



## Improved moorage in Quartermaster Harbor will enhance safety and protect the marine environment

DRAFT MOORING BUOY MANAGEMENT PLAN AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

With community help and support, in 2004 the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) designated Quartermaster Harbor and the **state-owned aquatic lands** around much of Maury Island an Aquatic Reserve. Reserves are aquatic lands managed by DNR to provide protection for special educational, scientific, and environmental qualities.

DNR developed a management plan for the **Maury Island Aquatic Reserve** that identified activities and uses, including supporting traditional recreational uses such as boating and mooring buoys. The plan also outlines how best to address potential harmful effects to the environment and public safety that might be associated with mooring buoys.



Boats tied to an old net pen in Dockton.  
Photo: Toni Droscher/DNR

### The Quartermaster Harbor Mooring Buoy Management Plan

In November 2012, DNR finished drafting the Quartermaster Harbor Mooring Buoy Management Plan, a supplement to the reserve management plan that more specifically addresses recreational mooring buoys. We invite the public to review and provide written comment on the draft plan, as well as the accompanying State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) documents. Download the plan and the SEPA documents at: [http://bit.ly/quartermaster\\_sepa](http://bit.ly/quartermaster_sepa). The deadline for comments is January 7, 2013.

#### How to comment:

- Send by mail to:  
Washington State Department of Natural Resources  
SEPA Center  
PO Box 47105  
Olympia, WA 98504
- Send by email to:  
[sepacenter@dnr.wa.gov](mailto:sepacenter@dnr.wa.gov)

#### Highlights of the Draft Mooring Buoy Management Plan:

- Designate buoy fields in Burton Cove and Dockton.
- Require that boaters use embedded anchors with midline floats to reduce the scouring of aquatic vegetation and sediments.
- Streamline the permitting process by allowing DNR to obtain necessary county, state, and federal permits. Boaters will only need to submit one application to DNR, which will include use authorization and the necessary permits.
- Designate a navigational channel at Dockton and include a voluntary, no-anchor area.
- Remove abandoned and derelict buoys.
- Encourage establishment of a public access point in Burton Cove.

## Next steps in developing the mooring buoy management plan

- **January – February 2013.** Review public comments and finalize mooring buoy plan.
- **February – July 2013.** To better streamline the permitting process, DNR will apply for all the necessary permits required by King County, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Mooring buoy applicants will only need to apply to DNR for authorization to install a mooring buoy for their boats.
- **Starting August 2013,** DNR anticipates beginning to issue mooring buoy authorizations.
- **Once permits are obtained and buoy applications are issued,** DNR will provide guidance on installing new mooring buoys. DNR will require approved mooring buoy systems with a midline float, designed to effectively anchor boats and lessen scouring impacts to the sea floor and habitat, such as eelgrass beds.
- **Remove abandoned buoys.** As funding permits, DNR will remove abandoned buoys that may pose a hazard to navigation or cause environmental damage.



Public participation has been essential in developing the draft mooring buoy plan for Quartermaster Harbor. Photo: Toni Droscher/DNR

## Authorizing mooring buoys

Historically, the majority of buoys on state-owned aquatic lands in Quartermaster Harbor were installed without permits or authorization from DNR and the other appropriate agencies with regulatory authority over mooring buoys in the area: King County, the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife, and the US Army Corps of Engineers.

DNR is asking boaters to apply for recreational mooring buoy authorizations. Once the mooring buoy plan is completed and regulatory the permits have been obtained, DNR will begin issuing mooring buoy licenses. The fees for mooring buoys are \$175 to \$564 each year, depending on vessel length, plus a proportional share of the regulatory permitting fees. The mooring buoy plan seeks to accommodate at least the existing number of vessels currently moored in Quartermaster Harbor, particularly in the congested areas of Dockton and Burton Cove. Residential waterfront owners next to state-owned aquatic lands may install recreational mooring buoys on state-owned aquatic lands for no fee.

## How to register a recreational mooring buoy

For information and a brochure about how to register and install a mooring buoy, to see maps of current Quartermaster Harbor buoys, and to download a mooring buoy license application, go to [http://bit.ly/qm\\_buoy\\_maps](http://bit.ly/qm_buoy_maps). You also may call DNR at 360-902-1100 to request an application and the brochure to be sent to you.

## DNR: steward of state-owned aquatic lands

The 2.6 million acres of state-owned aquatic lands (mostly submerged lands) are a public trust, managed and protected by DNR for the people of Washington. These lands are managed to protect fish and wildlife and to facilitate commerce, navigation, and public access.

Revenue is generated from the sale of renewable resources such as wild geoduck, as well as from leasing submerged lands for marinas, docks and other uses. This revenue is used to manage and protect the health and productivity of aquatic resources and to fund local projects that restore aquatic ecosystems and create public access to the waters of the state.