

Shellfish Inventory Protocols - Marine Park, Bellingham

Whatcom County Marine Resources Committee

Preparation:

Surveyor- Paces out sample plots on transect, digs survey hole, and records data for sampler.

- Determine the length of each pace.
- Receive training on:
 - Using a compass to determine direction of transect.
 - Determining starting location, sample plot location, and ending location.
 - Digging consistent sample holes.
 - Completing field data sheet.

Sampler- Sorts and organizes clams and provides clam data (species and size category) to surveyor.

- Rate experience and knowledge level.
- Receive training on:
 - Shellfish identification.
 - Shellfish measurements using caliper or card.
 - Completing field data sheet.
- Complete shellfish identification quiz.
-

Team- Surveyor and Sampler will work as a team to conduct the shellfish survey.

- Assign to transect. Clearly described transect location and public access issues.
- Sign-out equipment (shovel, compass, caliper, clipboard with shellfish id sheet and field data sheet).

Data Collection:

- Step 1)** Locate and stand at the flagged starting location for the assigned transect.
- Step 2)** Place the quadrat or hoop using the toe of the left foot as the locator.
- Step 3)** Count the number of horse clam holes within quadrat and describe features of survey plot on data sheet (water, vegetation, substrate, etc.).
- Step 4)** Dig the survey hole using quadrat or hoop. The survey hole size is 1ft³.
- Step 5)** Sort the removed substrate for all clams.
- Step 6)** Categorize clams by species, measure clams, and record number of clams by species and size category.
- Step 7)** Replace the clams and refill the survey hole.
- Step 8)** Place (or replace) red survey flag on the refilled hole
- Step 9)** Using the chosen distant landmark and pace measurement, pace 40 feet to next survey plot.
- Step 10)** Repeat steps 2 – 9 for remaining sample plots along transect.
- Step 11)** For last sample plot, record number of paces to transect end (water or other transect) and time of completion.
- Step 12)** Turn in data sheet and equipment.