

From: lnjthornton@comcast.net
To: [ECY RE Japanese Eelgrass Permit Comments](#)
Subject: Please don't spray eelgrass in Willapa Bay.
Date: Sunday, November 04, 2012 9:56:30 PM

Kathy,

I am writing to comment on the spraying of eelgrass on Willapa Bay. I am an avid outdoors person and I enjoy taking my family to Willapa Bay to go Hunting and Fishing there.

I can't imagine that the benefits of spraying to kill eelgrass is worth the risk of the possible detrimental affects it may have there.

(if you have time can you write back as to a summary of the expected benefits of less eelgrass in the bay)

Although I am not a scientist and can only employ my own common knowledge of things, I would worry about the ecosystem of Willapa bay being negatively affected by introducing a chemical and simultaneously killing eelgrass. It seems like common sense that by doing both those things the ecosystem will be affected.

Again, although I am not a scientist, I can think of 2 examples, (using my own limited, common knowledge of things) on how not having eelgrass in the bay could change the ecosystem in a way that would negatively affect some of its wildlife:

1. I know that in other bays on the West Coast herring attach their eggs to seaweed material such as the eelgrass in Willapa. (I know this because I have a friend that harvests the eggs off of such seaweed; as it is a delicacy to him.)

By having less eelgrass in the bay, won't that affect the Herring Spawn? And therefore the fish and wildlife that look to eat the herring?

2. I also know that Waterfowl such as - Widgeon, Pintail and Brant Geese, all of which are suffering low numbers in Population, eat eelgrass. If the eelgrass is not present in the bay the Waterfowl will not have an important source of food that they need. (As Willapa Bay is likely one of their first stops on their long migration over open waters from their Alaskan breeding areas)

By having less eelgrass in the bay, won't that effect the Waterfowl?

Those are just two species that I know will be negatively effected by killing eelgrass. There may be many other as well!

(if you have time can you comment on: what, if any, research/studies have been done on the possible affects killing eelgrass will have on the wildlife in Willapa Bay; and if so, by whom?)

Chemicals in the Bay?

As far as the chemicals being present in the bay, it's anyones guess as to how that will affect things.

It seems to me that whenever chemicals are introduced into an area, often times there are later reports of detrimental affects that were seldom anticipated at the time of introduction.

There are many examples one could give about the negative affects that have been felt by people, wildlife, ecosystems, etc.. in past incidents where chemicals have been introduced over large areas.

(Could it possibly kill more than just eelgrass?)

Another possible thing I would worry about if I were an Oyster Grower in the area, is that the chemicals may affect the Oyster Beds. (Do we know for sure that it won't Possibly affect their production or their quality)

How long would it take to rid the traces of chemicals from the contaminated beds?

This could exclude the local Oyster crops from many markets for possibly a significant amount of time. This alone seems to blow the risk/reward ratio in my opinion. Why risk the health of the existing oyster industry.

If chemicals are introduced over large areas of Willapa Bay and there is a negative consequence in the future, might that open up the possibility of potential future lawsuits?

If the chemicals caused some unwanted affect and lawsuits did follow, who would be liable for the attorney fees and possible monetary settlements? Would it be a Government Agency and therefore the tax payers? The cost of a large scale lawsuit could be very large. Today there is a lot of concern amongst Americans about Government having to spend more than it can bring in; and therefore much time and careful consideration should, in my opinion, be taken before making a decision such as this one.

All in all it seem to me that Willapa Bay is different from many other bays across the country. It is not next to big industry and the large populations of big cities. It could probably be considered somewhat of a pristine bay when compared to many others; and therefore the seafood that comes out of it could also be considered somewhat pristine. Why risk possibly changing that current condition of the bay? Many outdoors enthusiasts such as myself feed their families a lot of the fish and game that comes from the Willapa Bay area. I know many of them would feel weary about eating their catch if they know chemicals are being sprayed over the area. Also, I would think many would worry about the dwindling affects it possibly could have on fish and wildlife.

I hope that these things I have mentioned have already been thoroughly contemplated. And again if you have time I would appreciate any reply you may have; as I realize that there may be some things I don't understand about the need to kill eelgrass in Willapa Bay. But I would like to know more about it, so please reply if you can.

Thank you for considering my thoughts on the mater.

Jeff Thornton