



Thurston County Government

Shoreline Master Program

Land-use & Zoning Regulations for County Shorelines

Proposed Aquaculture Provisions for SMP

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19 June 2019



Proposed Definition



- 19.150.150 Aquaculture: the culture or farming of fish, shellfish, or other aquatic plants and animals. Aquaculture does not include the harvest of wild geoduck associated with the state and tribal co-managed wild-stock geoduck fishery.
- This definition appears in WAC 173-26-020(6)



SMP Policies Relevant to Aquaculture



- Policy SH-18 Shoreline use and development should minimize impacts that contaminate surface or ground water, cause adverse effects on shoreline ecological functions, or impact aesthetic qualities and recreational opportunities, including; but not limited to, healthy shellfish harvest, swimming, and boating.



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SMP Policies Relevant to Aquaculture



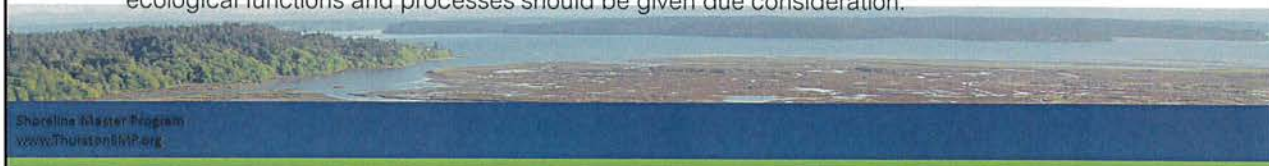
- Policy SH-23 Water-oriented economic development, such as those aquaculture activities encouraged under the Washington Shellfish Initiative, should be encouraged and shall be carried out in such a way as to minimize adverse effects and mitigate unavoidable adverse impacts to achieve no net loss of shoreline ecological functions. (19.300.120 TCC)
- *"This activity is of statewide interest. Properly managed, it can result in long-term over short-term benefit and can protect the resources and ecology of the shoreline. Aquaculture is dependent on the use of the water area and, when consistent with control of pollution and prevention of damage to the environment, is a preferred use of the water area. Local government should consider local ecological conditions and provide limits and conditions to assure appropriate compatible types of aquaculture for the local conditions as necessary to assure no net loss of ecological functions."* (WAC 173-26-241(3)(b)(i)(A))

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SMP Policies Relevant to Aquaculture



- Policies SH 30-37 specifically address aquaculture
- Reflects nature of WAC: *This activity is of statewide interest. Properly managed, it can result in long-term over short-term benefit and can protect the resources and ecology of the shoreline. Aquaculture is dependent on the use of the water area and, when consistent with control of pollution and prevention of damage to the environment, is a preferred use of the water area. (SH 30)*
- WAC and SMP state that potential locations are limited and some forms of aquaculture are in experimental and formative states. Therefore, some latitude should be given when implementing...regulations...provided potential impacts on existing uses and shoreline ecological functions and processes should be given due consideration.



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SMP Policies Relevant to Aquaculture



- Policy SH-32: Aquaculture activities should be located, designed and operated in a manner that supports long-term beneficial use of the shoreline and protects and maintains shoreline ecological functions and processes.
- Policy SH-33: Aquaculture should not be permitted where it would result in a net loss of shoreline ecological functions and processes, adversely impact eelgrass and macroalgae, or significantly conflict with navigation and other water-dependent uses. ...



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SMP Policies Relevant to Aquaculture



- Policy SH-34 Aquaculture facilities should be designed and located to avoid a) the spread of disease to native aquatic life; b) the establishment of new non-native species, which cause significant ecological impacts; and c) significant impact to the aesthetic qualities of the shoreline.
- Policy SH-35 Upland uses and modifications should be properly managed to avoid degradation of water quality of existing shellfish areas.



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Shoreline Permit Requirements



- New commercial geoduck aquaculture is proposed to require a Conditional Use Permit (CUP)
 - Substantial Development Permit (SDP) required if project causes substantial interference with normal public use of surface waters
- Other forms of aquaculture proposed to require SDP (and possibly CUP)
 - Aquaculture involving new structures in the Natural shoreline environment designation requires CUP
- Aquaculture operations must still obtain all necessary state and federal permits



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Application Requirements



- Site plan
- Baseline description of existing and seasonal conditions
- Operational plan – species/quantity, scale of operation, methods of: implementation, waste disposal/sanitation, planting/harvest, predation control; etc.
- Copies of other necessary applications
 - Applicants not required to duplicate information already provided in other required permits



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Development Standards (19.600.115(C))



- Proposed residential subdivisions and other land uses/developments which may impact aquaculture operations shall...prevent any adverse water quality impacts.
- Site prep/construction in the vicinity of aquaculture operations shall not result in off-site reductions in water quality.
- SDP/CUP for aquaculture apply to the initial siting/constructions/stocking; valid 5 years.
- Aquaculture not permitted where it results in net loss of shoreline ecological functions.
- Aquaculture shall not significantly conflict with navigation and other water-dependent uses.



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Development Standards (19.600.115(C))



- Introduction of new species must receive required state/federal approvals
 - Adaptive management plan required
- New overwater structures limited in height; storage of 3-6 feet of material allowed above raft/dock surface
- Structures/equipment used below OHWM shall be of sound construction, contain owners' identifying marks, and be so maintained
- Predator-exclusion devices must be firmly attached, blend with environment, and be inspected/maintained



Additional Geoduck Standards



- Allowed only where significant clearing/grading not required
- Single CUP may be submitted for multiple sites if all under same operator control/SMP jurisdiction
- Work may occur during low tides; noise and light impacts of work occurring during nights/weekends shall be mitigated



Additional Net Pen Standards



- Fish net pens must meet state-approved administrative guidelines
- Alternative facilities/technologies preferred to traditional floating net pens
- Net pens must be anchored >1,500 feet from OHWM; anchored to reduce substrate impacts
- Net cleaning must be frequent enough to comply with state water quality standards
- Fish kills must be reported to Thurston County
- New pens prohibited until Ecology's guidance on finfish aquaculture are completed/reviewed by County



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Questions?



SMP Discussion at Upcoming Meetings:

July 10 – Follow-up to aquaculture discussion

July 24 – Begin Discussion of Chapter 19.400 – General Regulations



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