

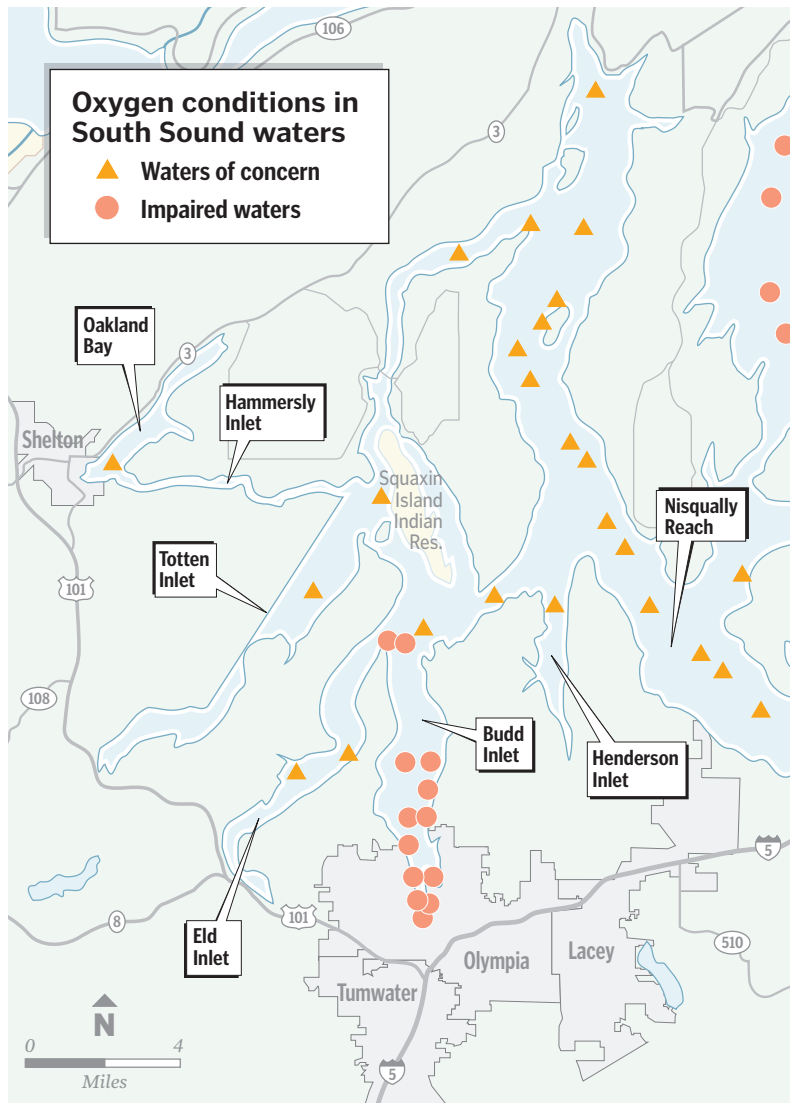
Profiles of South Sound Inlets and Watersheds

The inlets in South Sound are unique to Puget Sound in several ways. They are vulnerable to nutrient pollution and low dissolved oxygen levels because the water in South Sound circulates poorly and can take months to flush out to sea. The inlets are also home to much of the state's commercial shellfish industry.

OAKLAND BAY
(and Hammersley Inlet)
Watershed: 160 sq. miles
Shoreline length: 33 miles
Population: 25,100, growing population concentrated near inlet, moderate overall density
Land cover: Relatively low impervious cover and high forest cover, but much conversion in close proximity to Sound
Armoring: Moderate level of armoring (limited data)
Water quality: Problems in fresh and marine waters led by fecal coliform and temperature impairments
Shellfish: Hammersley mostly open and Oakland mostly 'conditionally' open (north end recently downgraded)
Eutrophication: Dead-end inlet sensitive to nutrient inputs

TOTTEN INLET
(and Skookum Inlet)
Watershed: 71 sq. miles
Shoreline length: 42 miles
Population: 6,300, low population and low density
Land cover: Low level of impervious cover and high level of forest cover
Armoring: Low level of armoring (limited data for Mason County portion of watershed)
Water quality: Relatively low number of problems including freshwater fecal coliform and temperature
Shellfish: Open for shellfish harvesting except for unclassified area at the head of the bay
Eutrophication: Dead-end inlet sensitive to nutrient inputs

ELD INLET
Watershed: 37 sq. miles
Shoreline length: 35 miles
Population: 9,100, relatively low population, moderate density
Land cover: Relatively low impervious cover and high forest cover, but much conversion in close proximity to Sound
Armoring: Significant armoring along many stretches, including Cooper Point and Squaxin Passage
Water quality: Relatively low number of problems led by freshwater fecal coliform
Shellfish: Open for shellfish harvesting except for unclassified area at the head of the bay
Eutrophication: Dead-end inlet sensitive to nutrient inputs



BUDD INLET
Watershed: 159 sq. miles
Shoreline length: 24 miles
Population: 82,800, high total population but moderate density due to watershed size
Land cover: Moderate level of impervious cover but concentrated near Sound and Deschutes River
Armoring: High level of armoring from Deschutes estuary to Cooper Point, less on east shoreline
Water quality: Problems in fresh and marine waters involving dissolved oxygen, toxics, temperature and fecal coliform
Shellfish: Closed to shellfish harvesting
Eutrophication: Dead-end inlet very sensitive to nutrient inputs

HENDERSON INLET
Watershed: 48 sq. miles
Shoreline length: 25 miles
Population: 54,300, highest population density at 1,100-plus people per square mile
Land cover: Relatively high level of impervious cover and low level of forest cover; steadily urbanizing watershed
Armoring: Moderate level of armoring, more on east than west shoreline
Water quality: Problems in both fresh and marine waters led by fecal coliform and temperature
Shellfish: Mix of harvest classifications (closed, conditional, approved), series of downgrades in recent years at head of bay
Eutrophication: Dead-end inlet sensitive to nutrient loading

NISQUALLY
Watershed: 765 sq. miles
Shoreline length: 23 miles
Population: 69,900, low average density, significant growth in urban areas (e.g., Lacey, Yelm, Dupont)
Land cover: Relatively low impervious cover and high forest cover, but much conversion in close proximity to Sound
Armoring: Armoring along Nisqually reach and diking/earth fill in Nisqually delta; estuary restoration underway
Water quality: Problems in both fresh and marine waters led by fecal coliform and temperature
Shellfish: Closed to harvest east of McAllister Creek; open to harvest along Nisqually Reach with upgrades in recent years
Eutrophication: Less vulnerable to effects of eutrophication

Condition of South Puget Sound inlets and watersheds

Totten Inlet scores highest among all South Sound inlets overall while Budd Inlet scores the worst.

Inlet/watershed	Population	Land cover	Armoring	Water quality	Shellfish	Eutrophication
Oakland/Hammersley	●	●	●	●	●	●
Totten	●	●	●	●	●	●
Eld	●	●	●	●	●	●
Budd	●	●	●	●	●	●
Henderson	●	●	●	●	●	●
Nisqually	●	●	●	●	●	●

Legend: ● Good (green), ● Fair (yellow), ● Poor (red)

Land cover and impervious surface, 1991-2001

Henderson Watershed clearly has the highest percentage of impervious surface, while Eld contains the highest percentage of forest cover. However, none showed any improvement from 1991 figures.

Basin	Percent Impervious 1991	Percent Impervious 2001	Percent change	Percent forest cover 1991	Percent forest cover 2001	Percent change
Oakland/Hammersley	1.9	2.2	15	59	52	-13
Totten	1.2	1.3	14	68	65	-4
Eld	2.2	2.7	16	70	64	-8
Budd	5.7	6.4	11	54	49	-10
Henderson	10.7	12.7	16	41	37	-8
Nisqually	1.2	1.4	16	61	58	-5

*Due to the need to apportion people by watershed, 2000 population numbers were used because more recent population trends are not available.