

Welcome to Watershed Masters
This program is sponsored by COA, COB, CMV,
CSW, Skagit county, and Skagit Conservation
District.

SPONSORED BY: SKAGIT CONSERVATION DISTRICT & PARTNERS:

- CITY OF ANACORTES
- CITY OF BURLINGTON
- CITY OF MOUNT VERNON
- CITY OF SEDRO-WOOLLEY
- SKAGIT COUNTY



- **NON-REGULATORY SUBDIVISION OF STATE GOVERNMENT (RCW 89.08)**
- **VOLUNTEER BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**
- **SCD ESTABLISHED IN 1942**

For those who aren't familiar with Conservation Districts, I thought I would explain who we are. I've met quite a few people who thought we were a part of "Skagit County government" or USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). We are not, but we partner with them to provide voluntary, options for working landscapes while protecting and enhancing our natural resources.



Times Wide World Photo

James Decker, in charge of the Central Park Weather Bureau, examining the pyrheliometer globe on the observation tower of the station, which recorded the sun's rays only 50 per cent of the normal clear day this time of the year.

The shaded portion of the map shows the area swept by the dust storm, which originated in the Northwest on Wednesday and arrived in this locality yesterday.

ROOSEVELT PREPARES FOR DROUGHT RELIEF
Takes It Up With Cabinet as

HUGE DUST CLOUD DARKENS THE CITY

The concept of Conservation Districts came about in the 1930s as a result of the Dust Bowl. It became clear that the farming practices of the time had compounded the problems caused by drought with devastating results. It was determined that there was a need to educate people about more sustainable farming practices and the best way to do that was through local communities and local farmers.



Conservation districts are classified as a "special district" because it has limited purposes, is not a local unit of general government, and are non-regulatory. Conservation Districts can not enforce compliance or impose penalties, but instead offer voluntary programs. Conservation Districts boards are made of five volunteers; local farmers, landowners along with other local citizens, balancing the needs of both productive land use and conservation of resources.



W-742-9. 3/27/52. Skagit SCD.
Supervisors of Skagit Soil Conservation
District. Left to right -- Jess Knutzen,
Director of the State Association; Al-
bert Gerriets, Vice Chairman; James T.
Ovenell, Chairman; W. James Wylie,
Secretary-Treasurer; and W. E. Jennings,
member.
Photo by A. F. Harms



In 1942, Skagit County petitioned and organized the Skagit Soil and Water Conservation District.

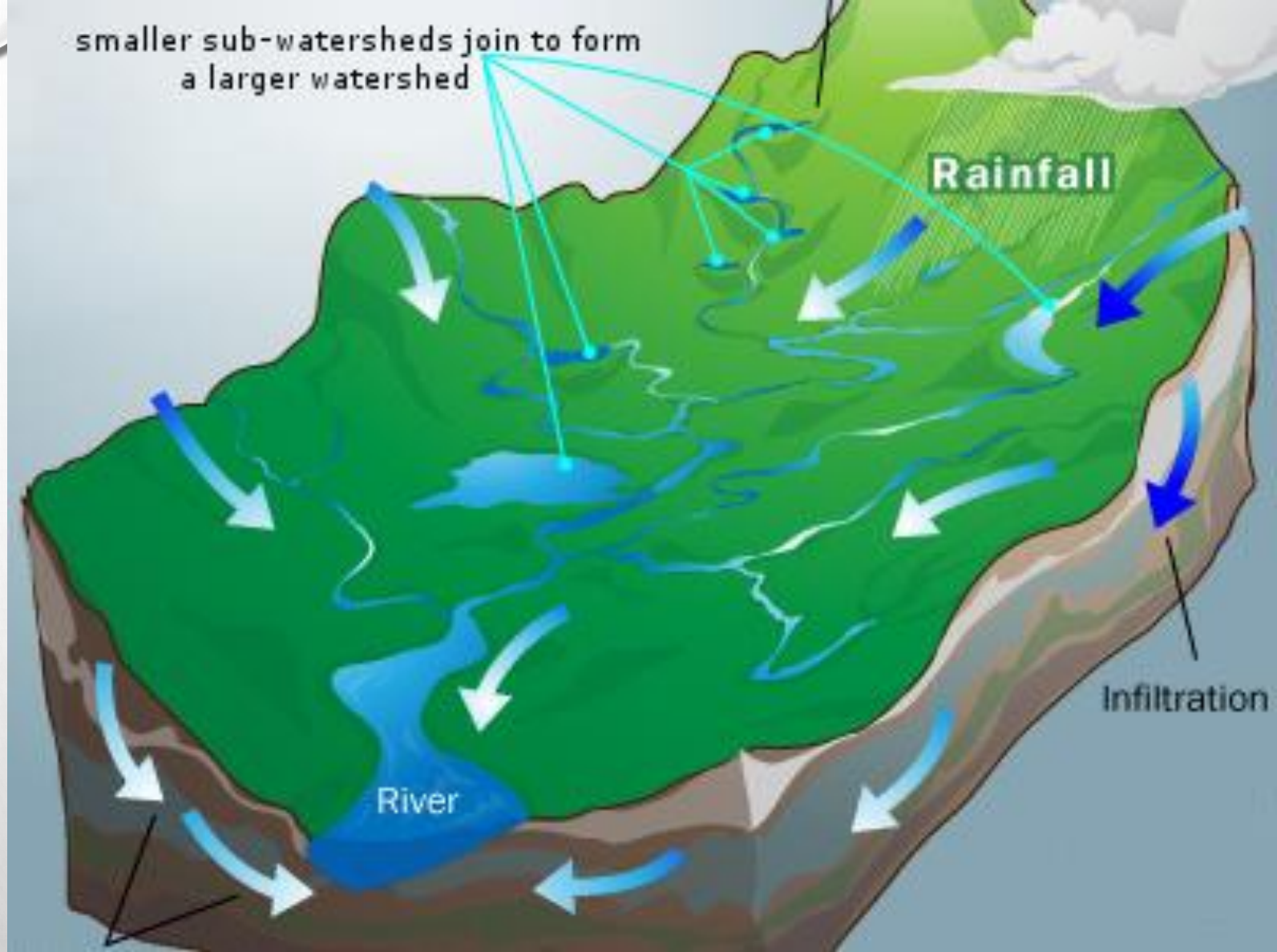
Conservation districts initially focused on promoting soil conservation, but additional federal and state legislation continued to alter and expand their role. In 1954 federal legislation for flood control in the small upstream watersheds passed. It brought involvement in watershed projects for flood control, drainage, recreation, municipal and industrial water supply, and other purposes.

As the local needs and resources change, Districts adjust their focus.

SKAGIT WATERSHED



Currently, Skagit Conservation District's primary focus is the water quality in our watersheds. For those that don't know, a watershed is the land area down which all water flows by networks of channels, that increase in size as the amount of water, sediment, and dissolved materials they carry increases.



If you think about it, all land that is not totally flat and totally level is a watershed. The steeper the slope, the faster and more powerful the water moves picking up whatever it touches.

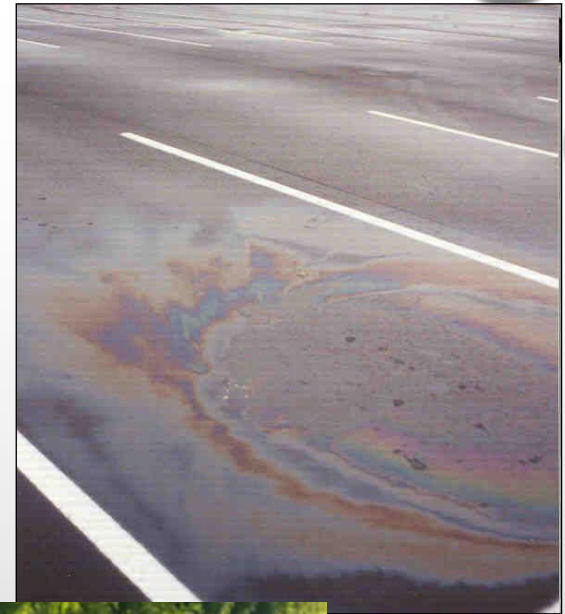


In the forest, when it rains, most of the water is slowed and disbursed by leaves and roots and is absorbed into the soil. The water is then able to spread out and down in the soil where it is usable to nearby plants and trees and refreshes underground aquifers. The soil in the forests can even retain moisture longer than soil in bare ground in part, because the plants shade the ground beneath their leaves which reduces evaporation.

When rain falls on hard surfaces, like roads and roofs, it runs off in channels that are not quickly absorbed. The runoff water moves away along the surface of the ground. This can take much of the available water far away from the site.



- **OIL**
- **GREASE**
- **METALS**
- **BACTERIA**
- **SEDIMENT**
- **NUTRIENTS**
- **YARD AND GARDEN CHEMICALS**
- **PET & LIVESTOCK WASTE**
- **OTHER POLLUTANTS FROM PAVED AREAS**



All of these pollutants are currently running off roads, parking lots, and people's properties, directly into our streams, rivers, and bays. (Or they will be once the rain starts)

The runoff filled with dirt, chemicals, and other pollutants contaminates our streams, waterways.

It also channels the water far down stream in lowland areas where all the flows combine, where it can overwhelm the infrastructure, cause erosion, and flooding damage.





This is because when our local Stormwater management system was created, the goal was to channel water away from roads and buildings, as fast as possible. Now these systems are not only outdated, worn out and failing, did you know that our stormwater drains do not channel water to a treatment facility? All the polluted water drains directly into our waterways.



- NON-REGULATORY SUBDIVISION OF STATE GOVERNMENT (RCW 89.08)
- VOLUNTEER BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
- SCD ESTABLISHED IN 1942

Something needed to be done and it was right up our alley.

WATERSHED MASTERS PROGRAM

- ESTABLISHED IN 1995
- RESULTED FROM THE COUNTY'S WATERSHED ACTION PLANNING PROCESS
- SHARED PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE COMMUNITY AND NUMEROUS LOCAL AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS



The Watershed Masters Program was established in 1995 as a result of the Watershed Planning process. The program has fostered partnerships between the community and numerous local agencies and organizations who collaborate on projects and learn from each other. Working together to protect our land, our water, and our communities.

WATERSHED MASTERS PROGRAM GOAL:

*“TO INCREASE PUBLIC AWARENESS
OF WATER QUALITY PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS
AND TO PROMOTE COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP
IN REGARD TO WATER QUALITY.”*



SOME OF YOU MAY BE AWARE THAT FOR THE LAST 25 YEARS, THE WATERSHED MASTERS PROGRAM WAS A 40 HOUR PROGRAM THAT REQUIRED PEOPLE ATTEND ALL OR MOST OF THE WORKSHOPS, THEN IN RETURN FOR THE FREE EDUCATION, PARTICIPANTS WERE REQUIRED TO DONATE 40 HOURS OF THEIR TIME VOLUNTEERING IN THINGS THAT PROMOTE WATER QUALITY.

IT WAS A WONDERFULLY SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM.

BUT IN THE HOPE OF INVOLVING SOME OF THE BUSIER GROUPS OF PEOPLE, WE ARE REMOVING THE REQUIREMENTS.

NOW, THERE IS NO PENALTY FOR BEING UNABLE TO ATTEND A WORKSHOP AND THERE IS NO REQUIREMENT TO RETURN VOLUNTEER HOURS.

**EVEN THE SMALLEST PERSON CAN CHANGE THE
COURSE OF THE FUTURE."
- BILBO BAGGINS, THE HOBBIT**



However, we very much welcome and appreciate volunteers and we have a number of volunteer opportunities that I'm going to mention today. Many of these volunteer opportunities can be found on our website, Skagitcd.org.

MARINE BIOTOXIN MONITORING PROGRAM

 **EATING SHELLFISH FROM THIS BEACH CAN MAKE YOU SICK!** 

People enjoyed harvesting clams and oysters at Bay View State Park for many years. However, water pollution has made it necessary to STOP all shellfish harvesting.

WHAT HAPPENED?
When septic systems in people's homes get clogged up or old, they no longer prevent sewage from running into Padilla Bay. Clams and oysters filter water for their food and get contaminated by germs in the sewage. These germs do not always hurt the shellfish, but they can make you sick if you eat the contaminated shellfish.



WILL IT EVER BE SAFE?
State and local agencies are working with the people who live in Bay View to make local waters cleaner and safer. Once the water running into the bay is safe, the clams and oysters here will be safe to eat again.

NEW OYSTER SEED
Skagit Marine Resources Committee, together with the Samish, Swinomish, and Upper Skagit tribes and community volunteers, planted oyster seed here in 2003 with the hope that they will be harvestable in three to four years.

YOU CAN HELP!
If you want healthy clams and oysters, take good care of your own septic system! And to prevent runoff of damaging chemicals into the bay, be careful what chemicals you put on your lawn, use on your farm, or keep on your boat.

WANT TO LEARN MORE? Skagit County Health Department - 360-336-9380
Skagit Conservation District - 360-428-4313



 **¡COMER MARISCOS DE ESTA PLAYA TE PUEDE ENFERMAR!** 

La gente ha disfrutado de la producción de almejas y ostras en "Bay View State Park" durante muchos años. Sin embargo, la contaminación del agua en la bahía, ha hecho que se detenga la recolección de esos mariscos.

¿POR QUÉ?
Cuando los sistemas sépticos de los hogares han vejeado o están quejados, no pueden evitar que las aguas servidas vayan hasta "Padilla Bay". Las almejas y ostras filtran agua como alimento y se

¿HASTA CUANDO?
El Estado y las Agencias Locales están trabajando con las personas que viven en "Bay View" para mantener al agua de la bahía más limpia y segura. Cuando el agua que llega a la bahía este libre de microbios, las almejas y ostras serán nuevamente saludables y

NUEVA SEMILLA DE OSTRAS
El Comité de Recursos Marinos del Condado de Skagit, junto con las tribus locales Samish, Swinomish, Upper Skagit y más otros voluntarios de la comunidad, depositaron semillas de ostra en este sitio en el año 2003, con la esperanza de que



SHELLFISH HARVESTING

CLOSED

ON THIS BEACH

Shellfish are unsafe to eat due to pollution, such as:

- bacteria
- viruses
- harmful chemicals

Always check the biotoxin hotline:
1-800-562-5632 or
www.doh.wa.gov/shellfishsafety.htm

For more information, contact:
(360) 336-4322



 360-236-3330

The Marine Biotoxin Monitoring Program was designed to act as a warning system to assist the WA State Department of Health's Biotoxin Program during the Harmful Algal Blooms season. Volunteers are put in teams of 2 or 3 people. Each team collect clams during low tide at their assigned beach about once/ month. A 2 day training occurs in April. Time commitment for this program is about 4 to 6 hours a month from mid-April through September.

SKAGIT STREAM TEAM WATER QUALITY MONITORING PROGRAM

SKAGIT STREAM TEAM



SKAGIT STORM TEAM



Stream Team volunteers are trained to work in teams to collect water quality data on Skagit County's priority watersheds. Stream Team's 2-day training occurs in September. Sampling takes just a couple hours. Each team samples about once/month.

Storm team is a special team that does collection from "Storm events".

SURF SMELT SURVEYS



We, also partner with groups such as Skagit Fisheries enhancement, Skagit Land trust, and others to assist in sampling, surveys, or projects in support of water quality.

RIPARIAN PLANTING

AMPHIBIAN SURVEYS

COMMUNITY RAIN GARDENS

AND MORE...

SALMON SPAWNING SURVEYS





Ivy pull, litter clean up, and
stream/wetland enhancement
projects



ASSISTING WITH LOCAL EVENTS & CELEBRATIONS



An aerial photograph of a river winding through a lush, green forested valley. The river is the central focus, flowing from the top left towards the bottom right. In the upper left, a bridge spans across the river. The surrounding landscape is densely wooded with various shades of green, and some rocky outcrops are visible along the riverbanks. The overall scene is serene and natural.

WATERSHED MASTERS PROGRAM

Topics covered include, but are not limited to: watershed history and geology; water quality; stream ecology; salmon; wetlands and soils; agricultural and forestry Best Management Practices (BMPs); stormwater runoff and activities that landowners can do to reduce stormwater water quality impacts; and low impact development practices.