IRREPLACEABLE HABITAT
The Nature Conservancy’s 4,122-acre preserve encompasses much of the Stillaguamish River estuary. This saltwater nursery boasts marshes, vast mudflats and tidally influenced channels supporting hundreds of thousands of birds, several species of salmon, smelt and clams. Western sandpipers, dunlins and dowitchers swoop over the mudflats. Wrangel Island snow geese gather by the thousands in tidal marshes while hundreds of raptors add to the drama. The Stillaguamish River spills into the bay, mixing freshwater and saltwater, creating extensive estuarine marshes that produce a vast quantity of decaying organic matter. The abundant invertebrate life in the tidalflats feed shorebirds and waterfowl, making Port Susan Bay and adjacent Skagit Bay important stops for migratory birds traveling along the Pacific Flyway.

COMMUNITY BASED CONSERVATION
Port Susan Bay is one of the largest undeveloped bays in Puget Sound with more than 7,000 acres owned by The Nature Conservancy and Whidbey Camano Land Trust. Key stakeholders, including nonprofit conservation, tribal, citizen, local government and industry groups, developed the Port Susan Bay Marine Stewardship Area Plan, identifying key actions for a healthier system. With strong support for conservation, Port Susan Bay has been designated a site of importance for shorebirds by the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network. The preserve is also an important destination during community festivals and events. Collaboration among diverse interest groups and engagement of community members helps keep Port Susan Bay a treasure, valued by those who live near and far.

LEARNING THROUGH SCIENCE
Estuary habitat is being restored at Port Susan Bay Preserve, creating a living laboratory for scientists to study:

- The changing marsh habitat and how shorebirds and waterfowl use various habitats.
- Sediment distribution and vegetation response after restoring 150 acres of once diked farmland to estuary habitat.
- Sea level rise and how the impact on Port Susan Bay can guide decisions in estuaries around the Pacific Northwest.
- How river flows and tides interact to create and sustain habitats throughout the range—from tidal freshwater to saltwater marshes.
- Estuarine restoration techniques, including building log jams in the intertidal channels to discover whether they improve habitat for juvenile salmon and other fish.
KEY PARTNERS
- Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- North Puget Sound Spartina Task Force
- Priscilla Bullitt Collins Trust Northwest Conservation Fund
- Puget Sound Partnership
- Stillaguamish Flood Control District
- Stillaguamish Tribe
- Stillaguamish Watershed Council
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Western Washington University
- United States Geological Survey
- Salmon Recovery Funding Board

VISITING THE PRESERVE
The public is welcome to visit February through October, but prior arrangements are required. Contact Pat Hampton at phampton@tnc.org or (360) 419-3140 at least one week in advance. Visitors are required to complete a liability form prior to their visit.

KEY SPECIES AT PORT SUSAN BAY PRESERVE

**FISH**
- Coho salmon
- Pink salmon
- Chinook salmon
- Chum salmon
- Steelhead
- Coastal cutthroat trout
- Bull trout
- English sole
- Surf smelt
- Three-spine stickleback

**BIRDS**
- Great blue heron
- Trumpeter swan
- Snow goose
- Blue-winged teal
- Northern pintail
- Northern shoveler
- Killdeer
- Greater yellowlegs
- Long-billed dowitcher
- Dunlin
- Western sandpiper
- Bald eagle
- Peregrine falcon
- Short-eared owl
- Marsh wren

**MAMMALS**
- Coyote
- River otter
- Long-tailed weasel
- Beaver
- Muskrat
- Townsend’s vole
- Harbor seal

**PLANTS**
- American bulrush
- Maritime bulrush
- Lyngby’s sedge
- Needle spikerush
- Seashore saltgrass
- Sea arrow-grass
- Pickleweed
- Redtop
- Red alder

**INVERTEBRATES**
- Baltic macoma clam
- Softshell clam
- Shore crab

JOIN US!
The future of Port Susan Bay Preserve and places like it here and around the world depend on your support. Together we can protect and restore treasured places for people and for nature.

The Nature Conservancy
Protecting nature. Preserving life.

WashingtonNature.org/PortSusanBay
Skagit Field Office: 410 N. 4th St., Mt. Vernon, WA 98273
(360) 419-3140 | Washington@TNC.org