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Subobjective: Puget Sound

EPA failed to meet both of commitments for the Puget Sound subobjective in FY 2013 (Figure 87).

Figure 87: Puget Sound Subobjective Six-Year Trend



FY 2013 ACS Code	Abbreviated Measure Description	Results and Commitment Status							Appendix Page Number (D-0)/ Figure Number
		2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	
Subobjective 2.2.8 Restore and Protect the Puget Sound									
PS-SP49.N11	Number acres of Puget Sound shellfish areas improved (cumulative)		1,566	1,730	4,453	1,525	2,489	3,203	D-52/Fig. 88
PS-SP51	Number acres of Puget Sound estuarine wetlands restored (cumulative)		4,413	5,751	10,062	14,629	23,818	30,128	D-52/Fig. 90

EPA's Puget Sound program works to ensure that the natural, cultural, and economic benefits of the Puget Sound ecosystem are protected and sustained, today and into the future. The Puget Sound ecosystem encompasses roughly 20 rivers and 2,800 square miles of sheltered inland waters that provide habitat to hundreds of species of marine mammals, fish, and sea birds. The waters in this basin also provide a significant source of seafood for both commercial and recreational harvesters.

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FY 2013 Performance Highlights and Management Challenges

The Puget Sound program missed its annual commitment to improve water quality and lift harvest restrictions in 7,758 of shellfish bed growing areas. Efforts by federal, state, and local agencies in partnership with Puget Sound tribes have resulted in better water quality on **3,203 acres** of commercial and recreational shellfish harvesting area since 2007 (Figure 88). In FY 2013, these efforts resulted in an upgrade of 714 acres, with very few acres downgraded. The FY013 commitment in part depended upon the successful recovery of over 4,000 acres in the Samish Bay growing area that had been downgraded in FY2011. A concerted effort by multiple stakeholders continues to target non-point source pathogen pollution in the Samish watershed. The levels of pathogens in the Samish Bay watershed continue to trend downward, but not yet to the levels needed for an upgrade to occur.

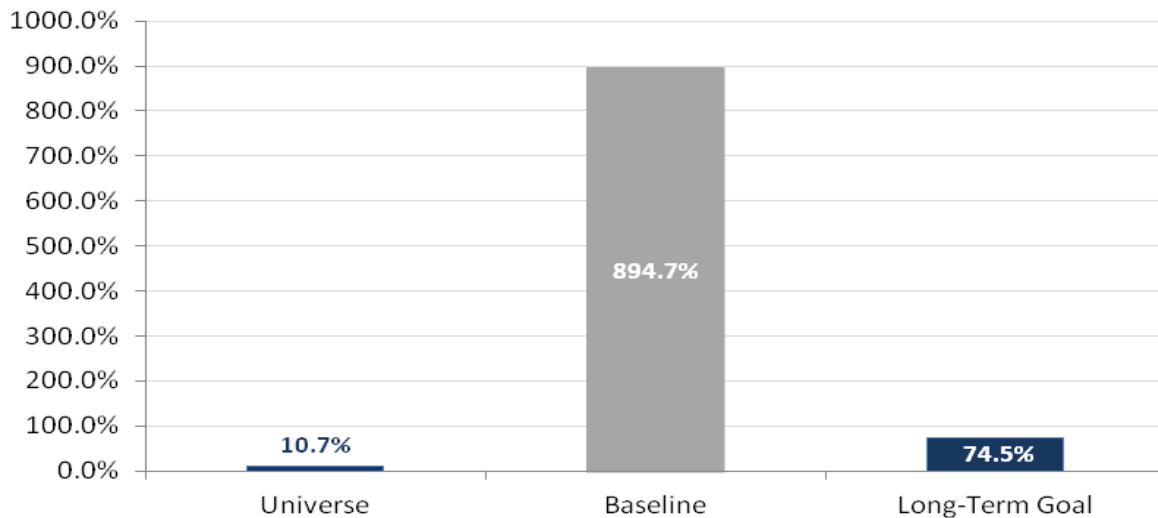
Figure 88: Increased Acres of Puget Sound Shellfish Areas by Fiscal Year (PS-SP49.N11)



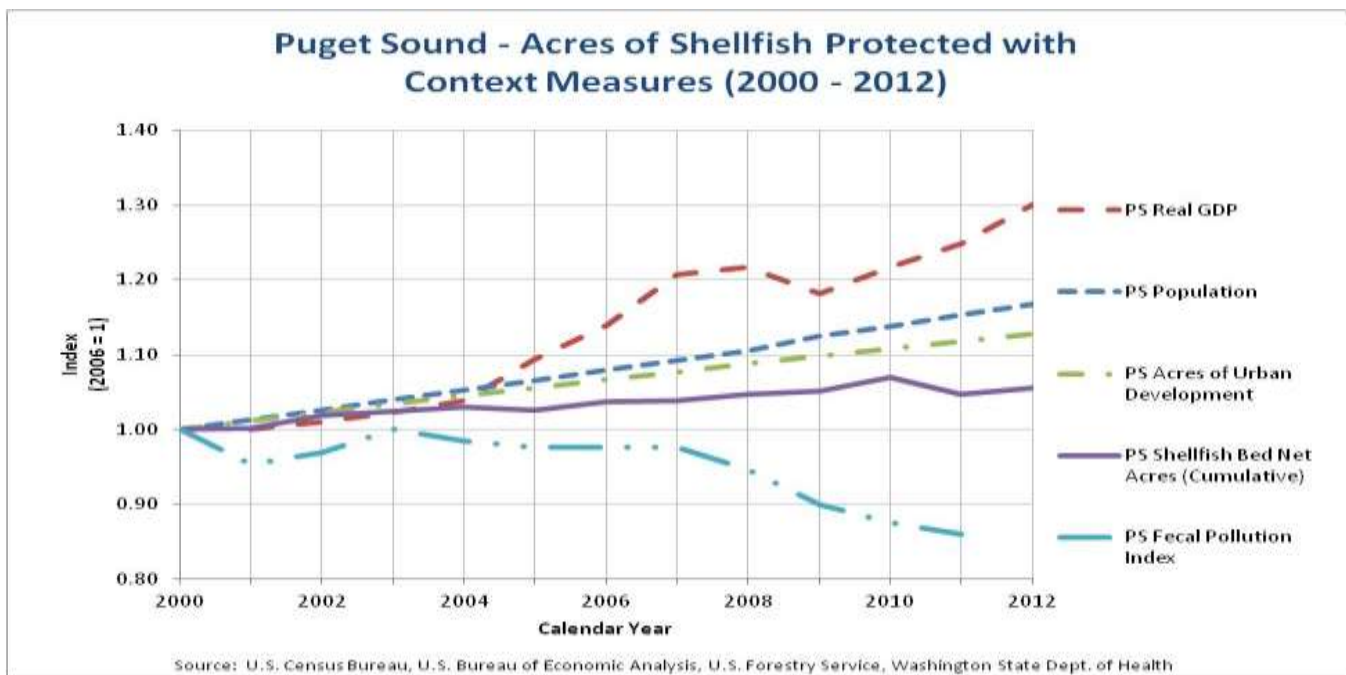
The Puget Sound has approximately 143,000 acres of approved shellfish harvest beds that require federal, state, local and tribal partners working together to ensure that adjacent water quality and safe harvesting conditions are preserved. Additionally, there are approximately 10,000 acres of potentially recoverable shellfish beds in Puget Sound closed due to nonpoint source pollution. The performance measure reports the *net* gains (losses) of recovered harvest areas minus any loss of currently approved acres. Protecting water quality in existing approved areas is critical to the achievement of the performance measure for lifting harvest restrictions. The Puget Sound Program works to both protect the existing approved shellfish harvest beds, and to improve water conditions so that recoverable harvest areas can be approved for harvest.. The Puget Sound Program strategically directs resources to address the pathogen pollution problems impacting shellfish harvest in Puget Sound both in the near term - focusing on specific geographical locations (e.g. Samish Bay), and in the long term for the universe of existing approved harvest areas and for the potentially recoverable shellfish acres basin-wide in Puget Sound.

As of 2013, EPA and its partners have upgraded 3,203 acres, 32 % of a total of 10,000 acres of shellfish beds identified as potentially recoverable in the 2007 baseline universe.. . This is a significant increase over the 2007 baseline of 322 acres recovered (895%). The program has achieved approximately 75% of its FY 2015 goal of 4,300 acres of harvestable shellfish beds. With continued emphasis on pollution identification and correction, gains will be made in FY 2014 that should enable the Puget Sound program to meet its five-year strategic plan goal by FY 2015 (Figure 89).

Figure 89: Increased Acres of Puget Sound Shellfish Areas as a Percent of Universe, Baseline, and Long-Term Goal (PS-SP49.N11)



Despite a burgeoning regional population, rapid economic growth, and increasingly expansive urban development, as of FY 2013, the EPA’s Puget Sound program work has resulted in over 30,000 acres of habitat protected and/or restored (cumulative from 2006), and just over 3,200 acres of shellfish harvest beds upgraded (cumulative from 2006). The program has also advanced Puget Sound stormwater permit and retrofit programs utilizing Low Impact Development techniques. The Puget Sound program continues to fund and build upon water quality work that has resulted in a substantial reduction in the fecal pollution index in some of the most polluted areas of Puget Sound.



Over **30,000 acres** of tidally and seasonally influenced estuarine wetlands have been restored in the Puget Sound Basin since FY 2006 (SP-51). In FY 2013, the Puget Sound program tallied an annual increase of 6310 acres, falling slightly below the annual increment needed to meet the cumulative target of 31,818 acres (Figure 90). Anticipated work in the Elwha riparian areas was delayed in FY13. In spite of this, over 6,000 acres were protected and/or restored during that year, and the 6-year cumulative target of 31,800 acres was narrowly missed by only approximately 1,700 acres. FY14 results -targeting an increase of 3,690 acres- will include acres from the Elwha as well as other salmon recovery efforts.

Figure 90: Restored Acres of Puget Sound Estuarine Wetlands by Fiscal Year (PS-SP51)

