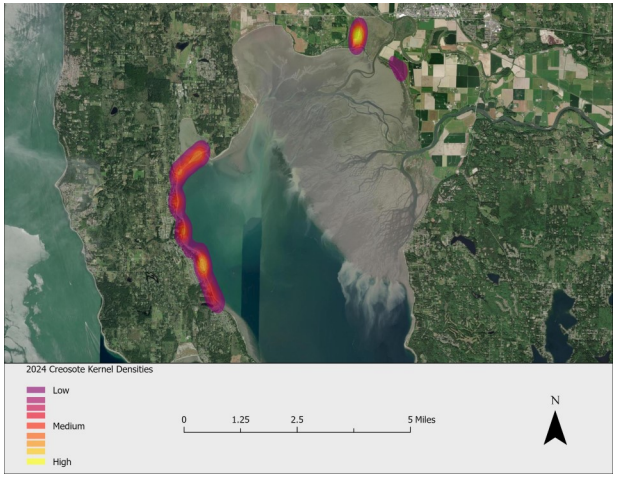
TRP Creosote Statistics

- To date, the TRP has identified 348 creosote logs and 178 pieces of large marine debris throughout Port Susan
- Approximately 11.75 miles of Port Susan shoreline have been surveyed
- In 2024, WADNR removed 3,320 pounds of creosote logs and Large Marine Debris from two Tribal beaches
- The daily maximum survey record was 64 creosote logs



A diffuse creosote log heat map of Stillaguamish TRP survey efforts in 2024

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Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians

Creosote Log Removal Program

Protecting communities, environment, and cultural resources

What is Creosote?

Creosote is a toxic chemical mixture used as a wood preservative. The chemical cocktail that makes up creosote contains many toxic components, including known carcinogens. Creosote has a tar-like appearance, with a unique, smoky smell, similar to freshly laid asphalt.

A large creosote log found in Livingston Bay, Port Susan. Notice the shiny, tar-like creosote on the surface of the log.

Where is Creosote Used?

Over the last century, creosote treated lumber were used extensively in structures built in or around the marine environment, including piers, docks, wharfs, and seawalls. Creosote timbers can remain in the environment for decades.

Why Remove Creosote Logs?

The chemicals which compose creosote are extremely toxic, harming humans, plants, and animals. One of the most dangerous chemical groups in creosote, Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons (PAHs), are known to cause cancer. If left in the environment, small amounts of creosote can continuously leech into the surrounding ecosystem. Creosote chemicals can be absorbed and stored in the fat of many animals (bioaccumulation), including forage fish and shellfish. These chemicals can then be passed onto humans and predators, like salmon and orcas, where the concentration becomes higher (biomagnification). Creosote can also cause chemical burns if exposed to light (phototoxin).

Creosote Log Removal Program

The Creosote Log Removal Program was established to locate and remove dispersed, diffuse creosote logs within the Stillaguamish Usual and Accustomed Area. The primary focus has been on Port Susan, as the long, south facing opening of the bay can accumulate large quantities of creosote logs and marine debris.

Survey crews with the Stillaguamish Tribe Natural Resources Department utilize the MyCoast App, developed by Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR), to survey creosote logs. This app is open to the public and allows surveyors/citizen scientists to geotag, photo document, and record basic information on located creosote logs and other marine debris. The DNR creosote team will then use this information to remove and dispose of the creosote logs free of charge.

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