

2006 Annual Report (July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006)

Skagit Conservation District



Washington Conservation Districts:
*assisting land managers with their
conservation choices*

Featured Natural Resource Accomplishment of the Year

Finney Road Sediment Reduction Mount Baker/Snoqualmie District – Skagit County

Resource Challenge:

Due to past logging practices, sediment from the Finney Creek has negatively affected the water quality of the Skagit River since the 70s. Also, Finney Creek is currently an impaired water body for elevated temperature. This was an erosion reduction project to reduce the risk of road failures and erosion and their negative effects to Finney Creek, Cumberland Creek and the Skagit River. Finney Creek, once a WDFW index stream for Chinook, has 11.5 miles of anadromous fish habitat and 11 miles of resident fish habitat. Cumberland Creek has one mile of anadromous and 4.4 miles of resident habitat.

Project Summary:

The project consisted of culvert replacement, ditching and fill and slope stabilization. The needed roadwork was first identified in 1992 during a road deficiency survey and again in 1995 following storm activity. Roadwork prioritization was based on high-risk ratings and inventoried drainage deficiencies. This project was the last in a series that addressed 23 miles of road segments by completing treatment of high-risk road segments and drainage deficiencies for the upper 60% of the watershed.

Results and Accomplishments:

This was an amazing cooperative effort between the Skagit Conservation District and the US Forest Service funded by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board. The Finney Bottom Roads Erosion Control Phase replaced or added 21 culverts and replaced a 47" log stringer bridge with a steel I-beam bridge that was furnished by the US Forest Service. The Iron Mountain Roads Erosion Control Phase replaced or added 126 culverts, constructed 57 rock dips, reconditioned the road and removed side casts. With funding from the US Forest Service, the South Fork Cascade River Road Phase removed or replaced 9 culverts, reconditioned the road and removed side casts. The Goodman Road Erosion Control Phase replaced or added 54 culverts, filled 11 spots for stabilization and reconditioned the road.



Key Partners Involved:

US Forest Service – Mount Baker/Snoqualmie District
Salmon Recovery Funding Board
Seattle City Light
Skagit Watershed Council

For More Information Contact:

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Skagit Conservation District Board of Supervisors:

Betty Norton, Chair; Janet Mc Rae, Vice-chair; Mike Naylor, Treasurer/Secretary; Jerry Vander Veen, Paul Blau, Members

Project Legislative District:

State Legislative District # 39
Congressional District # 2

Project Funding:

Federal \$851,000 (SRFB funds)
\$230,149 (US Forest Service)
Private \$ 50,000 (Skagit Watershed Council,
Seattle City Light)

Total \$1,131,149

Annual Status Report of Natural Resources

Skagit Conservation District

Background Summary:

The Skagit CD has been serving local citizens since September 16, 1942. The District encompasses 1,735 square miles and is home to over 113,00 residents. The Skagit River System is the largest of the Puget Sound drainages in total drainage area (WDF 1975). The main stem of the river is 162 miles long. The Skagit, after the Columbia, is the largest river on the west coast of the contiguous United States. Agricultural resources are very important to Skagit County's economy and community. Over 71 different crops are grown in Skagit County. Forestry is another important resource in Skagit County. Forest lands account for 29% of the county's total acreage. Shellfish industries and commercial and recreational fishing represent integral natural resource that have influenced Skagit County economically and culturally.

Mission of the Skagit Conservation District:

"To provide voluntary, incentive based options that support working landscapes while protecting and enhancing our natural resource land base."

Natural Resource Priorities and Goals:

Water Quality Conservation:

To protect and improve the quality of surface and ground water for the benefit of all users and user groups, targeting waterbodies on the 303(d) list. To participate in watershed planning and implementation activities, which further the District mission and goals while supporting stakeholder involvement.

Fisheries & Wildlife Habitat Improvement:

To promote and provide assistance for fish and wildlife habitat protection and enhancement activities targeting endangered and threatened species and state and local species of concern.

Agriculture Promotion and Assistance:

To support efforts to protect and preserve prime farmlands and provide opportunities to promote sustainable agriculture for farms of all sizes and economic scale.

Forestland Stewardship:

To implement a cooperative forest stewardship program, which will protect the area resources while supporting long-range silvicultural production.

Natural Resources Program Status:

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program:

To date, 69 active signed contracts totaling 469.7 buffer acres with 197,126 trees planted and a total of 142,650 stream feet.

Firewise and Community Wildfire Protection Planning: 22 home assessments; 4 presentations; 3 community-wide assessments completed; wildfire protection outreach methods for 4 communities; Shelter Bay recognized as a Firewise Community.

Forestry:

12 forestry plans were written for 890.4 acres.

Professional Engineering:

23 cooperators received engineering technical assistance; designed and obtained permits for 8 conservation projects; obtained grant funding for 2 conservation projects; design and permit for shoreline stabilization along Fidalgo Cove; design and permits for fish passage barrier removals at Cascade River Park, Day Creek Slough, and Fornsby Slough.

Livestock:

Cost-share was provided to 4 landowners totaling \$3,726.45; provided technical assistance to 59 landowners; 9 Nutrient Management Plans written; 4 plans certified as implemented; 7 conservation plans written.

Water Quality Conservation:

2 bank stabilization plantings.

Information – Education Priorities and Goals:

To provide conservation educational opportunities and volunteer activities to residents of all ages throughout Skagit County, increasing knowledge of resource issues while building community stewardship.

Information – Education Achievements:

- 26 classrooms with over 650 students attended the Annual 6th Grade Conservation Tour
- Over 100 posters were judged for the Annual Soil and Water Stewardship Week poster contest
- 9 school presentations to over 250 students were conducted
- Newsletters were distributed to over 4,500 readers

Educational booths and exhibits:

- 6,000+ people attended the Bald Eagle Festival
- 35,000 people attended the Skagit County Fair
- 2,000+ people attended the Family Festival of Farms
- 2,500+ attended the Bivalve Bash

Volunteer Programs Goals and Priorities -Community Participation & Involvement:

Backyard Conservation Stewardship Short-course generated 53 participants with 20 completing requirements for backyard wildlife habitat certification; 48 community volunteers participated in the Skagit Stream Team Program monitoring 32 stations located in 5 priority watersheds twice monthly; 18 volunteers sampled 13 local recreational shellfish harvesting beaches for PSP during low-tides May thru Sept; 20 volunteers completed the Watershed Masters Volunteer Training Program with 10 completing their 40-hour volunteer service commitment by June 30, 2006.