

Wear your School Colors to SLURP!

On April 27th, represent your school by wearing your school colors to PCSGA's annual fundraiser. Proud of your alma mater? Let's hear it during the Slurp-Off oyster speed-eating competition. Show your spirit and cheer on representatives from UW, WSU, WWU, OSU, The Evergreen State College, and Bellingham Technical College as they compete for the coveted Golden Oyster - and bragging rights.

SLURP offers succulent shellfish dishes prepared by local restaurants. Are oysters your thing? Try the Bluegrass BBQ Oyster Shooters. Love geoduck? Enjoy Smoked Geoduck Polk or the Geoduck Springroll. Appreciate mussels and clams? Dig into the Grilled Mussels with Dill Garlic Butter or the Clams 'Shin Dig'.

Be sure to fill your plate at our Grand Oyster Bar, featuring freshly harvested oysters shucked by local farmers.

You'll also enjoy samples from local wineries and nips from Fish Tale Ales. We'll round out the evening with a live auction!

All proceeds go to PCSGA's Habitat Restoration fund to support local restoration and protection efforts, clean water education, and beach cleanup events throughout western Washington.

Tickets are on sale now for \$60 on Brown Paper Tickets. Visit our website at www.pcsga.org to purchase tickets or for more details.



*Ian Jefferds, Lissa James, Senator Patty Murray, Sue Shotwell, and Miranda Ries.
Photo by Sue Shotwell*

Pounding DC Pavement Yields Results

By Sue Shotwell, Nisqually Indian Tribe

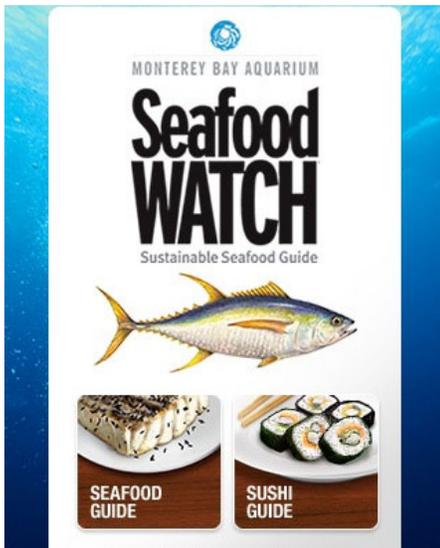
With the passage of the Farm Bill and recent ISSC meetings, the list of issues for our 2014 Walk The Hill was shortened compared to years past. This allowed walkers more time to focus on important issues such as: the China shellfish ban; Nation-Wide Permit 48; the European Union Trade Embargo; continued financial support for NOAA's IOOS and Ocean Acidification programs; individual state Shellfish Initiatives and specific states' issues.

A routine part of our visits to DC involves meeting with state representatives from Alaska to Hawaii. In addition to these appointments, we also had several new additions to our full agenda. The Congressional Puget Sound Caucus, Western Governors Association, Council for Environmental Quality, and Department of the Interior were great opportunities to discuss current issues affecting PCSGA members.

Our first agenda item in DC began with a trip to Silver Springs, Maryland where we spent an entire day meeting with FDA to discuss increasing the ISSC research budget and EU Trade. At NOAA, our focus was on the China shellfish ban and maintaining the budgets for Ocean Acidification and the IOOS program.

Congressmen Heck and Kilmer recently formed the Puget Sound Caucus as a way of educating members and building support for Puget Sound Recovery. This caucus focuses on three strategic initiatives to restore Puget Sound: prevent pollution from urban storm water runoff; protect and restore habitat; and, most importantly, to recover shellfish beds.

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Geoduck Rated by Seafood Watch

The Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch has rated farmed geoduck as "Best Choice" -- their highest rating! Seafood Watch seeks to raise consumer awareness by providing the public with science-based, peer-reviewed recommendations for choosing sustainably produced and harvested seafood products. Through pocket guides, website, and mobile apps, the Seafood Watch program is trusted and used by millions.

For more information on the Seafood Watch program visit their website at www.seafoodwatch.org

Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers Association

2013-2014

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What the Tide Brought In:

Notes from the director

David Ortiz, designated hitter for my beloved Red Sox, was accustomed to "hitting one out of the park" during the 2013 World Series. His amazing post-season .753 hitting average carried the Sox to the first World Series win in Fenway Park since 1918. As a New Englander and lifelong Sox fan, watching the "worst to first" team win generated such pride and enthusiasm for my winning team. I was, and still am, ecstatic. You can imagine my surprise when I found myself duplicating those feelings during the most recent ISSC conference in San Antonio.

I can't lie; I was one of the voices that spoke ill of participating in ISSC. In fact, when asked about the ISSC, the words, "It's long, process-heavy approach that provides virtually no opportunity for input and collaboration" have actually come from my mouth when asked about the ISSC. In preparing for the conference, I had zero faith in how to stop or slow FDA's efforts to implement nation-wide regulations and cripple the industry. It was clear FDA was eager to make some drastic changes, including a requirement to get product to 50 degrees within one hour. I was dreading the trip.

In advance of the meeting, PCSGA members and legal counsel spent hours upon hours reviewing the 80-plus proposals to change the National Shellfish Sanitation Program. We coordinated with Shellfish Authorities and industry representatives from both the Gulf and East Coasts to learn all we could about the proposals, how they might impact the west coast industry and what changes might be acceptable. We developed our strategy and courageously boarded the plane for Texas.

Just like Ortiz...PCSGA "hit it out of the park!" Our team was prepared and ready. Industry folks from other regions looked longingly upon our analyses of proposals and talking points. PCSGA received multiple complements on our preparedness and willingness to contribute to the discussions. Conversations between west coast shellfish growers, state shellfish authorities and FDA were prevalent and productive. As a result, we were able to avoid imposition of a 1 hour to 50 degrees requirement, got a much needed exemption for geoduck and had a hand in shaping future efforts towards vibrio controls.

We can't rest on our laurels. "Spring training", of sorts, and our next real time at bat occurs at the annual PacRim meetings. Please let us know if you want to join the team.

Be well, Margaret



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China Shellfish Ban Update

By Robert Smith, Plauché & Carr LLP

In November 2013, China banned the importation of shellfish from the West Coast (excluding Canada) after a geoduck sample from Washington tested above Chinese standards for inorganic arsenic and a geoduck sample from Alaska tested higher than Chinese standards for PSP. In response, the Washington Department of Health and Department of Natural Resources began testing geoducks in Poverty Bay, the harvest location for the Chinese sample, for inorganic arsenic. The results, which found inorganic arsenic levels lower than the Chinese standards for edible portions of the geoduck, were transmitted to China on January 5, 2014.

On January 27, 2014, China responded to the Washington test results with several additional questions and requests regarding PSP and arsenic. Regarding arsenic, China requested implementation of a federal program to regularly test for arsenic in shellfish. They also requested that the governments schedule an audit trip, where China can travel to the United States to review the safety of state and federal shellfish programs and try to negotiate a memorandum of understanding to ensure the safety of exported shellfish. Importantly, the Chinese letter also stated that, while the Washington tests did not include the skin as an edible part of the geoduck, the Chinese do eat geoduck skin, and the skin should therefore be included in calculations of inorganic arsenic.

On February 9, NOAA responded to the additional Chinese requests. NOAA renewed its request for all areas of the West

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Pearls from the Prez:

I just returned from Washington DC after a week with the PCSGA Walk the Hill group. My impression of the activity this year is that we have gotten very well organized and effective, with meetings scheduled with Federal agencies the first day and then House and Senate leaders for several days after. This allows us to get our key messages to and from the agencies before we carry those on to Congress with our requests. I am very impressed by how effective the group functions during this week and honored to be associated with these shellfish leaders.

Upon returning home, we were happy we missed the worst of the polar vortex problems on the East Coast and back to our wet and cool West Coast. My crew welcomes the daylight tides we are now finding, at least on the higher ground and spirits are lifted by intermittent warm days and calm winds. Our bay is filled with a huge variety of ducks, who are fishing for everything aquatic, including some of our clams. I love to see all of that wildlife, but will be happy to see those clam suckers head back north.

Rock Point Oyster Company is currently expanding seed production with new upweller tanks and building a flupsy to be operated in Drayton Harbor with the assistance of students from Bellingham Technical College and the Drayton Harbor Community Shellfish Farm. The changing water conditions on Dabob Bay (Ph levels are decreasing in the deeper water) have significantly changed the frequency and quantity of a natural oyster set. We have changed our operation from transplant seed and oysters to harvesting half-shell, which works well when natural sets are minimal. Supplementing the natural set with single oyster seed will help us to maintain a profitable business.

I'm looking forward to spring and warmer weather and daylight tides.

Dave Steele



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From left to right: Congressman Mike Thompson (CA), Greg Dale, Billy Plauché. back row: Cairn Steele, Bill Dewey, Dave Steele, Congressman Denny Heck (WA), Bill Taylor, Miranda Ries. Front Row: Mary Beth Dale, Ian Jefferds, Margaret Barrette, Diani Taylor, Connie Smith, Lissa James, and Amanda Carr

Walk the Hill

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One of our meetings, which I thought most exciting, was with Department of the Interior. This cabinet level agency manages America's natural and cultural resources. Secretary of Interior Sally Jewel heads the department that includes expert scientists, and resource management professionals in nine technical bureaus. We met with those representing USFW and US parks service. In addition to our usual topics we also discussed the completion of the NPDES permit for the control of burrowing shrimp in Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor.

This long successful adventure of walking the hill climaxed with the Congressional Shellfish Caucus Reception. The Caucus is a bipartisan group of Congressional members working to enhance the understanding and awareness of the issues and policies that affect the United States' shellfish industry, including its harvesters, processors, distributors and consumers. Thank

you to all the shellfish companies who donated product to the reception.

All in all this was a great Walk the Hill event in Washington DC. Every year PCSGA becomes more efficient at sharing information about our industry's issues and goals. I would encourage every PCSGA member to walk the hill to experience how your government works and how we can ensure the future of our shellfish industry for generations to come.

The Mike Voisin Memorial Fund

The Mike Voisin Memorial Fund has been set up to honor the memory of a passionate and committed advocate for the seafood community in the Gulf. Mike taught those in the industry the value of traveling to Washington, D.C. to 'Walk the Hill'.

After Mike's death in early 2013, the fund was set up to continue Mike's tradition of training the next generation of leaders in how to influence policy and guide our lawmakers toward workable solutions to challenging issues. One hundred percent of contributions to the fund will be used to reimburse travel expenses to Washington, D.C. so we can continue to educate our elected representatives about the issues affecting the shellfish community.

Award recipients will be selected annually from among the membership rolls of the East Coast Shellfish Growers Association, Gulf Oyster Industry Council and Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers Association.

For more information or to donate to the fund visit www.ecsga.org or contact Robert Rheault, ECSGA Executive Director, at (401) 783-3360 or bob@ecsga.org.



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China Update

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Coast to be reopened other than the areas implicated in China's original letter. NOAA also provided additional information regarding PSP protocols and the National Shellfish Sanitation Program and invited the Chinese to visit the United States to review its testing and health certification programs. Finally, NOAA proposed additional arsenic testing as part of its existing certification program. NOAA has indicated that the additional testing will only result in a \$5 increase in certification fees and will not delay future exports. Separately, NOAA is requesting additional information from China specific to their assertions regarding consumption of geoduck skin and their testing protocol for inorganic arsenic.

PCSGA recognizes the significance of this issue for its grower members. PCSGA has convened multiple productive conversations with NOAA, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and other state and federal representatives as we continue to work on solving the problem. While the federal negotiators involved have warned that this may be a process that takes several more months to resolve, we will continue to do everything we can to push NOAA, the Foreign Agriculture Service, and others to work with China to reopen shipments as soon as possible.

Representatives from NOAA traveled to Beijing on March 21st to discuss the ban with China's General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine. Hopefully this meeting will be an important step in resolving this ongoing issue.

PCSGA on the Road...

PCSGA works hard to make sure your voice is heard across the U.S. With recent legislative receptions in Oregon, Alaska, Washington, and Washington DC, members and staff are able to get valuable face time with our nation's decision makers. And the year has just begun!



Weatherly Bates, Connie Smith, and Rodger Painter in front of the Alaska State Capitol Building. Photo by Peter Metcalfe



Kyle Lentz and Marco Pinchot at the Washington State Legislative Reception. Photo by Shina Wysocki



Washington DC Congressional Shellfish Caucus Reception. Photo by Connie Smith

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Do you know Jerry Yamashita?

Shelly Solomon, with Leaping Frog Films, is creating a film project about Jerry Yamashita's extraordinary life. Do you have stories to share for the project, titled "Ebb & Flow"?

If so, please contact Robin Downey at 360-385-3691 or robin319@live.com

PCSGA at the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference

By Robert Smith, Plauché & Carr LLP

PCSGA members, Executive Director Margaret Barrette, and legal counsel Amanda Carr and Robert Smith participated in the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference (“ISSC”) in San Antonio from January 25-31, 2014. Prior to and during ISSC, the PCSGA team worked closely with other members of the Pacific Rim delegation, including representatives from the Washington State Department of Health, the Oregon Department of Agriculture, and the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, as well as shellfish growers and regulators from other coasts. As a result of this coordination and advanced preparation, PCSGA was highly successful at achieving its desired results on several key proposals.

A key proposal of concern for many participants was an FDA proposal that would have combined *Vibrio vulnificus* (V.v.) and *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* (V.p.) control plans and required immediate cooling of shellfish intended for

raw consumption to 50 degrees in one hour. PCSGA and many others raised significant questions regarding FDA’s V.p. illness and death data; the FDA public health rationale of “leveling the playing field”; the effectiveness of icing in reducing V.p., particularly on the West Coast; and the feasibility of implementing icing on boats. FDA withdrew the proposal and proposed a more reasonable substitute proposal that called for further research and study.

Another significant issue that will be brought back to ISSC in 2015 involves proposed FDA guidance for determining prohibited areas and closures and reopenings of shellfish growing areas near wastewater treatment plants (“WWTPs”) based on viral pathogen modeling in addition to bacterial loads. This could be a concern for shellfish farms located near WWTPs and will be an issue that PCSGA will follow closely.

Another key topic was collection and production of shellfish production data and V.p. illness data. This information is critical to establishing a verifiable illness risk per serving analysis and determining the effectiveness of existing V.p. control methods. ISSC approved an FDA proposal to require state authorities to report the annual production of shellfish

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Claire Thompson, an Olympia middle school student, is recognized by the Senate.

It’s Official: The Olympia is Washington’s Oyster

The Olympia Oyster, *Ostrea lurida*, has become the official oyster of Washington state. The small oyster earned the designation under Senate Bill 6145, sponsored by Sen. Brian Hatfield, D-Raymond.

The inspiration for the bill came from Claire Thompson, a student at Olympia’s Nova Middle School. Thompson asked Hatfield to propose the bill as part of a school project and to bring attention to ongoing threats to the state’s waters.

“I’m excited to see this bill move through the process. It’s an opportunity to shed light on an industry vital to our state’s economy and culture,” Hatfield said. “It’s also an excellent opportunity to share a lesson in civics with a young student in our state.”

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ISSC

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harvested in the state by species. Another proposal was sent to an ISSC committee to examine FDA risk assessments and risk calculators.

PCSGA and PacRim were also successful regarding their own proposals. ISSC approved a PacRim proposal to exempt geoduck from shellfish storage temperature critical control points if it is otherwise regulated by a state-approved tempering plan. After several discussions with FDA, PCSGA withdrew its proposal to allow product to be shucked in more than two hours if the dealer is shucking the shellfish and the quantity cannot be feasibly shucked within two hours. FDA confirmed that this was already permitted under the Model Ordinance and therefore no further changes were necessary.

While PCSGA obtained a very successful result at ISSC, additional work is needed over the next two years to carry that success into the next ISSC. PCSGA will continue to coordinate with PacRim, state regulators, FDA, and others to track the proposals that have been sent to committees. This coordination is critical to ensuring that growers' concerns continue to be addressed before and during the next ISSC. If you would like to assist in this effort, please contact Margaret Barrette.



Award recipients. Front row, second from the right: Peter Downey, Discovery Bay Shellfish. Photo from Jefferson County Department of Community Development.

Governor Inslee Acknowledges Mystery Bay Planning Project

Jefferson County, with the collaboration of many stakeholders and agencies, won the distinct honor of receiving a 2013 Governor's Smart Communities award for the Mystery Bay and South Port Townsend Bay Management Plans. The management plan has been very successful. As a result of the efforts of all involved, the shellfish beds in Mystery Bay and South Port Townsend Bay remain open and profitable. Certificates signed by the

Governor were presented to PCSGA and several of members at an event on February 24th. Congratulations to all involved in this impressive effort!

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Grower Profile: In Memory of Max Clausen

By Lilli Clausen, Clausen Oysters, Coos Bay, OR

The last few weeks have been difficult. While I am busy during the day driving to the office without Max now, the evenings are long and empty without his presence.

Max had some problems off and on with blood sugar fluctuations, but I thought that would stabilize at the hospital as before. I was counting on him being around for a few more years!!!

There would not be a Clausen Oyster business without Max's knowledge and expertise to make it happen. An interim part-time job at Qualman Oysters in Charleston turned into twelve years. When Coos Bay was finally cleared for oyster culture, Max sent me to the county office to bid on the leases. After the first crops matured we realized that the larger Coos Bay was an excellent place to grow oysters. Max commissioned the first wooden barge to be built (while I worried about the cost). He then invented the aluminum sleds to hold three baskets to place the oyster clusters into. It made it a lot



Max at work in Coos Bay. Photo by Lilli Clausen

easier than carrying baskets around.

He surveyed the terrain, decided where to plant and how much, took the barge out and later brought it back in. As most oyster growers know, sometimes oyster men get shortened on sleep; that was one reason I decided to go out with the crew.

We had started out on the side of the boat ramp, and then moved the operation over to the dock, eventually

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Max Clausen

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*Max and Lilli Clausen, October 2013.
Photo by Connie Smith*

ending up in the old building before we could convince the bank to grant us a building loan for the new facility. It was a very good day when we had our open house in February of 1996, and even Governor Kitzhaber came to offer encouragement.

Max also showed the crew how to separate the clusters, do quality control, and get the orders ready. But mostly he could fix almost anything due to his experience with all kinds of equipment. Everything went smoothly until Max broke his ankle and could no longer wear hip boots.

He was also good at peeling the onions (that made me cry) and potatoes for the oyster stew and making coffee in the morning. I am missing him every day.

Max Clausen passed away peacefully on January 13, 2014, in Eugene, Oregon.

Welcome New PCSGA Members

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Filling the dumpster at our Spring 2014 beach cleanup. Photo by Bobbi Hudson

10 Years of Marine Debris Clean-up

2014 marks the 10th year of the shellfish grower's volunteer beach clean-up. PCSGA would like to say THANK YOU to the shellfish companies, state agencies, non-profit organizations and individual citizen volunteers who work hard to help keep South Puget Sound beaches clean! We sincerely appreciate your time and effort at these bi-annual events.

Our spring cleanup this year was extremely successful! We were grateful for gorgeous weather, an incredible number of volunteers, and

pre-planning efforts which helped minimize overlap so we could cover more area. In March, 96 volunteers collected a ton (literally!) of debris.

We're pleased to report that the amount of aquaculture debris we haul in averages only 17% of the total garbage we collect. As good marine stewards, our shellfish growers are doing their part to ensure our local waterways stay pristine!

We encourage new and returning volunteers to join us in South Sound for the fall beach clean-up in October. We can also help you organize a clean-up effort in your area. Contact PCSGA for information.

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Ecosystem Services Photo Competition 2014 Winners

Congratulations to the recent winners of PCSGA's monthly Ecosystem Services Photo Contest. Their photos are great examples of how shellfish aquaculture provides important ecosystem benefits to a variety of marine life.

Each month \$100 is awarded to the person whose photo best tells the story of ecosystem services.

To learn more about the monthly contest, or to submit your photo, contact conniesmith@pcsga.org. Photos need to be submitted by the 15th of each month.

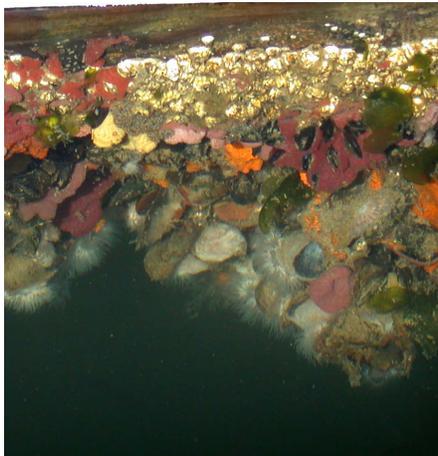
You can view all the winning photos and get more information about the contest at www.pcsqa.org.

January Winner - Mat Buldis, National Fish & Oyster



Nisqually Reach, Washington. You'll note the shining eyes of hundreds of small shrimp taking refuge in the geoduck tubes.

February Winner - Linda Schaffel, NW Shellfish



South Sound, Washington. Habitat and protection is provided by mussel rafts. Photo was taken from above the surface looking down into the water.

March Winner - Weatherly Bates, Alaska Shellfish Farms



Halibut Cove, Alaska. Oyster cages are not only great urchin habitat, but the grazing urchins help keep cages and oysters clean.



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Announcement

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PCSGA



PACIFIC COAST SHELLFISH GROWERS ASSOCIATION

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Olympia, WA 98501**

CURRENT EVENTS

April

- 1-3:** *National Shellfisheries Association Annual Meeting*, Jacksonville, FL. www.shellfish.org.
- 4:** *PCSGA Virtual Board Meeting*.
- 26-27:** *Oregon Ag Fest*, Salem, OR. www.oregifest.com.
- 27:** *SLURP*, Fish Tale Brew House, Olympia, WA. www.pcsga.org.

May

- 18-19:** *PCSGA Board Meeting*, San Francisco, CA.
- 23-25:** *Lund Shellfish Festival*, Lund, British Columbia, Canada. www.lundbc.ca.

June

- 14:** *Arcata Oyster Festival*, Arcata, CA. www.oysterfestival.net.
- 27-29:** *Taste of Tacoma*, Tacoma, WA. www.tasteoftacoma.com.