

A Wildlife Post from the Seadoc Society

The Salish Sea is home to some of North America's most amazing bird life including one of the world's largest wintering populations of scoters. Unfortunately in Puget Sound scoters have declined by over 50% in the last 25 years representing the largest loss of marine bird biomass in Puget Sound. Scientists are trying to learn why scoters are declining precipitously and there is concern that among other problems, hunting could be impacting scoter populations. A SeaDoc Society-funded study evaluating the impact of hunting on scoter populations found that wintering scoters have high site fidelity and that in four counties (Island, Mason, Skagit and Thurston) scoter harvest levels exceed what is believed to be sustainable. This means that hunting could definitely be impacting the long-term health of these birds in these counties. These findings were presented to the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission last fall and the state is now evaluating what the hunting impact is on the state level and if harvest regulations need to be

changed. Private donations from citizens like you enable the SeaDoc Society to gather and share the information needed to protect and restore the marine fish and wildlife and Salish Sea ecosystem. Thank you. For more information on how the SeaDoc Society is helping surf scoters, see www.seadocsociety.org



This new format replaces our old Research Update letters—we hope you like it!
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