

## **Ecology on the waterfront — the Port keeps it clean and green**

By Chris Keuss, Executive Director, the Port of Edmonds

At the Port of Edmonds, green is more than a color, it is a way of life.

As a marina—and as a waterfront landowner—the quality of our existence depends heavily upon the continual presence of a clean, safe and ecologically sound environment. That's why we never stop exploring ways to keep our waters and shorelines free of manmade contaminants.

Perhaps nowhere is the Port's commitment to environmental best practices more evident than in our boat workyard—which is recognized as among the most environmentally sound in the Northwest. The moment a boat is lifted from the water by our 50-ton TraveLift, it is thoroughly pressure washed to remove growth and contaminants. The wash water and other material is channeled into a catch basin and pumped into a separator and the residue is later shipped to an approved off-site facility for disposal. The clean water is then returned to the Sound.

In the workyard itself, there is grinding and sanding and other activities which, without great care, have the potential to harm the environment. We provide plastic tarps to cover the ground beneath the boats, as well as plastic and tape to encapsulate the boats to contain airborne particles.

Recently we have been having discussions with firms that may have an interest in recycling those plastics into useful products. Cost is an issue, but the quest continues. Meanwhile, we continue to insure that they are disposed of off-site in an environmentally safe manner.

Here are a few other things we are doing to insure a clean environment: We are establishing a bilge water recycling facility, increasing capacity from 5 gallons to 160. Deputy director Marla Kempf has arranged for the Port to test a new and innovative trash skimmer to see if it

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is effective at removing floating debris that often flows in and out of the marina with the tides.

We have begun a book recycling program, where boaters can bring in used books and swap them for others. And we have set up a special container where fishermen who reel in someone's broken or discarded monofilament line can bring it ashore and dispose of it in an environmentally responsible manner.

Finally, we are pleased to hear that the Port has once again been named a "Clean Marina Washington" by the EnviroStars program. EnviroStars provides incentives for businesses to reduce and better manage their hazardous waste. We have been a Clean Marina since the program began.

Whether or not helping to preserve our corner of the planet comes with recognition, we at the Port of Edmonds will continue to do our part. We are fortunate to live in what we think is a natural paradise. We are fully committed to keeping it that way, and—if possible—to go out of our way to improve it.

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