



# SKAGIT CONSERVATION DISTRICT

# SOIL

# News

Volume 32, Number 1

SOIL • WATER • WOODLAND

Winter 2016

## Skagit Conservation District

# 2016 NATIVE PLANT SALE

## OPEN SALE

Saturday, March 26th  
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

*Location:* Plant Materials Center  
16564 Bradley Road, Bow

## PRE-ORDERS

**\$50 PRE-ORDER MINIMUM!**

## Order online

[www.skagitcd.org/native\\_plant\\_sales](http://www.skagitcd.org/native_plant_sales)

or

call 360-428-4313 by March 11<sup>th</sup>

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

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Plant Sale List .....2
- Small Farm Spotlight.....3
- Padilla Bay Update .....4
- Thomas Creek Watershed .....5
- Accomplishment Highlights ...6-7
- Samish Challenge.....8
- Fire Adapted Communities.....9
- Community Involvement ... 10-11




























































































































**PLANT LIST & ORDER FORM INSIDE**














[www.skagitcd.org](http://www.skagitcd.org)

# SKAGIT CD 2016 NATIVE PLANT SALE: Plant Descriptions & Prices

FOR A BUYER'S GUIDE, VISIT:  
[www.skagitcd.org/native\\_plant\\_sales](http://www.skagitcd.org/native_plant_sales)

Common/Latin Name Genus Species	Max. Ht	Classification & Species Characteristics (see key)	Habitat Characteristics & Conservation Uses	Est. size	Bundle Price
<b>EVERGREEN/CONIFER TREE SEEDLINGS (SOLD IN BUNDLES OF 25)</b>					
1. Cedar, Incense <i>Calocedrus decurrens</i>	2-0	70'	   	Prefers moist, well-drained, fertile soil & full sun to light shade; high screen, wind break, wildlife cover	18" \$23.50 for 25
2. Cedar, Western Red <i>Thuja plicata</i>	P-1	200'	   	Prefers moist sites; riparian plantings, wildlife food & shelter, lumber	6" plug \$36.00 for 25
3. Fir, Douglas <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>	2-0	300'	   	Prefers acidic, well-drained soils; Christmas tree, lumber, wildlife food & shelter	12"+ \$21.00 for 25
4. Fir, Grand <i>Abies grandis</i>	2-0	200'	   	Prefers moist to dry sites at low to mid elevations; Christmas trees, lumber	12"+ \$21.00 for 25
5. Fir, Noble <i>Abies procera</i>	P-1	200'	   	Prefers well-drained soil; Christmas trees, wildlife food & shelter	12"+ \$31.00 for 25
6. Pine, Shore <i>Pinus contorta var. contorta</i>	2-0	65'	  	Grows in dry to wet sites; windbreak, wildlife food, fuel, lumber	12"+ \$21.00 for 25
7. Western White Pine <i>Pinus monticola</i>	P-1	150'	  	Prefers full sun on dry sites; disease resistant seedlings	12" \$36.00 for 25
8. Giant Sequoia <i>Sequoiadendron gigantea</i>	plug	300'	  	Prefers humid climate with dry summer; wildlife food & shelter, windbreak	8" plug \$36.00 for 25
9. Spruce, Sitka <i>Picea sitchensis</i>	P-1	200'	   	Prefers moist, well-drained soils; wildlife food & shelter, lumber	12"+ \$36.00 for 25
<b>DECIDUOUS TREE SEEDLINGS (SOLD IN BUNDLES OF 10)</b>					
10. Aspen, Quaking <i>Populus tremuloides</i>	2-0	60'	   	Grows in wet, moist & dry sites; fire-wood, wood pulp, wildlife food, wind-break	18" \$20.00 for 10
11. Birch <i>Betula papyrifera</i>	2-0	80'	   	Prefers moist, well-drained soils; wildlife food & shelter, fuel, lumber, windbreak	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, syrup, lumber	30"+ \$19.00 for 10
13. Maple, Vine <i>Acer circinatum</i>	1-0	25'	   	Grows in dry to wet areas at low to mid elevations; wildlife shelter, landscaping	18" \$19.00 for 10
<b>SHRUB SEEDLINGS (SOLD IN BUNDLES OF 10-EXCEPT AS NOTED)</b>					
14. Azalea, Western <i>Rhododendron occidentale</i>	4" pot	5-10'	   	Grows in well-drained, moist to wet acidic soil in riparian habitats & forests	4" pot \$4.30 EACH
15. Currant, Red Flowering <i>Ribes sanguineum</i>	1-0	10'	   	Grows in dry to moist soil at low & mid elevation; wildlife food	12"+ \$18.50 for 10
16. Dogwood, Red Osier <i>Cornus stolonifera</i>	1-0	20'	   	Grows in moist to wet sites; red twigs; wildlife food & shelter, erosion control	12"+ \$15.50 for 10
17. Hardhack <i>Spiraea douglasii</i>	2-0	6'	   	Grows in margins of ponds & meadows, open space at low elevation; erosion control, wildlife shelter	18"+ \$19.50 for 10
18. Huckleberry, Blue <i>Vaccinium ovalifolium</i>	plug	4'	   	Grows in moist coniferous forests, openings & bogs; edible berries	plug \$4.75 EACH
19. Huckleberry, Red <i>Vaccinium parvifolium</i>	plug	4-10'	   	Grows in moist, humic, acidic soils in forests; wildlife food, edible berries	plug \$4.75 EACH
20. Kinnikinnick <i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	4" pot	8-10'	   	Ground cover that prefers sandy, well-drained, exposed sites on dry slopes; wildlife shelter	4" pot \$4.00 EACH
21. Mock Orange <i>Philadelphus lewisii</i>	2-0	10'	   	Prefers well-drained moist sites; colorful flowers; wildlife food	12"+ \$18.50 for 10
22. Ninebark <i>Physocarpus capitatus</i>	1-0	13'	   	Grows in damp places along streams; wildlife shelter	12"+ \$19.50 for 10
23. Ocean Spray <i>Physocarpus Capitatus</i>	1-0	13'	  	Grows in dry & moist well-drained, gravelly soils in forests & coastal bluffs; wildlife shelter, nectar for hummingbirds	10-12" For 10 \$19.50
24. Oregon Grape, Tall <i>Mahonia aquifolium</i>	2-0	5'	   	Grows in dry to moist sites; wildlife food, medicine, erosion control, edible fruit	18"+ \$18.50 for 10
25. Indian Plum <i>Oemleria cerasiformis</i>	2-0	15'	   	Grows in dry to moist, nutrient rich soils in forests & by waterways; wildlife food	12"+ \$19.50 for 10
26. Rose, Nootka <i>Rosa nutkana</i>	1-0	10'	   	Grows in dry to moist sites; wildlife food & shelter, hedgerows, erosion control	18" \$18.50 for 10
27. Salal <i>Gaultheria shallon</i>	4" pot	6'	   	Grows in dry to moist sites; wildlife food, edible, floral greens, erosion control	4" pot \$3.60 EACH
28. Serviceberry <i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>	1-0	15'	   	Grows in well-drained dry to moist soils; wildlife food, edible berry	12"+ \$15.50 for 10
29. Snowberry <i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>	2-0	6'	   	Prefers dry well-drained soils; wildlife food, erosion control	12" \$18.50 for 10
30. Willow, Hooker <i>Salix hookeriana</i>	whip	20'	   	Grows in moist to wet sites; erosion control, wetland restoration	36" whip \$14.50 for 10
31. Willow, Pacific <i>Salix lasiandra</i>	whip	45'	   	Grows in wet to dry sites; erosion control, windbreaks, wetland restoration, wildlife food & shelter	36" whip \$14.50 for 10
32. Willow, Sitka <i>Salix sitchensis</i>	whip	15'	  	Grows in moist to dry sites; erosion control	36" whip \$14.50 for 10
<b>WETLAND/RAIN GARDEN &amp; HERBACIOUS (SOLD BY EACH)</b>					
33. Fern, Deer <i>Bechnum spicant</i>	plug	3.5'		Grows in moist humic soils in coniferous forests & wetlands	plug \$4.00 EACH
34. Strawberry, Broadleaf <i>Fragaria virginianan</i>	plug	6"		Grows in mid-range soil moisture, prefers sandy loam in woods, clearings, & fields; wildlife food	plug \$4.00 EACH

**Key:**

-  Evergreen
-  Deciduous
-  Full Sun
-  Mostly Sunny
-  Partial Sun
-  Partial Shade
-  Mostly Shade
-  Full Shade
-  Seed
-  Flower
-  Fruit



## HERE IS WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

1. Never dump anything down a storm drain or in streams or roadside ditches.
2. Check your car for leaks and recycle your motor oil.
3. Take your car to the carwash instead of washing it in your driveway.
4. Pick up pet waste, bag it and throw it in the garbage.
5. Reduce or eliminate use of pesticides and fertilizers.
6. Reduce impervious surfaces at home and increase the vegetated land cover of your property - consider native plants or a rain garden.
7. Plant or preserve trees and native vegetation along streams, rivers, and the marine shorelines.
8. Have your septic tank pumped and system inspected regularly.
9. Fence livestock away from waterways, prevent over grazing and manage manure.
10. Take advantage of opportunities to educate yourself and your family about your local watershed.

Storm drains and roadside ditches transport runoff from rainfall, snowmelt or sprinklers directly into our streams, rivers, and beaches. Unfiltered. Untreated. When water washes into the drains, pollutants are carried along for the ride. Litter, pet waste, dirt, fertilizers, antifreeze and motor oil are just a few examples of the contaminants that enter our waterways through storm drains.

Pollution from stormwater runoff contaminates our waters, closes local businesses, and harms or kills fish and other wildlife.

**PREVENT STORM WATER RUNOFF POLLUTION**  
 Contact the Skagit Conservation District for more information:  
**WWW.SKAGITCD.ORG**



## SMALL FARM PROJECT SPOTLIGHT



The McIntyres have enrolled 10.5 acres of their property into the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) along Wiseman Creek. They will establish native vegetation that will average 180 feet wide on both sides of the creek. 2,490 feet of fencing was installed this past fall (as shown above) and 5,200 trees will be planted in the spring of 2016.

**Landowners:** Matt and Jena McIntyre

**Location:** Minkler Road, Wiseman Creek

**Property Description:** Small sustainable farm operation –chickens, beef, eggs, veggies

**Landowner Objectives:**

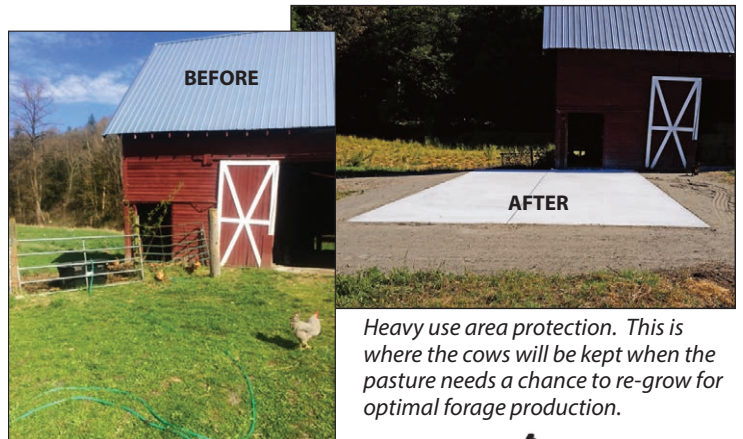
- Protect water quality in adjacent waterways
- Location, design and installation of a waste storage structure
- Optimize pasture forage production
- Location, design and installation of a heavy use area protection
- Completed farm plan for guidance on future farm operations/ best management practices

All of the voluntary and cost-shared best management practices that the McIntyres have implemented, and will be implementing in the near future improve soil quality and structure, protect water quality, increase forage production, and improve animal health and welfare.

For more information on farm planning and cost-share opportunities for small farm projects, visit our website at [www.skagitcd.org](http://www.skagitcd.org) or give us a call at 360-428-4313.



*This new waste storage structure will consolidate and contain manure from the farm.*



*Heavy use area protection. This is where the cows will be kept when the pasture needs a chance to re-grow for optimal forage production.*

*Before heavy use area protection was installed.*



# Help Us Keep Padilla Bay Healthy & Productive!

*Submitted by Karen DuBose, Skagit County PIC Coordinator*

**P**adilla Bay is part of a unique and prolific ecosystem that is home to nearly 8000 acres of eelgrass beds. Eelgrass is very valuable as it provides habitat for wildlife and commercially harvested animals. It is used as a nursery for salmon, crab, perch and herring, and provides a home for a plethora of worms, shrimp, crabs and other invertebrates which feed a diverse range of birds and mammals including great blue herons, eagles, seals, otters and humans.

Unfortunately, all this impressive productivity is being threatened by pollution. Recent water sampling has found high levels of harmful fecal bacteria in the sloughs and creeks that feed into Padilla Bay, as well as in the bay itself. In fact, the beach at Bay View State Park was closed to swimming and wading for a total of 35 days this summer because of

unsafe water in the bay. This is a dramatic increase from 2014, when the beach was closed for 12 days. These levels of bacteria exceed state standards and make the water unsafe for human contact.

The poor water quality in the area is concerning and Skagit County, the Washington Departments of Ecology and Agriculture, Skagit Conservation District, Coastal Volunteer Partnership and others have teamed up to find and fix sources of pollution as part of Skagit County's Pollution Identification and Correction Program (PIC).

At the same time, the Washington Department of Ecology is working on a plan (called a TMDL, or Total Maximum Daily Load) that will identify how much we need to improve water quality in the Padilla watershed, and outline strategies to help us meet those goals.

Over the next year, our team members will be in the field sampling water and looking for site conditions that may be sources of pollution. Community volunteers may be in your neighborhood to distribute educational information.

In the meantime, we are asking for your help to locate and address sources of fecal pollution. Sources can include leaky septic systems, pet waste, and uncontrolled livestock waste. Your neighbors are already taking steps to fix problems that will help. In the last few months, 3 failed septic systems were found that are in the process of being fixed, and several



agricultural property owners are working to ensure that management of their fields is the best it can be. This is a great start, but there is plenty more work to do!

If you have questions about your property or know of potential pollution sources, please contact the county at 360-416-1400. We will gladly work with you to find available technical and financial resources if needed to address the issue.

You have the chance to be part of the solution by helping to clean up your local waters, and leave a positive legacy for future generations. This is a community concern and it will take a community effort to resolve. With your help, we are confident we can meet our clean water goals.



*Above: A failed dye test in downtown Bay View – sewage was found to be flowing directly into Padilla Bay.*



# Thomas Creek Watershed Becomes Focal Point for Project Funding Opportunities

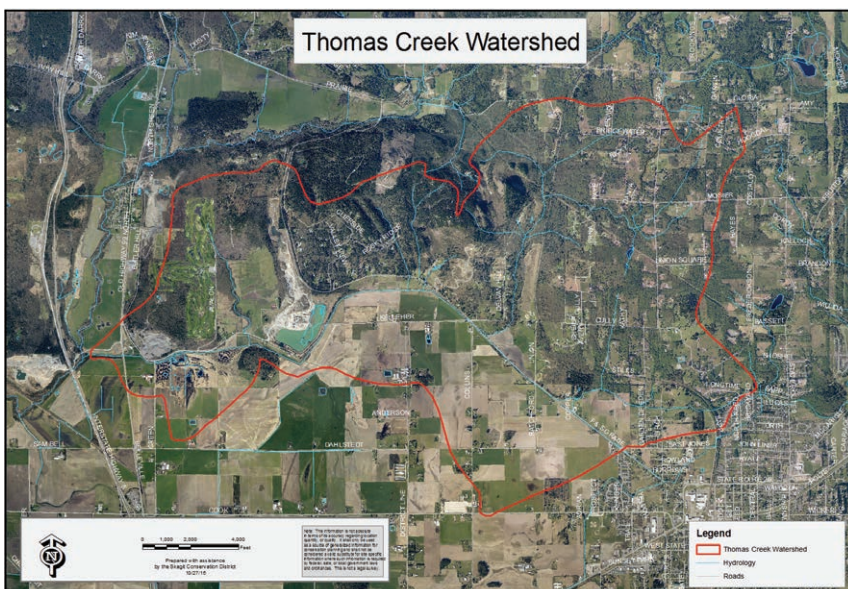


*“Do unto those downstream as you would have those upstream do unto you.”*

– Wendell Berry

As many Skagit County residents are aware by now, there has been a huge effort by numerous agencies, organizations, and citizen groups to address and fix water quality issues in the Samish River and its tributaries that are affecting the health and economic viability of Samish Bay. Much has been discovered and many improvements have been made over the years, but there is still more work to be done.

The latest effort and funding focus is in the Thomas Creek Watershed; a priority area for reducing fecal coliform pollution. Thomas Creek is a major tributary of the Samish River and therefore its health directly affects the health of the Samish River and Samish Bay. There are a number of smaller creeks that flow together to make up Thomas Creek – some named, some not. Below is a map that shows the boundaries of the watershed.



This watershed encompasses approximately 6,375 acres of land and numerous land uses. If your property is located within the red boundary of the watershed it means that, in general, any water that falls on your land will eventually reach Thomas Creek and carry with it whatever it picks up along its journey to the closest waterway.

There has already been a lot of activity going on in this area with water quality sampling, farm plans and best management practices being implemented, fish habitat improvement projects occurring, septic maintenance and repairs, and forest health and Firewise plans being applied. Active landowners in this area are investing time and energy into improving the quality and sustainability of their properties and have taken steps to ensure that their land use activities are not negatively affecting their downstream neighbors.

In order to encourage and build upon the enthusiasm for watershed improvements in this area, the Skagit Conservation District (SCD) is leading an effort to better understand the needs and interests of property owners and respond accordingly. Last year a survey of landowners was completed in the Thomas Creek drainage that asked how best to address natural resource concerns in the watershed. The study revealed what types of assistance; both technical and financial, that were needed and wanted by residents. Equipped with this new insight, Skagit CD and our partners will be working hard to address these identified needs. In the near future, you can look forward to free educational workshops on topics that were identified in the survey, community events, information about how to get funding for certain activities on your property, and other useful resources.

The Skagit CD looks forward to facilitating continued efforts for improving the health of Thomas Creek and the Samish River Watershed. SCD has a suite of voluntary cost-share opportunities for implementing things like mud, manure and runoff management practices, riparian plantings, septic repair, and many other activities. The District will work with landowners to develop a plan and provide free technical assistance throughout the process.

If you are a landowner in the Thomas Creek Watershed and are interested in learning more about best management practices and cost share opportunities for your property, please call or email us at **360-428-4313**, [skagitcd@skagitcd.org](mailto:skagitcd@skagitcd.org)

# ACCOMPLISHMENT HIGHLIGHTS

## 2015 Conservation Award Winners

The Skagit Conservation District announced its 2015 conservation award winners at their Annual Conservation Awards Banquet held on Tuesday, September 29<sup>th</sup> 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. More than 110 people were in attendance.

The prestigious **Cooperator of the Year Award** was presented to **George and Eiko Vojkovich of Skagit River Ranch**. 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. The Vojkovich family received the 2015 Cooperator of the Year award in recognition of their outstanding commitment to conservation in Skagit County and exemplary land stewardship. Over the last year, the couple worked closely with the Skagit Conservation District to develop a farm plan and implement a variety of conservation practices that will improve soil and water resources on their property where they raise organic beef, turkey, chickens, eggs, and pigs. As certified organic producers, the family does not use antibiotics, steroids, growth hormones or animal by-products. Three farming practices that the Vojkovich family holds dear to their



James Fukuyama

hearts, include: 1) Humane treatment of animals; 2) Sustainable farming by being a good steward of the land; and 3) Certified organic practices with no chemicals or pesticides.

The recipient of the **2015 Inspirational Award** was presented to **James Fukuyama of Mount Vernon**. This award recognizes a distinguished individual for their exceptional volunteer spirit and contributions to the protection and conservation of water quality in our community. James was honored with the 2015 Inspirational Award for his many above and beyond volunteer contributions to our community. A Conservation District volunteer since 2009, James continues to participate in the Skagit Stream Team, Storm Team, and Marine Biotoxin programs as well as providing invaluable support at District events. He has also logged over 680 volunteer hours with the Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group (SFE) assisting with tree planting events, conducting spawning surveys, providing hatchery tours, assisting students with service learning projects, and serves on the SFE Board of Directors. He is a Land Steward for the Skagit Land Trust, helps with trail maintenance, and more! Special thanks to Jim Fukuyama, for the inspiration, for the difference he has made, and for making our community and our world a better place to live.

For a complete list of 2015 Award Recipients, visit the District's website at [http://skagitcd.org/adult\\_edu](http://skagitcd.org/adult_edu)

*"Good actions give strength to ourselves and inspire good actions in others."*

- Plato



George and Eiko Vojkovich of Skagit River Ranch with Joe Holtcamp, SCD staff.





## 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 2016. The positions are currently held by Janet McRae (elected) and Dean Wesen (appointed). There are no term limits, so both may choose to continue on the Board if re-elected by the public or re-appointed by the Washington State Conservation Commission.

**To vote**, request an absentee ballot by 4 p.m. Tuesday, March 8<sup>th</sup> by calling the SCD at (360) 428-4313 or cast your vote at our public walk-in poll election, which will be held from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Tuesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup> at 2021 E. College Way, Mount Vernon, WA. Voters must be Washington State registered voters and live within Skagit County.

**To be an elected candidate**, you must be a Washington State registered voter, live within Skagit County and file with the SCD by 4 p.m. Tuesday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>. For a candidate's name to appear on the ballot, a valid nomination form signed by 25 registered Skagit County voters must also be filed by February 23<sup>rd</sup>. Information forms and nomination petitions are available by contacting the SCD at (360) 428-4313.

**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 online. The SCD can provide assistance if needed. Applications for the appointed position must be received by the Conservation Commission by close of business on Thursday, March 31, 2016.

**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. Three of the Board Supervisors are elected by the voters of Skagit County and two are appointed by the Conservation Commission.

### Important 2016 Election Dates

Candidate Filing Deadline  
4 pm Tuesday, Feb. 23

Absentee Ballots Request Deadline  
4 p.m. Tuesday, March 8

Absentee Ballot Receipt Deadline  
1 p.m. Tuesday, March 22

Public Poll Election  
7 a.m. to 1 p.m., Tues., March 22  
2021 E. College Way, Mt. Vernon, WA

For more information or to request a form or ballot contact Cora at (360) 428-4313 or email [cora@skagitcd.org](mailto:cora@skagitcd.org)

**Don't forget to vote!**  
**Tuesday, March 22**



#### Commercial Livestock and Small Farm Operations

- 172 commercial and small farm landowners assisted with 21 Best Management Practices implemented

#### Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

- 10 new contracts signed for 2016 spring planting totaling 78.66 acres

#### Firewise and Fire Adapted Communities

- 5 fire weather monitoring stations installed across the county and data collected

#### Forest Stewardship Program and EQIP

- 20 forest conservation plans written encompassing 1,237 total acres

#### Professional Engineering

- Design completed for stabilizing soil erosion from river flooding in Day Creek & for a mitigation project for DD 21

#### Clean Samish Initiative Education

- Hosted 3 livestock workshops, 3 sustainable landscaping workshops, Friday Creek Storm Team, and much more.

#### Environmental Education

- 775 students (31 classes) participated in the annual Sixth Grade Conservation Tour in May

#### Marine Biotoxin Monitoring Program

- 25 community volunteers participated in the 2015 sampling season

#### Backyard Conservation Stewardship Program

- 48 individuals completed the Spring 2015 Backyard Conservation Stewardship Short Course

#### Low Impact Development (LID) & Stormwater Education

- 48 stormwater education presentations provided to 1,155 Skagit County students and much more

#### Skagit Stream Team

- Over 1,250 Stream Team volunteer hours reported for 2014/2015 monitoring season

#### Watershed Masters Volunteer Training Program

- ~3,700 Watershed Master volunteer hours reported in 2015 – over 46,700 total hours to date

#### District Media

- Skagit Conservation News – 2 newsletters each year distributed to over 4,000 readers

For the full Annual Report of Accomplishments, visit [www.skagitcd.org/publications](http://www.skagitcd.org/publications)





## 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 1<sup>st</sup> and June 30<sup>th</sup>! We encourage everyone in the watershed to take action and join with your neighbors to help meet this challenge. Success in cleaning up the Samish basin relies on the participation and involvement of everyone. 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, and 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.



Now Offering  
**\$25.00 OFF** coupons for  
**SEPTIC INSPECTION or  
PUMPING SERVICES**



at the Skagit CD office while supplies last. Offer expires May 1<sup>st</sup>.

*Participating Businesses include:*

Cinema Septic • The Drain Doctor  
Johnny's Septic Service • Tiger Tank Pumping  
Water & Wastewater Services, LLC

Stop by our office M-F, 8 am- 4:30 pm to pick up your coupon!  
2021 E College Way, Ste. 203, Mount Vernon, WA 98273



# DASSH

*“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, February 27th**. The event will begin/end at Edison Elementary School and provides a beautiful scenic route for all to enjoy.

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2016**

Race starts at 10:00 a.m.  
(Check in beginning at 9 a.m.)  
Edison Elementary School

To Register: [www.databarevents.com/dassh](http://www.databarevents.com/dassh)  
Age 13 to 18 - \$5.00 – Age 19 to 69 - \$10.00  
12 and under, veterans, and 70+ FREE!

The State Health Department has indicated that they will upgrade Samish Bay to approved status if we don't have more than one closure due to fecal coliform bacteria between March 1st and June 30th (“critical rainy period”). Due to steps taken by Samish watershed residents, we have made tremendous improvements in water quality in the Samish over the last several years – we are almost there! The event is being held on Feb. 27th to draw awareness of the upcoming “critical period” and to provide a fun opportunity to bring the community together to run/walk for a clean and healthy Samish! Hope you can join us! There will be a celebration in the school auditorium directly after the run – and will include geoduck chowder provided by Taylor Shellfish Farms and activities for kids. For questions about the event, send email to Karen Summers, SCEA at: [cwaterskagit@gmail.com](mailto:cwaterskagit@gmail.com) or call Kristi Carpenter, SCD at 428-4313.

*Cleaning up the Samish –  
one-step at a time!*





**WASHINGTON STATE  
FIRE ADAPTED  
COMMUNITIES  
LEARNING NETWORK**

There's a new kid in town in the world of wildfire, known by the name of the Washington State Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network (WAFAC).

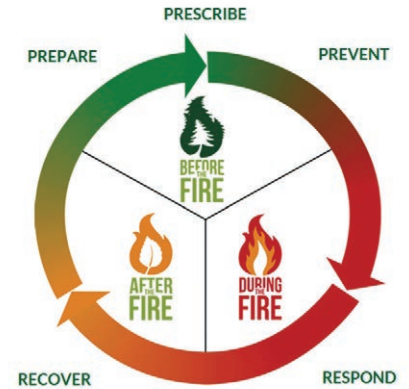
This collaborative state network was established in late 2014 with funding from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and loosely modeled after a national network with similar goals. WAFAC has spent a little over a year developing their identity and establishing a presence within Washington. The network currently consists of a staff team, a steering committee of wildfire and natural hazard mitigation professionals, and 6 pilot community participants. The goal of this network is to facilitate long-term learning and sharing of resources in order to elevate the collective ability to adapt communities' relationships to the complex fire issues we face in our state. It provides a means to invest resources in these pilot communities around Washington that are working to create fire adapted communities, helping them increase their local capacity.

By definition, a fire adapted community is a community that is working to prepare for, respond to, and recover from wildfire. It incorporates people, buildings, businesses, infrastructure, cultural resources, and natural areas into the preparedness effort.

**The goals for Washington include:**

- **Cohesion** – Support the integration of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Strategy's three goals: resilient landscapes, fire adapted communities, and efficient response to wildfire.
- **Acceleration** – Accelerate the adoption, innovation, and diffusion of best practices associated with Fire Adapted Communities programs and strategies across communities and geographies.
- **Adaptation** – Foster a strong and resilient Washington whose residents understand their role (and the role of fire) in a fire-adapted landscape.
- **Connection** – Create a strong network structure that connects local Fire Adapted Communities with Fire Adapted Communities around the state and nation.
- **Learning** – Provide Washington Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network members the space and support to grow and learn.

The WAFAC has developed a diagram that illustrates the cyclical effort of continuing to learn, adapt, and improve in all aspects of living with wildfire.



Staying connected through webinars, blogs, phone calls, in-person meetings, an online workspace, and training exchanges is a key strategy of the network in order to learn, adapt, and share.

For more information about this active and growing learning network including a map of the current pilot communities, visit the website at [www.fireadaptedwashington.org](http://www.fireadaptedwashington.org)

Also, check out the national FAC Network at [www.facnetwork.org](http://www.facnetwork.org)

## Using Native Fire-Resistant Plants in Your Landscape

Property owners in Skagit County can have a laundry list of objectives that they're trying to meet with their landscaping decisions. Things like attracting pollinators and wildlife, reducing stormwater run-off and sometimes reducing the risk of wildfire spreading to their homes in higher risk areas. In that case, decisions about what plants to use to reduce the risk of fire spread on your property can be made easier by understanding what a fire-resistant plant is and what the options are for this area.

**Fire-resistant plants are:**

- Plants that do not readily ignite from a flame or other ignition source
- Plants that do not significantly contribute to the fuel or fire intensity

**Fire-resistant plant characteristics:**

- Leaves are moist & supple
- Plants have minimal amounts of dead wood and do not accumulate dry, dead material within the plant
- Sap is watery and does not have a strong odor
- Sap or resin materials are low



Native plants are more fire-resistant as they require less water, less maintenance, and provide better wildlife, pollinator & songbird habitat.

**Fire-resistant DOES NOT mean it won't burn.  
Proper maintenance is very important.**

**Characteristics of highly flammable plants:**

- Contain fine, dry, dead, material within the plant
- Leaves, twigs, and stems contain volatile waxes, terpenes, or oils
- Leaves are aromatic
- May have loose or papery bark
- Sap is gummy or resinous and has a strong odor



Above: Juniper is a highly flammable plant and very common in NW landscapes.

Here is a list of native fire-resistant plants that we will have available at our plant sale in March:

- Shore pine
- Vine Maple
- Mock Orange
- Serviceberry
- Kinnikinnick
- Quaking aspen
- Red Flowering Currant
- Oregon Grape
- Willow Sp.
- Salal
- Birch
- Red Osier Dogwood
- Nootka Rose



# Protecting our legacy of clean water...

*"Even the smallest person can change the course of the future."*

*- Bilbo Baggins, The Hobbit*

## Thank you, Fall 2015 Watershed Master Graduates!

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 2015 Watershed Masters Volunteer Training Program for their involvement and commitment to help protect our legacy of clean water in Skagit County: **Kayla Andres, Catherine Carter, Andrea Doll, Judy Fisher, Danielle Galbraith, Martha Hall, Nicolette Harrington, Marilyn Holtz, Scott Jones, Tatum Kenn, Cheryl King, Diane Melvin, Hannah Moon, Frank Repplier, Amanda Richner, Mae Tabor, and Jerry VanVliet.**

The class was recognized at a special ceremony on November 12<sup>th</sup> culminating eight weeks of training, which included 8 evening classes and 3 Saturday field days. The sessions are taught by local experts and 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 and collectively to protect and improve the health of our local streams, rivers, lakes, and marine resources. 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 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](mailto:kristi@skagitcd.org)**



*A blustery Saturday WSM field day at Bay View State Park lead by Glen "Alex" Alexander, Education Director, Padilla Bay Research Reserve, learning about estuaries and the amazing critters that live in Padilla Bay.*



*An evening WSM tour of Skagit County's rain gardens and new pervious paved parking lot – Pictured (left to right): Diane Melvin, Nicolette Harrington, Mae Tabor, Frank Repplier, Lori Wight (Skagit County Public Works), Martha Hall, Judy Fisher, Carla Glassman, Tatum Kenn (kneeling), Cheryl King, and Kayla Andres.*

**The Skagit Conservation District Presents:**

## **2016 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, bees as pollinators, and much more!

Classes will begin on **Wednesday, March 23rd from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. and will continue every Wednesday evening through April 27th.** The program also includes two Saturday field tours, tentatively scheduled for **April 9th and April 23rd.** 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](mailto:kristi@skagitcd.org). **Registration Deadline is March 18, 2016.** 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.

*"What's a butterfly garden without butterflies?"*

*– Roy Rogers*



# Mussels, Oysters and Clams ... Oh my!

## Why all the fuss about shellfish?



The shellfish resources of Samish Bay are one of Skagit County's most historic and treasured resources. The bounty of clams and oysters that flourish on Samish tidelands were an important food source for Native Americans and early settlers and are a local delicacy that many of us enjoy and appreciate today (yum!). The very first certified oyster farm in Washington State was located on Samish Bay - in 1921, the Steele family opened the Rockpoint Oyster Company, which was located on Chuckanut Drive (and later purchased by Taylor Shellfish Farms in 1991). Blau Oyster Company has been farming Pacific Oysters on Samish Island since 1935. Today, there are ten Washington licensed shellfish companies on Samish Bay.

While shellfish provide a nutritious food source and contribute to our economy, they also play a crucial role in maintaining the health of the estuary and are considered an important keystone species (which means that despite their small size, they have the potential to greatly impact the environment that they live in). The interactions between shellfish beds and other organisms and elements of the coastal ecosystem are numerous and complex. Shellfish serve as powerful water filters, provide habitat for plant and animal life of all kinds, and play an important role in the food web. They also play a particularly important role in the uptake and recycling of energy and nutrients.

The ability to harvest shellfish locally is a clear measure of the health of our rivers and water quality. Like the "canary in the coal mine," polluted shellfish beds are often an early warning to a larger problem, upland in the watershed that needs immediate attention. When Samish bay shellfish beds are closed it is an indicator that the health of our upland streams and rivers are also at risk. Fecal coliform pollution is one of the key environmental issues facing our community. Whether your passion is eating fresh local oysters, clams, and mussels, finding them on the beach, or improving the health of our watershed and community, we can all do our part by taking actions in our own backyard and joining in this local effort to protect water quality and the shellfish resources in the Samish watershed.

## Did You Know...?

- Shellfish do not need clean water to grow, BUT shellfish **must have** clean water to be eaten safely. That is because shellfish are not choosy. They filter out all particles – including any chemicals, biotoxins, bacteria and viruses. If the water contains human sewage, animal wastes, disease-producing organisms, or chemicals, then these contaminants concentrate in shellfish tissue as well.
- Filter-feeding shellfish improve water quality! Shellfish feed by filtering microscopic plants from the water column. This removes problematic sediments and phytoplankton and their associated nutrients. A single adult oyster clears over 15 gallons a day and the combined efforts of millions of shellfish can have a dramatic impact!
- Commercial shellfish growing areas, like Samish Bay, are classified by the State Dept. of Health and routinely monitored to determine how clean the water is – and it must be very clean! This helps ensure that shellfish reaching seafood markets, restaurants, and our kitchens are safe to eat!
- We can all help protect Skagit County's valuable shellfish resources by keeping on-site septic systems in good working order, keeping livestock and domestic pet waste out of streams and drainage ditches, and using port-a-potties or other restroom facilities when recreating.

## ATTENTION BEACH LOVERS!

### Skagit County Marine Biotxin Volunteer Training

Do you enjoy spending time at the beach, digging clams, learning new skills, and contributing your time to a worthwhile community project? The Skagit Conservation District and the Skagit County Health Department are seeking interested community volunteers (age 18 and up) to provide support in monitoring Skagit County's recreational beaches for paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP) and diarrhetic shellfish poisoning (DSP) during spring/summer low tides.

Time commitment for this program will include approximately 4 to 6 hours a month from April through September after completing the orientation and training. Training and orientation is scheduled for Thursday, March 10th from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm and on Tuesday, March 15<sup>th</sup> (field day) from 3 pm to 4:30 pm. New volunteers should attend both training events. To register for the program or for more information, contact: Kristi Carpenter, Skagit Conservation District, (360) 428-4313 or email: [Kristi@skagitcd.org](mailto:Kristi@skagitcd.org)  
Registration Deadline: March 7, 2016.

**Participation in the program may require walking on rocky or muddy terrain (on the beach) and the ability to use a shovel and dig for clams and/or cockles and muscles.**



# 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



SKAGIT CONSERVATION DISTRICT NEWS

# SCD

**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 conservation newsletter sponsor, please contact Cora at **360-428-4313**.

**The Skagit Conservation District salutes the following businesses as Skagit Conservation News sponsors:**

- NW Dairy Association
- Schuh Farms
- Skagit Farmers Supply



**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  
gary@happyfacefarms.com

**Travis Lohman** • (360) 661-4533  
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



**NSB**  
**NORTH SOUND**  
BREWING CO.  
MOUNT VERNON, WA



**Trevor Faucett**  
Relationship Manager  
Assistant Vice President

265 E George Hopper Rd  
Burlington, WA 98233-3105

360.707.2353 ext. 2351  
800.548.2699  
360.269.2243 (Cell)  
1-800-869-7097  
trevor.faucett@northwestfcs.com  
northwestfcs.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.

[www.skagitcd.org](http://www.skagitcd.org)




**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

**WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION**  
[www.scc.wa.gov](http://www.scc.wa.gov)

**WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS**  
[www.wadistricts.org](http://www.wadistricts.org)

Visit Us On Facebook!

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

