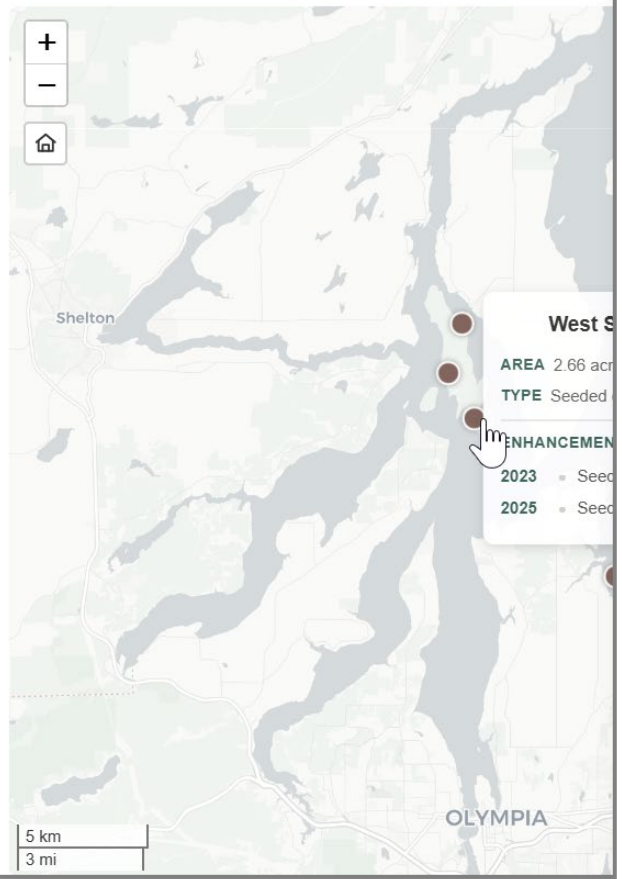


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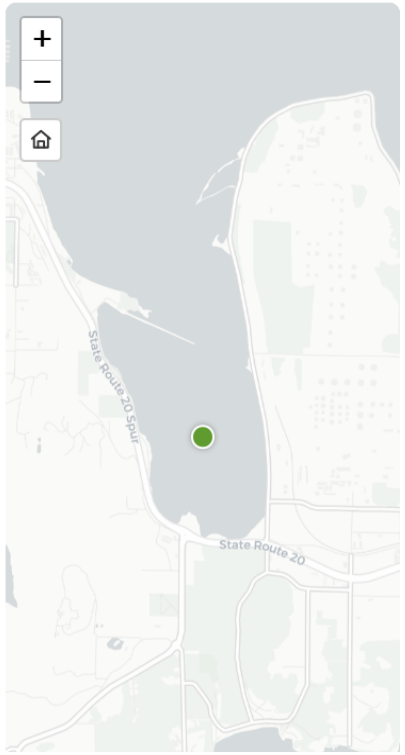
Mapping Olympia Oyster Restoration Across Puget Sound

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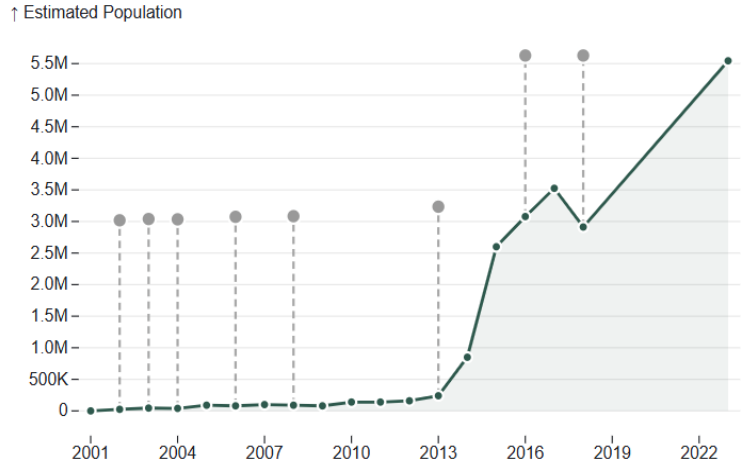


← BACK TO MAP

Fidalgo Bay

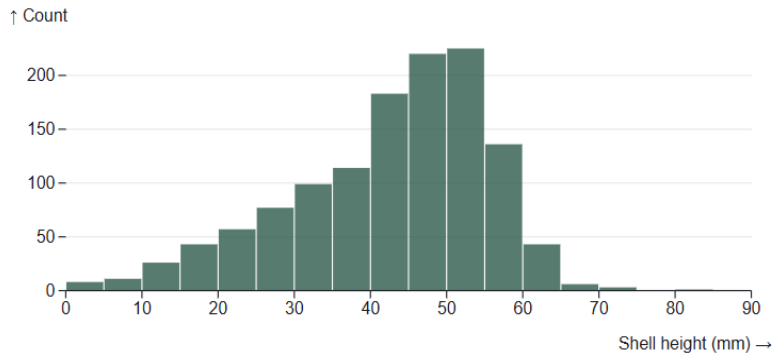
POPULATION GROWTH & RESTORATION TIMELINE

Estimated Olympia oyster population size at Fidalgo Bay, 2001 to 2023



OYSTER SIZE CLASS DISTRIBUTION

Most recent distribution of individual oyster shell heights, measured 2023

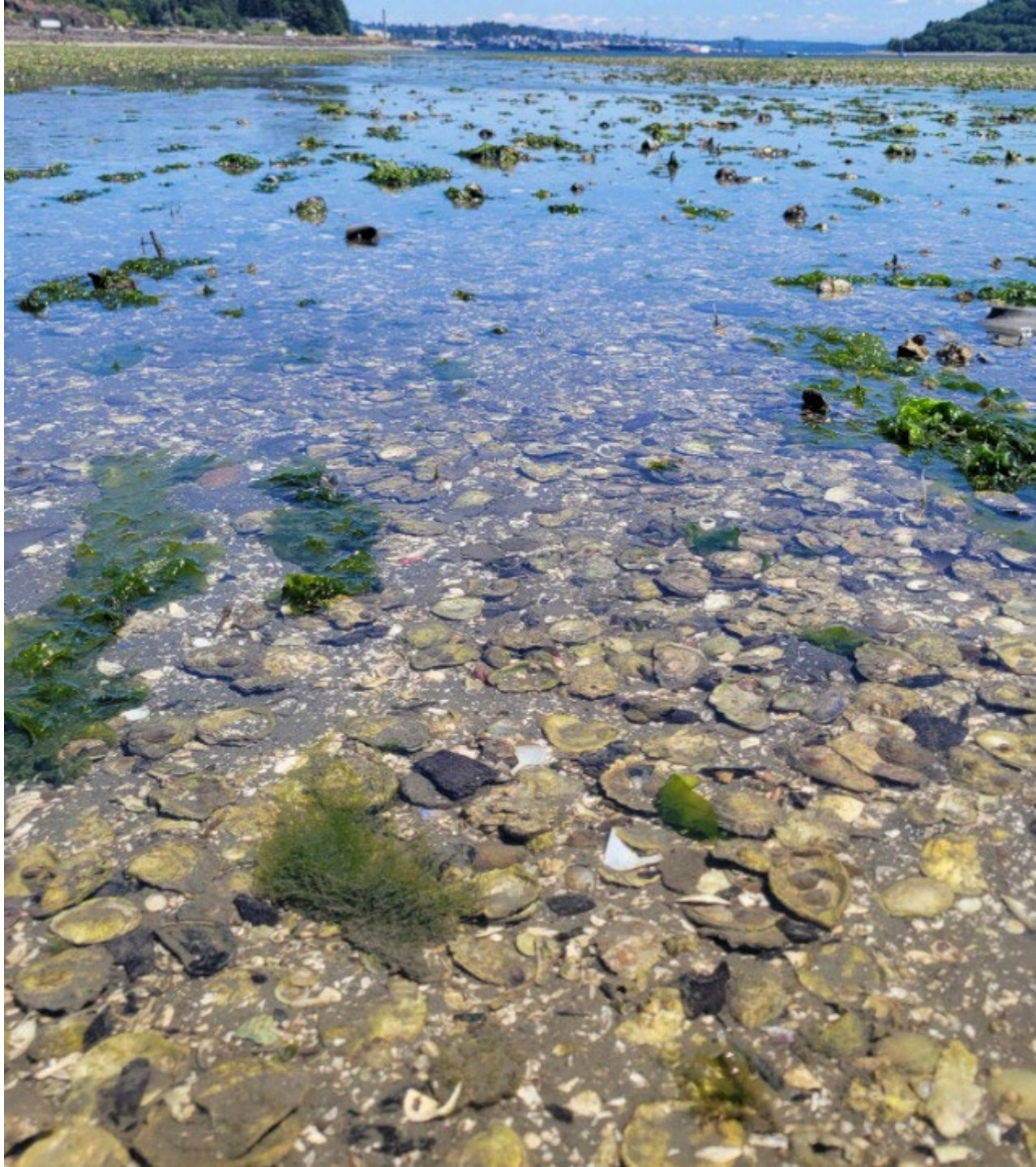


SITE TYPES

- Enhancement Site
- Enhancement Story - Click to learn more

PUGET SOUND RESTORATION FUND






OLYMPIA.




OYSTERS





1. **North Bay wild bed**
   Safeguard + expand
2. **Squaxin Island restoration**
   Keep going!
3. **Oakland Bay restoration**
   2027
4. **Budd Inlet restoration**
   2027, then expand
5. **Various shellfish farms**
   Keep growing & eating Olys!
6. **McNeil Island restoration**
   Scoping
+ **???**





150 Acres: Bringing Back Native Oysters throughout Puget Sound

Thank you!

The Olympia oyster comeback is a South Sound story, still being written together

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With thanks to the Squaxin Island Tribe, Nisqually Tribe, and many South Sound industry partners

