

Advancing Shellfish Sustainability: Kachemak Bay Habitat Focus Area

Researchers, decision-makers and stakeholders in Kachemak Bay and Cook Inlet are partnering to establish a framework upon which ecosystem-based management questions can be explored, and bivalve rehabilitation efforts can be built.

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Project Type: Baseline Habitat Assessment

Location: Kachemak Bay and Lower Cook Inlet

Duration: September 2015 to August 2017



Port Graham Intertidal Monitoring Site © ShoreZone

The Need:

Native clam populations in southcentral Alaska have declined significantly since the late 1900s to the point where fisheries are now closed and harvest opportunities are lost. As ocean conditions continue to change, there is an immediate need for decision-support tools to inform management efforts and enhance the productivity of native clam species.



Littleneck clam from Kachemak Bay © C. Field

Approach:

Synthesize information in a baseline habitat assessment

- Marine ecosystem research and monitoring
- Bivalve spawning and rearing methods
- Traditional knowledge ecological trends and maps

Collaboratively address conservation needs with end-users

- Identify priorities with stakeholder surveys
- Develop visualization and analysis decision support tools
- Apply project results with education and outreach
- Package tools for future use and with other species

Stakeholder Anticipated Results and Benefits:

“Provide a unified framework and facilitate better understanding of the factors affecting various shellfish life stages”
~Alaska Department of Fish and Game

*“Identify **priority habitats** for population recovery”* ~Chugach Regional Resources Commission

*“Improve **management strategies** for local clam populations”* ~Seldovia Village Tribe

*“A foundation for developing shellfish **enhancement tools**”* ~Alutiiq Pride Shellfish Hatchery

*“New management strategies for **increasing both wild and farmed shellfish resources**”*

~Kachemak Shellfish Mariculture Association