



SKAGIT COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
1800 CONTINENTAL PLACE
MOUNT VERNON, WA 98273-5625

Postal Customer Address

CLEAN WATER IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

We need YOUR help to clean up the Samish River

Resources Available to You

Get FREE and friendly help!

Skagit Conservation District

- ◆ FREE temporary fencing
- ◆ Farm planning
- ◆ Best management practices
- ◆ Cost share
- ◆ Native plants
- ◆ Stormwater management

<http://www.skagitcd.org>

Natural Resources Stewardship Program

FREE grant funds to:

- ◆ Fence out livestock
- ◆ Remove invasive plants
- ◆ Replant native plants

<http://www.skagitcounty.net/NRSP>

Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group

- ◆ FREE visit to assess fish habitat needs & concerns
- ◆ Assistance with finding funds for barrier culvert removal/repair
- ◆ Replanting riparian areas with native plants
- ◆ Information on salmon in your stream watershed

<http://www.skagitfisheries.org/>

Classes & Events

Country Living Expo & Cattleman's Winterschool

Saturday, January 28th, at Stanwood High School.

Learn about a multitude of topics, network with other small farmers, and visit with local agricultural businesses. For questions, contact WSU Skagit County Extension Office at 360-428-4270, ext. 0. or countrylivingexpo@gmail.com

D.A.S.S.H. 5K Fun Run/Walk for Clean Water Awareness

Saturday, March 4th, 2017, 10 a.m.

SCEA is hosting this 5k run to raise awareness and promote the reduction of non-point pollution and clean water in the Samish watershed and surrounding areas.

Salish Sea Stewards Training

Tuesdays, March 7-May 9,

1-5pm at Padilla Bay Research Reserve

Learn how the Salish Sea is different than Puget Sound in 40 hours of classroom and field-based training taught by local and regional experts. Topics include Salish Sea ecosystems, human interactions, current issues, ongoing recovery efforts, and how you can make a difference as a volunteer! Registration required: 360-428-1559 or rsussell@padillabay.gov.

Backyard Conservation Stewardship Short Course

Wednesdays, March 22-April 26, 6-8:30pm

Learn the principles of how to create beautiful landscapes that benefit humans, animals, stream health, and the environment...one backyard at a time! Registration required. Contact Kristi Carpenter at 360-428-4313 or kristi@skagitcd.org.

Skagit Conservation District Native Plant Sale

Friday March 24th and Saturday March 25th

For more information contact the district at 360-428-4313 or skagitcd@skagitcd.org

Septic Systems 101 - available online!

Learn the basics of owning and operating your septic system to keep it working well for as long as possible. Keeping your septic system working well will save you money and help to keep surface and groundwater quality clean.

<http://www.skagitcounty.net/septics101online>



SKAGIT COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS

WINTER/SPRING 2017

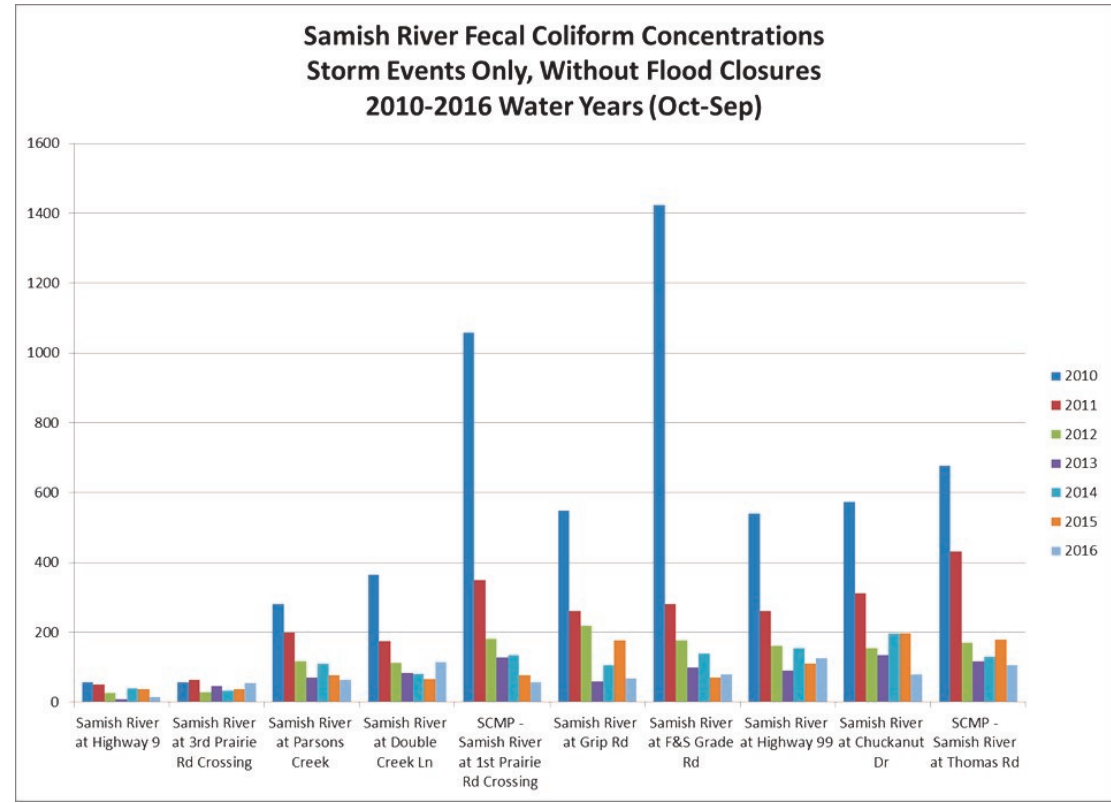


In 2016 the Samish Basin experienced fewer storms, leading to fewer closures of the Samish Bay Shellfish Growing Area. The storms that did occur continued to show that high rainfall increases fecal coliform counts at most water quality stations in the basin, especially in the Samish River and its tributaries. Skagit County staff and Storm Team volunteers have taken over 850 fecal coliform samples in the Samish Basin during 2016 to date. Staff from the Washington State Departments of Ecology and Agriculture, and the Samish Indian Nation took an estimated 500 additional samples. Results from this intensive sampling are used to locate pollution sources and to guide landowner contact and cleanup activities. To date, in 2016 the Samish Bay Shellfish Growing Area has had one flood closure, six pollution closures, and nine occasions where a precautionary storm closure was rescinded due to low pollution levels. This represents not only fewer total closures, but also fewer confirmed pollution closures than in previous years.



Samish River Water Quality Update

Shellfish harvests are not the only reason for working for clean water. Reducing fecal coliform bacteria pollution also means our streams are safer for recreation such as fishing and swimming. Removing fecal coliform sources also means reducing organic and sediment inputs into the streams, which improves the oxygen levels critical for fish health and reduces egg mortality in spawning beds. The following chart shows fecal coliform concentrations during storms at Samish River monitoring locations, by year and from upstream on the left to downstream on the right. Average storm concentrations are greatly reduced from 2010. Progress in reducing fecal coliform pollution is more difficult now that the major sources have been addressed, but Clean Samish partners continue to make headway in this area.



You can follow our progress online by checking our water quality map at www.skagitcounty.net/cleanwater. We post results every two weeks. You can also follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/skagitcountycleanwater.

**Salish Sea Stewards
Volunteer Training**
Tuesday's 1:00-5:00pm
March 7 – May 9, 2017

Don't wait! Space is limited to the first 30 applicants!

Padilla Bay Interpretive Center • 10441 Bayview Edison Road • Mt. Vernon, WA 98273

40 hours of free citizen science training taught by local experts
+10 hours of customizable hands-on trainings
Participants return 50 hours of volunteer service in 1 year.

Topics include: water quality, climate change, green crab monitoring, intertidal monitoring, Salish Sea 101, forage fish sampling, marine ecology, and much more!

Applications available at: www.skagitmrc.org and www.coastalvolunteerpartnership.org
No prior experience necessary!
Direct questions and turn in completed applications by February 28th to
Samantha Russell
srussell@padillabay.gov, 360-428-1559

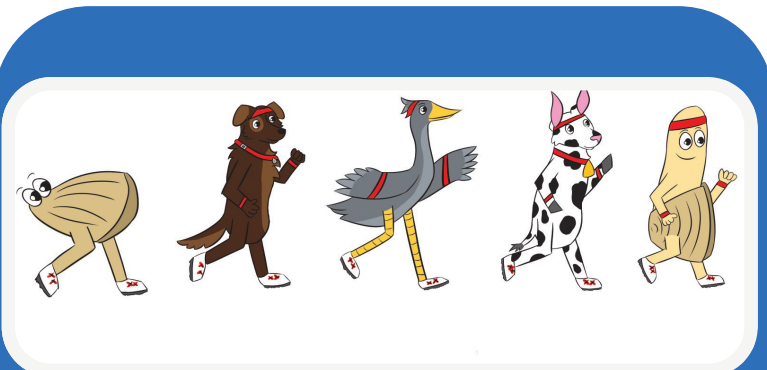
FREE Grant Funding Available for Streamside Landowners

Skagit County's Natural Resource Stewardship Program is looking for landowners next to streams who want help fencing out livestock, performing bank stability work, removing invasive plants, replanting, and providing livestock crossings. The program offers free grant funds to do the work, and is non-regulatory. Our goal is to improve water quality in Skagit County by increasing community awareness and inspiring landowners to participate in protecting water quality. Since 2009 the program has worked on 27 projects in the Samish watershed and 42 projects County-wide. Please contact NRSP Coordinator Emily Derenne at emilyjd@co.skagit.wa.us or 360-416-1449.

FREE GRANT FUNDS
Fence-out livestock
Remove invasives
Replant

ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS NOW!!!!

NRSP



DASSH : Doing a Sprint For Samish Health
5k Family Run/Walk for Clean Water Awareness
Saturday, February 25th, 2017 @ 10am
www.databarevents.com/dassh



Dairy Farming in the Samish

Winter is here, which means heavy rains and soggy conditions. Dairy farmers in Skagit County work especially hard during this season to address excess water on their properties. DeBoer Dairy has implemented a number of Best Management Practices (BMPs) over the last few years to do just that. These BMPs can be helpful for private landowners too!

Gutters, a simple solution

Large barn roofs can direct clean water toward livestock and storage areas where it can pick up pollution. Manure-contaminated water must be stored in a dairy's lagoon so that it doesn't flow into ditches and streams, but filling up a manure lagoon with water leaves less room

for manure! Gutters are a simple fix for this problem. DeBoer Dairy installed gutters in June, 2015 to redirect roof water so the farm doesn't have to store it. Farmers can also choose to store rainwater for farm use, such as watering.

Why install a vegetated filter strip?

Vegetated filter strips are another tool farmers can use to deal with excess water on their farm and treat contaminated water. Treating runoff from feeding areas by directing water to a healthy stand of grass allows nutrients to fertilize the grass, and prevents the farm from needing to store runoff. These filter strips control and treat runoff from feeding areas by removing bacteria and

nutrients such as nitrogen from the water. They also help in providing clean, dry lots which improves livestock health. DeBoer Dairy installed a filter strip in the summer of 2016. So far, they feel the filter strip has been valuable.

Want to learn more?

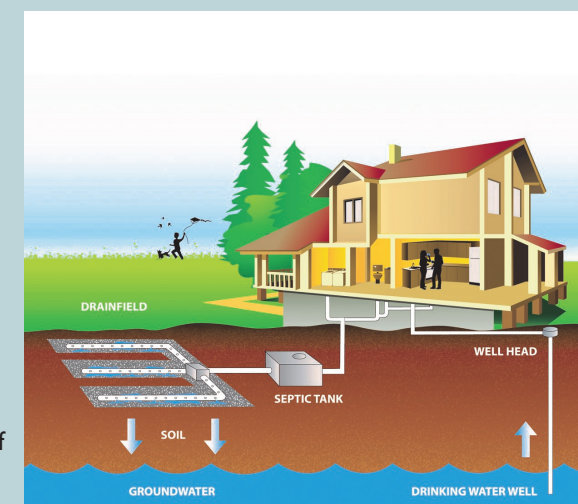
Please visit the WSDA Dairy Nutrient Management Program and the Skagit Conservation District websites for more information. You can also contact WSDA inspector Kyrre Flege at kflege@agr.wa.gov with questions or concerns.



How Does a Septic System Work?

A septic system is how households not hooked into sewer treat and dispose of wastewater. The typical septic tank is a large buried container that receives wastewater from your home. Heavy solids settle to the bottom, becoming the sludge layer, while lighter solids float to the top and form the scum layer. Clear wastewater leaving the septic tank then enters the drainfield. There, wastewater trickles out of perforated pipes laid in gravel filled trenches, and the soils of the drainfield filter out remaining pollutants. Every drainfield should have a reserve or replacement area in case the

existing system needs a repair. Septic systems need to be inspected every 1 to 3 years, and pumped every 3 to 5 years. During a routine inspection a certified inspector can tell you if your tank needs to be pumped. Risers can be installed for easy access to the tanks. It is important for the safety of you and your family that riser lids are properly tightened and in good condition. A well maintained septic system can provide years of reliable service. Performing routine maintenance can protect your property, your family's health, and the health of our watershed.



Rebates for Septic Inspections Are Back!

Skagit County's Public Health Department is now offering \$100 rebates to help with the cost of inspecting your septic system. Rebate forms are available at: <http://skagitcounty.net/septic>.

Find us on

To get the straight poop on septic systems, visit our Facebook page and view the septic videos at <https://www.facebook.com/skagitcountycleanwater>