



# Clean Water Report

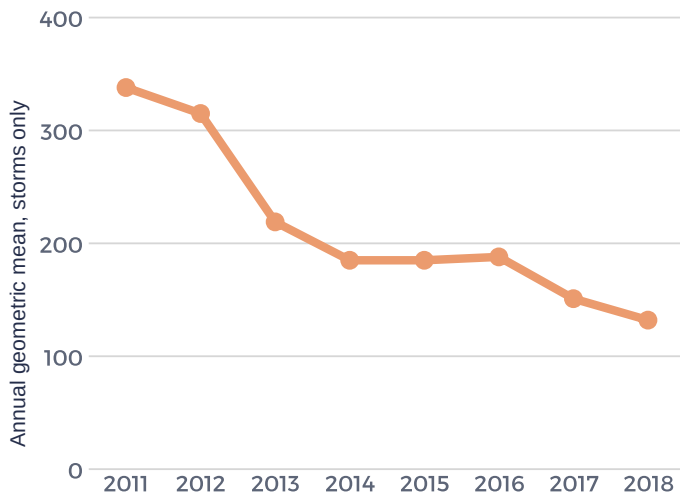
WHERE THE MONEY GOES

If you live in unincorporated Skagit County, you may have seen "Clean Water Assessment" (CWA) on your property tax statement. The assessment began in 2009, and supports the county's Clean Water Program. The Program's goal is to improve water quality in order to protect public health and the environment. We partner with local groups like Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group, Skagit Conservation District, and the Marine Resources Committee whenever possible to broaden our impact.

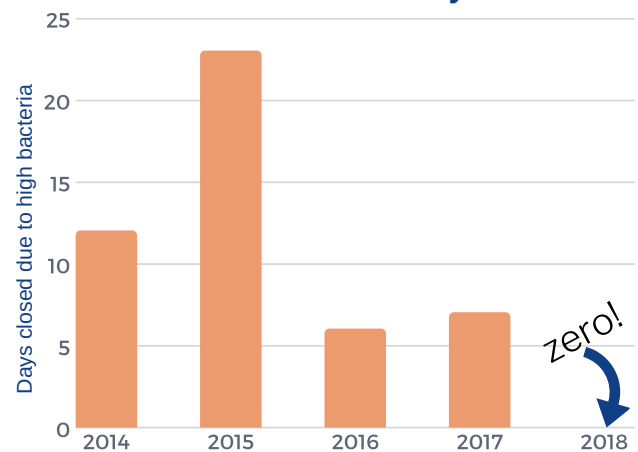
## KEEPING SHELLFISH AND BEACHES SAFE BY CLEANING UP POLLUTION

Skagit County Public Works regularly monitors water quality throughout the county. When we detected unsafe levels of fecal coliform bacteria in the Samish and Padilla Bay areas, the Clean Water Program worked to find and fix the sources of pollution causing the problem. Bay View State Park is now open for swimming for more days during the summer, and commercial and recreational shellfish harvesters can harvest safely for longer periods of time thanks to improved water quality.

**Average levels of bacteria in the Samish River have declined significantly**



**Bay View State Park swim beach is closed for fewer days**



How do we find and fix pollution sources? It starts with water quality sampling. When we find problem areas, we sample creeks, ditches, and any trickle of water we find to track it back to the source. When we identify a source on a property, whether it's manure or sewage, we work with the property owner to solve the problem.

We have also found pollution by enforcing the state law that requires septic system owners to regularly inspect their systems. Inspections can help identify a failure, but regular maintenance like inspections also helps to catch problems before they become expensive failures.

**330**

Septic systems were identified as failed or seriously deficient\*

**12+**

Pet waste stations are maintained by Skagit County or community partners

**260+**

Best management practices implemented on farms to prevent manure runoff

**26,881**

Feet of fencing built to keep livestock out of waterways

\*All data included in this report is measured from 2010 through 2018 unless otherwise noted.

**PROTECTING AND RESTORING HABITAT FOR SHELLFISH AND SALMON**

Through the Marine Resources Committee and Natural Resources Stewardship Program, we protect and restore streams, shorelines, and habitat. With Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group and Skagit Conservation District as partners, we have restored hundreds of acres of habitat. Along with our staff time, hundreds of volunteers have donated thousands of hours toward these efforts.

Citizen scientists donated

**25,908**

hours of volunteer time, equal to 12.5 full-time employees

**1.5 MILLION**

Native Olympia oysters planted and thriving in Fidalgo Bay since 2002

feet of shoreline restored **6,950**

**58,224** feet of streambanks restored

**99** acres of upland habitat restored with native plants

Pinto abalone planted at 6 rocky reefs **9,200**

Highlights from the past 5 years:

**745**

Adults attended a class or workshop

**8,756**

Students received in- or out-of-classroom education

**804**

Volunteers participated in various outreach and citizen science programs

**27,153**

Hours contributed by volunteers, equal to 13 full-time employees

**OUTREACH AND EDUCATION**

With the help of partners like the Skagit Conservation District, Skagit Conservation Education Alliance, the Salish Sea Stewards, and Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group, thousands of adults and children have learned more about shellfish, salmon, the environment, and the importance of clean water for all.

From classes on backyard stewardship, conservation, and livestock management to in- and out-of-classroom educational opportunities, to participation at events like the Skagit River Salmon Festival, we are working to get the word out. You can even find us on Facebook, Twitter, Next Door, and YouTube!

**LEVERAGING OUR FUNDING FOR GRANTS**

The majority of the Clean Water Program's work is funded by the Clean Water Assessment. However, having sustainable funding from the county has allowed us to apply for and win grants to make our work even more effective.

For every \$10 in Clean Water Assessment funding, we received \$4.28 in grant funding in 2018. From planting Olympia oysters and pinto abalone to restoring stream banks and shorelines to cleaning up pollution, the Clean Water Assessment allows us to leverage our funding to do even more work.

**\$6.83 MILLION**

*total revenue in grants since 2009*

**30%**

*of revenue in 2018 came from grants*