

My name is George Johnston, I live at 9105 Otis Beach Street NE on the West side of Johnson Point. My wife and I have been property owners on Henderson Inlet for 14 years and in Thurston County for almost 30 years. We live approximately ¼ mile from the project site before us today.



All of us in the Henderson Inlet watershed are required to pay for and participate in the clean water initiative, which ensures clean and working septic systems, among other things. We pay the tax to administer the program, inspect, pump and repair our systems, and subject ourselves to inspections, dye tests, reports and vast amounts of permit regulations. We have brought back the clean and livable waters that once were common here. It is unconscionable to think that all those efforts, countless hours and dollars, only went to further the cause of commercial enterprises taking advantage of OUR community efforts. I would like to preserve and protect our shorelines and marine habitat so they may be healthy and viable for centuries to come.



Things have changed in the 120 years since oysterlands were sold off by the State. Residential densities have increased exponentially and the permit investigation process should reflect this. For these reasons alone a permit pause should be initiated until the social and ecological conditions relating to these permits can be further studied.



In addition, there are many, many references in the SMP and WAC's to eliminate detrimental impacts to views, aesthetics of natural shorelines, access of shoreline owners and use of plastics. I would hate to be the owners of these boats trying to get to shore.



Taylor talks of removing the netting after a maturation period, but with the new migration of Sea Lions, a known major predator of geoducks, that have arrived over the last couple of years, I seriously doubt they will ever be removed. There were two to three dozen just in this area alone, more groups just around the corner.



There is little oversight of regulations that go into these permits. We should not be granting invasive projects without robust compliance.

In an earlier hearing for Seattle Shellfish last July, there was testimony that **MAYBE 10% of the projects ever get looked at.** This is not nearly enough deterrence for the growers to follow the rules.

They say they use the latest, best practices as detailed in their “Geoduck Growers Environmental Codes of Ethics” (note, it is written by Taylor Shellfish) but even though **they mandated themselves to update it annually, it’s last update was in 2005, almost 20 years ago.**

From that publication:

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These Codes of Practice were originally developed by Taylor Shellfish 1997 and contain annual revisions. Last update June 2005.

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The requirements of avoiding Eelgrass also include Kelp and Macroalgae. Are there surveys of these colonies included?

Even though this project intends(?) to use different materials, there have been no known studies regarding the microplastics emissions of these new tubes in regards to the apparently much larger amount of surface area affected by the elements. These pictures show some of the ongoing problems going unchecked:



They show a general disregard for current science on plastics pollution of the environment.



The plastics are uncovered, degrading by UV and environmental effects. Although a better option, Flexible DPE mesh also degrades through the same mechanisms.

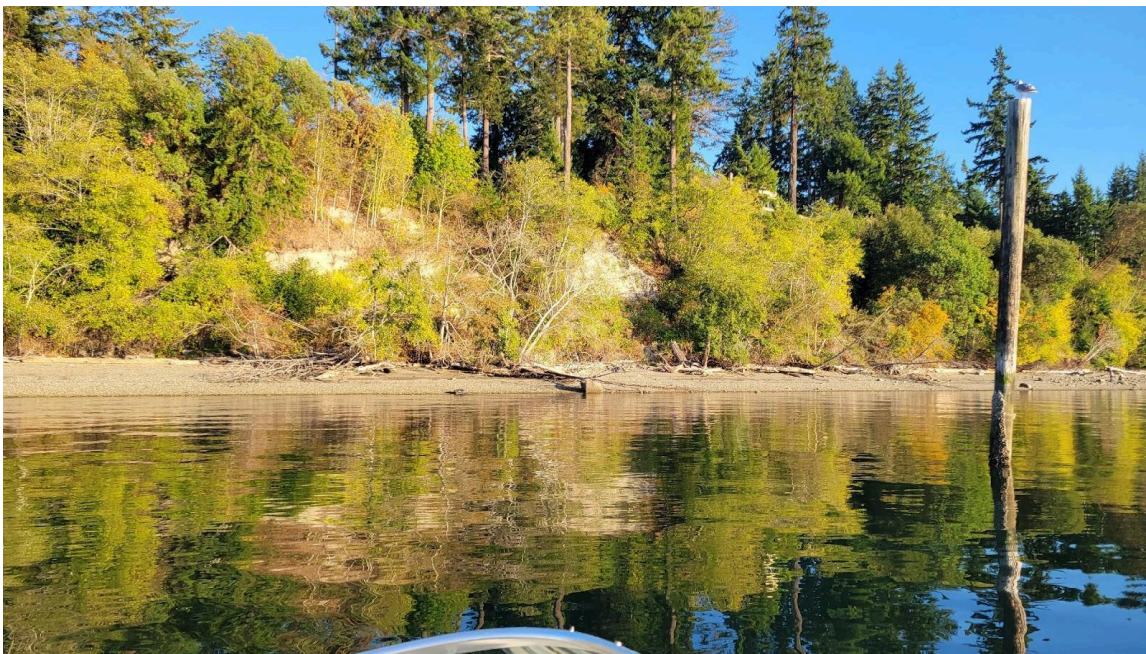


They are even left in huge piles upland, degrading, in various sites around the area.



With this level of non-chalance, there is nothing to tell us that these current loose and dangerous practices will not continue.

****This is what the subject beach looks like now:**



****This is what the same beach could look like under production:**





****These shellfish developments have the visual appeal similar to looking out your back yard and seeing a strip mine has been dug just beyond your chain link fence. Even with the new tubes, the required protection of the views, aesthetics and shore access are still detrimentally affected.**



When the citizens of Thurston County work so hard for a clean, beautiful, inviting, living environment and a large portion of that is given up and soured for the sole purpose of a few companies to pad their corporate pockets, then we as citizens and you as administrators have failed the common good.

For the future of our beautiful, clean shorelines and the health of Puget Sound please do not approve this permit.