

# Taylor Shellfish calls its DNR tidelands use unintentional

Taylor Shellfish Farms, Mason County's seventh-largest employer, has hit rough waters in South Puget Sound this year.

Recently, the Shelton-based shellfish farming company discovered its long-standing use of a shellfish farm on Totten Inlet involved some Washington Department of Natural Resources tidelands.

Both DNR and the firm say the use of state tidelands was not intentional. The firm has farmed those tidelands for shellfish for over 50 years, Bill Taylor said in a recent response to reports of the use of state tidelands.

Taylor Shellfish purchased the farm from Carl Adams in 1972, he told *The Journal*, and since that time the company has "managed the footprint that was farmed by our predecessors.

"Until this issue was recently raised," he added, "Taylor Shellfish had no idea that our activities at this location may be occurring on state lands."

Taylor expressed dis-

may with a July 12 story published by the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* which said critics "estimate Taylor secretly converted at least 25 acres of state tidelands into a shellfish farm."

"We are disappointed with the lack of balance in this article and would like to make clear the facts," Taylor said in a prepared statement this week. "As soon as we learned of this issue,

we began working on a survey to precisely locate the property lines in question. We also ceased any harvest of geoduck from the area in question until this issue is resolved.

"We have been working closely with the DNR to obtain a precise understanding of the property boundaries at issue and we will continue to fully cooperate with DNR to resolve any issues relating to our use of the area in question. I assure you that any and all Taylor Shellfish planting and harvesting of shellfish on unleased state lands in Totten Inlet was inadvertent."

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