

Poison Hemlock – *Conium
maculatum*
in Skagit County

Noxious Weed Coordinator - Joseph Shea

What is Poison Hemlock

- *Conium maculatum*
- Class B “Designate” Noxious weed in Skagit County
- Required for control per WAC 16-750/ RCW 17.10
- Native to Europe, Asia and North Africa
- Toxic to Humans and Livestock
- Grows in rich, moist soils, but otherwise is highly adaptable

<https://www.nwcb.wa.gov/weeds/poison-hemlock>



Poison Hemlock Identification

- Biennial
- Up to 12 ft in height
- Rossete first year, flower and seed production year two



Poison Hemlock Identification

- Flower
 - 4-8 inch Umbel “umbrella shaped clusters\
- Leaf “fern like toothed finely divided and have strong odor when crushed
- Stem Hollow hairless and have purple blotches

<https://www.nwcb.wa.gov/weeds/poison-hemlock>



Poison Hemlock Look Alikes

- Apiaceae (carrot parsley family when young)
- Wild Carrot - *Daucus carota*
- Water Hemlock – *Cicuta Maculata*
- Cow Parsnip – *Heracleum maximum*
- Giant hogweed - *Heracleum mantegazzianum*



Signs of poisoning

- Nervous trembling
- Stimulation followed by depression Ataxia, especially lower and hind limbs
- Salivation
- Lack of coordination
- Dilation of the pupils
- Rapid, weak pulse
- Respiratory paralysis
- Coma
- Death
- Convulsions have been reported
- Occasionally bloody feces and gastrointestinal irritation
- Skeletal birth defects occur in calves when cows eat poison-hemlock between 40 and 70 days gestation

How It Affects Livestock

Poison-hemlock ingestion frequently is fatal. Sheep may be poisoned by eating as little as 100 to 500 gm of green leaves. Cattle that eat 300 to 500 gm may be poisoned. Signs usually appear within an hour after an animal eats the plant. Animals die from respiratory paralysis in 2 to 3 hours. Convulsions, which are common in western water hemlock poisoning, seldom occur with poison-hemlock.

- Skeletal deformities or cleft palate may be induced in offspring of cows, sheep, goats, and pigs that eat poison-hemlock during gestation. Susceptible stages of gestation when animals should not be exposed to this plant include 40 to 70 days in cows and 30 to 60 days in sheep, goats, and pigs. Palate and skeletal deformities in calves are indistinguishable from the lupine-induced crooked calf disease.

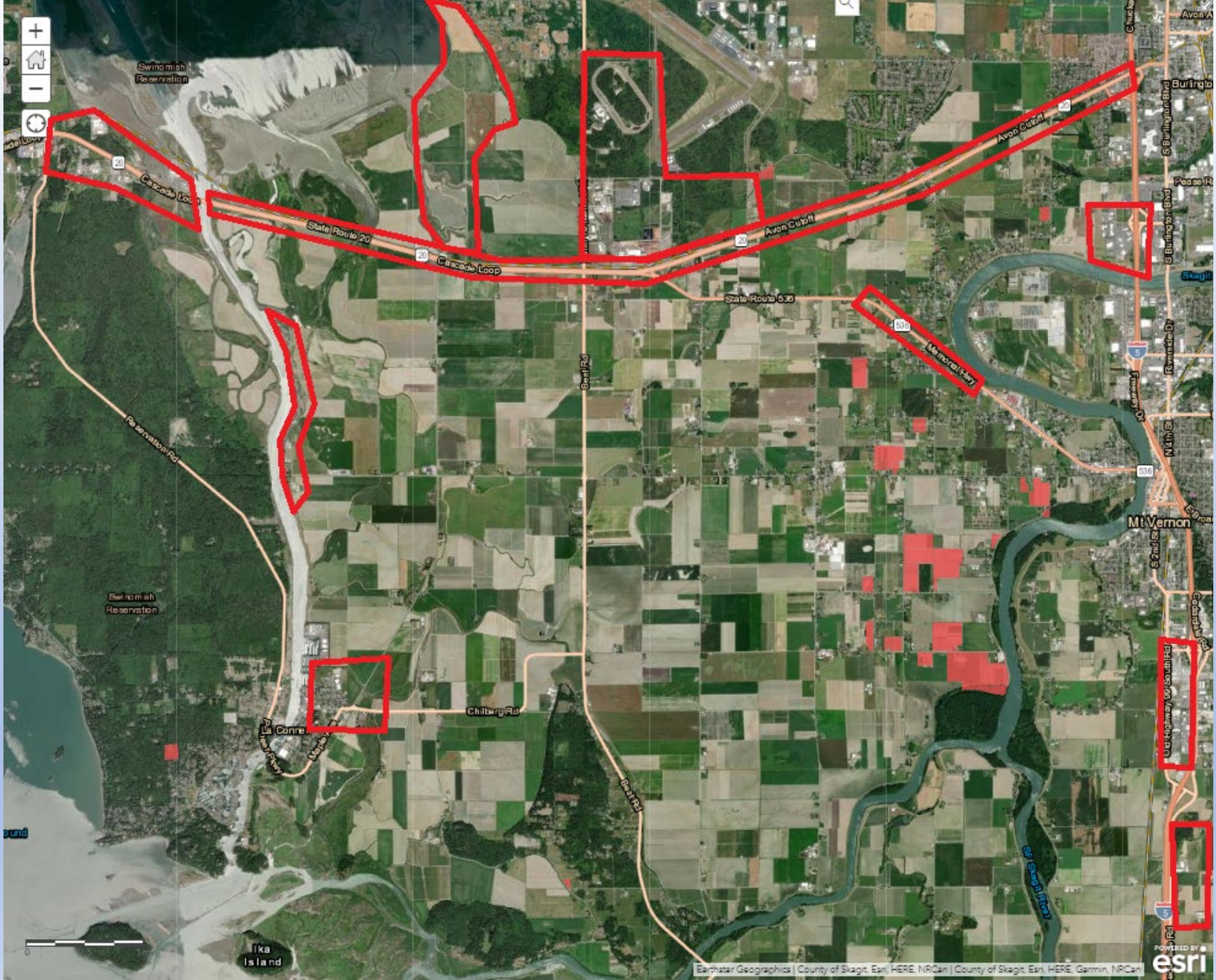
How to Reduce Losses

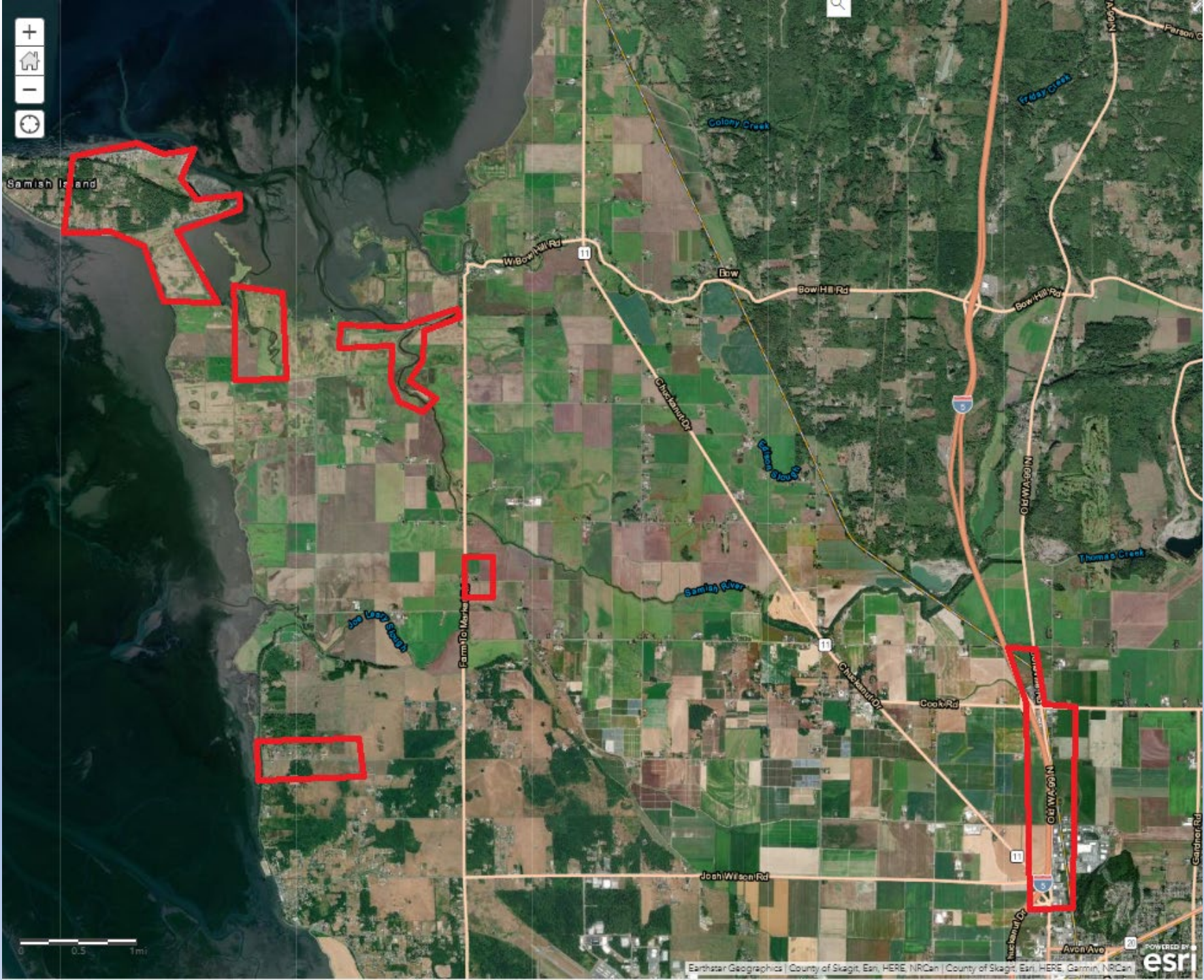
Avoid stressing animals that are not recumbent. For recumbent animals, support respiration and treat with activated charcoal and a saline cathartic. Gastric lavage may be beneficial with atropine therapy to control parasympathetic signs. Animals that recover seldom show aftereffects, although pregnant animals may give birth to deformed offspring.

Poison Hemlock Control

- Manual Removal
- Digging up small infestations removing entire taproot.
- Mowing is ineffective as plants will re-sprout the same growing season.
- Toxins remain potent in dried plant material
- Never add to compost or leave them where children and livestock might eat them
- Bag plant material and put in trash
- New plants will geminate in disturbed ground
- Broadleaf selective herbicide in hay, or lawn environments, Aquatic Approved herbicides near waterbodies or non-selective herbicide with ground activity to stop new seed production. Then site would need to be replanted or seeded the following growing season to inspire desired vegetation.

<https://www.nwcb.wa.gov/weeds/poison-hemlock>





Samish Island

Colony Creek

Friday Creek

W Bow Hill Rd

Bow

Bow Hill Rd

Bow Hill Rd

Chesham Dr

Edna's Loop

Old WA 99 N

Thomas Creek

Samish River

Joe Loop Slough

Farm To Market

Chesham Dr

Cook Rd

Old WA 99 N

Josh Wilson Rd

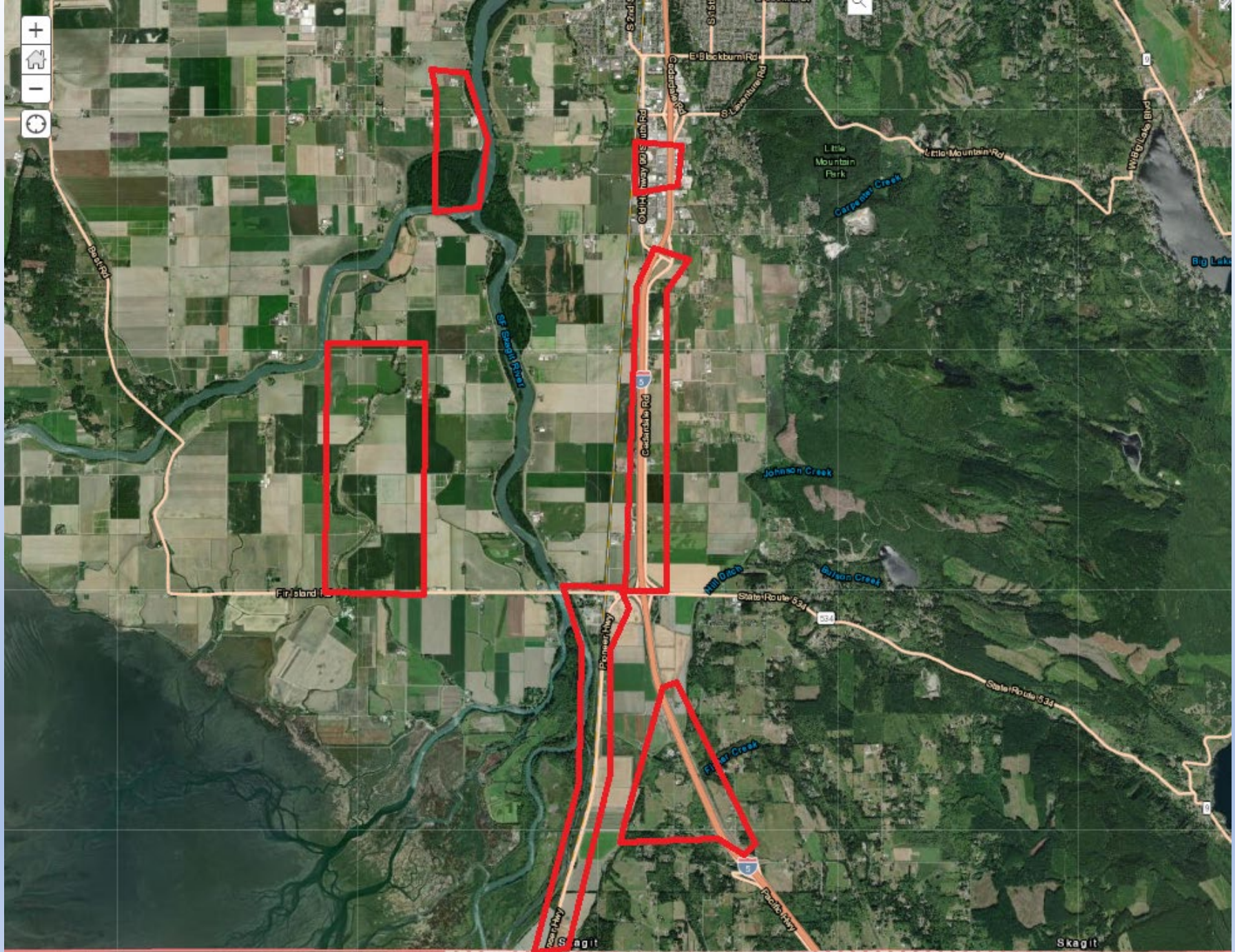
Old WA 99 N

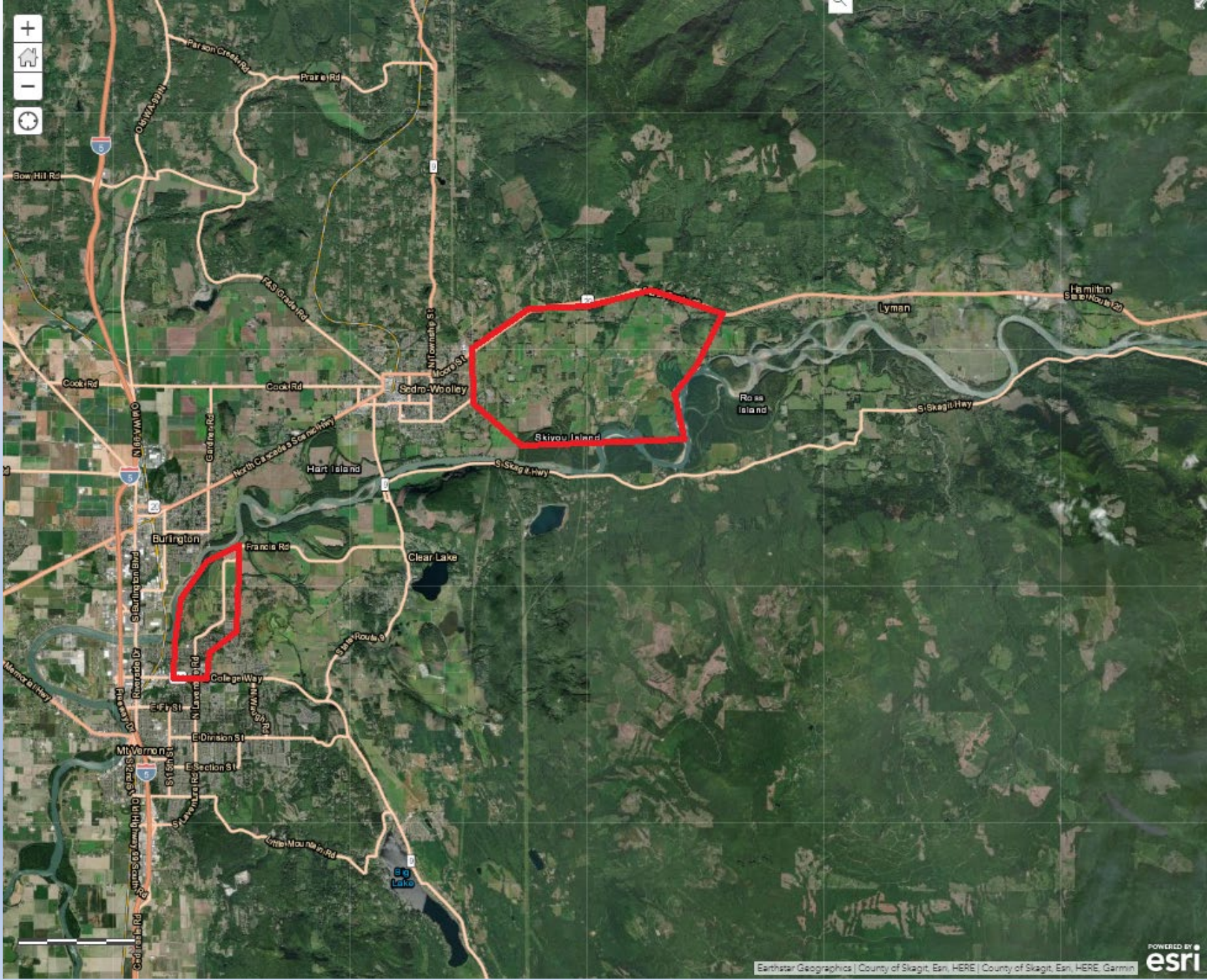
Gardner Rd

Avon Ave

0 0.5 1mi







Monetary fees and penalties - RCW 17.10/ WAC 16-750

- **Right of entry—Warrant for noxious weed search—Civil liability—Penalty for preventing entry.**
- **Quarantine of land—Order—Expense.**
- **Violations—Penalty.**
- **Selling product, article, or feed containing noxious weed seeds or toxic weeds—Penalty—Rules—Inspections—Fees.**
- **Infraction—Penalty.**
- **Lien for labor, material, equipment used in controlling noxious weeds.**

WAC 16-750-020 Noxious weeds—Civil infractions—Schedule of monetary penalties. Civil infractions under chapter 17.10 RCW shall be assessed a monetary penalty according to the following schedule:

(1) Any owner knowing of the existence of any noxious weeds on the owner's land who fails to control the noxious weeds will be assessed the following monetary penalties. The penalties are assessed per parcel, per noxious weed species, per day after expiration of the notice to control filed pursuant to RCW 17.10.170:

(a) Any Class A noxious weed:

1st offense within five years	\$ 750
2nd and any subsequent offense	1,000

(b) Any Class B designate noxious weed in the noxious weed control region in which the land lies:

1st offense within five years	\$ 500
2nd offense	750
3rd and any subsequent offense	1,000

(c) Any Class B nondesignate noxious weed in the noxious weed control region in which the land lies; or any Class C noxious weed:

1st offense within five years	\$ 250
2nd offense	500
3rd offense	750
4th and any subsequent offense	1,000

(2) Any person who enters upon any land in violation of an order in force pursuant to RCW 17.10.210 will be assessed as follows:

1st offense within five years	\$ 500
2nd offense	750
3rd and any subsequent offense	1,000

(3) Any person who interferes with the carrying out of the provisions of chapter 17.10 RCW shall be assessed as follows:

1st offense within five years	\$ 500
2nd offense	750
3rd and any subsequent offense	1,000

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 17.10 RCW. WSR 99-24-029, § 16-750-020, filed 11/23/99, effective 1/3/00; WSR 97-06-108, § 16-750-020, filed 3/5/97, effective 4/5/97; WSR 93-01-004, § 16-750-020, filed 12/2/92, effective 1/2/93.]

Helpful Links

- <https://www.nwcb.wa.gov/weeds/poison-hemlock>
- <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=16-750>
- <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=17.10>

Contact info

Joseph Shea

Noxious Weed Coordinator

360-416-1467

jshea@co.skagit.wa.us