

**REACHING THE SHORE:
ADDING SHORELINE PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION TO THE
WASHINGTON COASTAL ATLAS**

Coastal shorelines are increasingly subject to uses and ownership that restrict the ability of the public to access the water. Washington State legislation that makes the creation and protection of shoreline public access a management priority is embodied in Washington's Shoreline Management Act and federally approved Coastal Zone Management Program.

The Washington Department of Ecology, therefore, seeks to support local governments in their efforts to maintain and expand shoreline public access opportunities and is developing a detailed GIS inventory of all public access locations along Washington's marine shorelines. Access to these data and information will allow local shoreline planners to easily locate, track, and analyze existing public access within their shoreline jurisdiction and to identify public access gaps and priority areas.

Ecology will publish the inventory through the Washington Coastal Atlas. The online atlas is an open access resource available to everyone and represents an excellent clearinghouse for public access information. The atlas will provide shoreline access data to diverse user groups in three formats: (1) a coastal atlas map layer, (2) downloadable GIS data layers and tables, and (3) via a public access search tool. All formats will direct users to public access information including location, type of access, presence of man-made and natural features, services, activities, oblique aerial and ground photos, and other contextual information.

The web-based GIS inventory will represent a significant update to Washington's available shoreline public access information and presents the data in an accurate, dynamic and widely available format.

Prepared by the Washington Department of Ecology

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Marine Shoreline Public Access Mileage by REGION

Marine Shoreline Regions	Marine Shoreline Mileage ¹	Public Access Mileage ²	% of Shoreline with Public Access	# of Individual Public Access Sites ²
Puget Sound / Northern Straits	2027	612	30%	939
Outer Coast	591	368	62%	158
Strait of Juan de Fuca	197	113	57%	71
Hood Canal	252	43	17%	81
Total	3067	1136	37%	1249

Marine Shoreline Public Access Mileage by COUNTY

Marine Shoreline Regions	Marine Shoreline Mileage ¹	Public Access Mileage ²	% of Shoreline with Public Access	# of Individual Public Access Sites ²
San Juan*	408.1	207.5	51%	204
Pacific**	275.7	141.8	51%	58
Kitsap	254.4	39.8	16%	186
Clallam [§]	254.3	176.8	70%	86
Jefferson	253.7	97.2	38%	89
Pierce	238.5	46.7	20%	117
Mason	231.3	31.6	14%	61
Skagit	228.7	90.4	40%	60
Island	214.2	64.3	30%	113
Grays Harbor ^{§§}	187.0	116.3	62%	71
Whatcom	146.5	39.6	27%	46
Snohomish	133.9	26.3	20%	31
King	122.9	30.2	25%	94
Thurston	118.0	27.7	23%	33
Total	3067.2	1136.2	37%	1249

* 147.9 miles (70%) of public shoreline in San Juan Co. is accessible only by personal watercraft leaving only 12% of the shoreline accessible to all.

** 47 miles (33%) of public shoreline in Pacific Co. is in the Seashore Conservation Area

§ 38.4 miles (22%) of public shoreline in Clallam Co. is accessible only by personal watercraft; 41.5 miles (23%) of shoreline in Clallam Co. is Tribal land.

§§ 46.7 miles (40%) of public shoreline in Grays Harbor Co. is in the Seashore Conservation Area; 30 miles (36%) of shoreline in Grays Harbor Co. is Tribal land.

¹Nearshore Habitat Program. 2001. The Washington State ShoreZone Inventory. Washington State Department of Natural Resources, Olympia, WA.

²WA Department of Ecology Marine Shoreline Public Access Project, 2008. GIS layer and metadata are available at: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/services/gis/data/data.htm>.