

Below are results from sampling by the Storm Team (5/7) and Skagit County (5/9-11) in the Samish Basin in the last week.

Heavy rains on Friday night and Saturday brought the river up to an unseasonably high 1000 cfs on Saturday. The Storm Team went above and beyond the call of duty to sample this event at multiple times on Saturday. Coliform counts rose throughout the event, reaching their peak at the same time as the peak flow. Many thanks to the Storm Team for collecting this important information.

By Monday the river was still falling and County samples on Monday and Tuesday reflect normal conditions during falling and steady hydrographs. We continue to see low fecal coliform counts at all times except during heavy rainstorms.

Wednesday's samples were taken during the beginning of yet another rise in the river, but the FC counts remained low. The majority of the rise and the peak occurred during the evening and night hours (the peak was near 1 am and again over 1000 cfs), so no samples were taken then. We sampled again early yesterday, results should be available this afternoon, but I needed to get this email out. That sample will be an important indicator for the bay status and will be reported later today if possible.

Thanks to MarySutton Carruthers for collection of the County samples.

We are at the time of year where a 100 cfs rise in the river triggers an automatic closure of shellfish. Because this has been such a rainy April and May, we are experiencing many more of these than we would have in previous years with this regulation system. However, in most cases the FC data has confirmed the closure.

Skagit County has not been able to collect samples from the intermediate Pollution Identification and Correction sites for most of these events because they are occurring on nights and weekends. As the data below shows, FC counts are low except when the river is on a significant rise, and it would not be a good use of resources to conduct intensive PIC or source tracking samples when the counts are low.

5/7/2011 Storm Team Volunteers

Location	Fecal coliform, cfu/100 mL	Duplicate	River status
Samish River at Thomas Road 10:50 am	380	405	590 cfs rising
Samish River at Thomas Road 11:55 am	690	555	690 cfs rising
Samish River at Thomas Road 5:30 pm	2200	1950	1040 cfs peak

5/9/2011 County

Samish River at Thomas Road	49	79	530 cfs falling

5/10/2011 County

Thomas Creek at Hwy 99	49		
Thomas Creek at F&S Grade Road	79		
Friday Creek at Prairie Rd	33		
Swede Creek at Grip Rd	16		
Samish River at Hwy 9	4		
Samish River at Thomas Rd	49	33	420 cfs steady
Alice Bay Pump Station	79		
Edison Slough at School	79		
Edison Pump Station	49		
North Edison Pump Station	430		
Colony Creek at Colony Rd	33		

5/11/2011 County

Samish River at Hwy 99	23	23	
Samish River at Chuckanut Drive	70	70	
Samish River at Thomas Road	63	23	430 cfs rising

Samish River at Thomas Road, 0800 5/12: 540 cfu; duplicate
540 cfu

This is high enough to keep the bay closed. Strong rain system
expected Saturday night into Sunday morning will probably again
push the river over the closure criteria.