

**From:** [Thomas, Sue](#)  
**To:** [Spragens, Kyle A \(DFW\)](#); [Sands, Joseph P](#)  
**Cc:** [BrownScott, Jennifer](#)  
**Subject:** Re: [EXTERNAL] RE: looking for Brant data from Thurston Co, WA if possible by COB today  
**Date:** Monday, October 25, 2021 11:43:52 AM

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Thank you so much for your quick response, Kyle!

Here is the summary I'd like to send up the line. What do you think?

High tidal elevations in Totten Inlet restrict access to eelgrass, resulting in very limited Brant use in the winter months (Kyle Spragens, pers comm). Long term averages of Brant use during this time provided by WDFW's Puget Sound Ambient Monitoring Program for South Puget Sound (including Totten Inlet) are an order of magnitude less (<100 Brant) than the long-term average for the eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca (>2,000 Brant; including Dungeness NWR). For more information see <https://gispublic.dfw.wa.gov/WinterSeabird/>. There are no count data available for spring or fall migration through Totten Inlet that we are aware of, however given the differences in long term averages for use in winter, comparison of the two areas is not valid.

Best,  
Sue

Sue Thomas  
Wildlife Biologist  
Washington Maritime NWRC  
360 457 8451

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**From:** Spragens, Kyle A (DFW) <Kyle.Spragens@dfw.wa.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 25, 2021 10:28 AM  
**To:** Thomas, Sue <sue\_thomas@fws.gov>; Joe Evenson <evensjre@dfw.wa.gov>; Sands, Joseph P <joseph\_sands@fws.gov>  
**Cc:** Munes, Ryan J <ryan\_munes@fws.gov>; BrownScott, Jennifer <jennifer\_brownScott@fws.gov>; McMillan, Anita K (DFW) <Anita.McMillan@dfw.wa.gov>  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] RE: looking for Brant data from Thurston Co, WA if possible by COB today

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Hi Sue,  
Let me send two links to you to see if these might help you?

First, we have finally produced a interactive map product related to our aerial survey data (PSAMP), this allows you to get a feel of that comparison... CAVEAT during winter when we actually have standardized surveys... the take home from this map would be Totten Inlet is not that important DURING WINTER for brant (long term average of South Puget Sound is <100 brant per winter)... certainly the Dungeness region is much higher (East Strait of Juan de Fuca >2,000).  
<https://gispublic.dfw.wa.gov/WinterSeabird/> [select Brant under species and hit "Get Species Data"].

The second link is to the short summary (there is a link to the full report at the end of the document) of Avian Habitat Suitability Models for Puget Sound Estuary Birds... this collaborative team used brant as one of the "narrative species" to produce a predictive model based on GIS available... follow the link to the maps (Appendix B: Species Relative Abundance Maps:

<https://pspwa.box.com/v/AvianHabModB>) this model does place predictive weight in that area... HOWEVER,

What is important to point out, is the tidal range that would be present in Totten would make the tide height/amplitude relative to the depth/presence of Zostera marina would make it nearly inaccessible during the winter time. Nisqually NWR sees this... they do not record many brant during the winter time, but during the spring the tide-eelgrass interaction becomes favorable to migrants coming back north...

BUT, we do not survey during the spring, so we don't have a way to validate that outside of the monitoring USGS did at Nisqually for a while... but nothing specific for Totten.

I'll think about this a little bit more, but please let me know if our webmap will suffice?

Respectfully,  
Kyle

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**Kyle A. Spragens**

Waterfowl Section Manager | Pacific Flyway Study Committee

Sea Duck Joint Venture & NAWMP Science Support Team tech. rep.

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*Respect the resource. Enjoy the harvest.*

**Waterfowl | Habitat | People** = <https://wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/requirements/waterfowl/stamp>

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**From:** Thomas, Sue <sue\_thomas@fws.gov>

**Sent:** Monday, October 25, 2021 10:04 AM

**To:** Spragens, Kyle A (DFW) <Kyle.Spragens@dfw.wa.gov>; Joe Evenson <evensjre@dfw.wa.gov>; Sands, Joseph P <joseph\_sands@fws.gov>

**Cc:** Munes, Ryan J <ryan\_munes@fws.gov>; BrownScott, Jennifer <jennifer\_brownScott@fws.gov>; McMillan, Anita K (DFW) <Anita.McMillan@dfw.wa.gov>

**Subject:** looking for Brant data from Thurston Co, WA if possible by COB today

External Email

Hi All,

We just received an information request from our Regional Director regarding Brant use of Totten Inlet (Thurston County), WA. Can any of you share Midwinter Waterfowl and/or Brant survey data for that area? I am trying to determine the importance of the inlet to Brant in WA as part of a comparison between Totten Inlet and Dungeness Bay relative to aquaculture (present or future, respectively). If you could share any data you have for that area some time today, that would really help. Also, do you know if Totten Inlet supports any habitat features key to Brant such as gritting sites, eelgrass beds, etc similar to those found in Dungeness Bay?

Thanks for any help you can give! Apologies for the last-minute request, but the RD would like any info we can find by the end of the day.

Best,  
Sue

Sue Thomas  
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