

Microplastic Accumulation in Elliot Bay Washington

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As part of a project led by the Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program (PSEMP), we isolated microplastics from various bed sediment samples taken from Elliot Bay Washington. Our goal was to collect and categorize any found plastics by length, type, and color. Plastics 5mm-3 μ m were isolated through a series of density separations and sorted under a dissection microscope and weighed. We found that 66% of the total plastics found were clear in color, 88% of them were fibrous and 54% were between 1-2.5mm in length, suggesting that the parent material was of similar characteristics. Further investigation would have to be done to identify the source of the microplastics, but our catalog of microplastics may increase the probability of determining their origin.