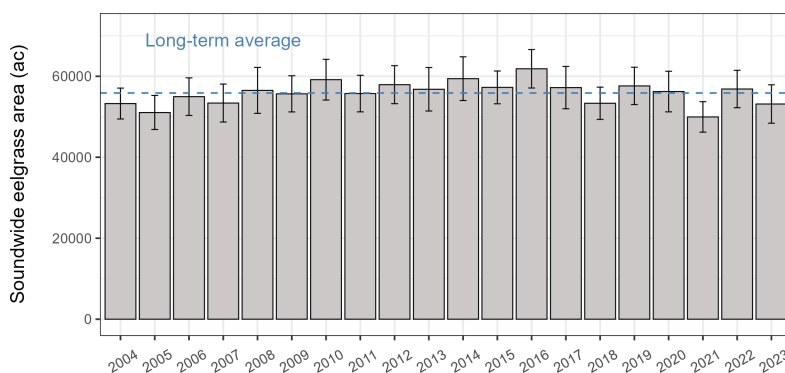


PUGET SOUND VITAL SIGNS

INDICATOR EELGRASS AREA

Soundwide eelgrass area is a metric for the overall health of native seagrass beds in greater Puget Sound. Seagrass is an important component of nearshore habitats and is sensitive to human disturbance and declines in water quality.



Annual estimates of soundwide eelgrass area (acres) in greater Puget Sound. The dashed line is the long-term average of annual estimates from 2004 to 2023. Error bars are standard error.

Indicator Progress



Target Status



Target

No targets are currently set for this indicator.

Data Source

Nearshore Habitat Program Data & Apps (arcgis.com)

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Last Updated

12/30/2024

Key Vital Sign Indicator Results

- The current best estimate of eelgrass area in greater Puget Sound is approximately 51,700 acres (pooled 3-year average 2021-2023).
- Soundwide eelgrass area showed an increasing trend between 2004 and 2016, and a declining trend between 2016 and 2023. The magnitude of these changes was relatively small compared to the total amount of eelgrass present in greater Puget Sound. The relative stability is reassuring and sets Puget Sound apart from many other developed areas, where substantial system-wide declines are ongoing.
- While most sites appear stable, the spatial pattern in site level trends suggests that eelgrass is susceptible to declines in certain areas of greater Puget Sound. For more information on regional patterns, see the [short and long-term change at eelgrass sites indicator](#).

CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE VITAL SIGNS VISIT: vitalsigns.pugetsoundinfo.wa.gov OR CONTACT: vitalsigns@psp.wa.gov