



Pacific Shellfish Institute
Strategic Plan
2020-2025

Organizational Description

The Pacific Shellfish Institute (PSI) is a Section 501(c)(3) private nonprofit organization formed in 1995 to develop and disseminate scientific and technical information of value to the general public, shellfish farmers, and public officials in connection with shellfish-related environmental, and animal and human health and safety issues. PSI maintains an office and laboratory in Olympia, Washington, USA.

Mission, Vision and Values

Our vision is for healthy coastal ecosystems and productive and sustainable shellfish populations along the U.S. West Coast. Our mission is, therefore, to provide the shellfish industry, resource managers, and the general public with practical tools and information for accomplishing these goals. PSI research and educational activities are aimed at supporting sustainable shellfish production and restoration, protecting marine ecosystems, reducing user-conflicts, and informing coastal planning decisions. Most of our activities focus on publicly-funded research projects to evaluate the ecology, health, and diseases of shellfish, including oysters, mussels and clams. We also conduct much needed social research to characterize the status of shellfish production and restoration along the West Coast, including examinations into the economic costs and benefits of shellfish activities and socio-economic assessments of barriers to entry and sustainable production for the shellfish industry.

PSI emphasizes sound science, broad partnerships, meaningful stakeholder collaboration, and sustainable coastal communities and ecosystems. By applying these values to everything we do, PSI aims to engender an environment that understands and values the ecological, economic, and social contributions of shellfish and shellfish aquaculture to the region.



Planning Process

This strategic plan provides direction for PSI to address critical regional needs associated with shellfish and marine and coastal ecosystems. The plan draws on PSI's unique strengths and abilities to set a course for future research and outreach efforts while allowing the organization the flexibility to address new and emerging issues as they arise.

The planning process began with a review of key national, regional, and state-level priorities including those established by the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), West Coast Governors' Alliance on Ocean Health, West Coast Regional Marine Research and Information Needs Report, West Coast state Sea Grant programs, and other recent plans that outline state priorities for coastal areas. These priorities were examined in the context of those expressed by shellfish stakeholders and summarized in the [West Coast Shellfish Research and Information Needs and Priorities Report](#). Input and guidance was provided by the PSI Board of Directors, which

includes representatives from state agencies, universities, tribes, the shellfish industry, and shellfish restoration interests.

Three overarching goals emerged from the strategic planning process. These goals and associated objectives and strategies highlight the mission and values of PSI and the critical issues surrounding West Coast shellfish.

Mission Goals and Strategies

Goal #1 – Safe and sustainable shellfish production along the West Coast

Objectives

- The information needs of the shellfish community are understood and addressed through multi-disciplinary research and outreach.
- Reduced risk of shellfish-related illness.
- Increased understanding of the social and environmental impacts of shellfish and shellfish aquaculture.
- Impediments to environmentally sound development of shellfish aquaculture and restoration efforts are reduced.
- Improved profitability of shellfish aquaculture.

Strategies

- Coordinate with federal, state, tribal and local resource managers to determine research needs as they pertain to shellfish and shellfish aquaculture.
- Provide federal, state, tribal, and local decision-makers with the best available shellfish research and information for integration into planning and management frameworks.
- Target research and outreach to address issues of conflict and policy.
- Participate in local, state, and regional planning workshops that impact shellfish growing areas.
- Provide tools and information to streamline aquaculture permitting processes and inform marine spatial planning efforts.
- Provide technology and information transfer seminars and one-on-one consultations for new or existing industry members.

Goal #2 – Healthy marine ecosystems that sustain healthy shellfish populations and a vibrant shellfish industry

Objectives

- Enhanced resiliency of shellfish and the shellfish industry to disease and changing ocean conditions.
- Improved understanding of the marine environment through enhanced and expanded monitoring and evaluation of water quality and biological conditions.
- The general public understands and takes measures to improve local water quality conditions.
- Enhanced ability of resource managers and shellfish growers to predict and respond effectively to events that threaten human or ecosystem health.

Strategies

- Enhance capacity to conduct research and outreach on ocean acidification along the West Coast, including development of adaptive measures.
- Provide water quality and pollution education/outreach.

- Provide training and support for volunteer water quality monitoring efforts.
- Participate in research and outreach to improve public understanding of harmful events (e.g. HABs, oil spills) and inform resource management decisions.

Goal #3 - Citizens and consumers understand and value the economic, social, and ecological benefits of shellfish

Objectives

- Improved understanding of the socio-economic and cultural contributions of shellfish aquaculture at the local, state, and national level.
- Improved understanding and awareness of the ecosystem services provided by shellfish.
- Increased integration of shellfish into habitat and water quality improvement efforts.

Strategies

- Advocate for working waterfronts and the ecological, economic, cultural, and recreation benefits of shellfish.
- Conduct research and outreach to better understand and communicate the ecosystem services and economic and cultural value of shellfish.
- Identify and enhance opportunities to connect the public with shellfish resources.
- Develop communication and outreach efforts that go beyond traditional reporting requirements and target local governments and the general public in addition to state and federal managers and shellfish growers.
- Present on research and outreach activities at relevant regional meetings and conferences (National Shellfisheries Association, Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers Association, Sea Grant shellfish conferences, etc.)