

PUGET SOUND

National Estuary Program

PUGET SOUND ZOOPLANKTON SAMPLING PROGRAM

Zooplankton are the cornerstone of the Puget Sound marine food web. They are the primary food source for juvenile salmon, herring, and other fish.

What we're doing

12 tribal, county, state, federal, academic, and non-profit entities collaborate to sample the zooplankton community every two weeks at sites throughout Puget Sound. Two types of sampling occur:

- A net towed vertically over the full water column to develop an index of ecosystem health.
- A net towed obliquely over the upper 30 m of the water column to measure food availability for juvenile salmon and other pelagic fish.



Why is this important?

Zooplankton monitoring helps us determine how specific physical stressors (man-made and natural) and changes in the local and oceanic physical environments translate up the food web. As such, this program provides a robust indicator of ecosystem health, a new way to improve salmon adult return forecasting, and a critical data point for ecosystem models and decision support tools: all critical to improving our chances of recovering and effectively managing our Puget Sound ecosystem.



What you can do

Support the long-term continuation of the Puget Sound Zooplankton Sampling Program:

- Ongoing monitoring enables adaptive management in rapidly changing ecosystems.
- Data from the pilot phase of this program are already being used to develop relationships between water quality, zooplankton, and salmon survival.
- The program's unique collaborative sampling design engages the Puget Sound community and is highly cost-effective.

About Long Live the Kings

Long Live the Kings has worked since 1986 to restore wild salmon and steelhead and support sustainable fishing. Our programs combine on-the-ground fieldwork with scientific innovation and broad partnerships to help decision-makers advance salmon recovery while balancing the needs of fish and people.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.marinesurvivalproject.org

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