

Summary of Facts

- The science supporting geoduck aquaculture is very limited and mitigation for environmental impacts that we do not understand is not possible.
- The applicant bears the responsibility to show that their actions meet regulatory criterion. They cannot prove that mitigation will offset negative impact.
- The new Thurston County SMP will require no net loss of ecologic function.
- Science does tell us that geoduck aquaculture kills eelgrass and likely has more far-reaching effects on other elements of our marine ecosystems.
- Cumulative impacts for geoduck aquaculture are unknown and the strong recommendations in the GARP report for cumulative impact analysis have not been followed.
- Genetic impacts on wild geoduck stocks by hatchery cultivation are unknown, and strong recommendations in the GARP report for assessment of those impacts have not been followed.
- Programmatic Biologic Assessments from NOAA and WDFW do not support that there will be no net loss of ecologic function by aquaculture or that mitigation will be effective
- Forage fish in Henderson Inlet, especially Surf Smelt, are likely to be negatively impacted by geoduck aquaculture and those impacts cannot be adequately mitigated.
- Geoduck do not “clean” the waters of Henderson Inlet and provide no environmental benefit.
- Plastics are employed in staggering quantities by Taylor Shellfish who does not properly disclose, store or monitor those plastics for loss.
- The impact of plastics on human health and the environment have been downplayed and ignored. The current SMP requires consideration of health impacts. The potential health effects from plastics cannot be mitigated.
- The possibility of mobilization of toxic lead and arsenic by geoduck cultivation arising from 100 years of pollution from the Sarco Smelter in Pierce County has not been evaluated.
- Thurston County has no program for monitoring or compliance of aquaculture permits, in violation of their own regulations.
- Geoduck aquaculture is highly lucrative for growers, but provides negligible benefit to the people of Henderson Inlet.