



Apr 6th, 8:30 AM - 8:45 AM

Engaging the community in Drayton Harbor's comeback story

Betsy Peabody

Puget Sound Restoration Fund, United States, betsy@restorationfund.org

Follow this and additional works at: <https://cedar.wvu.edu/ssec>

 Part of the [Fresh Water Studies Commons](#), [Marine Biology Commons](#), [Natural Resources and Conservation Commons](#), and the [Terrestrial and Aquatic Ecology Commons](#)

Peabody, Betsy, "Engaging the community in Drayton Harbor's comeback story" (2018). *Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference*. 432.
<https://cedar.wvu.edu/ssec/2018ssec/allsessions/432>

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by the Conferences and Events at Western CEDAR. It has been accepted for inclusion in Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference by an authorized administrator of Western CEDAR. For more information, please contact westerncedar@wwu.edu.

Engaging the Community in Drayton Harbor's Comeback Story



Betsy Peabody
Puget Sound Restoration Fund



1999: A Galvanizing Moment

- | Rich history of tribal, recreational & commercial shellfishing
- | Total harvest prohibition in 1999
- | Collective sense that problems were too tough to solve

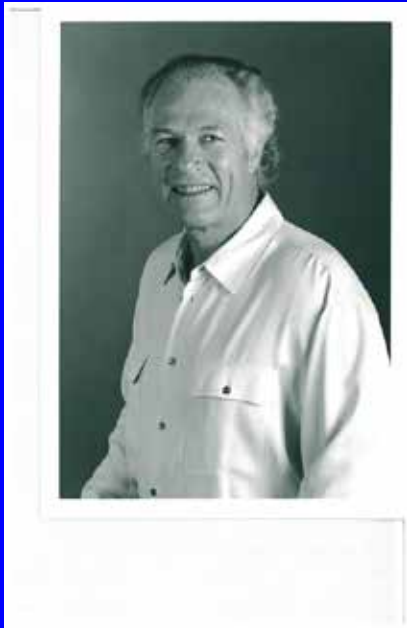


Facts – Then and Now

- | Population in Puget Sound is growing.
- | Shellfish growing areas are lost to pollution.
- | Community needs to be engaged effectively to maintain and restore growing areas,.
- | Multiple strategies are needed.

New Strategy for Drayton

- Engage the community in food gathering as a way to drive water quality improvements & complement agency water quality efforts.



Genesis of Idea

- | Shellfish growers all believe that their bay is the most beautiful and productive bay on earth and they fight to protect it;
- | If community could have this same experience, they too might advocate fiercely for clean up.



Drayton Harbor Community Oyster Farm: 2001-2013

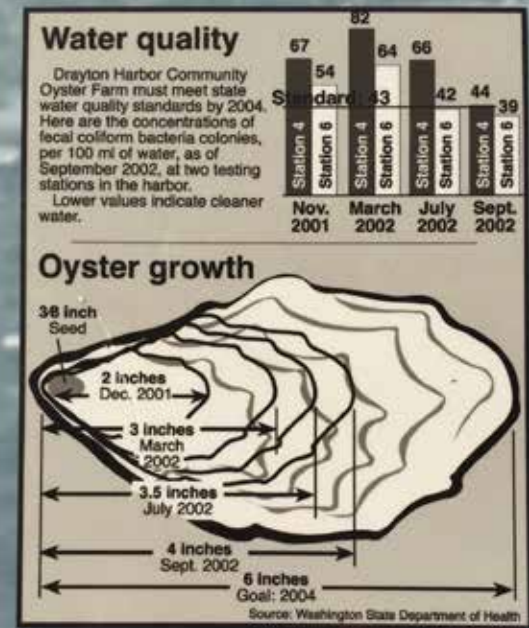
Goals:

1. Involve community in planting and raising oysters to invest them in health of bay
2. Tackle sources of pollution that prohibit harvesting
3. Re-open Drayton Harbor to commercial, recreational, and tribal shellfish harvesting



Community Oyster Farm: Timeline

- | 2001: Plant seed
- | Find and fix pollution sources
- | Meet water quality standards
- | Demonstrate community commitment
- | Publish 1/4 updates in *Bellingham Herald*
- | 2004: Celebrate w/community harvest



Source: *Bellingham Herald*

Pollution Control & Other Projects

- | Shoreline sampling
- | Video inspection
- | Marine sampling
- | Marina circulation studies
- | Boating education
- | School tours
- | Garden of the Salish Sea – all Blaine students since 2012

Re-connecting with Marine Food



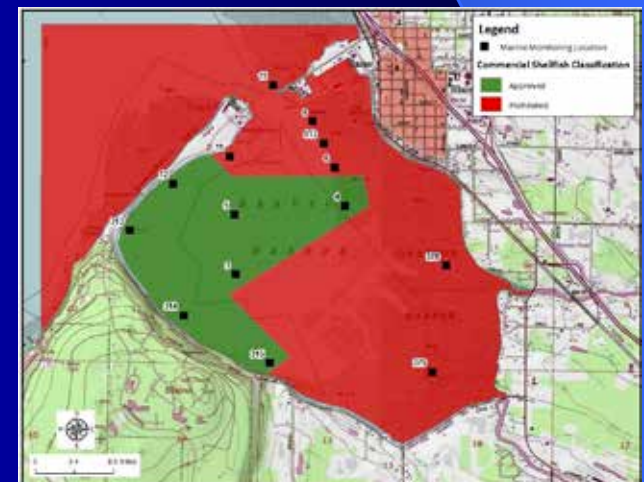
Food:

- Creates common ground
- Connects us to the natural world.
- Gives us a **REASON** to protect the environment.



Engaging people makes a difference

- | 2004: 575 acres conditionally reopened and celebrated with a community harvest
- | 2016: 810 acres fully approved
- | Communities play a critical role in multi-faceted efforts to restore shellfish growing areas.



The Ultimate Comeback

- | In 2014, the Drayton Harbor Community Oyster Farm officially transitioned into a commercial venture – achieving the original goal of restoring commercial, tribal, and recreational harvest.



Win/Win Strategy

Community Oyster Farm:

- | Makes resource & issue real to people
- | Creates a timeline & focus on cleanup

Community:

- | Has chance to re-connect to the bay
- | Gets to experience the best of this place

Agencies:

- | Get stronger community backing for pollution control efforts



Shared Vision

| A healthy productive ecosystem

| Waters that support harvest

| A “Swimmable, Fishable, Diggable Puget Sound...” with people still digging



Thank you to Everyone Involved!!!

Funders:

- | Trillium Corporation
- | Puget Sound Action Team
- | The Russell Family Fdn
- | Whatcom Community Fdn
- | Horizons Foundation
- | Whatcom County
- | City of Blaine
- | Semiahmoo First Nation
- | Environment Canada
- | NOAA

In-kind Supporters:

- | Volunteer Tideflat farmers
- | WA Department of Health
- | Dept. of Natural Resources
- | Growers (Blau, Rock Point, Acme, Penn Cove, Taylor)
- | Port of Bellingham
- | Shellfish Protection District
- | Star Fish Co.
- | WA Dept of Ecology
- | EPA