

# Holmes Harbor

## Annual Shellfish Growing Area Review



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Area: Holmes Harbor

Year Ending: December 31, 2023

Classification: Approved, Conditionally Approved

### Activities in the Growing Area in 2023

All stations in the growing area were sampled six times in accordance with the National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP) Systematic Random Sampling criteria. All sampling events occurred when the Conditionally Approved area was in the Open status. The Conditionally Approved area was closed for 92 days from June 1 through August 31 in accordance with the Conditionally Approved Area Management Plan.

Nearshore water quality at Freeland County Park has been degraded in the summer when large piles of wrack accumulate on the beach. During the BEACH Program's 2023 monitoring season at the park (late May through August), fecal indicator bacteria (enterococci) levels exceeded the Beach Action Value on 7/18/2023 and 8/22/2023, and water quality over the season did not meet EPA's saltwater swimming standard.

Island County Public Health (ICPH) received EPA National Estuary Program funds for pollution identification and correction activities in the Holmes Harbor watershed. The Department and ICPH completed follow-up sampling and evaluations of on-site sewage systems (OSS) and agricultural sites. Two drainages with historically elevated bacteria levels that resulted in parcel closures showed a significant improvement in water quality during follow-up sampling. As a result of low bacteria levels and no OSS or agricultural site impacts, associated parcel closures and areas surrounding these drainages were reopened including parcels S613500001590, S613500001600, S613500001610, S613500001620, S615500000240 and S615500000280.

### Analytical Results of Water Samples

Table 1 summarizes the results of the last 30 samples collected from the area. This summary shows that all stations pass the NSSP water quality standard.

### Change in Actual Pollution Sources that Impact the Growing Area

During a marine water sampling event on 9/18/2023, a 48-foot wooden tug was anchored in deeper water off Freeland County Park in South Holmes Harbor. Although no people were observed on board and no discharge was observed, people were clearly living on board. The vessel had been in the growing area most of the summer and was still present on 10/23/2023 (but not observed in the growing area on 2/5/2024). The vessel was not impacting the harvest area.

### Classification Status

- Well within the classification standards
- Meets standards, but threatened with downgrade in classification
- Fails to meet current classification standard

## Remarks and Recommendations

Table 1 shows that all stations meet the NSSP water quality standard for an Approved classification and the area is correctly classified.

## Management Plan Evaluation

1. Have all parties involved complied with the conditions of the management plan ..... Yes
2. Has reporting been adequate to manage the conditional area..... Yes
3. Does the area consistently meet approved area criteria when it is open for harvest ..... Yes
4. Has a field inspection of critical pollution sources been conducted ..... Yes

**TABLE 1. Summary of Marine Water Data (SRS) for the Holmes Harbor Growing Area**

Sampling Event Type: Regulatory

Maximum Number of Samples: 30

Tides Included: All

Station Number	Classification	Date Range	Range (FC/100mL)	Geomean (FC/100mL)	Est. 90 <sup>th</sup> Percentile (FC/100mL)	Meets Standard
194	Approved	10/19/2015 - 11/13/2023	1.7 - 110.0	2.7	11.2	Y
195	Approved	10/19/2015 - 11/13/2023	1.7 - 2.0	1.7	1.8	Y
196	Approved	10/19/2015 - 11/13/2023	1.7 - 2.0	1.7	1.8	Y
197	Approved	8/4/2015 - 11/13/2023	1.7 - 7.8	1.8	2.6	Y
198	Approved	10/19/2015 - 11/13/2023	1.7 - 46.0	1.9	4.2	Y
199	Approved	10/19/2015 - 11/13/2023	1.7 - 2.0	1.7	1.8	Y
200	Approved	11/5/2018 - 11/13/2023	1.7 - 33.0	2.2	5.6	Y
201	Approved	11/5/2018 - 11/13/2023	1.7 - 17.0	2.2	5.2	Y
280	Approved	10/19/2015 - 11/13/2023	1.7 - 2.0	1.7	1.8	Y
281	Approved	10/19/2015 - 11/13/2023	1.7 - 2.0	1.7	1.8	Y
282	Approved	10/19/2015 - 11/13/2023	1.7 - 23.0	1.9	3.5	Y
283	Approved	10/19/2015 - 11/13/2023	1.7 - 17.0	2.1	4.2	Y
193	Conditionally Approved	8/19/2019 - 10/23/2023	1.7 - 350.0	2.4	8.6	Y
402	Conditionally Approved	8/19/2019 - 10/23/2023	1.7 - 350.0	2.6	13.9	Y

The standard for approved shellfish growing waters is fecal coliform geometric mean not greater than 14 organisms/ 100 mL with an estimated 90th percentile not greater than 43 organisms/ 100 mL. The above table shows bacteriological results in relation to program standards.

**MAP 1. Holmes Harbor Growing Area**




 **Holmes Harbor**

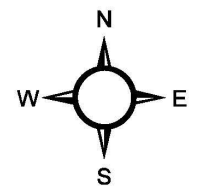
 **Washington State Department of Health**

Date Updated: 7/11/2018

0 1.5 3 Miles



Classification		Sampling Stations
	Approved	
	Conditional	
	Prohibited	
	Restricted	
	Unclassified	



\* Some sampling stations are highlighted with grey box for ease of reading.