



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

Postal Customer Address

CLEAN WATER IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

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/>

Get Smart! Free Classes & Events to Learn More

Septic Systems 101 - available in person and 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>

Trivia Night with Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group

June 16, 2016 7pm-9pm at North Sound Brewery

This will be a fun filled event for participants 21 years of age and older full of questions about Skagit Valley history, local fish, local businesses and much more! Prizes for winning teams!
<http://www.skagitfisheries.org/>

Watershed Art & Discovery Day

June 18, 2016 11am-2pm

Bring the kids! Play, create & learn all about estuaries and the wonderful creatures that inhabit our local ecosystems through fun, interactive exploration & art! Classes will be instructed by Artist in Residence, Barbara Summers, and SCEA staff. FREE! Pre-registration requested. Call (360) 428-1558.

Taylor Shellfish-Tival

Wednesday, July 20, 2016 11am-3pm
Free family day at Taylor Shellfish Farm! There will be many fun activities including low tide beach walks, shell art, watershed game, toss the turd game, a kids beach, and lots more!

Sustainable Samish Garden Tour

July 31, 2016 11am-3pm

Experience five inspiring gardens on this FREE, friendly-to-all-ages, open house style farm and garden tour, that features a mix of fresh food production, bountiful blooms, healthy living, and environmental and community responsibility - for wildlife, plants, water, people, and the whole earth! For more info contact: Kristi Carpenter (360) 428-4313 or email: kristi@skagitcd.org

Kids in Nature: Families Outdoors at Pomona Grange Park

August 20, 2016 11am-2pm

FREE FAMILY EVENT! Bring the kids outdoors for an afternoon of play, discovery, and exploration! Pre-registration requested by August 18th. To register, contact Kristi Carpenter, Skagit Conservation District at (360) 428-4313 or email: kristi@skagitcd.org

Padilla Bay Partnership

SKAGIT COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS &
WASHINGTON STATE DEPT OF ECOLOGY

SPRING / SUMMER 2016

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Even if your property is not next to a creek, stormwater runoff flowing into ditches from your property can carry bacteria to Padilla Bay.

- Summer is the best time to install permanent fencing, manure storage facilities and other best management practices (BMPs). The Skagit Conservation District can help identify and share the cost of BMPs to help you manage runoff from your property.



DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY
State of Washington

Bay View Students Becoming Stewards of their Watershed

This school year, Kristin Lessley's 8th grade science classes have been learning about their local watershed and the concept of stewardship. Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group (SFEG) has been engaging local

middle school students in Junior Stream Stewards since 2006.

This year, Bay View students joined 500 other middle schoolers in Skagit County to learn about their local watersheds. The students toured the Padilla Bay Watershed, including Joe Leary Slough, to learn about where water flows and what happens to it along the way. In a visit to the Port of Skagit in November, Planning Director Sara Young explained to students the ability of wetlands to filter and clean water that flows through them. Students conducted water quality tests, and indeed the water coming out of the wetlands at the airport was very clean!



Bay View students planting trees along the Samish River



Bay View 8th graders dissecting salmon.

In addition to salmon dissections, and biological and chemical water quality testing, students planted native trees to improve habitat and water quality. The students even became "guinea pigs" in a brand new educational board game designed by SFEG interns called *Spawn 'Till You Die*, which the majority of the students say they loved.

You're Invited!

Dine & Discover

Bay View

BBQ • Live Music • Raffle • Water Quality Activities

Friday June 17, 4-8pm at
Bay View State Park

Join us for a fun-filled evening of water quality education and delicious local food! Skagit County Clean Water and the Coastal Volunteer Partnership are excited to host an event for Samish and Padilla watershed residents in an effort to educate about local water quality issues and celebrate our accomplishments. Hope to see you there!

Live Music by The Prozac Mtn Boys

Questions? Call (360) 416-1400

Did you know?

- Rain gardens can be shaped and sized to fit your yard.
- They are constructed with soil mixes that allow water to soak in rapidly, treat runoff, and support plant growth.
- Rain gardens can be landscaped with a variety of plants to fit the surroundings.

For more information about rain gardens contact:

Kristi Carpenter, Skagit Conservation District: kristi@skagitcd.org or visit the Skagit Conservation District's website: http://www.skagitcd.org/stormwater_programs.

Rain Gardens — “A beautiful solution to pollution”

You can help keep Padilla Bay clean and reduce local drainage problems. How? **Build a rain garden!** Rain gardens are “gardens with a purpose”; they allow rain to soak into the ground naturally, reducing the amount of pollution that gets into our creeks, rivers, sloughs, and marine waters. A substantial amount of the pollution in these waterways is carried there by runoff from our yards and gardens. Some of the pollutants include fertilizers, pesticides, grass clippings, pet waste, yard debris, and oil and grease. Homeowners, schools, businesses, and other organizations across the nation are installing rain gardens on their property to be a part of the pollution solution and to protect their neighborhood stream.

What is a Rain Garden?

Rain gardens look like any other flower garden, but they are built in a shallow depression that is landscaped and designed to collect, absorb, and filter storm-



Rain garden outside Skagit County administrative building

water runoff from roof tops, driveways, patios, lawns, and other hard surfaces that don't allow water to soak in. Unlike a wetland, rain gardens are designed to be completely dry after a maximum of two days, so standing water is not a problem.

Rain Gardens Provide Multiple Benefits

Rain gardens are important and versatile tools in the approach of managing stormwater called low impact development (LID). Rain gardens help keep our streams, rivers, and bays clean by filtering stormwater runoff, help alleviate problems associated with localized flooding by encouraging water to soak into the ground (thereby reducing the volume of runoff), make for beautiful, low-maintenance landscapes, and can help our community save millions of dollars in pollution clean-up and expensive stormwater projects. Rain gardens also provide habitat for many birds and beneficial insects such as bees and butterflies.

An Interview with Dean Bannister: a Septic Inspector

Why should I get my septic system inspected?

Today system installations and repairs have been known to exceed \$20,000. That amount of money is a major investment for most homeowners. In many cases a major repair may be avoided if minor system problems can be identified early on. A properly working septic system will also be beneficial for the health and safety of your family and help to keep surface and groundwater clean.

How much does an inspection cost?

Inspection fees in Skagit County typically range from \$125.00 to \$300.00 depending on the service provider and the system type. These numbers include travel to and from the site, on-site system inspection and possible maintenance, and completing the online inspection report required by Skagit County.

What happens during an inspection?

It depends on the type of system. My typical inspection will include examination of applicable components including the septic tank, pump tank, and drain field. In all systems I would be observing the entire site

for evidence of surfacing effluent, wetter areas, and groundwater influence upon the drain field along with effluent discharge to ditches or other surface water.

What happens if you find a problem?

Many inspections reveal minor issues with system function. Typically these can be fixed while on the site by minor adjustment. Other times, a component will need to be replaced. We will advise the property owner of the problem, give a rough quote of the cost to fix it, and rig the system to operate in one fashion or another until we can make the repair. If we have done minor fixes we will report them with no further action by the county. If the system is failing it will require soil and site evaluation and repair design.



An inspector removing risers to access the septic tank.

Septic Inspection Rebates Are Back!

Skagit County's Public Health Department is offering \$100 rebates to help with the cost of inspecting your septic system. Rebate forms and instruction are posted on their webpage. <http://skagitcounty.net/septic>

Financial Assistance for Septic System Repair/Replacement

If you can't afford to repair or replace your septic system, Skagit County offers grants and loans to help you. Contact the Environmental Public Health Department at 360-416-1555.

Department of Ecology's B.E.A.C.H. Program

Interested in the quality of our marine waters, and how it relates to our health and well-being? Well so is the Department of Ecology's B.E.A.C.H. (Beach Environmental Assessment, Communication and Health) program. If you frequent Bay View State Park, you may notice Coastal Volunteer Partnership (CVP) volunteers collecting water quality samples and information about the usage of the surrounding beach area. These samples are transported to a lab in Burlington to be analyzed for the presence and quantity of enterococcus, a

bacterium which, when present, indicates that there could be a risk present for people who use that beach. Sampling occurs once per week from Memorial Day to Labor Day, more information, results, and state wide information can be found at BEACH's website: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/eap/beach/> If you are interested in getting involved with water quality sampling or other volunteer opportunities contact Samantha Russell at srussell@padillabay.gov or (360)428-1559.



Did you know?

Fecal coliform bacteria come from the intestines of warm blooded animals including humans, dogs, livestock and wildlife. Although most bacteria in feces are harmless, fecal coliform bacteria may indicate the presence of disease-causing pathogens that can make swimming and eating shellfish unsafe.

Padilla Bay Water Quality Report

Freshwater tributaries to Padilla Bay have shown elevated fecal coliform concentrations in both regular (ambient) and storm event sampling. Many sites show wide fluctuations in fecal coliform between relatively clean and highly polluted, with the highest fecal coliform concentrations occurring during storm events. Other sites can have high counts regardless of weather conditions, hinting at possible steady sources of fecal coliform. Sites with elevated fecal coliform counts include watercourses draining both residential and agricultural land uses, so there are likely many

coliform source activities in the watershed. The Washington State Department of Ecology will be conducting water quality sampling in the Padilla Bay watershed over the next year in support of their Padilla Bay Total Maximum Daily Load study, also known as a "Cleanup Plan". Ecology data, along with previous data collected by Skagit County and Storm Team volunteers, will be



The view north from Bay View State Park.

used to target fecal coliform cleanup activities in the Padilla Bay watershed. The ultimate goal is to prevent swimming beach closures and allow shellfish harvest in the area.