

From: [Darlene Schanfeld](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Relevant to DNWR Refuge: Tribes, et al Support Olympia Oyster Restoration in Hood Canal; Morro Bay Seagrass Loss Causes Shift in Populations
Date: Wednesday, August 18, 2021 12:13:10 PM

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These articles are relevant to the Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge, especially in that the site was dedicated because of its eelgrass, now jeopardized because of the proposed industrial shellfish operation.

https://nwtreatytribes.org/tribes-shellfish-growers-and-partners-support-olympia-oyster-restoration-in-hood-canal/?utm_campaign=2021-08-13+PFN&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Pew&subscriberkey=0030e00002JbNCSAA3

This project is just one of many in a nationwide effort by TNC and Pew to purchase more than 5 million surplus native oysters from farmers that have been impacted by pandemic closures, and use them in nearby restoration projects, said Molly Borgeberg, the Washington state lead for TNC's SOAR project.

Pollution and overharvest since the late 1880s nearly destroyed the population, in addition to being crowded out by Pacific oysters,

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https://atascaderonews.com/news/morro-bay-seagrass-loss-causes-shift-in-populations/?utm_campaign=2021-08-13+PFN&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Pew&subscriberkey=0030e00002JbNCSAA3

Morro Bay Seagrass Loss Causes Shift in Populations

Once covered with lush eelgrass meadows and unique fish species, areas of the bay are now home to muddy-seafloor-loving flatfish.

*Morro Bay estuary, one of 28 that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency designated as critical to the economic and environmental health of the nation, has seen a dramatic loss in its seagrass habitat. Once dominated by a common California eelgrass (*Zostera marina*), seagrass at this site has declined by over 95 percent.*

The loss of eelgrass habitat along the California coast presents a larger problem for species that depend on seagrass, like the bay pipefish. If seagrass doesn't recover, then the surviving meadows will be further apart and have a more fragmented, or patchy, distribution. This distance and patchiness of habitat may impact specialists, like pipefish, by impairing their ability to move to new habitats in search of food or mates. Over time this community isolation may alter the genetic structure and diversity of the overall pipefish population.

In another study published last September, the team [found](#) that the loss of eelgrass in Morro Bay led to widespread erosion or sediment loss throughout the estuary.

<https://reader.elsevier.com/reader/sd/pii/S0272771420303528?token=99E5E8BBFF08100E635989E88F60491EA8523F1AB27A59A87314B000E5E98BB65741C9C81C8E949ED86D317BD16D7000&originRegion=us-east-1&originCreation=20210818185622>

Estuarine, Coastal and Shelf Science 243 (2020) 106910 Available online 26 July 2020 0272-7714/© 2020 The Authors. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>). Large-scale erosion driven by intertidal eelgrass loss in an estuarine environment

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