State of Classification Report

The attached report illustrates the status of the commercial shellfish growing areas in your county. It includes a breakdown of shellfish harvest acreage, impacts to marine water that result in Prohibited classifications, and details regarding how your county compares to the other 13 counties with shellfish growing areas. We are providing this information in hopes of continuing conversations about the current marine water quality in your county.

Our program collected and analyzed the data within this report following the stringent pollution source and marine water quality requirements set forth in the National Shellfish Sanitation Program Guide for the Control of Molluscan Shellfish (NSSP). Commercial shellfish growing areas must meet numeric criteria outlined in the NSSP of a geometric mean of no greater than 14 fecal coliform/100 ml and an estimated 90th percentile of no greater than 43 fecal coliform/100 ml. These numbers are based on ongoing, long-term sampling at permanent marine water stations. The classification statistics include the evaluation of a minimum of the last 30 marine water samples collected over a 2.5 to 5-year period. Commercial shellfish harvesting is not allowed if marine water stations fail to meet the marine water standards or if pollution sources are identified within the watershed that impact the area.

Common terms used in the report include:

Classification – A specific term that defines the conditions under which commercial shellfish harvesting can occur. It is determined by the evaluation of marine water quality, shoreline pollution sources, and meteorological/hydrographic factors.

> ***Approved*** – This classification applies to areas that meet very stringent marine water quality standards and have no pollution impacts. Commercial shellfish companies can harvest directly from Approved areas and take the product directly to market.
>
> ***Conditionally Approved*** – This classification applies to areas that meet very stringent marine water quality standards and have no pollution impacts most of the time. Periodic poor water quality, based on predictable conditions, results in the temporary closure of the harvest area.
>
> ***Restricted*** – This classification applies to areas that show a limited degree of pollution or areas where active marine water quality evaluations are not available. Shellfish must be relayed to Approved or Conditionally Approved areas and allowed to purge before harvest.
>
> ***Prohibited*** – This classification applies to areas that have known marine water quality impacts. Commercial shellfish harvesting is not allowed in Prohibited areas.

Upgrade – Reclassifying a growing area or portion of a growing area from a more restrictive classification to a less restrictive classification. *Example: Upgrade from Prohibited to Approved.*

Downgrade – Reclassifying a growing area or portion of a growing area from a less restrictive classification to a more restrictive classification. *Example: Downgrade from Approved to Conditionally Approved.*

Failing – Marine water sampling stations that do not meet the water quality standards. The classification of the shellfish harvesting area must be downgraded.

Threatened – Marine water stations currently meeting the standards but are near failing or existing shoreline pollution sources have been identified that may impact public health if not appropriately managed. Marine water sampling stations with estimated 90th percentiles between 30 and 43 fc/100 ml are considered Threatened.

Short descriptions of each section of the report follow:

CLASSIFICATION & RANK

Classified commercial shellfish growing areas vary in size from under 500 acres to over 46,000 acres. The rank is based on each category's relationship to the same category in the other counties with commercial shellfish growing areas. There are 14 counties with shellfish growing areas in Washington State. The total classified acres in a county accounts for all Approved, Conditionally Approved, Restricted, and Prohibited acres. The number of marine water stations in a county denotes how many permanent stations are routinely sampled each year.

CLASSIFICATION BREAKDOWN & REASONS FOR PROHIBITED CLASSIFICATIONS

This figure shows a breakdown of the classifications and reasons for the Prohibited classifications. While the Nonpoint denotation in the Prohibited classification chart is based on poor water quality; the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and Marina portions are based on the potential to pollute. Potential upset conditions at a WWTP and discharges from boats in a marina are used to calculate these areas.

UPGRADES & DOWNGRADES

This table lists recent classification upgrades and downgrades.

FECAL COLIFORM ROLLING ESTIMATED 90th PERCENTILES

This figure shows the water quality trend over the last 8 years for all Threatened or Failing stations and includes demarcations of the minimum Threatened threshold (30 FC/100mL) and minimum Failing threshold (43 FC/100mL). The trend lines illustrate the change in bacterial marine water quality (estimated 90th percentile) at those stations over time. Each point on the estimated 90th percentile trend line is calculated using the previous 30 marine water samples.

COMMERCIAL SHELLFISH GROWING AREA MAPS

Page 2 includes maps of all shellfish growing areas in the county followed by insets of areas with Threatened or Failing stations. Stations symbolized in orange are threatened and in danger of failing – these areas should be, or should continue to be, the focus of water quality restoration work to prevent future downgrades. Stations symbolized in red are failing and subject to be downgraded to a more restrictive classification. These stations will require improvements in marine water quality and work completed to remediate pollution sources in order to be upgraded again.

SHELLFISH PROGRAMS CONTACT

For the 2022 Growing Area Annual Reports, please visit
http://www.doh.wa.gov/CommunityandEnvironment/Shellfish/GrowingAreas/AnnualReports

For current Growing Area classifications and water quality, please visit
www.doh.wa.gov/commercialshellfishmap

For further information, please contact:

Scott Chernoff at scott.chernoff@doh.wa.gov or (360) 236-3329
Mason, Pierce, Island, Snohomish, Thurston, and Whatcom counties

Trevor Swanson at trevor.swanson@doh.wa.gov or (360) 236-3313
Clallam, Grays Harbor, Kitsap, Jefferson, Pacific, and Skagit counties

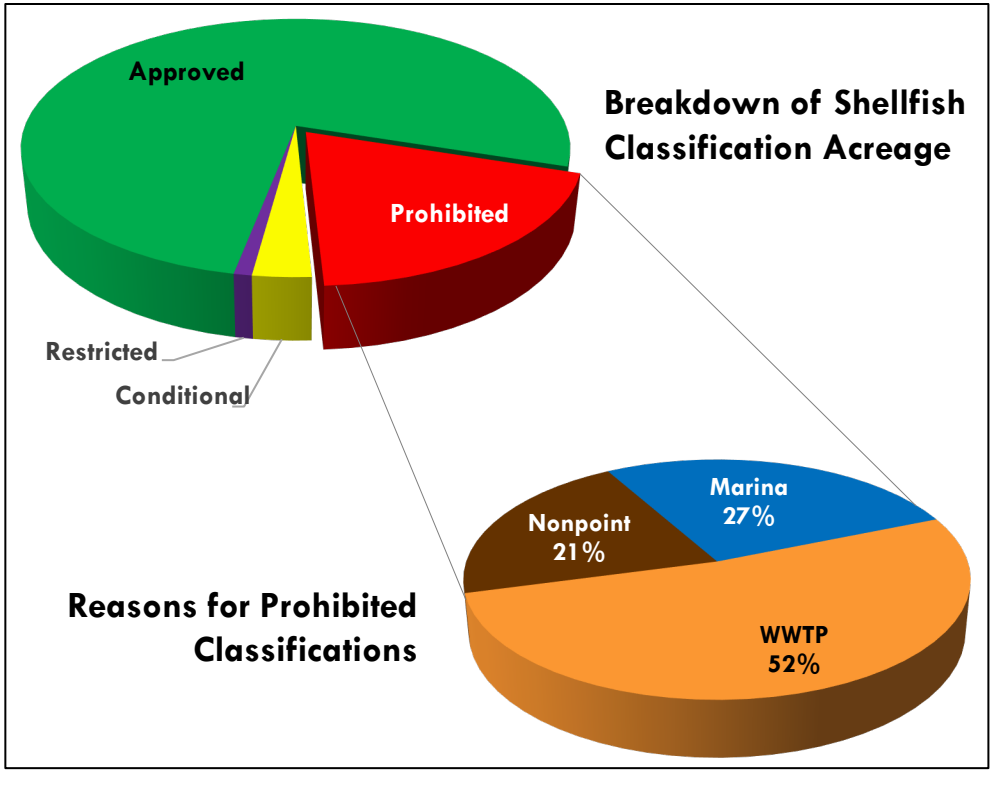
Jean Frost at jean.frost@doh.wa.gov or (360) 489-2384
King and San Juan counties

2023 Pierce County: State of Classification Report (through end of 2022)

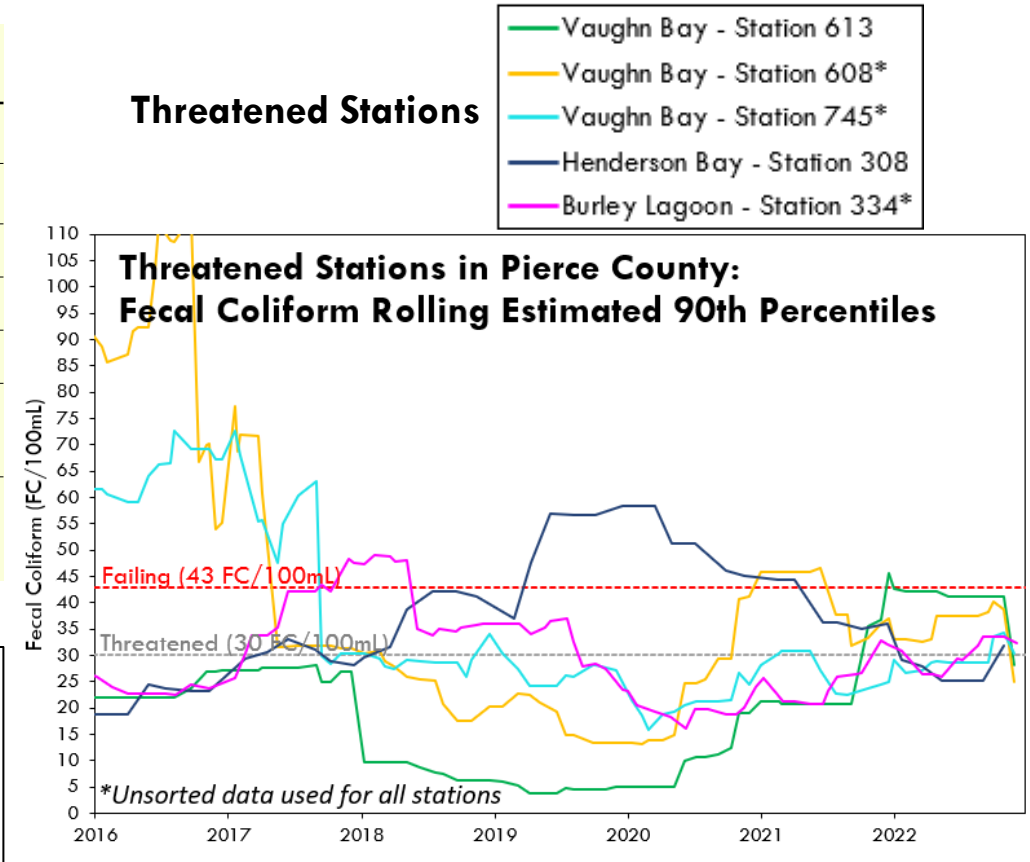
Shellfish Programs | Office of Environmental Health and Safety | Washington State Department of Health

Pierce County Classifications & Rank

Total Classified Acres	12,647 acres	Rank #12
Approved	9,728 acres	Rank #10
Conditionally Approved	372 acres	Rank #8
Restricted	114 acres	Rank #6
Prohibited	2,433 acres	Rank #8
Marine Water Stations Monitored	202 Stations	Rank #3
Classified Commercial Shellfish Growing Areas	18 Areas	Rank #1



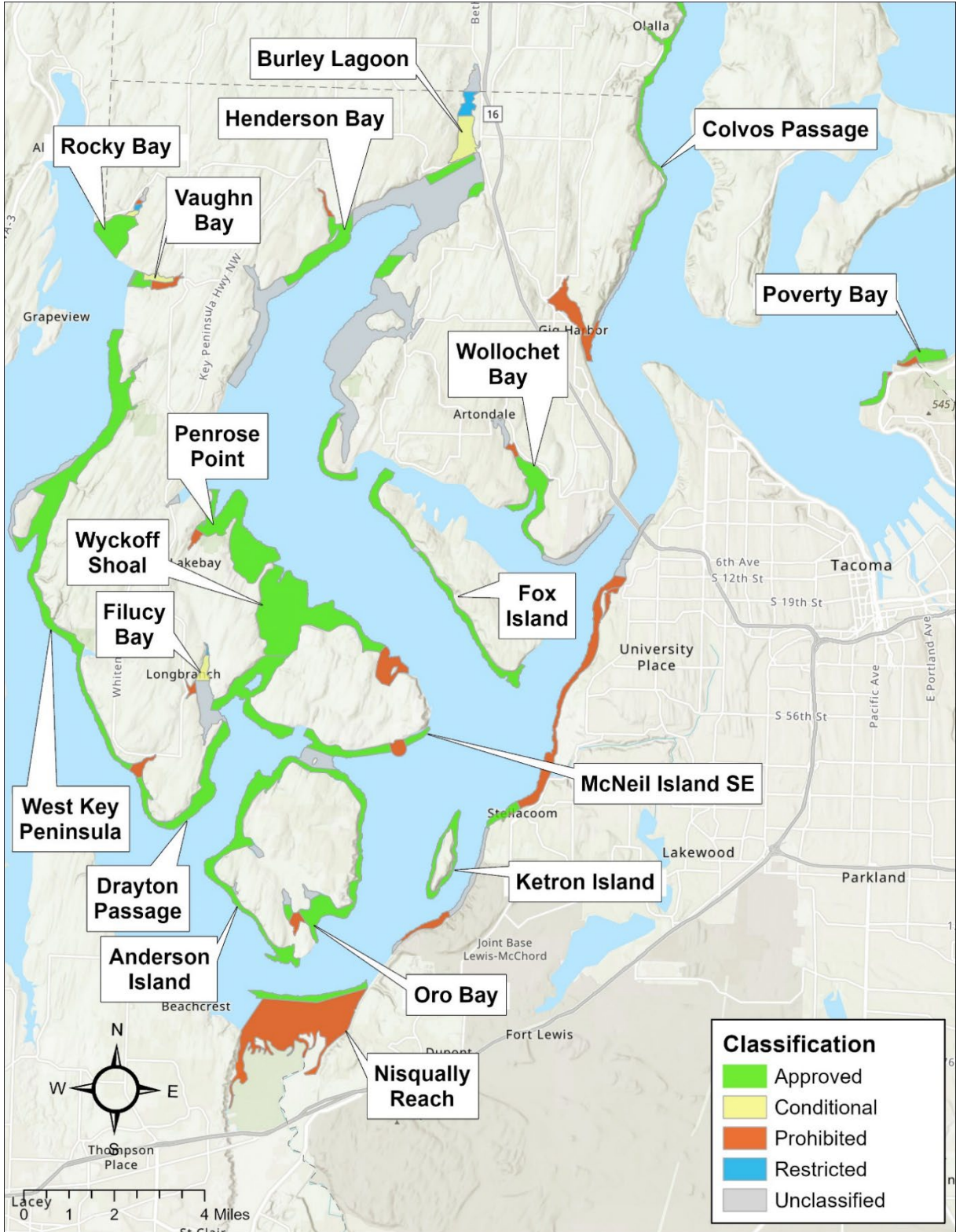
Threatened Stations



Recent Upgrades and Downgrades

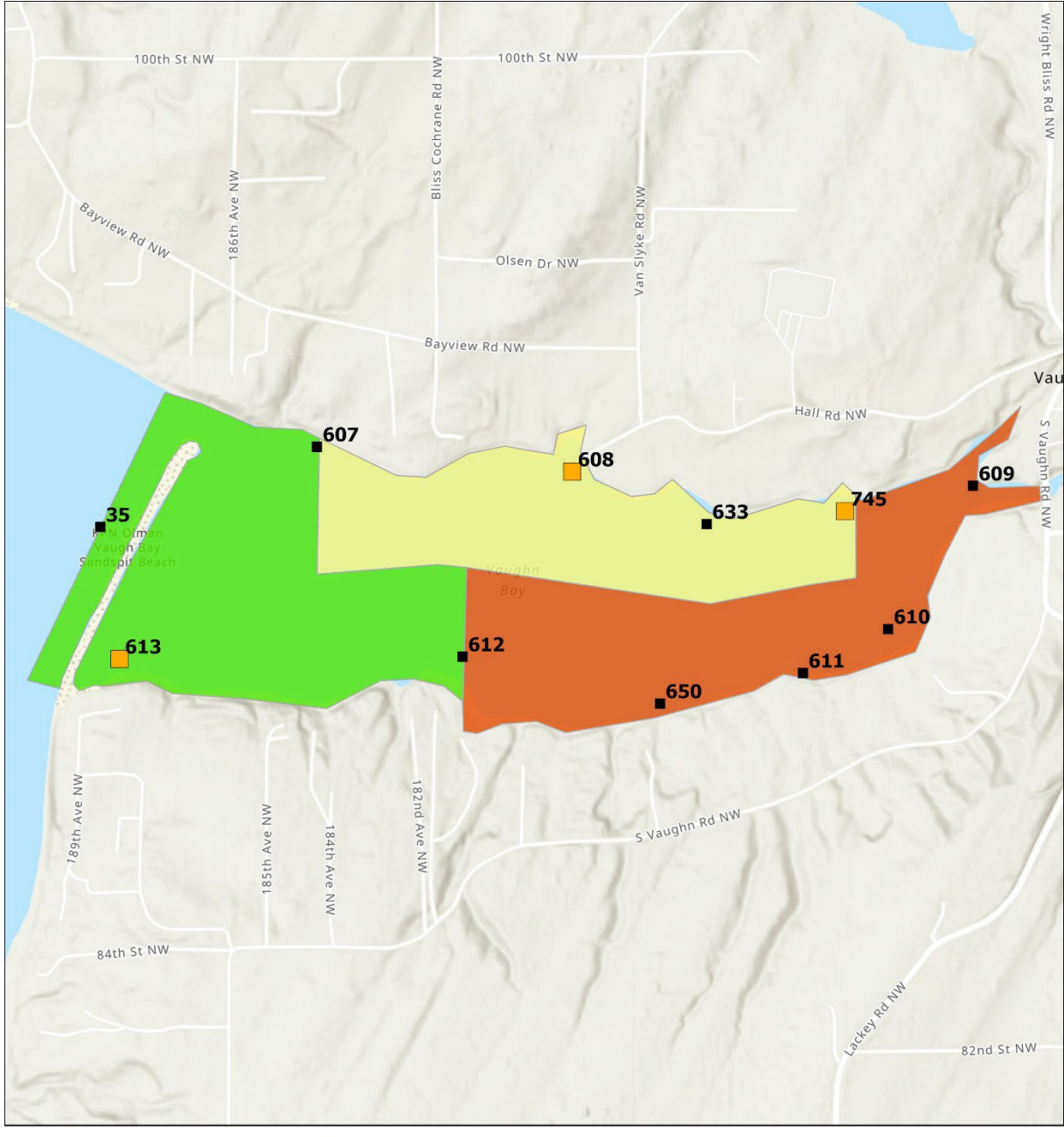
Year	Growing Area	Acres	Description
2022	Vaughn Bay	-40	Conditional to Prohibited
2022	Henderson Bay	+18	Restricted to Approved
2020	Henderson Bay	-18	Approved to Restricted
2018	Burley Lagoon	-81	Approved to Conditional
2018	Burley Lagoon	-20	Conditional to Restricted
2017	Rocky Bay	-13	Approved to Restricted
2017	Rocky Bay	-17	Approved to Conditional
2016	Rocky Bay	-9	Approved to Prohibited
2016	Vaughn Bay	-40	Approved to Conditional

Map 1: Growing Areas in Pierce County



Washington State Department of HEALTH

Map 2: Vaughn Bay Growing Area



Shellfish Classification

- Approved
- Conditional
- Prohibited
- Restricted
- Unclassified

- Threatened Stations
- Failing Stations
- Marine Stations

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0 0.13 0.25 0.5 Miles

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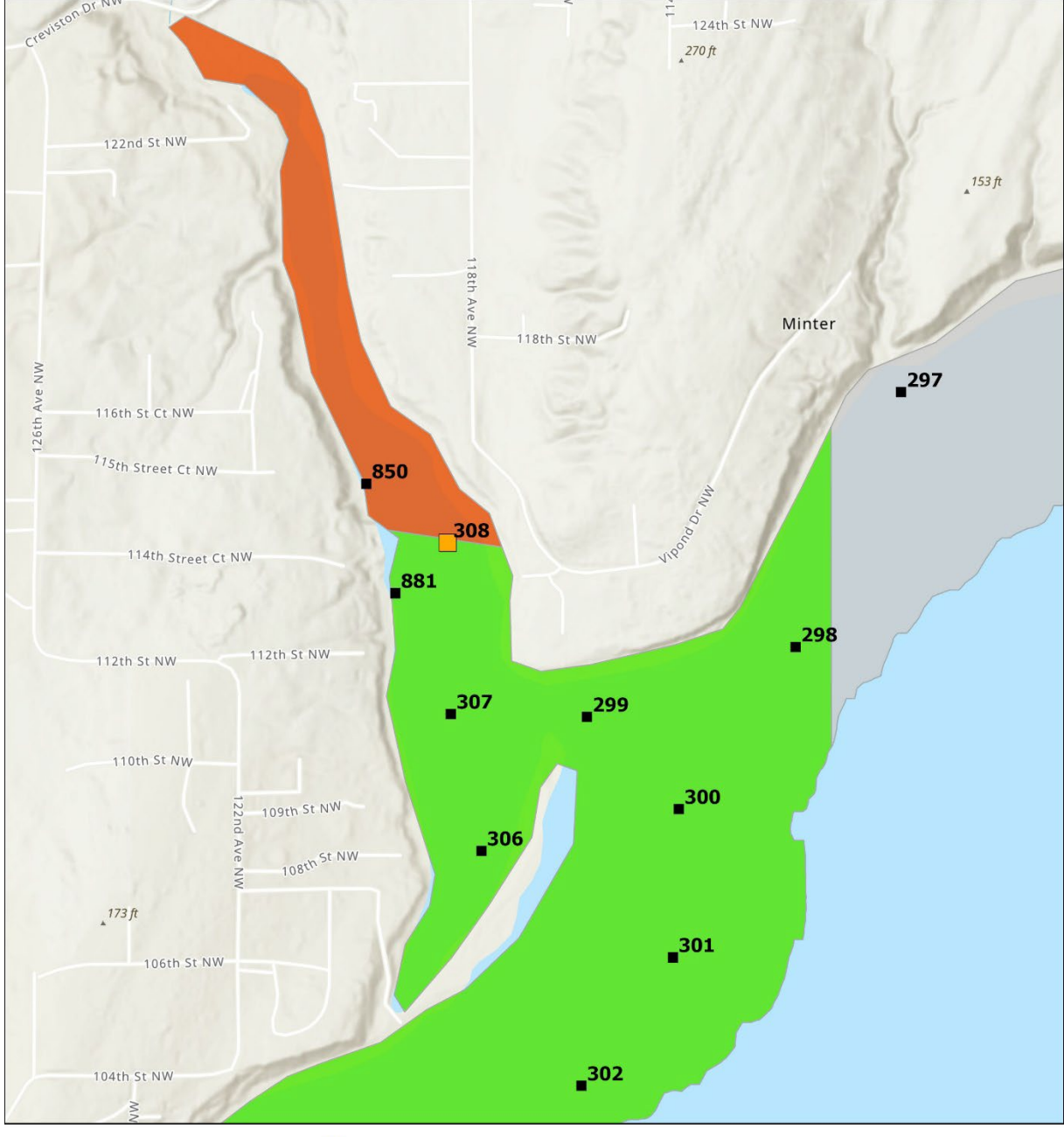
Map 3: Henderson Bay Growing Area (Minter Bay)



Shellfish Classification

- Approved
- Conditional
- Prohibited
- Restricted
- Unclassified

- Threatened Stations
- Failing Stations
- Marine Stations

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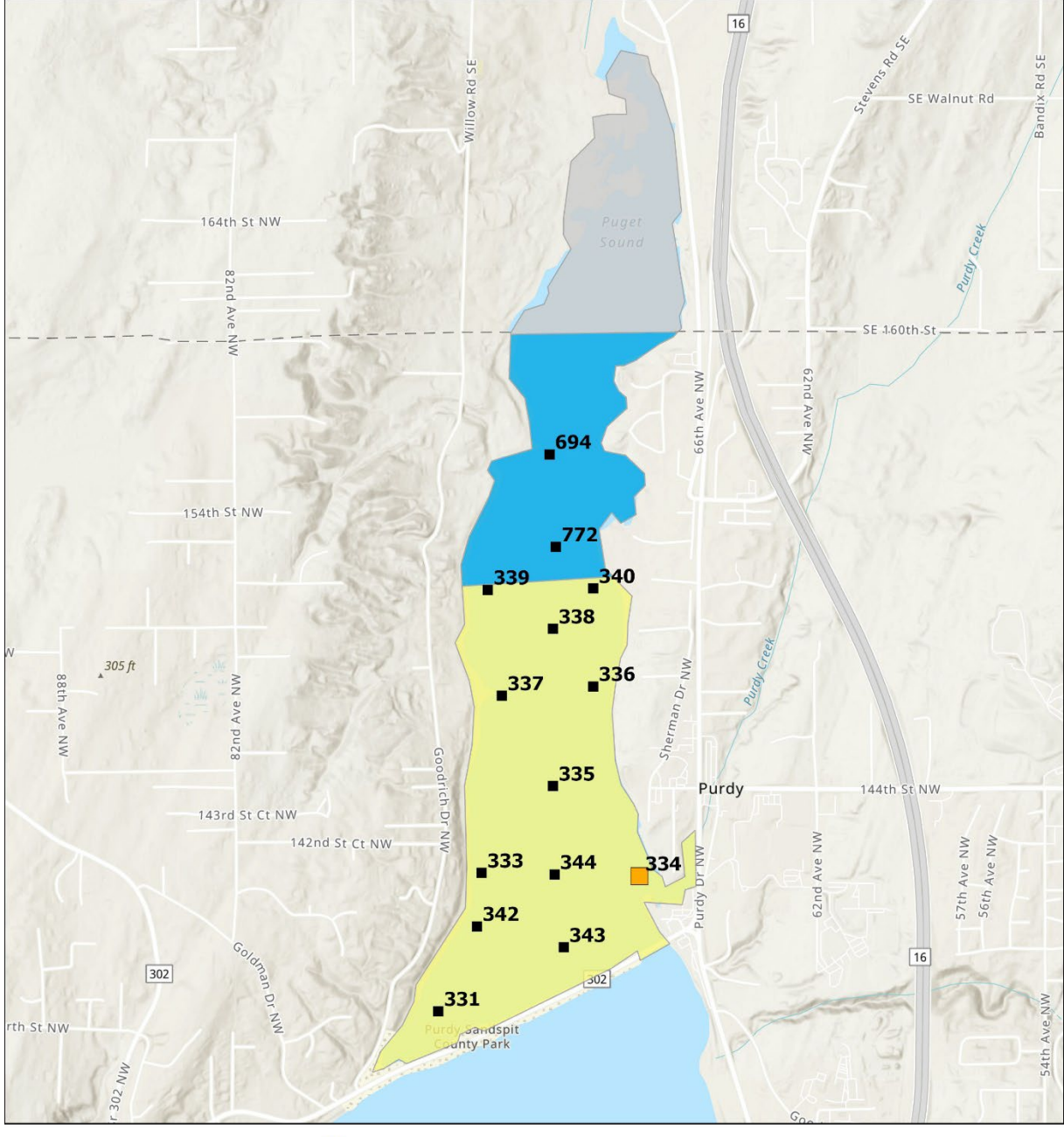
Map 4: Burley Lagoon Growing Area



Shellfish Classification

- Approved
- Conditional
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- Restricted
- Unclassified

- Threatened Stations
- Failing Stations
- Marine Stations

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