



SCD

SKAGIT CONSERVATION DISTRICT

News

Volume 33, Number 1

SOIL • WATER • WOODLAND

Winter 2017

Skagit Conservation District

2017 NATIVE PLANT SALE

OPEN SALE

Saturday, April 15th
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Location: Plant Materials Center
16564 Bradley Road, Bow

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Plant Sale Guide 2
- Going Native 3
- Stormwater Infrastructure 4
- Watershed Masters 5
- 2016 Report of Accomplishments.... 6-7
- Watershed Updates 8-9
- Fire Safe Communities 10
- 2016 Conservation Award Winners... 11

PLANT LIST & ORDER FORM INSIDE

PRE-ORDER INFO

\$50 PRE-ORDER MINIMUM!

Order online @ www.skagitcd.org/native_plant_sales
or call 360-428-4313 by March 31st

50% deposit due at time of order *(We accept all major credit cards)*

Pick up your plants on Friday, April 14th
at the Plant Materials Center 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.



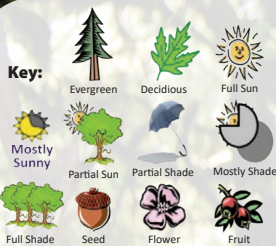
www.skagitcd.org

SKAGIT CD 2017 NATIVE PLANT SALE:

Plant Descriptions & Prices

| Common Name/ Genus Species | Max. Ht | Classification & Characteristics | Habitat Characteristics & Conservation Uses | Est. size | Bundle Price |
|--|----------|----------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------|
| EVERGREEN/CONIFER TREE SEEDLINGS (SOLD IN BUNDLES OF 25- EXCEPT AS NOTED) | | | | | |
| 1. Fir, Grand <i>Abies grandis</i> | 2-0 | 200' | | Prefers acidic, well-drained soils; Christmas tree, lumber, wildlife food & shelter | 12"+ \$25.00 for 25 |
| 2. Fir, Noble <i>Abies procera</i> | P-1 | 100' | | Prefers well-drained soil; Christmas trees, wildlife food & shelter | 12"+ \$36.00 for 25 |
| 3. Cedar, AK Yellow <i>Chamaecyparis nootkatensis</i> | P-1 | 100' | | Prefers full sun and cool humid climate, Uses; building, carving, weaving | 12" \$36.00 for 25 |
| 4. Spruce, Sitka <i>Picea sitchensis</i> | P-1 | 200' | | Prefers moist, well-drained soils; wildlife food & shelter, lumber | 12" \$36.00 for 25 |
| 5. Pine, Shore <i>Pinus contorta</i> | 2-0 | 100' | | Tolerates wet soils; Christmas trees, wildlife food & shelter | 12"+ \$25.00 for 25 |
| 6. Western White Pine <i>Pinus monticola</i> | P-1 | 65' | | Prefers full sun on dry sites; disease resistant seedlings. wildlife food & shelter | 10" \$31.00 for 25 |
| 7. Fir, Douglas <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> | 2-0 | 300' | | Prefers acidic, well-drained soils; Christmas tree, lumber, wildlife food & shelter | 12"+ \$23.50 for 25 |
| 8. Cedar, Western Red <i>Thuja plicata</i> | P-1 | 200' | | Tolerates wet soils; wildlife food & shelter, windbreak | 8" \$36.00 for 25 |
| 9. Madrone, Pacific Plug <i>Arbutus menziesii</i> | | 90' | | Prefers dry, sunny, often rocky sites; White flowers, red berries; wildlife cover | plug \$12.00 EACH |
| DECIDUOUS TREE SEEDLINGS (SOLD IN BUNDLES OF 10) | | | | | |
| 10. Maple, Vine <i>Acer circinatum</i> | 1-0 | 25' | | Grows in dry to wet areas; wildlife shelter, host plant for the Western Tiger Swallowtail | 18" \$20.00 for 10 |
| 11. Maple, Douglas <i>Acer glabrum</i> | 1-0 | 40' | | Grows in moist to well-drained seepage sites; Uses: wildlife cover & habitat, landscaping | 18" \$20.00 for 10 |
| 12. Maple, Big Leaf <i>Acer macrophyllum</i> | 1-0 | 80' | | Grows in dry to moist soil; wildlife food & shelter, early bloom for bees and other pollinators. | 24+ \$20.00 for 10 |
| 13. Birch <i>Betula papyrifera</i> | 2-0 | 80' | | Prefers moist, well-drained soils; wildlife food & shelter, fuel, lumber, windbreak | 18"+ \$20.00 for 10 |
| 14. Crabapple, Pacific <i>Malus fusca</i> | 1-0 | 30' | | Prefers low, damp places; Wildlife food. Pollen. | 12"+ \$20.00 for 10 |
| 15. Aspen, Quaking <i>Populus tremuloides</i> | 2-0 | 60' | | Grows in wet, moist & dry sites; firewood, wood pulp, wildlife food, windbreak | 18"+ \$20.00 for 10 |
| SHRUB SEEDLINGS (SOLD IN BUNDLES OF 10- EXCEPT AS NOTED) | | | | | |
| 16. Serviceberry <i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i> | 1-0 | 15' | | Grows in well-drained dry to moist soils; wildlife food, edible berry | 12"+ \$20.00 for 10 |
| 17. Kinnikinnick <i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i> | 4" pot | 8-10" | | Ground cover that prefers well-drained, exposed sites. Wildlife food. Pollen | 4" pot \$3.85 EACH |
| 18. Dogwood, Red Osier <i>Cornus stolonifera</i> | 1-0 | 20' | | Grows in moist to wet sites; red twigs; wildlife food & shelter, erosion control | 12"+ \$20.00 for 10 |
| 19. Salal <i>Gaultheria shallon</i> | 4" pot | 6' | | Grows in dry to moist sites; wildlife food, edible, floral greens, erosion control | 4" pot \$3.55 EACH |
| 20. Oregon Grape, Tall <i>Mahonia aquifolium</i> | 2-0 | 5-10' | | Dry to moist sites; wildlife food, attracts long-tongued bee species, erosion control, edible | 18"+ \$20.00 for 10 |
| 21. Indian Plum <i>Oemleria cerasiformis</i> | 1-0 | 15' | | Grows in dry to moist, soils. Wildlife food. Attracts bees, butterflies, & hummingbirds | 12"+ \$20.00 for 10 |
| 22. Mock Orange <i>Philadelphus lewisii</i> | 2-0 | 10' | | Prefers well-drained moist sites; has fragrant flowers; wildlife food and nectar. | 12"+ \$20.00 for 10 |
| 23. Ninebark <i>Physocarpus capitatus</i> | 1-0 | 13' | | Grows in damp soil; benefits small bees; Host plant for the Spring Azure butterflies | 12-18" \$20.00 for 10 |
| 24. Currant, Red Flowering <i>Ribes sanguineum</i> | 1-0 | 10' | | Grows in dry to moist soil at low & mid elevation; wildlife food | 12"+ \$20.00 for 10 |
| 25. Rhododendron, Pacific <i>Rhododendron macrophyllum</i> | | 10' | | Prefers moist to dry well-drained soil; Source of shelter and pollen | plug 6.95 EACH |
| 26. Rose, Nootka <i>Rosa nutkana</i> | 1-0 | 10' | | Grows in dry to moist sites; wildlife food and shelter. host plant for numerous butterflies | 12"+ \$20.00 for 10 |
| 28. Elderberry, Blue root+10" <i>Sambucus glauca</i> | | 15' | | Grows in dry to moist sites in open Wildlife food and shelter. | 10" \$20.00 for 10 |
| 29. Willow, Hooker <i>Salix hookeriana</i> | whip | 20' | | Grows in moist to wet sites; erosion. Benefits birds and butterflies. | 36" whip \$15.50 for 10 |
| 30. Willow, Sitka <i>Salix sitchensis</i> | whip | 15' | | Grows in moist to dry sites; erosion. Benefits birds and butterflies. | 36" whip \$15.50 for 10 |
| 31. Willow, Pacific <i>Salix lasiandra</i> | whip | 45' | | Grows in wet to dry sites; erosion. Benefits birds and butterflies. | 36" whip \$15.50 for 10 |
| 32. Douglas Spirea <i>Spiraea douglasii</i> | 2-0 | 6' | | Margins of ponds and meadows, open space at low elevation; Benefits bumble bees | 18"+ \$20.00 for 10 |
| 33. Snowberry <i>Symphoricarpos albus</i> | 2-0 | 6' | | Prefers dry well-drained soils; wildlife food, erosion control | 12"+ \$20.00 for 10 |
| 34. Fern, Sword <i>Polystichum munitum</i> | 3.5" pot | 4' | | Partial to full shade and fertile, well-drained soil. Very hardy and low maintenance | 3.5" pot 6.90 EACH |

Key:



FOR A BUYER'S GUIDE, VISIT: www.skagitcd.org/native_plant_sales

GOING NATIVE:



A Sustainable Garden Choice

The choice of adding native plants to your garden landscape can have an immediate positive impact on the environment and are treasured by those who see their gardens as more than just a garden - but a place that complements our natural ecosystem, provides habitat for local wildlife, protects the health of our streams and of our community, and helps sustain local ecology. Plants native to the Pacific Northwest have adapted to our seasonal weather conditions, tolerate droughts and flourish in local soils. This gives us several gardening advantages:

Saves Water: Once established, many native plants need little irrigation beyond normal rainfall.

Low Maintenance: Native plants require less pruning, fertilizer, water, and less time to maintain.

Less Pesticides: Native plants have developed their own defenses against many pests and diseases. Most pesticides kill helpful creatures that control pest populations. Beneficial insects, such as ladybugs, preying mantises, and lacewings prey on pests, such as aphids, scales and spider mites. By eliminating pesticides, pest control occurs naturally, which prevents pesticide-polluted runoff from flowing into our streams, drainages, and other waterways.

Gardening with natives also creates valuable wildlife habitat. Our native plants and animals have evolved together since the beginning of time. Native plants provide the food, shelter, and nesting sites that native birds, butterflies, beneficial insects, and urban-adapted wildlife need. In return, pollinators such as flying insects, birds, and bats improve fruit set and help control mosquitoes and other pests. A native garden creates a "bridge" to nearby wildlands, which helps sustain local ecology. And because many native plants are deep-rooted — it's the way they survive drought — they are able to store more carbon from the

atmosphere than a short-lived plant. As part of photosynthesis, all plants absorb and store carbon. But long-lived and deep-rooted native plants are able to store more for longer periods of time, giving homeowners an easy but important way to help mitigate the impact of global warming.

Native plants are essential to sustainable landscapes, but need not be exclusively used. We all have our favorite ornamentals — and plants that are exotic, or not native to a local region may fill a need (such as food crops). However, keep in mind that the majority of ornamentals offer nothing in the way of food or habitat for key wildlife species. Thus, incorporating native plants into your garden landscape enhances the existing local biodiversity and helps conserve the flora and fauna in our community. There are native plants to complement everyone's gardening style and soil conditions — whether you are a "neat and tidy" gardener or prefer a more wild or whimsical design.

There are lots of great resources to help you pick native plants suitable for your projects. A few favorites are listed below:

King County Native Plant Resources for Pacific NW:

<http://green2.kingcounty.gov/gonative>

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center: www.wildflower.org.

Native Plant Society: www.wnps.org

National Wildlife Federation: www.nwf.org

Skagit Conservation District: www.skagitcd.org or call (360) 428-4313

The Skagit Conservation District's upcoming annual native plant sale provides an opportunity to purchase native plants in quantity at affordable prices — or learn more about sustainable landscaping design and principles by signing up for the Backyard Conservation Stewardship Short Course — see details on page 4.



(Left) **Red Flowering Currant:** Many gardeners who love this plant do not realize it is a native, found in our Pacific Northwest forest. Suitable for both small urban and rural gardens, this beautiful shrub is one of the first to bloom in the early spring. The blue-black fruits are appreciated by the birds.



(Above) **Mock Orange:** Often recommended for erosion control, most folks plant this beauty for its fragrant June-July blossoms. Seeds are eaten by many birds including grosbeaks, juncos, thrushes, bluebirds, flickers, quail, and the chickadee-finch group. It's a good nectar plant for several butterflies, too.

(Right) **Pacific Crabapple:** Crabapples are excellent wildlife plants: butterflies feed on the nectar; the leaves are food for their larvae. Pheasants, sapsuckers, woodpeckers, jays, robins, and more eat the fruits. Hummingbirds use the nectar.



(Right) **Vine Maple:** From a small tree to a large shrub, the Vine Maple has elegant form and texture. Airy and delicate, often multi-stemmed, this native is as beautiful as any imported species.



(Left) **Oregon Grape:** Bright yellow flowers, bronzy new growth of stout evergreen foliage, attractive dark blue berries in summer, and colorful, red-purple tones in winter—what more could you ask! Add drought tolerance (once established) and good wildlife habitat, and you've got the 'ultimate' plant! A native, it adapts well to many situations.

Green Stormwater Infrastructure:

A more sustainable approach to managing stormwater

Green stormwater infrastructure (also called Low Impact Development or LID), addresses the problem of runoff by using vegetation and soil to infiltrate and cleanse rainwater where it falls. While single-purpose gray stormwater infrastructure—conventional piped drainage and water treatment systems—is designed to move urban stormwater away from the built environment, green infrastructure reduces and treats stormwater at its source while delivering environmental, social, and economic benefits.

Stormwater runoff is a major cause of water pollution in urban areas. When rain falls on our roofs, streets, and parking lots in cities and their suburbs, the water cannot soak into the ground as it should. Stormwater drains through gutters, storm sewers, and other engineered collection systems and is discharged into nearby water bodies. The stormwater runoff carries trash, bacteria, heavy metals, and other pollutants from the urban landscape. Higher flows resulting from heavy rains also can cause erosion and flooding in urban streams, damaging habitat, property, and infrastructure.

When rain falls in natural, undeveloped areas, the water is absorbed and filtered by soil and plants. Stormwater runoff is cleaner and less of a problem. Green infrastructure

uses vegetation, soils, and other elements and practices to restore some of the natural processes required to manage water and create healthier urban environments. At the city or county scale, green infrastructure is a patchwork of natural areas that provides habitat, flood protection, cleaner air, and cleaner water. At the

neighborhood or site scale, stormwater management systems that mimic nature soak up and store water. (Source: US Environmental Protection Agency website: www.epa.gov/green-infrastructure)

Right: Permeable pavements infiltrate, treat, and/or store rainwater where it falls. They can be made of pervious concrete, porous asphalt, or permeable interlocking pavers.



Rain gardens are versatile features that can be installed in almost any unpaved space. Also known as bioretention, or bioinfiltration, cells, they are shallow, vegetated basins that collect and absorb runoff from rooftops, sidewalks, and streets. This practice mimics natural hydrology by infiltrating, and evaporating and transpiring—or “evapotranspiring”—stormwater runoff.



Coming this Spring!

Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) Demonstration Project at Bay View United Methodist Church

The Skagit Conservation District has received grant funding through the WA Dept. of Ecology's Terry Husseman Fund to install a green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) demonstration project in partnership with Snohomish Conservation District and the Bay View United Methodist Church in the Padilla Bay Watershed. This project will collect and infiltrate stormwater runoff, support local and state efforts to improve the water quality health of the Padilla Bay Watershed, and provide an educational demonstration site to inspire community awareness of local water quality issues and to promote green landscaping techniques and construction.

Initial project planning is underway with construction planned for the Spring of 2017. The project will include transforming a portion of the Bay View United Methodist Church property, located just two blocks from the bay, into a demonstration rain garden, a pervious paved parking lot, and compost sock terracing to protect an existing uphill slope from erosion and to treat upstream runoff. Volunteer and educational opportunities will also be offered, including on-site workshops and project tours.

Special thanks to the Bay View United Methodist Church and congregation for their inspiration, for doing their part to protect the water quality health of Padilla Bay, and serving as a source of information and education for others in their community.

For more information about this project, or if you would like to volunteer at upcoming project work parties, contact Kristi Carpenter, SCD, at 428-4313 or email: kristi@skagitcd.org

“In all things of nature, there is something of the marvelous.” – Aristotle

2017 Backyard Conservation Stewardship Short-Course

“Bring Your Backyard to Life!”

Conservation can begin in your very own backyard by making it a haven for songbirds, bees, and other wildlife. The Skagit Conservation District's Backyard Conservation Stewardship short-course provides an opportunity to learn from local experts about how you can design and implement a sustainable residential landscape, help protect our local streams and waterways, provide shelter and habitat for wildlife, and add beauty and interest to your backyard! Topics covered over this fun and exciting six-week program include an introduction to native plants, sustainable landscape design, environmentally friendly gardening practices, attracting birds & butterflies, building healthy soils, alternatives to pesticides, natural lawn care, composting, invasive plants & noxious weeds, an introduction to low impact development and rain gardens, permaculture gardens, bees as pollinators, and much more!

Classes will begin on **Wednesday, March 22nd from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. and will continue every Wednesday evening through April 26th.** The program also includes two Saturday field tours, scheduled for **April 8th and April 22nd.** The class is **FREE**; however, pre-registration and a commitment to complete the program is requested. To register, contact Kristi Carpenter, Skagit Conservation District, at (360) 428-4313 or email: Kristi@skagitcd.org. **Registration Deadline is March 17th, 2017.** The program is being co-sponsored by Skagit County and the cities of Mount Vernon, Anacortes, Burlington, and Sedro-Woolley. The evening sessions will be held at the Padilla Bay Research Reserve, located at 10441 Bay View Edison Road, Mount Vernon.

Protecting our watersheds...protecting our future!

Thank You! Fall 2016 Watershed Master “Graduates!”

Congratulations and a special thank you to the Fall 2016 Watershed Master Graduates!

The Watershed Masters Volunteer Training program, offered annually by the Skagit Conservation District, provides a unique opportunity for local residents to learn more about the place we live and to make a difference right here in our own community and neighborhoods.

Participants attend an intensive 8-week course which provides over 40 hours of free training, including several Saturday field tours. The sessions are designed to demonstrate the interrelationship of watershed health, beauty, recreation, economics and citizen behavior; and to provide residents with a vehicle to get involved individually & collectively to protect and improve the health of our local streams and rivers. In exchange for 40 hours of training, Watershed Masters pledge to complete 40 hours of volunteer service in our community over the next two years. Each individual volunteer decides how to spend these hours.

The Skagit Conservation District and partners, including the City of Mount Vernon, City of Burlington, City of Sedro-Woolley, City of Anacortes, Skagit County, and the WA Conservation Commission, would like to thank and commend the participants of the Fall 2016 Watershed Masters Volunteer Training Program for their involvement and commitment to help protect our legacy of clean water in Skagit County: **Barbara Baker-Hobbs, Shawn Bell, Yvette Bertram, Cynthia Duval, Tammy Ennen, Adrian Ettlinger, Corrin Hamburg, Tony Harrah, Christie Houston, Pi Kosarot, Oliver Miler, Bengt Miller, Lisa Miller, John Moore, Rick Nishi, Maddie Rose, Ken Shelton, Gloria Shelton, Thomas Sherfick, Terese VanAssche, Jesse Varsi and Hannah Williams.**

The Watershed Masters Volunteer Training course is offered each fall, with volunteer activities occurring year-round. For information about the program, please contact Kristi Carpenter, Skagit Conservation District, at (360) 428-4313 or email: kristi@skagitcd.org



Left: One of the stops for the Fall 2016 Watershed Masters “Return of the Salmon” Field Tour was Jim and Kara Kintzele’s stream and habitat restoration project on Thomas Creek.



Above: Watershed Masters Maddie Rose and Adrian Ettlinger add the ingredients for “Estuary Soup” lead by Padilla Bay’s famous French cook, Glen “Alex” Alexander.

Left: A group of Watershed Masters pose for the camera before venturing on an amazing tour of the Baker Dam and Sockeye spawning grounds lead by PSE staff, Doug Bruland. Back Row: Thomas Sherfick, Oliver Miler, Tony Harrah, Christie Houston, Barbara Baker-Hobbs, Adrian Ettlinger, Bengt Miller, and Jesse Varsi. Front Row: Kristi Carpenter (SCD), Tammy Ennen, Cynthia Duval, Hannah Williams, and Garrett Knoll.



Commercial Livestock and Small Farm Operations

- 233 commercial and small farm landowners assisted
- 20 farm plans completed
- 14 structural BMPs implemented
- 3 farm/dairy plans updated



Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)



- 4 new contracts signed for 2017 spring planting totaling 78.66 acres
- 9 new projects planted totaling 56.66 acres
- 678 buffer acres installed to date
- 223,729 feet (42.4 miles) of riparian restoration implemented to date
- 307,898 native trees planted to date
- 18 landowners signed re-enrollment contracts

Firewise and Fire Adapted Communities

- 7 Firewise plans written
- Over 60 CD staff or volunteers trained on Firewise and Fire Adapted Communities
- 5 Firewise/FAC presentations and outreach events conducted – 240 attendees
- 8 active Firewise Communities/USA in Skagit County to date
- 7 hazardous fuels reduction projects implemented
- 10 risk assessments completed
- WA State ranks 3rd in the nation for number of Firewise Communities/USA (139) and had the most new communities in 2016



Forest Stewardship Program

- 14 forest conservation plans written encompassing 560 total acres
- 39 landowners received technical assistance
- 15 forestry conservation practices implemented
- 4 Forestry workshops/field days – 165 participants



Clean Samish/Padilla Bay Education

- Built nesting houses, including education activities on sustainable gardening with 35 Boy Scouts and their families
- Manure Share Program continued
- Hosted 2 livestock workshops – 68 attendees
- Co-sponsored 5th Annual Alger Seed Sale/Swap & Arbor Day Celebration – 250 attendees/25 vendors (distributed 125 native plants)
- Co-sponsored Sustainable Samish Garden Tour – 80+ attendees
- Co-sponsored Kids in Nature: Families Outdoors at Pomona Grange Park – 65 participants
- Networked and held monthly meetings with Samish neighborhood groups
- Hosted 2 nitrate testing events for Butler and Wildes Creek residents – 16 attendees
- Received grant funding for green infrastructure project at Bay View Methodist Church to begin spring 2017
- Ongoing technical support to the Friday Creek Habitat Stewards
- Organized 3 work parties for Naturescape Demonstration Garden on Silver Creek
- Led 6 tours of Naturescape Demonstration Garden & Alger NRSP projects – 663 participants
- Established Padilla Bay Storm Team monitoring stations
- 2 Friday Creek residents participated in CoCoRaHS Rain Gauge program (for Storm Team monitoring program)
- Hosted educational display and hands-on watershed-based activities at 5 Samish watershed events – 3,090 attendees
- Participated in CSI Education Committee



Environmental Education

- 734 students (28 classes) participated in the annual Youth Conservation Tour in May
- Participated in the Skagit Watershed Letterbox Trail
- Hosted educational displays and “hands-on” educational activities for the Festival of Family Farms at Taylor Shellfish Farms (2,500 attendees) and Ovenell’s Heritage Inn Ranch (1000 attendees); Taylor Shellfish-tival (200 attendees); Skagit River Salmon Festival (6,000 attendees); Fidalgo Bay Day (300 attendees); DASSH (130 attendees)
- 500 tree seedlings distributed to students in honor of Arbor Day
- Hosted Arbor Day promotion at Alger Hall – distributed 125 native plants
- 2 community proclamations in recognition of Arbor Day and “Soil and Water Stewardship Week” at Skagit County Commissioners’ meetings in April
- 101 posters received for the Soil and Water Stewardship poster contest for local youth grades K-12



Report of Accomplishments



Marine Biotoxin Monitoring Program

- 25 community volunteers participated in the 2016 sampling season
- 10 local recreational shellfish harvesting beaches monitored twice monthly April-September

Backyard Conservation Stewardship Program

- 50 individuals completed the Spring 2016 Backyard Conservation Stewardship Short Course
- 1,000+ Skagit County residents, farms, parks, and schools have applied sustainable landscaping practices and have certified their yards as backyard wildlife habitats/sanctuaries
- New volunteer garden group "Skagit Backyard Eco Garden Group" formed as a result of Backyard Short Course



Low Impact Development (LID) & Stormwater Education

- Over 1,000 storm markers installed by volunteers on storm drains
- 37 stormwater education presentations provided to 900 Skagit County students
- Hosted booths at 6 events providing watershed model presentations and educational materials distributed – 4,500 attendees
- Hosted Permaculture and Sustainable Landscape Workshop – 54 attendees
- Provided LID/rain garden presentations at 3 events reaching 127 residents
- Hosted Detention Pond Maintenance Training – 27 attendees
- Hosted Stormwater Management Manual Training for engineers, designers and developers – 65 attendees an co-hosted SWMMT training for local municipalities – 30 attendees
- Hosted 4 sustainable landscaping garden tours, including tour of native plant demonstration garden, naturescape garden, and County rain garden/LID project – 403 participants
- Pet waste education handout published and distributed
- Stormwater education media ad published in 7 editions of the Skagit Valley Herald
- Hosted "Puget Sound Starts Here" educational display and watershed model/and or stormwater game at 7 community events (9,160 attendees overall)
- Participated in "Skagit EcoNet"



Skagit Stream/Storm Team

- 63 volunteers participated in the 2015/16 Stream Team Program and monitored for fecal coliform, temperature, dissolved oxygen, and turbidity twice a month at stations located in the Padilla Bay, Samish Bay, Fisher Creek, Kulshan Creek, Trumpeter Basin, Gages Slough, Clyde Creek, and Nookachamps Creek basins
- New monitoring stations established on Ace of Hearts Creek in Anacortes for 2016/17 monitoring year
- Annual Stream Team training held September 7th, 8th and 10th
- 9 volunteers participated in Storm Team program
- Storm Team volunteers continued storm event study of Friday Creek Watershed and initiated new monitoring stations in the Padilla Bay Watershed for the 2016/17 monitoring season
- Over 1,175 Stream Team volunteer hours reported for 2015/16 monitoring season
- Annual Stream Team report completed and distributed
- Hosted "How Clean is Your Neighborhood Stream?" event – 28 attendees
- Hosted annual Stream Team celebration – 63 volunteers recognized



Watershed Masters Volunteer Training Program

- 23 individuals completed the fall 2016 Watershed Masters Training Program – 533 participants to date
- 3,800 Watershed Master volunteer hours reported in 2016 – over 50,500 total hours to date



District Media

- Skagit Conservation News – 2 newsletters each distributed to over 4,000 readers
- Skagit Conservation District website maintained – www.skagitcd.org
- Skagit Conservation District Facebook page maintained
- Over 15,000 native plants were sold at the annual SCD plant sale

Special thanks to all of our partnering organizations who helped make the Skagit Conservation District's efforts toward conservation, protection and enhancement of the natural resources of Skagit County a huge success in 2016!!



The Samish Basin experienced fewer storms in 2016, leading to fewer closures of the Samish Bay Shellfish Growing Area. The storms that did occur continued to show that high rainfall increases levels of fecal coliform bacteria in sampling results. Skagit County staff and Storm Team volunteers have taken over 850 fecal coliform samples in the Samish Basin during 2016 to date. Staff from the Washington State Departments of Ecology and Agriculture, and the Samish Indian Nation took many additional samples. Results from this intensive sampling are used to locate pollution sources and to guide landowner contact and cleanup activities.

Skagit County staff continues to find and fix failed septic systems in the Samish watershed. In 2016, five septic systems have been found to have a problem, and two of those have been fixed, the other three are in process. Five long-standing problems were also fixed in 2016. The neighborhoods near Colony Creek have joined the list of areas

Samish Bay Watershed Update



of interest due to high bacteria levels in the creek with no obvious source. Five dye tests have been performed which led to finding and repairing one deficient septic system. Dye testing in the area is continuing, and Skagit County is asking local property owners for permission to do a stream walk in early 2017 to look for other sources of pollution, including wildlife.

Grazing of livestock on saturated or muddy pastures where manure can easily wash off

in the next rain storm, and manure management are two of the most persistent agricultural problems in the watershed. In 2016, 27 properties in the Samish watershed were identified with potential issues. Several farms and landowners are working with the Conservation District to make improvements on their property, including fencing animals out of creeks and streams, installing gutters, and planting vegetated filter strips. Three of the 27 properties with issues have fixed their problems.

March through June is the time when the state Department of Health reevaluates whether it is safe to upgrade Samish Bay shellfish beds. Clean Samish Initiative partners are working hard preparing for this evaluation. We hope 2017 will be our year to be upgraded!



Padilla Bay Watershed Update

2016 is the first year that water quality has been monitored consistently throughout the Padilla Bay Watershed, and the first year we have been working to improve water quality in the area. We are still just beginning to understand where the problem areas are and what to do about them, but we have made some progress.

This year, the state Department of Ecology noted significant improvements in summer water quality at the beach at Bay View State Park. The beach closed only once this summer for five days, due to poor water quality. This is a great improvement over the last several years. Additionally, the state Department of Health was able to upgrade



151 acres of the Padilla Bay shellfish growing area. Much of these improvements can be tied to Skagit County Health Department's septic inspection program, which found seven failing systems in the Bay View area.

Farmers managing both small and large scale farms are working with the Skagit Conservation District to improve their livestock management. In the last year, we identified 22 properties with potential issues. Several farmers have begun using temporary fencing to keep animals and their manure away from ditches and wet pastures during the rainy season. Several more are working with the Conservation District to develop farm plans. These actions will go a long way to improving water quality.

As winter brings more rainfall to our area, Skagit County, its partners, and citizens will all have to be diligent in our efforts in order to continue to improve water quality.



SAMISH CHALLENGE – we need your help!

This spring will provide another opportunity to upgrade Samish Bay from "Conditionally Approved" to "Approved" if there is no more than one pollution closure between March 1st and June 30th! Managing runoff on your property is the best way to reduce pollutants before they reach the nearest drainage ditch, stream, or river:

- **Be responsible for proper septic system maintenance**
- **Keep livestock and domestic pet waste out of streams and drainage ditches**
- **Implement good pasture and manure management practices**
- **Consider a rain garden or bioswale to capture and infiltrate rainwater runoff**
- **Plant or preserve trees and native vegetation**
- **Take advantage of opportunities to educate yourself and your family about your local stream and watershed.**

Contact the Skagit Conservation District for information on our free technical assistance, farm planning and cost-share programs, and upcoming educational opportunities.



“Doing a Sprint for Samish Health”

5K

Family Fun Run/ Walk for Clean Water Awareness

Join us in celebrating the Samish Watershed! The Skagit Conservation Education Alliance (SCEA) and partners are hosting a 5k Family Fun Run: **“DASSH” (Doing a Sprint for Samish Health)** on **Saturday, March 4th**. The event will begin/end at Allen Elementary School and provides a beautiful scenic route for all to enjoy. Free geoduck chowder, provided by Taylor Shellfish Farms, education activities, and event awards will be available in the gym immediately following the run.

SATURDAY, MARCH 4, 2017

Race starts at 10:00 a.m.

Check in beginning at 9 a.m.)

**Allen Elementary School
17145 Cook Road**

To Register:

www.databarevents.com/dassh

Age 13 to 18 - \$5.00

Age 19 to 69 - \$10.00

**12 and under, veterans,
and 70+ FREE!**

For questions about the event,

email: Karen Summers,

SCEA at: cwaterskagit@gmail.com

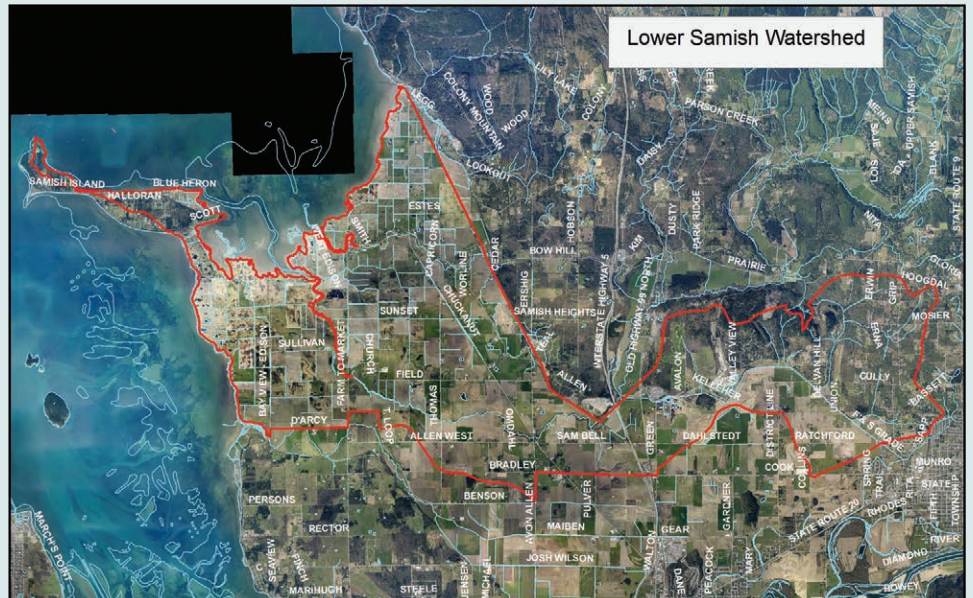
or call Kristi Carpenter, SCD at **428-4313**.

**Cleaning up the Samish –
One-Step at a Time!**

MONEY AVAILABLE FOR LANDOWNERS IN THE LOWER SAMISH WATERSHED

The Skagit Conservation District (SCD) and the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) are combining efforts in the Lower Samish Watershed to offer an opportunity for landowners to receive reimbursement for installing conservation farming practices that improve water quality.

Funding for these projects are strictly for landowners in the Lower Samish Watershed as designated on the map. For a larger map, visit: http://www.skagitcd.org/sites/default/files/images/programs/RCPP_Map.jpg



Examples of practices eligible for funding include:

- Installing waste storage structures
- Installing fencing
- Streamside plantings
- Mud & runoff management practices
- Fish passage projects
- Much, much more!

This special funding pool through the NRCS's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) and Skagit CD is in place to address local water quality concerns affecting salmon. Though the focus for these projects and funding is in the Lower Samish Watershed, it is part of a broader effort to address issues in the larger Puget Sound. By applying to use these funds the landowner will be reimbursed for a portion of the costs of the project with the potential for 100% reimbursement in certain situations. There are options and flexibility in how a landowner can utilize these funding sources in determining what makes the most sense and is a good fit for them and their projects.

This is a great opportunity for landowners to take advantage of available funds to improve the sustainability of farming operations and land use while contributing to the larger scale improvement of the health in Puget Sound and the smaller watersheds that are part of it.

To find out what options are available for your property and to speak with a farm planner, please contact us at Skagit CD at **360-428-4313**, or call Jared Hamman at NRCS at **360-428-7684x3, x134**.

You are invited! How Clean is Your Neighborhood Stream? Annual Water Quality Report to the Community

Join us on **Wednesday, March 1st from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm** at the Padilla Bay Research Reserve for an annual water quality update on the health of our local streams. Water quality data collected by Skagit County and the Skagit Stream Team and Storm Team volunteers for monitoring year 2015/16 will be presented at this annual meeting. Streams monitored by the Skagit Stream Team over this time period included the Samish River and its tributaries, No Name Slough, Bay View drainage, Joe Leary Slough, Gages Slough, Nookachamps Creek, Kulshan Creek, Trumpeter Basin, and Clyde Creek. Storm Team efforts focused on the Friday Creek basin during this timeframe. To register, for more information, or if you would like a copy of the 2015/16 Annual Stream Team Report, contact Kristi Carpenter, Skagit Conservation District, **428-4313** or email: Kristi@skagitcd.org

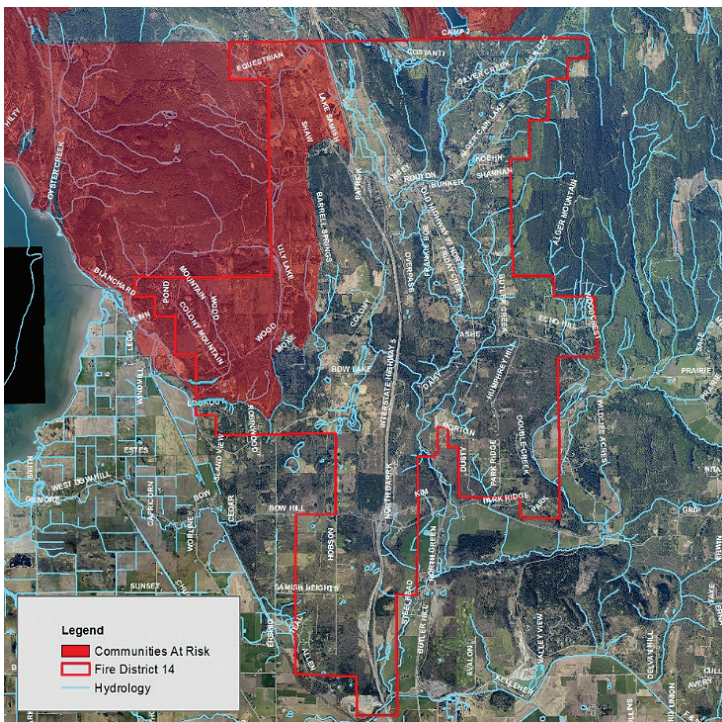


Skagit Conservation District & Alger Fire Come Together for Safer Communities

In Skagit County, Skagit Conservation District (SCD) is responsible for providing technical assistance to communities on how to best prepare for wildfire. One of the services that has been popular with homeowners is the individual property risk assessments and the Firewise plans that are provided at no charge. These individual assessments usually take anywhere from 1 to 2.5 hours where time is spent with the homeowner discussing wildfire behavior, addressing site specific questions and risks, and discussing manageable ways the homeowner can reduce the risk to their home and property. In order to help facilitate action and help homeowners take that first step to implementing Firewise practices on their properties, everything that is discussed on site is written up in a plan and sent to them as follow up. This service has been a key ingredient to a successful Firewise program in Skagit County; however, it is time intensive. As the demand for these services grows, the need to broaden capacity grows with it.

As fate would have it, the Alger Fire District was looking for ways to better connect with the communities they serve, and get staff and volunteers trained in assessing wildfire risk to homes.

Alger Fire District 14 serves a relatively large area in Skagit County. A portion of the area they serve includes the wildland urban interface, or WUI (woo-ee), where homes and people are located adjacent to or within wildlands – in this case wildlands are forested areas. This area is considered high risk for wildfire and is shown in red on the map below.



Recognizing this, Alger Fire Chief David Skrinde and Fire Commissioner Chris England decided to have their student volunteers learn about wildfire risk and preparedness from a community perspective in order to better serve their communities facing these risks.

On December 6th student volunteers and staff from Alger Fire District and employees from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) gathered together to learn from Skagit CD and NW Regional DNR partners about assessing wildfire risk to homes. Because the Colony Mountain Community Club is a community that is already working toward taking Firewise action and is served by Alger Fire District 14, it was a perfect location to hold the training. Three willing homeowners offered up their properties for the assessments.

The training consisted of a trainer-led group assessment of the first home followed by an opportunity for the students to do their own

assessments on two other homes. At the end, the students took turns sharing their assessments with the group and discussing what they observed.

In the month prior, the same group of students, along with a host of other conservation district staff from around the state had attended another training put on by Skagit CD, DNR and NFPA partners that was focused on the NFPA Firewise Communities/USA Program. Between that training and an opportunity to get out in the field and practice home assessments, the students now have a better understanding of wildfire in the urban-interface, how to communicate risk, understand what actions can be taken to reduce risk to homes and properties, and can address and facilitate larger scale community action and planning.

Not only do Skagit CD, DNR, and Alger FD 14 benefit from these trainings, but the residents within the community do as well. Firefighters that are familiar with a community have developed a relationship with community members, and have been part of the planning and preparedness process. They will know which places are safe to defend, allowing for a quicker and more effective and safer response.

The partnership between a fire district and a conservation district may seem far-fetched at first thought, but developing partnerships with all those involved in every aspect of wildfire benefits everyone. Sometimes it can be difficult to figure out where and how the roles of these partners can intertwine, but in the end we all have the same bottom line; a safer and more resilient Washington.

For more information on risk assessments for your neighborhood or home, please contact SCD at 360-428-4313. If you are within Fire District 14, you can contact Alger Fire directly at 360-724-3451.



Left: The group takes turns sharing their assessments of a home in the Colony Mountain Community. When performing a risk assessment, we take into consideration the construction and landscaping details on site in relation to the potential for wildfire to approach the property.



Right: Fire District and Conservation District students learn about having adequate clearance (defensible space) around homes for better survivability as well as a safer space for fire fighters to be when defending a home from a wildfire.

Congratulations Washington State for bringing in the most new Firewise Communities in the nation for 2016!

Washington State added 32 new Firewise Communities to the list of communities nationally recognized for making their neighborhoods and properties more resilient to wildfire.

For more information on Firewise Communities, visit www.firewise.org





"Conservation must be more than a convenient slogan."

— Maria Cantwell

Skagit Conservation District's 2016 Conservation Award Winners

The Skagit Conservation District announced its 2016 conservation award winners at their Annual Conservation Awards Banquet held on Tuesday, September 20th at the Sedro-Woolley Community Center. The event honors those who have made significant contributions toward conservation and natural resource enhancement in Skagit County in the past year.

The Cooperator of the Year Award was presented to **Morris Wiseman**. This award honors an individual, family, business or organization for outstanding accomplishments in implementing conservation practices, protecting water quality, and conserving natural resources on their land. Since 2014, Morris Wiseman has been working with the Skagit Conservation District and Skagit County Public Works to protect and enhance wildlife habitat along Walker Creek, which flows through the middle of Mr. Wiseman's property. The Skagit Conservation District developed a farm plan for Mr. Wiseman, which included the installation of two solar powered water pump systems on both sides of Walker Creek.



Skagit County Public Works assisted Mr. Wiseman with the installation of about 3,120 feet of fencing, replanting of a riparian area and streambank protection. The benefits of this project included enhancing wildlife habitat and protecting water quality by excluding livestock from the creek.



The recipient of the 2016 Inspirational Award was presented to **Robert Pare** of Bow. This award recognizes a distinguished individual for their exceptional volunteer spirit and contributions to the protection and conservation of water quality in our community.

Robert has been volunteering with the Skagit Conservation District for over 5 years. Over this time, he has provided an important leadership role in the Stream Team and Storm Team programs. As a Storm Team volunteer, he has been the key organizer for monitoring

during rain events, tracking weather, coordinating other Storm Team volunteers for availability, collecting samples, running lab, and emailing results to key partners. He has provided invaluable support in determining priority monitoring stations each year – and has even been seen collecting samples and running lab on Xmas day and other holidays. His involvement and leadership has been appreciated and recognized by many SCD partners, including Skagit County, Padilla Bay Research Reserve, WA State Dept. of Health, and the WA Dept. of Ecology – and his fellow Stream Team and Storm Team partners. As a Stream Team volunteer, he was recognized numerous events, including the Festival of Family Farms, Shellfish Seed Sale, Annual Native Plant Sale, watershed tours, and more. With the same community spirit, this amazing individual volunteers with the Wolf Hollow Wildlife Rehabilitation Center and with the Padilla Bay Research Reserve's BEACH program.

For a complete list of 2016 Award Recipients, visit the District's website at http://skagitcd.org/adult_edu

SKAGIT CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD SUPERVISOR ELECTION AND APPOINTMENT

One elected position and one appointed position on the Skagit Conservation District (SCD) Board will expire in 2017. The positions are currently held by Paul Blau (elected) and Wendy Pare (appointed). There are no term limits, so both candidates may choose to continue on the Board if elected by the public or appointed by the Washington State Conservation Commission to do so.

To vote, visit our public walk-in poll election, which will be held from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Tuesday, February 21 at 2021 E. College Way, Mount Vernon, WA. Voters must be Washington State registered voters and live within Skagit County.

To be an appointed candidate, go to <http://scc.wa.gov/elections/> and complete the Conservation District Appointed Supervisor Application form. This is only available on-line. The SCD can provide assistance if needed. Applications for the appointed position must be received by the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) by close of business on Friday, March 31, 2017.

More about the Board of Supervisors

The SCD Board is a governing body of five supervisors who are unpaid public officials. The Board oversees the work of the SCD, which provides voluntary, incentive based options that support working landscapes while protecting and enhancing our natural resource land base. Three of the Board Supervisors are elected by the voters of Skagit County and two are appointed by the WSCC.

Important Upcoming 2017 Election Dates

Absentee Ballot Receipt Deadline
1 p.m. Tuesday, February 21, 2017

Public Poll Election
7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tuesday, February 21, 2017
at 2021 E. College Way, Mount Vernon, WA

For more information or to request a form or ballot contact Sheri at (360) 428-4313 or email Sheri@skagitcd.org

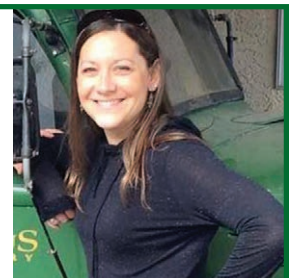
Don't forget to vote!
Tuesday, February 21, 2017

Commission website:
<http://www.scc.wa.gov/>



A farewell from Jenny Coe!

After 15 years at the Skagit Conservation District, leaving is bittersweet. I have accepted a position with the Whatcom Conservation District as the Lake Whatcom Homeowner Incentive Program Coordinator. This will allow me to be closer to home and more accessible to my three kiddos! I will start my new job in February. Thank you to all in Skagit County and beyond for making this a rewarding job and a great career experience! I'll still be in the Conservation District family, so please don't be a stranger! Cheers!





Skagit Conservation District

SKAGIT CONSERVATION DISTRICT
2021 E. COLLEGE WAY, SUITE 203
MOUNT VERNON, WA 98273-2373
PHONE: (360) 428-4313
Website: skagitcd.org

NON-PROFIT
ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 91
Mount Vernon, WA

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



Printed on recycled paper that contains 30% post-consumer waste.



We wish to thank the businesses and individuals who help to sponsor this publication of the Skagit Conservation District News.

Skagit Conservation News sponsorships cost \$50 a year for business names or \$100 for business cards and are seen by over 4,000 readers twice a year.

To become a newsletter sponsor, please contact Sheri at 360-428-4313.

The Skagit Conservation District salutes the following business as a Skagit Conservation News sponsor:

- Schuh Farms



COUNTRY STORE
FARM • PET • HOME

We have what you need!

Lawn & Garden
Feed • Animal Health • Wild Bird
Pet Food & Supplies
Hardware • Tack & Clothing

Countrystore.net

- Burlington (360) 757-4055
- Freeland (360) 331-1970
- Mount Vernon (360) 424-4207
- Oak Harbor (360) 675-2277
- Sedro Wooley (360) 656-6567
- Stanwood (360) 629-7033



HAPPY FACE FARMS, INC.

Complete Site Prep. / Logging / Glendons
Design and Septic Installers / Sewers / Utilities
Permit Applications / Crawl Space Drainage

Gary Lohman • (360) 421-5193 **Travis Lohman** • (360) 661-4533
gary@happyfacefarms.com travis@happyfacefarms.com

Frank • (360) 840-8643
8795 District Line Rd. • Fax (360) 399-1820
Burlington, Washington 98233 • MasterCard / VISA Accepted

William F. Black Soil Testing
Testing and Consulting

Agricultural • Nurseries • Landscaping

William Black **360-757-6112**
Agronomist **Cell: 360-770-6437**

E-Mail: wfblacksoiltester@gmail.com
503 Gardner Rd. • P.O. Box 317 • Burlington, WA 98233



Skagit River Steel & Recycling

Charlie Urbick
President

1265 So. Anacortes St.
P.O. Box 376 • Burlington, WA 98233
(360) 757-6096 Fax (360) 757-7157
1-800-869-7097
E-mail: charlesu@skagitriversteel.com

SCD Board meetings are held at
2021 E. College Way
on the fourth Tuesday of every month
at 7:00 a.m. and are open to the public.
Please call (360) 428-4313 to verify
meeting dates.

Visit Us On Facebook!
Visit our page for tips, updates,
photos, and events, and
don't forget to "Like" us!



www.skagitcd.org



WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION www.scc.wa.gov
WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS www.wadistricts.org

SCD Board of Supervisors: Paul Blau, Chair | Dean Wesen, Vice Chair | Dave Malsed, Auditor | Wendy Pare, Member | Eben Twaddle, Member