



Jefferson County Water Resources Program

BY THE NUMBERS

3

Marine Science
Community Workshops
hosted

19

Agencies, organizations,
municipalities and
individuals partnered with

1,034

Attendees to the Wooden
Boat Festival Marine
Science and Stewardship
Stage speaker series



ISSUE

2024

East Jefferson County includes 950 stream and river miles, 317 lakes, 45 recreational shellfish beaches, and over 200 miles of shoreline that border the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Admiralty Inlet and Hood Canal. This region has vast forest lands that provide water storage and filtration. Although many waterbodies are relatively undisturbed, impacts from human activities and development are a growing concern. Non-point source pollution, generally resulting from stormwater runoff, is the leading cause of water quality issues. Freshwater harmful algal blooms are an ongoing problem. Climate change poses additional water quality concerns, with the Pacific Northwest experiencing drier summers, reductions in snowpack and glacial mass, higher spring and lower summer river flows, and a more acidic ocean. Addressing these threats hinges upon the broader community becoming well-informed and actively engaging in stewarding our water and natural resources.

RESPONSE

We provide environmental education training programs, public events, and resources for those interested in stewardship of our streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands, estuaries and marine waters. We provided 3 in-person workshops that educated members of the public on seaweed identification, shellfish harvesting, and safe crab pot use, and tabled 2 outreach events where we provided information on resources related to landowner shoreline management, native eelgrass habitats and protection, and stormwater management through rain gardens. We also held a 3-day Marine Science and Stewardship Stage speaker series, where 25 presenters discussed key topics related to our local waters, including:

- Plankton and the life cycle of Dungeness Crab
- Derelict vessels and derelict crab pots
- Eelgrass protection and restoration
- MyCoast and other citizen science apps
- Ecosystem of a whale fall and Orcas of the Salish Sea
- Invasive European Green Crab



QUOTES

“ [Wooden Boat Festival] speaker was very interesting, informative, prepared, and fun! Thank you!” ”

“ That is fantastic, a group devoting its focus to maintenance [of rain gardens]! ”

OUTCOMES

Volunteers trained through WSU Jefferson County Extension reported hundreds of service hours to improve local ecosystems through education, stewardship, and community science. In 2024, 48 volunteers worked to make a difference through:

- Stewardship: spread clean shell at Discovery Bay to support Olympia oyster habitat enhancement efforts, installed and maintained rain gardens with the Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee, monitored compliance in eelgrass No-Anchor Zones.
- Community science: surveyed forage fish populations at 2 sites, measured the perimeter and density of local kelp beds, monitored water quality with DOH using mussel cages.
- Public education: facilitated discussion with local landowners on soft armoring of beaches, provided information packets on safe crabbing practices.

Through partnerships with local organizations and governments we connect community volunteers with environmental stewardship opportunities across the North Olympic Peninsula. We also provide administrative and technical support for the Jefferson County Marine Resources committee

<https://www.jeffersonmrc.org/>

