

WAC 220-660-340 Intertidal forage fish spawning bed surveys.

(1) **Description:** The department uses intertidal forage fish spawning bed surveys to determine presence, absence, quantity, and timing of surf smelt (*Hypomesus pretiosus*) and Pacific sand lance (*Ammodytes hexapterus*) spawning. The department may require an applicant to hire a qualified, department-trained biologist to conduct an intertidal forage fish spawning survey before working in potential surf smelt and Pacific sand lance spawning habitat adjacent to documented areas or in documented surf smelt spawning areas where the spawning season is six months or longer. The presence of eggs may restrict project type, design, location, and timing.

(2) **Fish life concerns:** Surf smelt and Pacific sand lance are important food for marine mammals, birds, and fish, including Pacific salmon. The department protects forage fish spawning by limiting construction activities on beaches when and where spawning is documented.

(3) **Intertidal forage fish surveys:**

(a) A biologist must complete the department's forage fish spawning beach survey training to be approved by the department to conduct intertidal forage fish spawning bed surveys.

(b) A biologist must follow the department-approved intertidal forage fish spawning protocol and use the standard department data sheets when conducting forage fish spawning beach surveys. The protocol and data sheets are available on the department's web site. The department may modify this protocol when only the presence or absence of surf smelt eggs needs to be determined.

(c) A biologist must submit the completed, standard department data sheets to the department within seventy-two hours of the survey.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, and 77.12.047. WSR 15-02-029 (Order 14-353), § 220-660-340, filed 12/30/14, effective 7/1/15.]