

# Our Net Pens

The net-pen system is a surprisingly simple but leading-edge approach to reviving salmon populations in the Youngs Bay estuary and other "select" areas where native stocks have been depleted.

## How it works!



The Fisheries Project operates three estuarine net-pen sites in Youngs Bay, Tongue Point, and Blind Slough and a hatchery and rearing pond on the South Fork of the Klaskanine River, a tributary to Youngs Bay. In the fall or early spring, juvenile salmon are brought to the net pens, where they are reared by the project staff until ready to be released to migrate to the ocean (anywhere from two weeks to six months in the net pens).

A small-mesh net is suspended from a floating frame, made of high-density polyethylene pipe, that is secured to pilings. Each side of the pen is 20 feet long. The net hangs 10 feet deep. The pens were designed by Fisheries Project staff and are made by Ferguson Enterprises of Washougal, Washington, the company that built the pen for the orca Keiko in Iceland.

Chinook and coho fingerlings from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and U.S. Fish and Wildlife hatcheries are placed in the net pens. The fish are raised in these pens for various lengths of time, long enough for them to "smolt," a physiological change prior to entering saltwater.

The Fisheries Project also collects and receives eggs for incubation at its hatchery on the South Fork of the Klaskanine River.

### Youngs Bay Pier Storm Damage - February 9, 2023 Update



Clatsop County understands the importance of the Youngs Bay pier to Clatsop County residents and businesses.

Because of the storm damage, gill netters do not have pier access to the yacht club parking lot.

We met with the City of Astoria to discuss the pier project on January 27, and together, the city and county are working towards a resolution for the rebuilding of the pier.

Clatsop County Public Works has conducted a site survey of the existing pier site, pile placements with elevations and is working with the engineering firm of Topper in Woodland, Washington that builds gangways.

This design will be coordinated by the city of Astoria and Clatsop County to start the nationwide permitting process with the Oregon Division of State Lands and the Corp of Engineers. The permitting process could take at least three months.

Clatsop County Fisheries continues working on the removal and cleanup of the old pier materials.

Clatsop County has reached out to the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) fish restoration and enhancement grant coordinator for financial assistance and we have received a \$5,000 emergency grant for the purchase of materials to construct a new pipeline to transfer incoming fish to the net pens. This action will ensure there are future fisheries in Youngs Bay and lower Columbia Basin.

A FEMA damage assessment team will be in Clatsop County on Feb. 13 to assess damage from the recent storm. Clatsop County and municipal partners submitted an Infrastructure Initial Damage Assessment for Public Assistance totaling \$4,925,973. Highlights include:

- Astoria - \$3,828,698
  - Rebuild dock to net pens and repair pier damage- \$2 million
  - Columbia Riverwalk erosion: Bay Street to 52nd street - \$1,820,000
- Brownsmead and Lewis and Clark diking district repairs - \$583,000
- Maritime Museum - for gangway light ship repairs - \$301,678

At this time, there is no estimated date on when the Youngs Bay pier will be rebuilt and operational.