

The Samish River made a mess of itself this week. Flooding started Sunday and continued through the week as the water that got out of the river channel to the south, upstream of the levees, couldn't get back in, and ran across fields several miles to a breach in the levee at Farm to Market Road, where it was able to reenter the river channel.

Storm team sampled the Samish River at Thomas Road on Sunday, December 12 as the water was rising.

Result: 230 cfu/100 mL, flow approx 3000 cfs.

Skagit County sampled various places on 12/13, 14, and 15. Here are the results:

<b>Date/Site</b>	<b>Fecal Coliform</b>
12/13/10	
Swede Creek at Grip Rd	30
Samish River at Grip Rd	30
Samish River at Hwy 99	70
Samish River at Chuckanut Dr	80
	130
Samish River at Thomas Rd	300
	500
12/14/2010	
Samish River at Thomas Rd	48
	20
12/15/2010	
Samish River at Thomas Rd	80
	30
Field runoff at Farm to Market Rd	130
Colony Cr at Colony Rd (Site 39)	4
Colony Cr at Tidegate	7
Ditch trib to McElroy Slough	80

On 12/13, samples were taken in conjunction with a flood assessment tour. By this time significant amounts of water were flowing through the town of Allen and across fields south of the levee system –

On 12/14, samples were taken at the Samish River/Thomas Rd site as a detour from regular weekly sampling, which was on the other route this week.

On 12/15, samples were again taken at Thomas Road, from the field runoff as it reentered the river, and from some locations in the Colony Creek basin at the request of the State Shellfish Office.

I would characterize the numbers as generally low considering the amount of rainfall (up to 6-8" in the headwaters) and the amount of water flowing across land that hadn't seen river water since January, 2009. Peak flow on the Samish this week was about 5700 cfs early Monday morning. Normal flow for the week is about 300 cfs. The January 2009 flood peaked at about 9,000 cfs