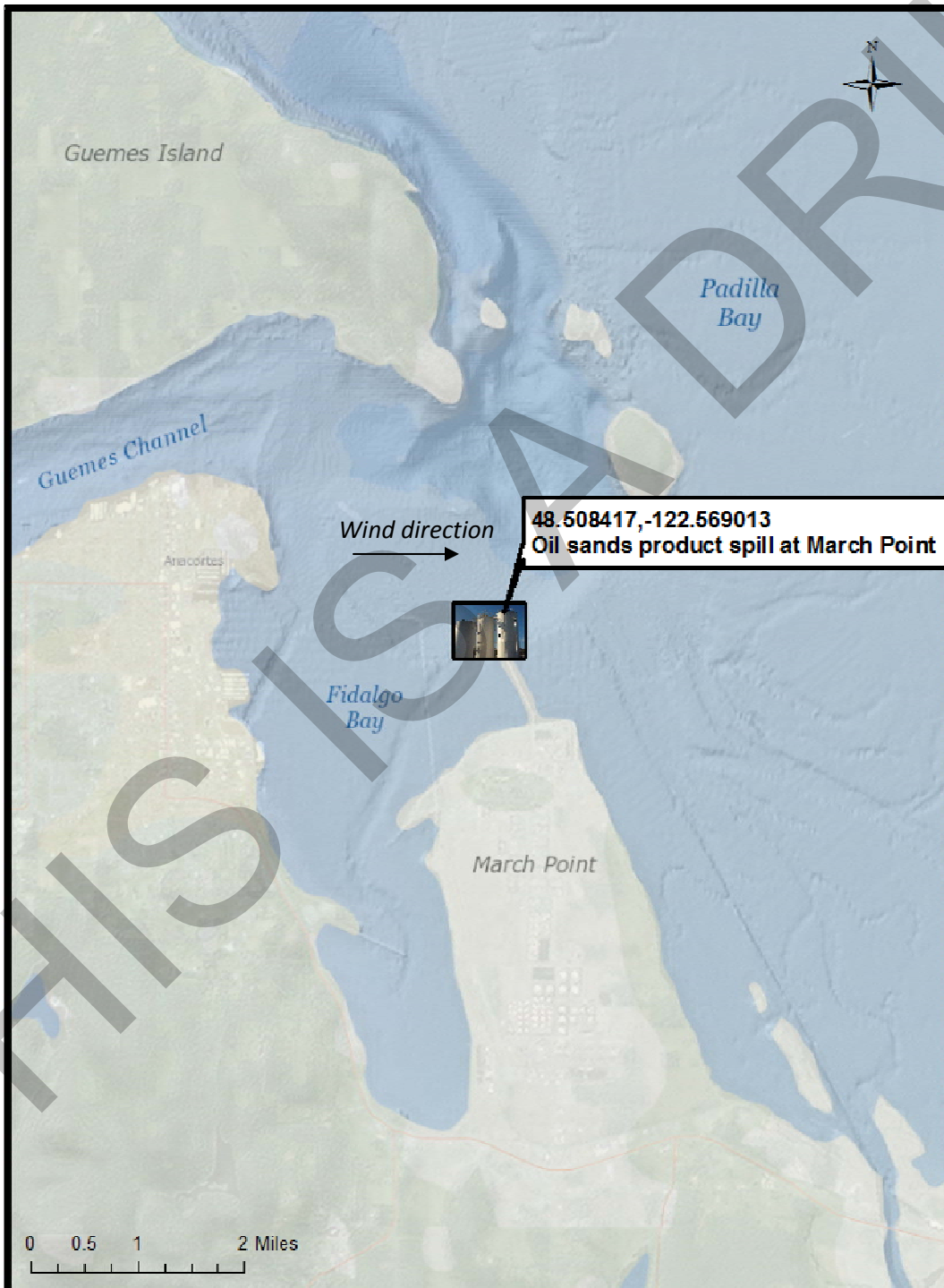


**Facility - Marine**

On April 16<sup>th</sup>, a tank barge is on the outside berth at the March Point refinery dock offloading oil sands product into tanks 24 and 25. The facility is located in Skagit County. The weather is relatively calm until approximately 0047, when a high-intensity storm comes through the area, compromising the boom placed around the transfer site. As crews rush to shut down the transfer, the pump on the tank barge suffers a catastrophic failure and spews oil sands product onto the deck and into the water. The boom traps some of the oil, but the majority escapes. Winds are driving the oil east, towards Padilla Bay.



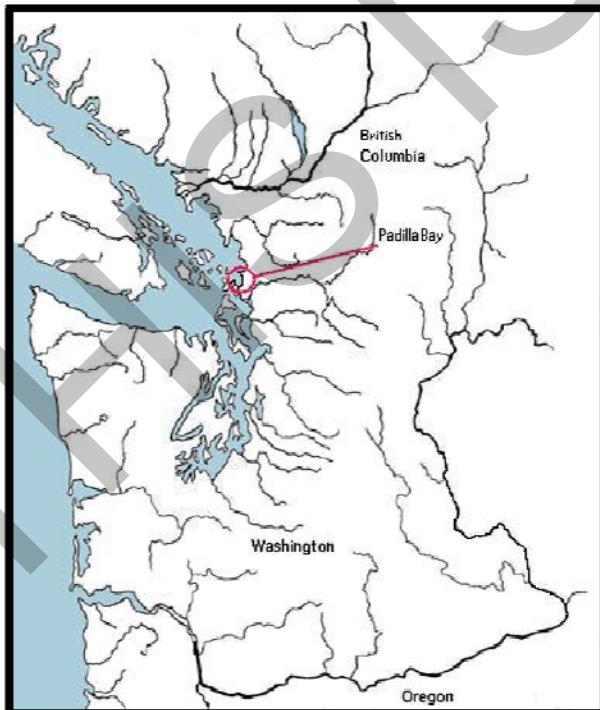
Resource Concerns

Padilla Bay is located between the San Juan Islands and the mainland of Washington State. Fidalgo and Guemes Islands lie to the west of Padilla Bay. Guemes Channel, between the islands, connects Padilla Bay to Rosario Strait. Padilla Bay is an estuary at the saltwater edge of the large delta of the Skagit River in the Salish Sea. It is about eight miles long and three miles across. Because the bay is filled with sediment from the Skagit River, the bottom is very shallow, flat, and muddy. It is so shallow that almost the whole bay is intertidal. This means that it is flooded at high tide. When the tide goes out the whole bay empties out, exposing miles and miles of mud flats. This condition allows unusually large eelgrass meadows to grow. There are nearly 8,000 acres of eelgrass in Padilla Bay.



*This picture shows the south portion of Padilla Bay with March Point (foreground) and the Skagit River Valley in the distance.*

In the vicinity of March Point: Padilla Bay is a National Estuarine Research Reserve. It has one of the largest concentrations of wintering waterfowl in Washington. Its extensive eelgrass habitat supports herring [FCo/SC]\* spawning and serves as nursery area for juvenile fish and shellfish. Dungeness crab are abundant in the area. Bald eagles [FCo/SS], peregrine falcons [FCo/SS] and great blue herons are present year round. Marbled murrelets [FT/SC] are also abundant in the area.



Eelgrass provides important habitat for wildlife and commercially harvested animals. Eelgrass is used as a nursery by salmon, crab, perch, and herring. Eelgrass is also home for millions of worms, shrimp, clams, and other invertebrates that are food for great blue herons, eagles, otters, seals, as well as humans.

Glaucous-winged gulls and pigeon guillemots nest in Padilla Bay, and harbor seals and other sensitive species are common throughout the bay.

Numerous harbor seal haulout areas are scattered throughout the region, and southern resident killer whales [FE/SE] may be present, especially from April through September. Dalls porpoise and harbor porpoise are also present.

## Oil Sands Products Forum and Work Group Scenarios

Northwest salmonid species are present in this region. Juvenile salmonids of several species, including Puget Sound chinook [FT], use shallow nearshore areas extensively for feeding and rearing.

Forage fish spawning occurs throughout the region. Herring [FCo/SC] spawning and small pockets of spawning habitat for sandlance and surf smelt occur on and gravel beaches throughout the region.

Many different Native American groups have a historical and continuing presence in Washington State. It is possible that cultural and historical resources exist in the area of the spill, particularly near Padilla Bay.

Washington State is one of the most trade-dependent states in the nation. There are seven deep-draft ports on Puget Sound, one coastal port and three on the Columbia River. A major oil spill in this area would disrupt shipping and commerce.

**\*Sensitive species include the following federal and state designations:** Federal Endangered (FE), Federal Threatened (FT), Federal Candidate (FC), Federal Species of Concern (FCo), State Endangered (SE), State Threatened (ST), State Candidate (SC), State Sensitive (SS).