

How bulkheads harm beaches

Bulkheads reduce fish habitat and block sand from replenishing beaches. The state approves about 130 new bulkheads a year.

NATURAL BEACHES

EROSION CONTROL

Wave energy dissipates and is absorbed by fallen trees and driftwood. This debris prevents erosion.

HABITAT

Vegetation and debris provide food and protection for fish and eggs, and cool spawning areas.

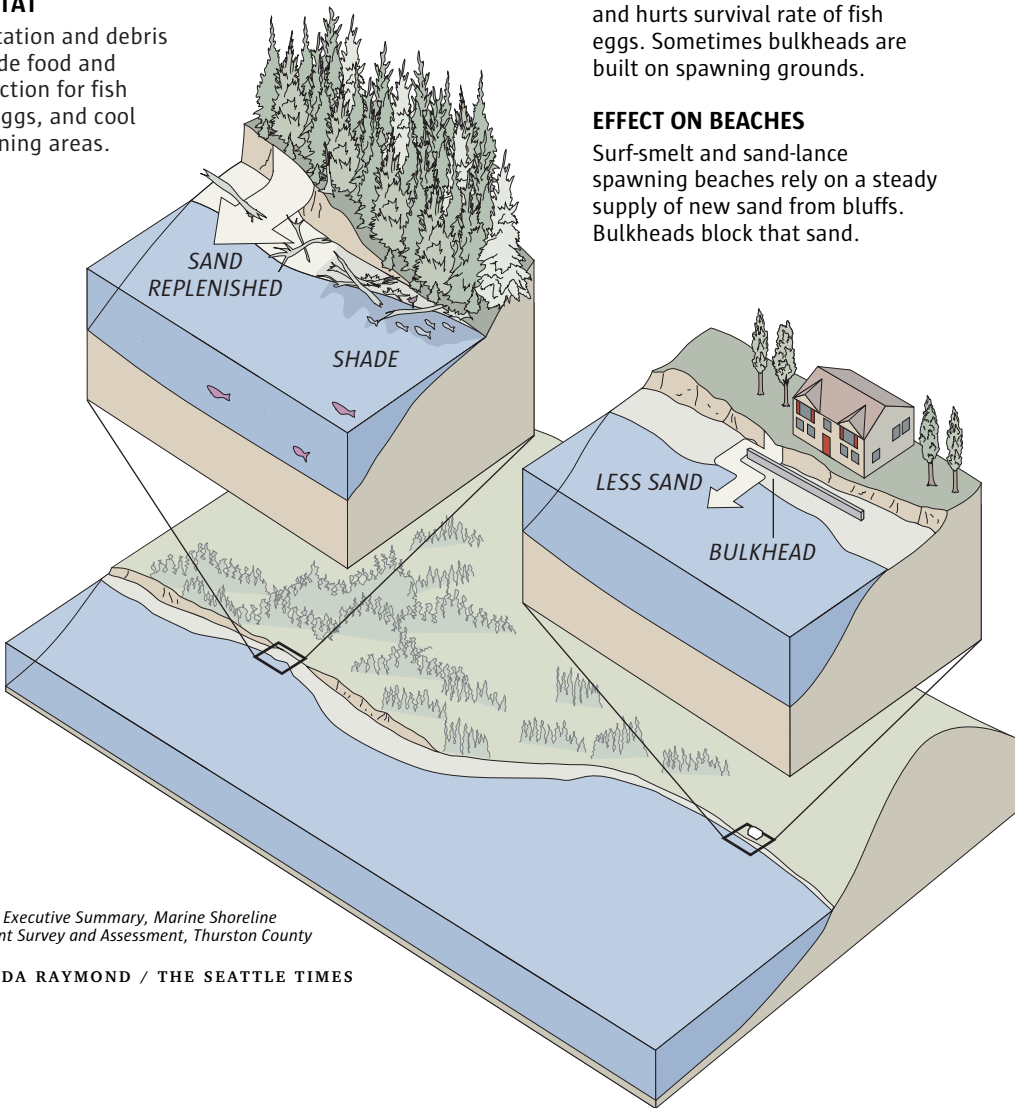
THE EFFECTS OF BULKHEADS

EFFECT ON FISH

Property owners remove trees and debris. This reduces shade and hurts survival rate of fish eggs. Sometimes bulkheads are built on spawning grounds.

EFFECT ON BEACHES

Surf-smelt and sand-lance spawning beaches rely on a steady supply of new sand from bluffs. Bulkheads block that sand.



Source: Executive Summary, Marine Shoreline Sediment Survey and Assessment, Thurston County

AMANDA RAYMOND / THE SEATTLE TIMES