

DRAINAGE UTILITY



Skagit County formed a drainage utility in 1994 to address ongoing storm water problems throughout the region. The utility generates just under \$1 million per year. Projects range from ditch clearing to the million dollar Burrows Bay storm water system and outfall.

Edison Slough Drainage Improvement Project

Completion of this project by Skagit County Public Works is made possible by funds from the local Drainage Utility District. The project will reduce flood levels and improve drainage by enlarging the channel. This will be accomplished by excavating the banks of the slough at two narrow restriction points and by replacing undersized culverts. As mitigation for this work, a self-regulating tide (SRT) gate was added to Phase 1 of the project (completed in 1999). This SRT gate will provide many benefits to the slough: aesthetics, water quality, and restoration of a historic saltwater estuary. It will also increase channel capacity by introducing salt tolerant species; replacing the invasive canary grass and cattails that choke flows within the channel. Channel depth could be increased by tidal scour.

By restoring the saltwater flows to this area, the project will broaden the critical salt-to-fresh-water interface where salmonids evolve from fresh water fry to salt-water smolt. Areas of interaction between salt and fresh water create an estuarine environment. Estuaries provide critical habitats that juvenile salmonids need to transition from fresh water to saltwater environments. The project will also provide important refugia and estuarine foraging areas for juvenile salmonids.

Benefits

- Reduces flooding.
- Restores wetland and estuary function.
- Improves channels.

Additional Drainage Utility projects include:

<i>Project</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Partners</i>
Claybrook Road	\$4,000	Skagit County
Sunset Lane	\$65,000	Skagit County Drainage District #15
West Bulson Road	\$6,000	Skagit County
Josh Wilson Road	\$130,000	Skagit County
Hope Island	\$576,000	Skagit County
Fruitdale Road	\$254,000	Skagit County



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