

Cherry Point Beach Walks

By

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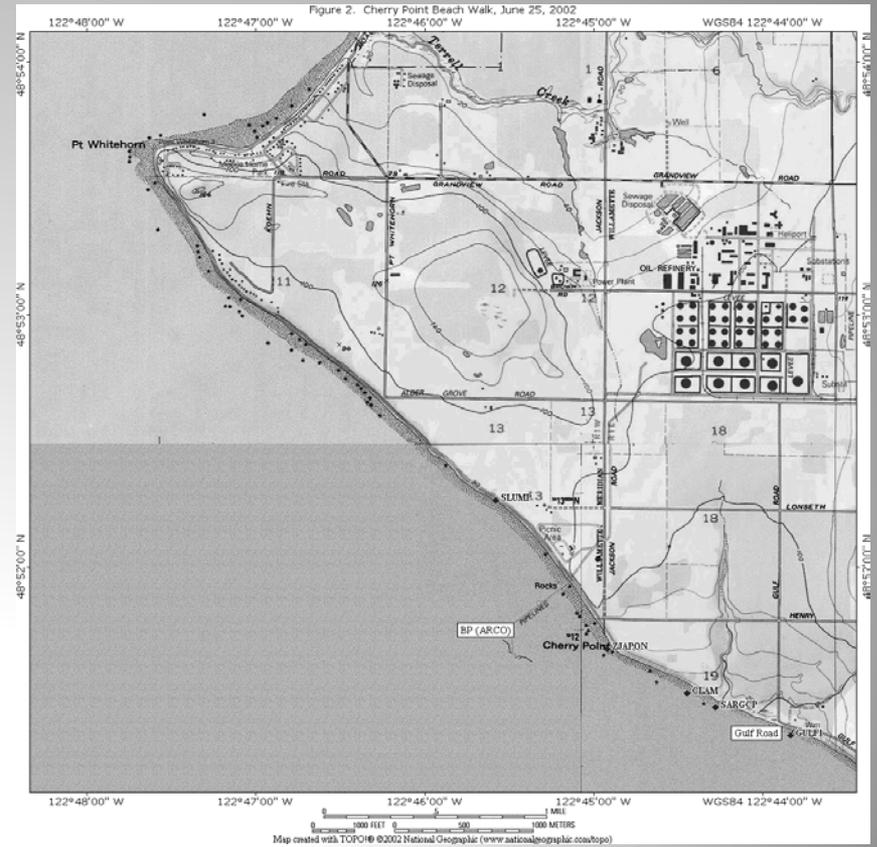
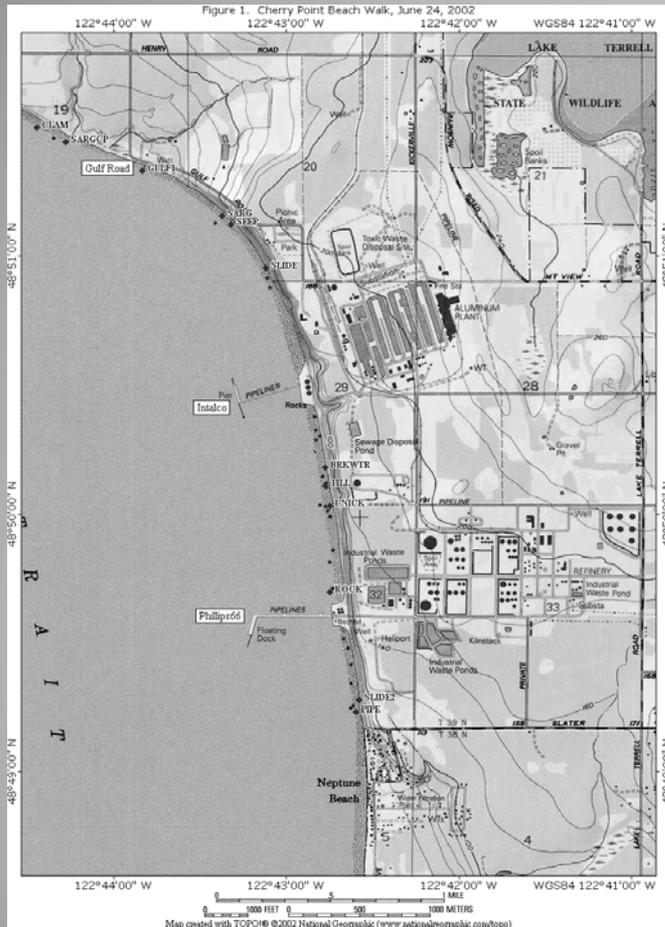
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Why Beach Walks?

- To conduct a qualitative and systematic inspection of key features along the Cherry Point shoreline to protect it from harm
- Beach walks are a part of a long-term monitoring program that consists of the annual beach walk, aerial photos every four years (2012 is the 7th event), and WDFW herring spawn annual surveys.
- Scientific beach walks have been conducted along the Cherry Point shoreline since 1954
- Information obtained in these beach walks has been useful in management planning, ecological risk assessments, development planning, and clean up (debris removal)

When and Where Lowest tides of the year (6/4&5/2012)



What do we look for?

- Landslides
- Condition of the foreshore (wetlands, riparian zone)
- Anthropogenic affects (creosote, potentially harmful debris, disturbances, etc.)
- Beach level & sediment transport (direction and relative amount)
- Biological invasives (e.g., Sargassum, green crab, varnish clam)
- Habitat distribution and conditions
- Flora (eelgrass & macroalgae) and fauna distribution & conditions

LANDSLIDES

- Prominent features
- Normal feeder bluff activity
- Supply finer sediments (gravel, sand & silt), large woody debris, and hard substrates to intertidal and nearshore habitats
- Sometimes affect human structures



DEBRIS

- Derelict boats
- Litter/trash
- Creosote timber/lumber
- Dead whales and other organisms



Creosote and styrofoam are primary concerns



Styrofoam comes in many forms –
old floating docks included



Beach Level and Sediment Transport

- Beach level and sediment transport are indicated by a number of fixed features.
- These are photographed during each annual beach walk.
- Distribution of sediment around each feature indicates direction of local sediment movement
- Beach texture also indicates movement



Invasives

- Sargassum is so far the only known biologically significant invasive
- Green crabs and varnish clams have not been seen to date
- Other invasives are present in the riparian zone and Gulf Road wetland



Marine flora and fauna

- Most interesting to me
- Distributions and assemblage composition are always changing
- Look for anomalous changes (i.e., the conspicuous lack or presence of species)
- Dynamics of eelgrass is very interesting



Faunal changes

- River otters have colonized the Gulf Road wetland
- Extensive signs in the wetland and in the intertidal around Gulf Road



Questions?

