

## **Nearshore Biological Communities Prior to the Removal of the Elwha River Dams: Chapter 6 in Coastal Habitats of the Elwha River, Washington, Biological and Physical Patterns and Processes Prior to Dam Removal: Usgs**



Nearshore biological communities prior to the removal of the Elwha River dams: Chapter 6 in Coastal habitats of the Elwha River, Washington, biological and physical patterns and processes prior to dam removal: USGS Report 2011-5120-6

et al., Stephen P. Miller, Ian M. Miller

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*(Dr. Raven Ledner)*

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Bibliogov, United States, 2013. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 246 x 189 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book \*\*\*\*\* Print on Demand \*\*\*\*\*.Increases in sediment delivery to coastal waters are expected following removal of dams on the Elwha River, Washington, potentially increasing sediment deposition on the seafloor and suspended sediment in the water column. Biological communities inhabiting shallow, subtidal depths (3-18 m) near the mouth of the Elwha River, between the west end of Freshwater Bay and the base of Ediz Hook, were surveyed in August and September 2008, to establish baselines prior to dam removal. Density was estimated for 9 kelp taxa, 65 taxa of invertebrates larger than 2.5 cm any dimension and 24 fish taxa. Density averaged over all sites was 3.1 per square meter (/m<sup>2</sup>) for kelp, 2.7/m<sup>2</sup> for invertebrates, and 0.1/m<sup>2</sup> for fish. Community structure was partly controlled by substrate type, seafloor relief, and depth. On average, 12 more taxa occurred where boulders were present compared to areas lacking boulders but with similar base substrate. Four habitat types were identified: (1) Bedrock/boulder reefs had the highest kelp density and taxa richness, and were characterized by a canopy of *Nereocystis leutkeana* (bull kelp) at the water surface and a secondary canopy of perennial kelp 1-2 m above the seafloor; (2) Mixed sand and gravel-cobble habitats with moderate relief provided by boulders had the highest density of invertebrates and a taxa richness nearly equivalent to that for bedrock/boulder reefs; (3) Mixed sand and gravel-cobble habitats lacking boulders supported a moderate density of kelp, primarily annual species with low growth forms (blades close to the seafloor), and the lowest invertebrate density among habitats; and (4) Sand habitats had the lowest kelp density and taxa richness among habitats and a moderate density of invertebrates. Uncertainties about nearshore community responses to...



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