



Washington State Auditor
Brian Sonntag

June 4, 2008

Laura Hendricks
The Coalition to Protect Puget Sound Habitat
3919 51st Ave. Ct. N.W.
Gig Harbor, WA 98335
Laura.l.hendricks@gmail.com

Dear Ms. Hendricks:

Thank you for your email sent May 21, 2008, regarding alleged geoduck farming on state owned lands in Totten Inlet. You requested two things from our Office:

1. To assure citizens that the geoduck farm in question is not on state lands.
2. Documentation supporting that assurance.

Previously, our Office was asked to look into the Department of Natural Resources allowing private geoduck farming on state lands. State law prohibits providing public resources without adequate compensation. The Department was not leasing any state lands for geoduck farming, and believed that all commercial farming was being conducted on privately owned land.

Our inquiry did prompt a review by the Department. As you are aware, a land survey was recently conducted by a shellfish farm in the area after the Department noted some required waterward boundary markers were missing. The Department worked with the farm during the survey.

As a result of that survey, questions arose regarding the correct boundaries and what intertidal lands are public and which are private. Some of these questions are not easily answered due to how the area was historically identified and deeded. The Department is reviewing the results of the survey and historical documents in order to accurately determine the land ownership boundaries. We were informed by the Department that the company has stopped planting additional shellfish and has ceased harvesting activity on the area in question until the boundary issues are resolved.

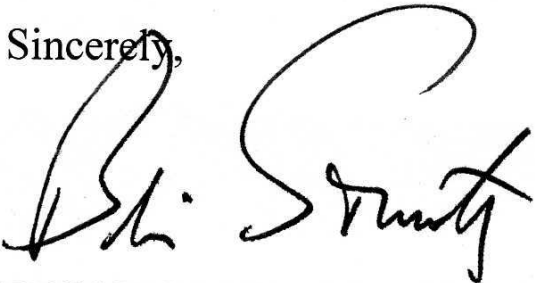
The Department will best be able to provide you with information regarding any final outcome of the survey and boundary review. We refer you to Rich Doenges, Aquatic Resources Division Manager at the Department, for that information when it becomes



available. Mr. Doenges can be reached at 360-902-1240, or via e-mail at rich.doenges@dnr.wa.gov.

Thank you for taking the time to contact our office with your concerns. Participation of all citizens is vital to maintaining a responsive, efficient and transparent government. If, after the boundary issues are resolved, you have additional concerns regarding this issue, please do not hesitate to contact Lynda Karseboom Audit Manager, at (360) 725-5431.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Sonntag". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "B".

BRIAN SONNTAG, CGFM
STATE AUDITOR

BS:LK:jc

H-2008-348