



W FIRE & FORESTRY W

eduction.



Skagit County Communities Thinking Ahead

A number of communities in Skagit County have been actively working to reduce the wildfire risk to their properties.

Preventative measures such as managing vegetation within a 30-foot defensible space zone around homes; using fire-resistant building materials; and making improvements to community owned areas such as roads, park areas, and ingress/egress areas greatly improve the survivability and safety of homes.

These community members would attest that taking the time to protect most likely the biggest financial investment of one's life, as well as the natural resources surrounding it, is well-worth the time, energy, and commitment for those who reside in areas at highrisk for wildfire.

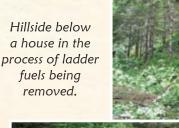
Shown are some highlights from community wildfire mitigation projects around the county in the last year. In most cases, these projects have been a joint effort between the community members, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources, and the Skagit Conservation District.





below a house before ladder fuels are removed.

debris from





around a house and then chip it.

(Fuels reduction project completed Spring 2010)

If you are interested in getting a wildfire mitigation project started in your community, please contact the Skagit Conservation District at 360-428-4313. For more information on wildfire mitigation and the Firewise Communities/USA



Program, please visit our website at

www.skagitcd.org or go to

www.firewise.org.

Other active

communities in the area (not in

Skagit County)

include Lummi

Island, Sudden

Valley, and

the San Juan

Islands.

continuity between the ground and tree crowns, thus creating a pathway for a surface fire to move into the overstory).

Reducing ladder

fuels (ladder

fuels - fuels that

provide vertical



(FIREWISE PROJECT COMPLETED SPRING 2009)

JENKINS LANE

(Firewise Community/USA May 2009)

HOXIE LANE

(Firewise Community/USA December 2009)



Removal of diseased trees within defensible space zone.



Piling up slash for future chipping or firewood cutting.



SKAGITWILDE

(Firewise Community/USA December 2007)

DNR crew members load debris into the chipper.

(CHIPPING PROJECT COMPLETED SPRING 2010)

Removal of dead and downed material.



Clearing the immediate perimeter around structures.

(FUELS REDUCTION PROJECT COMPLETED FALL/WINTER 2009)

EQIP Helps Small Forest Landowners and the Environment

A cost-share program under the USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service works for small forest landowners. The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) is allowing forest landowners to improve their forestlands. In this economy, many landowners would not be able to complete practices without financial and technical assistance. The practices will greatly improve the future value of their forest.

Linda Olsoe, a forest landowner says, "Lucky for me, I found the EQIP program to fund needed improvements. The technical assistance and funding allowed me to proceed with corrections needed to improve my forest. EQIP provided a way for me to be environmentally responsible and to get the

This is about long-term stewardship of the land. The effects go beyond one's own property. Clean water, clean air, wildlife habitat, recreation, climate change – trees are our best friends. Trees are the most powerful concentrators of carbon on Earth. Through photosynthesis, they absorb CO2 from the atmosphere and store it in their wood. The bole of a tree is mostly stored carbon. Houses built of wood hold the fixed carbon hundreds of years. Although old trees contain huge amounts of carbon, their rate of sequestration has slowed to near zero. A young tree, although it contains little fixed carbon, pulls CO2 from the atmosphere at a much faster rate. Thus, young forests outperform old growth forests in carbon

When a tree rots or burns, the carbon contained in the wood is released back to the atmosphere. Since combustion releases carbon, active forest management, such as removing unhealthy trees, improves the health of the environment and reduces the number and intensity of wildfires.

Deforestation, as practiced in many tropical forests, is very different from managed forests in Skagit County. Deforestation is responsible for about 20 percent of global carbon dioxide levels. This occurs when forests are permanently cleared or converted and soils are eroded.

EQIP is helping forest landowners in Skagit County make long-term commitments to the land and the



Photos 1 & 2: Trees will be thinned to provide light, water, nutrients and become a healthy forest. Photo 2 & 3: Before thinning & after thinning (respectively).

Photo 4: Cross drains will reduce sediment transport to streams.

Photo 5: Site preparation will allow adequate reforestation.









KEEPING YOUR FOREST HEALTHY

Consider the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP): A prescription for forest health



EQIP is a voluntary program administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) that is available to private forest landowners. It provides incentives to improve forest stands and treat related natural resource issues such as forest health, water quality, and wildlife habitat.

Amongst other activities, EQIP can help with wildfire mitigation activities such as:

• Pre-commercial thinning

- Slash treatment
- Tree planting to improve suitable forest stands Pruning

For more details on this program or to apply, please contact the local NRCS office at 360-428-7758 ext. 3.



Summer Is Here! **GET IN THE ZONE**

Below is a list of suggested activities for around your home to improve its survivability in the event of a wildfire. The suggestions are based on three different zones. If you follow the basic suggestions in each zone, you will not only be improving the safety and survivability of your home, you will also be improving the health of your yard and forest, therefore increasing the resale value of your property. This is also a great time to incorporate wildlife habitat into your landscape features. A "firewise" landscape can be a wildlife friendly landscape!

Get outside and enjoy our beautiful Washington summer weather and keep in mind your defensible space!

Defensible Space Zones

ZONE #1: Defensible Space (0 – 30 FEET)

- Clear leaves and needles from base of house.
- Create a three foot, fire-free area on all sides of structures. • Clear gutters of leaves, needles, and debris.
- Trim any limbs on trees hanging over
- structures. • Prune lower limbs to reduce ladder fuels.
- Clean trees and shrubs of dead material and keep them pruned.
- Choose deciduous fire resistant trees, rather than evergreen trees, when planting close to structures. Eliminate foundation conifers such
- Store firewood well away from your house, particularly during fire season (at least 30 feet away).
- Plant native fire-resistant plants; keep lawns
- Utilize rock gardens and xeriscapes near structures. Low growing herbaceous (nonwoody) plants that are keep green during fire season (lawns, clovers, bedding plants, bulbs, perennial flowers).
- Remove ladder fuels.
- Minimize the use of wooden fences and
- trellises and never attach them to the house. Use fire resistant building materials.

ZONE #2: *The Mid-Zone* (30 – 100 feet)

- Remove all dead material and snags.
- Thin trees to a wider spacing. • Prune lower limbs to 10 to 15 feet from ground, over time, removing no more than 50% of live crown.
- Remove ladder fuels, keeping the volume of vegetation low.
- Fit driveways, walkways and pathways on topographic breaks to slow or stop the spread
- Use only fire resistant plant materials.
- Maintain space between shrubs at least twice as wide as their diameter.

ZONE 3: The Outer Zone (100 to 200 feet) Thin forest stands to improve forest health

- (Tree crowns should be separated by at least
- Pruning of lower limbs in lifts over time, depending upon the size of the tree. Do not remove more than 50% of live crown. Remove dead material, slash and snags.
- Remove excess vegetation along roads.
- Construct trails on topographic breaks as fuel • Prevent ladder fuels from developing.
- Allow adequate access for emergency vehicles.



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AGRICULTURAL HAPPENINGS

Benefits of Good Manure Management



Managing manure – pick up, storage and disposal – is an issue for every livestock owner. If you have livestock on your property, then you have manure that should be collected, stored and utilized in a manner that does not degrade water resources and that could benefit your property.

There are many negative impacts of improperly managed livestock manure on your property. Some of those concerns are as follows:

- Living in manure creates an unhealthy environment for horses and livestock; poor health may mean more vet bills and increased feed bills.
- Leaving manure on the ground creates more mud.
- Manure, like mud, creates a breeding ground for insects, especially filth flies. Insects are annoying and carry diseases or can cause serious allergies.
- Internal parasites hatch from the manure as often as every 3 days, allowing for parasite reinfestation as soon as 24 hours after worming.
- Manure problems are inconvenient for the farm owner, can make chores difficult and are unpleasant for neighbors.
- Nutrient runoff from manure has a negative impact on the environment. It contaminates surface water and groundwater, is detrimental to fish and other aquatic wildlife and fertilizes aquatic weeds.





Tips on Disposal of Manure and Stall Waste

Manure contains significant quantities of salt, nitrogen, phosphorous, and potassium, as well as lesser amounts of nutrients such as calcium, magnesium, manganese, zinc, copper and sulfur. When manure is properly utilized, it can greatly increase soil fertility, improve soil properties and reduce commercial fertilizer costs. However, improper handling, storage and application of manure can present multiple opportunities for both ground and surface water

- Collect raw manure from pastures, confinement areas and stalls every 1 or
- Use less bedding reducing the amount of bedding saves money and it will reduce the amount of compost material.
- Store manure and apply it to pastures during the growing season (April October). A storage bin or area that is covered or tarped works well for
- Test soils and manure at least once every three years. A minimum of one acre of well-vegetated land is needed for annual spreading of manure from two horses or cows.
- Compost manure and stall waste and apply to pastures, gardens and flowerbeds during the growing season. As a general rule, apply about ½ inch of compost at a time, but no more than 3 – 4 inches per year and only
- Sell or give away composted manure and stall waste to neighbors, community gardens, local garden clubs, nurseries and topsoil and
- Applying manure back to pastures creates a natural nutrient cycle; one horse's manure represents about \$150 in fertilizer value per year.



Financial Assistance for Ag Producers

USDA's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary, technical and financial assistance program designed to help farmers improve irrigation efficiency; manage nutrient run-off and/or animal waste; improve the health of native plant communities; and reduce soil loss. In most cases, producers who participate in the program pay roughly half the costs of the conservation practices.

August 13, 2010 is the sign-up deadline for those who want to be considered for the 2011 fiscal year, however, there will be additional ranking deadlines later in the year for some of the EQIP special initiatives such as funding specifically for Organic Producers, and Conservation Activity Plans.

For more details on this program or to apply, please contact the local NRCS office at 360-428-7758 ext.3. You can also visit the agency's web site at www.nrcs.usda.gov for more





The Skagit County Fair is August 11 – 14

and once again the Skagit Conservation District will be seeking volunteers to help with cow milking contests. This is always a crowd favorite and fun for the whole family. Volunteers will receive free entrance into the fair for each three-hour shift.

If you would like to volunteer, please call **Cindy Pierce** (360) 428-4313





Poster created by Good Nature Publishing Company. For more information on this poster and others, please visit goodnaturepublishing.com

CREP Offers Greater Flexibility

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) now offers additional conservation practices and provides for additional lands to be eligible. CREP is a national voluntary program that in Washington improves habitat and water quality in salmon streams. Land enrolled in a 10-15 year CREP contract is removed from agricultural production and grazing. In return, producers receive annual rental payments, contract signing incentives, and financial incentives of nearly 100 percent reimbursement for creating new wildlife habitat. Approved conservation practices can include livestock fencing and water quality improvements.

In addition to traditional riparian buffers, participants can now use



15-foot hedgerow buffers along smaller water courses, upstream grass filter strips, and wetland enhancements connected to salmon streams. In addition, orchards, vineyards and berry farms are now eligible for all CREP practices. The changes will allow producers to meet critical habitat needs without sacrificing large portions of their farms or ranches.

All CREP practices must be established according to USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) technical standards and specifications. NRCS and local conservation districts provide technical assistance on the design and installation of the practices.

Skagit County landowners may sign up for CREP with the Skagit Conservation District or FSA at any time. For more information about CREP, contact the USDA Service Center or visit www.fsa.usda.gov/wa.



RMERS MARKETS ~ SKAGIT COUNTY, **Anacortes Farmers Market** Rexville Farmers Market Saturday - 9 am to 2 pm - May to October Sunday - 9 am to 5 pm - June - November 7th Street & R Avenue (Depot Arts Center) Next to Rexville Grocery Keri Knapp 360-293-7922 19271 Best Road, Mount Vernon info@anacortesfarmersmarket.org 360-466-5522 www.anacortesfarmersmarket.org TalkToUs@rexvillegrocery.com Mount Vernon Farmers Market Sedro-Woolley Farmers Market Saturday - 9 am to 1 pm - May to October Wednesday - 3 pm to 7 pm - May to October Hammer Heritage Square (Ferry and Metcalf) The Revetment (on the river at Gates & Main) Gilda Gorr 360-724-3835 Wednesday - 1:30 pm to 5:30 pm swfarmersmarket@fidalgo.net June to September Skagit Valley Hospital at 1415 Kincaid Concrete Saturday Market Ron Farrell - 360-540-4066 mvfarmer1@hotmail.com Saturday - 9 am to 4 pm - June to Labor Day Senior Center - 45821 Railroad Street www.mountvernonfarmersmarket.org Marty Smith 360-853-8505

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KIDS FOR CONSERVATION

ENVIROTHON CHAIR

We are pleased to announce that our very own **Cindy Pierce** has been appointed Chair of the Washington State Envirothon Committee.



As the Chair of the Committee, her responsibilities include overseeing the state program, local competition guidance to conservation districts across the state and generating interest in the program through outreach to local schools. In addition, Cindy is the Washington State Representative for the Canon North American Envirothon Program.

Cindy is looking forward to continuing to raise awareness of the program and to seek funding through sponsorships that would ensure the sustainability and growth of the program.

Congratulations, Cindy!



Cindy Pierce, newly appointed Chair of the Washington State Envirothon Committee.

ENVIROTHON UPDATE

This past May, the Washington State Envirothon competition took place at Cispus Learning Center in Randle, WA. We are pleased to announce that for the second year in a row, Stanwood High School had the winning team. For their win, they earned all expenses paid travel to Fresno, California for the Canon North American Envirothon competition. Good luck, Stanwood!



Advisor Ryan Ovenell and students (L to R) Jacob Flake, Thor Pearson, Scott Weisse, Cory Calkins and Alyssa Thompson are awarded First Place in the Washington State Envirothon Competition at Cispus Learning Center.

The Canon Envirothon is an annual competition in which winning state/provincial teams compete for recognition and scholarships by demonstrating their knowledge of environmental science and natural resource management. The teams, each consisting of five high school-aged students from participating US States and Canadian Provinces, exercise their training and problem-solving skills in a competition centered on four universal testing categories (i.e., soils/land use, aquatic ecology, forestry and wildlife) and a current environmental issue.

For further information, please contact Cindy Pierce at the Skagit Conservation District at (360) 428-4313.

Let It Rain...Words!

In this word search puzzle the first or last letter of each word will be the first or last letter of another word, sometimes more than one! The number of letters in each word is given in parentheses. These words can be found in the information on **Rain Barrels** and **Rain Gardens**. The first two words have been done for you.

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L	Е	R	R	Α	В	1	R	D	С		Q	Χ	D	L	Α	0
0	С	K	W	R	D		Ε	U	D	L	L	R	F	М	R	L
С	D	Ε	0	Ν	Ε	Ε	Р	٧	Ε	М	Α	D	G	N	Ε	F
Α	L	S	R	Ι	S	Р	R	Π	N	G	R	R	L	0	Т	L
L	В	L	S	Α	Ε	J	L	W	F	R	0	Χ	Ε	1	Α	0
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Q	Υ	Α	R	D	Т	L	R	Χ	0	S	Т	Ζ	D	Р	_	Ε
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F	D	L	0	Н	Ε	S	U	0	Н	Α	В	Ι	Т	Α	Т	U
BIRD (4)							(6)									(4)
BARREL (6)							(7)									(5)

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Annual 6th Grade Conservation Tour

Over 700 students from 28 Skagit County classrooms were able to take part in the 2010 Sixth Grade Conservation Tour. Once again the two-day event was held at Pomona Grange Park on Friday Creek this past May. The students participated in hands-on education at a rotation of seven stations, which included topics on forest protection, the salmon life cycle, composting and recycling, soils, forest regeneration, macroinvertebrates, and Leave No Trace camping practices.

Natural resource agency professionals dedicated their time to assist with this event and we would like to extend a huge thank you to these organizations and their staff that continue to offer support and make it a success:

- Kevin Alexander, Shannon Clark and Chris Hankey WA Department of Natural Resources
- Lucy DeGrace Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group
- Callie Martin Skagit County Master Composter/ Recyclers
- Jared Hamman and Bruce Gordon Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Keith Greenwood Sierra Pacific Industries
- Cindy Bjorklund North Cascades National Park
 Complex
- Orlando Garcia, Barbara Johnson and Barbara Richey -US Forest Service

We would also like to give a special thanks to our dedicated volunteers April Glaefke, Donna Helgeson, Kari Odden, Ingeborg Siller, and Teresa Swick-Hansen.



Department of Natural Resources staff, Shannon Clark, Kevin Alexander and Chris Hankey, hosted the Forest Protection station. Shannon Clark explains the importance of forest fire protection gear to a group of Karla Klein's Foothills Christian School Students.



A group of students try to guess the length of time it takes different objects to compost.

2010 POSTER CONTEST

"Conservation Habits = Healthy Habitats"

The Skagit Conservation District hosted its annual Natural Resources Conservation Poster Contest in honor of Soil and Water Stewardship Week, which was April 25 to May 5, 2010. This year's theme is "Conservation Habits = Healthy Habitats". The contest was open to Skagit County students, grades kindergarten through twelfth, and approximately 220 poster entries were submitted.

The poster judges this year were Donna Schram, chair of the Skagit Valley Backyard Wildlife Habitat Team and friend Grace Keesling, Sue Davenport, Multi-Family Housing Specialist with Rural Development, and Andrea Xaver, active community volunteer.

The Overall Winner this year is *Lauren Mowat*, a third grader from Amy Reisner's Bay View Elementary class. As the Overall Winner, Lauren was awarded a \$50 savings bond, a plaque, and professional framing of her poster. Lauren is also the Category 2nd-3rd Grade Winner.

The Runner-Up Winner is *Cheyenn Hendrickson*, a fifth grade student at Samish Elementary. Cheyenn was awarded a plaque and \$10 Borders bookstore gift card. Cheyenn is also the Category 4th-6th Grade Winner.

Nylah Torgerson, a kindergartener who attends Summersun Montessori School, is the Category K-1st Grade Winner. *Mercedez Garfias*, a tenth grade student in Scott Adam's Emerson High School class, is the winner for Category 10th-12th Grade.



Winners pose with Blossom the Treeture (TM). From left to right Cheyenn Hendrickson, Nylah Torgerson, Blossom, Mercedez Garfias and Lauren Mowat.

All category winners received a paintable birdhouse and a certificate of achievement. All poster entries received a participation certificate, habitat activity booklet and bookmark.

Poster Contest winners were recognized for their talents at a televised presentation with the Skagit County Commissioners at the Soil and Water Stewardship Week Proclamation in April.







COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP

Thank you, Skagit Stream Team, for Caring for our Waters!

On Saturday, June 12th, sixty-three Skagit Stream Team volunteers were recognized at a special celebration hosted by the Skagit Conservation District and the Padilla Bay Research Reserve for their participation in the 2009/10 Stream Team program.

The event included a variety of great foods, great company, and a great time! Special guests included Skagit County Commissioners Ron Wesen and Sharon Dillon, and Brian Dempsey, representing the City of Burlington. Special thanks to Paul Blau, Blau Oyster Company; and Jennifer Hopper, Taylor Shellfish Farms, for cooking up some delicious local clams and oysters and to all attendees for the outstanding potluck dishes! The entertainment was (once again) superb thanks to the delightful performances provided by Kulshan Creek Stream Teamers, Terri Dix, Gina Dilabio and Maria Magaña (a.k.a the "Salmon Sisters")!

Volunteers were all individually recognized in an award service. Special recognition was also given to Alec McDougall for ten-years of volunteer service; and to this year's "Shining Stars," Scott Doman, Shirley Doman, Luanne Goodrich, Steve Goodrich, Pete Haase, Michelle McPhee, Vivian Mizuta, Patrick O'Hearn, Carol Schwartz, and Dean Schwartz. Steve Goodrich was awarded for his dedicated efforts in entering all this year's stream team data in an excel spreadsheet (a huge job!).

Kurt Buchanan, Stephen Farmer, Pete Haase, Patrick Hurley, Jack Middleton, Patrick O'Hearn and Jack Sekora, were honored for their involvement as "Samish Storm Team," volunteers – this group has been on special assignment conducting storm event monitoring in the Samish basin for the past 2 years. Their ongoing commitment has been a key factor in protecting public health and identifying priority stream reaches in the watershed.

The shining stars for 2010 are:

Left-Right: Top Row – Dean Schwartz, Steve Goodrich, Carol Schwartz; Middle Row – Michelle McPhee, Patrick O'Hearn, Luanne Goodrich; Bottom Row - Pete Haase, Shirley and Scott Doman, and Vivian Mizuta.



ALEC MCDOUGALL SKAGIT STREAM TEAM OUTSTANDING **SERVICE AWARD** RECIPIENT

"Blessed is the person who invests in the next generation"

Alec McDougall of Mount Vernon was the recipient of the Skagit Stream Team "Outstanding Service Award," for serving 10 years as a Stream Team Volunteer. Alec was recognized at the annual Skagit Stream Team Celebration, which was held on June 12th. Over the last few years, Alec, his wife Sandy, and their little dog, Keiko, have been conducting water quality analysis in the Kulshan Creek watershed in Mount Vernon. Over the years, Alec has also monitored in the Joe Leary Slough, lower Samish, and upper Samish watersheds. We are very proud of Alec and feel very fortunate for his long-term commitment to this program. In addition to his Stream Team activities, Alec is a math teacher at Skagit Valley College, was appointed by Governor Gregoire to serve on the WA Association of Boundary Review Board, is a local theater stage actor, provides bookkeeping and sales support to Cascadia Stoneware, a local high fire pottery company owned by his son, and much more! Thank you, Alec, for your many contributions and for making our community a better place





Bayview Drainage

Patti Bolyard Walter Boy Marina Rogowski Sally Saxton James Stavig

Brickyard Creek

Bill Bowen Jerry Corrion Jim Johnson Jack Middleton Richard Oickle Jack Sekora

Fisher Creek

Chris Bouey Scott Doman Shirley Doman Peter Dowden Luanne Goodrich Larry Labo Henry Nyland Carol Schwartz Dean Schwartz

Gages Slough Emilia Blake Robyn Blankenship Stephen Farmer Patrick Hurley

Joe Leary Slough Scott Adams Donald Brassington Doug Edwards Luanne Goodrich Cindy Montañez

Nate Schuh Kulshan Creek Gena Dilabio

Laura Paise

Terri Dix Maria Magaña Alec McDougall Sandy McDougall

Nookachamps Creek Kara Block Eric Chabot Monte Richardson

No Name Slough Kathy Fournier Michelle McPhee George Miller Patrick O'Hearn Corey Peterson

George Viverette Samish Bay Mariepaule Braule Deryl Hart Stephen Farmer Steve Goodrich Sarah Huntington Dick Lease Elaine Lease Marci Maulden Sue Mitchell Vivian Mizuta Joyce Moon Dick Redmond

Samish Storm Team Kurt Buchanan Stephen Farmer

Jeanette Redmond

Tom Schmidt

Pete Haase Patrick Hurley Jack Middleton Patrick O'Hearn Jack Sekora

Trumpeter Basin Sheila Berry

Rhonda Jennings Janis Kautz Michele Morse Frank Repplier Jack Sekora

"IF YOU HAVE SOME TIME TO SPARE AND WANT TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT, BECOME A STREAM TEAM PARTICIPANT."



The 2010 Skagit Stream Team Celebration included great food, great company, and a great time!



Meet the Samish Storm Team! Back row: Patrick Hurley, Jack Middleton, Patrick O'Hearn, and Kurt Buchanan. Front row: Jack Sekora and Stephen Farmer. Missing from photo: Pete Haase.



Meet the Salmon Sisters! Kulshan Stream Team volunteers, Gina Dilabio, Terri Dix, and Maria Magaña were a hit at the Stream Team Celebration and at the Family Night on Samish Bay event. The trio sang and performed original songs written and

INTERESTED IN JOINING THE STREAM TEAM???

Call Kristi Carpenter 360-428-4313 or email kristi@skagitcd.org to register by September 1st.



COMMUNITYSTEWARDSHIP

SKAGIT MARINE BIOTOXIN VOLUNTEERS SAFEGUARD THE HEALTH OF OUR COMMUNITY

Hats off and a special thank you to our 2010 Marine Biotoxin Volunteers - many who have been contributing to this important program since it commenced ten years ago! The goal of the Marine Biotoxin Volunteer Program is to provide an early public health warning of shellfish toxicity by routinely assessing our local recreational shellfish harvesting beaches for the presence of paralytic shellfish poison (PSP) Due to the dedication and commitment of our Marine Biotoxin volunteers, local shellfish toxicity data is generated on a regular basis, providing emergency investigative responses for local and visiting recreational shellfish harvesters. PSP poisoning can be life threatening and is caused by eating shellfish containing a potent toxin. The toxin is produced by a naturally occurring organism. Cooking or freezing does NOT destroy the toxin. Common symptoms of PSP poisoning include tingly lips and tongue moving to the hands and feet, which may begin within minutes of eating the shellfish. In high doses it can cause difficulty breathing, which can cause death without emergency life support. A person who suspects they have eaten contaminated shellfish should seek medical help immediately.



The Skagit Marine Biotoxin Volunteer program is a local/ state partnership involving the Skagit Conservation District, Skagit County Health Department, the Washington **State Department**

and a consortium of local volunteers. For information, contact Kristi Carpenter, Skagit Conservation District @ 428-4313 or email: kristi@skagitcd.org.



"Oysters, Clams, and Mussels...Oh, my!" Our firstyear Marine Biotoxin Volunteers test their shellfish identification skills during the annual training at March Point. Pictured: Jeanne King, Skagit County Health Department, Marina Rogowski, and Glenda

2010 Skagit County Marine **Biotoxin Volunteers:**

Glenda Alm, Mount Vernon Chet Bradley, Sedro-Woolley Nihla Bradley, Sedro-Woolley Kurt Buchanan, Mount Vernon Jim Crone, Anacortes Kathy Crone, Anacortes Chuck Davis, Bow Stephen Farmer, Sedro-Woolley **Bud Freeman, Mount Vernon** Cherie Freeman, Mount Vernon Jim Fukuyama, Mount Vernon Donna Helgeson, Sedro-Woolley Patrick Hurley, Sedro-Woolley Keegan Janicula, Anacortes Dick Kent, Mount Vernon Elaine Lease, Mount Vernon Richard Lease, Mount Vernon Jack Mercer, Sinclair Island Jack Middleton, Mount Vernon Henry Nyland, Mount Vernon Shirley Nyland, MountVernon Marina Rogowski, Concrete Jessie Sauer, Sedro-Woolley Jon Stables, Anacortes



Marine Biotoxin Volunteers, Shirley and Henry Nyland of Mount Vernon, decided to participate in the program because they enjoy spending time on the beach. "O Oysters, come and walk with us!" The Walrus did beseech. "A pleasant walk, a pleasant talk, along the briny beach." - Lewis Carroll, 1872

Dangerous Biotoxins Threaten Local Recreational Shellfish Harvest

Fidalgo Bay in Skagit County was closed to recreational shellfish harvesting on Friday, June 18th because of lethal levels of paralytic shellfish poison, or red tide. Fidalgo will remain closed until sampling indicates toxin levels have declined. These potentially deadly levels of red tide are sweeping throughout Puget Sound. Washington State Health Department officials have also closed shorelines for shellfish harvesting in Whatcom County, San Juan County, Clallam County, and Discovery Bay in Jefferson County.

Health officials said they haven't seen red tide levels this toxic in 10 or 15 years. Levels of toxin have ranged as high as 3,000 micrograms and even higher. Anything above 80 micrograms is considered dangerous. The closure includes clams, oysters, mussels, scallops, and other species of

Before harvesting any kind of shellfish, call the Marine Biotoxin Hotline at 1-800-562-5632 or visit their website: www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/sf/biotoxin.htm to find out what recreational areas are closed due to PSP. Do not expect all beaches to be marked with a sign.

Explore the Wonders of our Local Watersheds!

We are now taking registrations for the Fall 2010 Watershed Masters Program!

Are you interested in meeting new friends, learning from local experts about the wonders of the Skagit River watershed and participating in meaningful community projects? The Skagit Conservation District is pleased to announce that we are now taking applications for the Fall 2010 Watershed Masters Volunteer Training Program. The program is intended for community residents (age 17 and up) who are aspiring to increase their knowledge about their watershed, water quality and stream ecology.

Participants attend 8 FUN and INFORMATIVE EVENING sessions, which will be held from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on TUESDAY evenings beginning September 28th through November 16th and participate in three Saturday watershed field adventures (final dates to

Watershed Masters receive a comprehensive reference notebook and 40 hours of FREE training, which covers an introduction to local geology, historical and treasured places, stream ecology, salmon, soils and wetlands, forest practices, water quality, backyard conservation, and much, much more! Each session is taught by local experts. After completing the training, volunteers return 40 hours participating in meaningful community projects of their choice. The program is being sponsored by the Skagit Conservation District in partnership with the City of Mount Vernon, City of Sedro-Woolley, City of Burlington,

Pre-register by SEPTEMBER 22nd (Class fills up rapidly and is limited to 25 - first come basis). For more information or for an application packet, contact Kristi Carpenter @ (360) 428-4313 or email: kristi@skagitcd.org

Thank You Plant Sale Volunteers!

We are extending a big thank you to the many volunteers that helped at our plant sale this year. We simply can't do events such as these without the help of our faithful volunteers. Also, a big thanks to all of you that came out to support our plant sale by purchasing native plants!

Our heartfelt thanks to the following volunteers:

Sammy Adams Alison Hitchcock Connie Bush Ann Buzaitis Gretchen Cohan David Cohen Richard Crerie Susanna Dentel Mark Fessler James Fukuyama Kenley Gard Nancy Hall Donna Helgeson Barbara Wasserman

Dena Petersen John Hoyer Martha Rhodes Alden Jensen Loren Sande Keith Johnson Nate Schuh Barbara Kolar Seth Schuh Mira Lutz Susan Schuh Maria Magaña Jack Sekora Lisa Mirante Randy Stevens Becky Stinson Sue Mitchell Boshie Morris Teresa Swick-Hansen Jean Nelson Shelia Tuff David Van Winkle Kasha Newberry Lea Ann Vaughn John Patton

EEPING IT CLEAN

SAMISH WATERSHED UPDATE

Summary

The Samish Watershed has come under close scrutiny by the Washington State Department of Ecology because of high fecal coliform bacteria levels throughout the Watershed. The Department has conducted several inspections on landowners' properties and has requested those landowners to obtain assistance from the District to implement best management practices (BMPs) that will decrease the potential for fecal coliform bacteria to contaminate the waterways.

The role of the District is to assist landowners by providing alternatives to existing livestock management practices and in most cases, provide cost share funds to help alleviate the cost of implementing best management practices. A representative from the District can write a farm plan for a landowner's property, recommend management practices, and provide designs for any needed structural practices. All of this is free to a qualified landowner.

Accomplishments in the Samish Watershed

Since last October, the District has received requests for assistance from 24 Samish Watershed landowners. Warning letters from the Department of Ecology prompted sixteen of those requests and eight were from landowners who voluntarily requested

The District has conducted 20 site visits, written 5 farm plans, installed 3 solar powered water pump systems and provided cost share funds for the installation of a roof runoff management system. The solar powered water pumps provide water to livestock without the livestock having to access a waterway to obtain their drinking water. Keeping livestock out of waterways decreases the potential for manure to runoff into the waterways and streambank

The Cost-Share Incentive

The Skagit Conservation District offers incentivebased options that support working landscapes and protect natural resources. To receive cost-share from the Skagit Conservation District landowners are required to

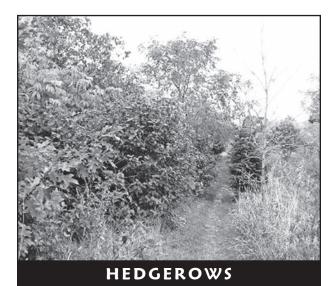
follow a step-by-step process: 1. Contact the District

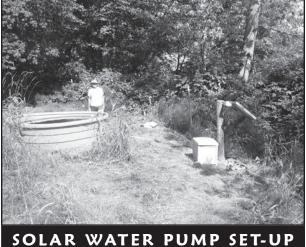
- 2. Develop a farm plan with a District
- 3. Apply for cost-share for planned practices
- 4. Implement BMPs
- 5. Have implemented BMPs approved by a District technician
- 6. Receive cost-share reiumbursement

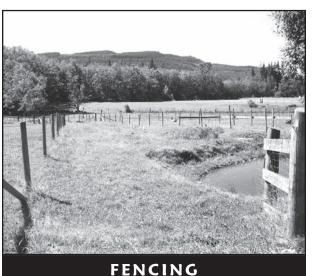
For more information on our programs, please visit our website at www.skagitcd.org

District cost share and technical services available for:

- Manure management Fencing design Riparian planting Design of sacrifice areas
 - Grazing management Mud management Watering facilities







WORKSHOPS IN THE SAMISH WATERSHED

In April and May the District sponsored four Horses for Clean Water workshops which were instructed by Alayne Bickle of Maple Valley. Horses for Clean water offers way to care for livestock that improve the farm they live on and reduce non-point polution. Participants

learned about techniques to decrease mud; proper manure and pasture management practices and "green" horse keeping techniques. In all, 27 people attended the workshops, which took place at the Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Participants of these workshops received a free manure tarp by pledging to cover manure and compost piles to help keep the Samish clean.

Other Samish workshops included Stream Ecology and Watersheds with 29 attendees, and a Family Night on Samish Bay at Taylor Shellfish Farm with over 50



The Family Night on Samish Bay workshop provided a fun and educational event for local families to attend together to learn about our shellfish resources, water quality, and the Samish watershed. Pictured above, families enjoyed time on the beach and the beautiful sunset provided a great conclusion to a great event. Over 50 people attended.

AFTER THE STORM

Low Impact Development in Skagit County: A Few Local Examples

Low Impact Development (LID) projects are on the rise in Skagit

County! LID is an innovative stormwater management approach with a basic principle that is modeled after nature: manage rainfall at the source. LID's goal is to mimic a site's predevelopment hydrology by using design techniques that infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, and detain runoff close to its source. Techniques are based on the premise that stormwater management should not be seen as stormwater disposal. Instead of conveying, managing and treating stormwater in large, costly end-of-pipe facilities located at the bottom of drainage areas, LID addresses stormwater through small, cost-effective landscape features located at the lot level. LID is a versatile approach that can be applied equally well to new development, urban retrofits, and redevelopment/revitalization projects.

Basic components of LID include reduced impervious surfaces – including narrower roads and fewer cement sidewalks – keeping or planting native vegetation, retaining the natural grade of the site, creating bioretention areas (rain gardens) and grassed swales to help filter groundwater and allow it to seep into the ground. Green roofs are another LID feature that detain, absorb, and filter precipitation, reducing the annual volume of roof runoff. Green roofs (also called "vegetated-roofs," "living roofs," or "eco-roofs") provide many ecological, aesthetic, and financial benefits.



This new development off N. Oak St. in Burlington features porous asphalt driveways, which allow rain and runoff to infiltrate, restoring hydrlogy and improving water quality.



This medical office building on 15th Street in Mount Vernon features one of the few green roofs in Skagit County. In addition to stormwater and pollution control, green, or 'living," roofs cool and clean the air, conserve energy, can double the service life of the roof, reduce sound, provide insulation, create wildlife habitat and improve the aesthetic environment.



This beautiful rain garden in front of the Skagit County Administration building on Continental Place collects and filters runoff from the roof of the building. This demonstration community rain garden was a partnership of the County, Skagit Conservation District, SV Backyard Wildlife Habitat Team, Watershed Master volunteers, and the WA Dept. of Ecology.



The parking lot at the Mount Vernon Medical Center on 13th Street features a vegetated swale which serves as conveyance, infiltration, and storage.



These rain barrels, located at the Native Plant Society's Demonstration Garden, collect rainwater from the roof of the tool shed. This simple technology can be used to conserve water and help reduce stormwater runoff.



Porous paved walkways and patios are featured at Penn Park in Anacortes.

Did you know?...One inch of rain falling in one day on 1,000 square feet of roof can produce over 600 gallons of water!



Benefits of Low Impact Development:

to residents:

- increases community character
- improves quality of life
- increases open spacepromotes pedestrian-friendly

landscaping to developers:

- reduces land clearing and grading costs
- reduces infrastructure costs (streets, curbs, gutters, sidewalks)
- increases lot values and community marketability

to communities:

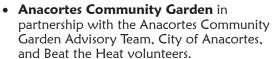
- balances growth needs with environmental protection
- reduces infrastructure and utility maintenance costs

to the environment:

- protects environmentally-sensitive areasincreases wildlife habitat by preserving
- trees and vegetationprotects water quality by reducing
- profects water quality by reducing pollutant loads
- reduces stream bank and channel erosion by reducing peak flows and moderating the frequent bounce associated with lower intensity storms
- reduces flooding potential

SCD PARTNERS ON LOCAL RAIN GARDEN PROJECTS

There is an enthusiastic and growing movement in Skagit County toward managing stormwater using Low Impact Development (LID) approaches. Over this last winter and spring, Kristi Carpenter, SCD Public Information & Education Coordinator, and Tom Slocum, District Engineer, have been working closely with the City of Burlington, City of Sedro-Woolley, and the City of Anacortes to design demonstration rain gardens to promote the use of Low Impact Development (LID) in our community. Rain gardens are designed to collect and absorb rain from rooftops, sidewalks, parking lots, playgrounds, etc. They help filter pollutants, reduce stormwater runoff, provide valuable wildlife habitat, and are beautiful! District Engineer, Tom Slocum, recently completed the engineering design for 3 demonstration rain garden projects, which will be installed soon at the following locations:



- Railroad Park in partnership with the City of Burlington. The demonstration rain garden and bioswales will be one component of this fun and exciting project, which will include a new visitors center, chamber office, an interpretive park, and native landscaping.
- Warner Street Parking Lot in partnership with the City of Sedro-Woolley. The demonstration rain garden combined with bioswales will capture runoff, filter pollutants, and enhance neighborhood aesthetics.

Partial funding for these projects are being provided by the Skagit Conservation District through a WA Dept. of Ecology Stormwater Education Grant. For information, contact Kristi Carpenter @ 428-4313 or email: Kristi@skagitcd.org.

Watershed Model is a Popular Learning Tool in Skagit County Classrooms

This past spring, the Skagit Conservation District visited 30 Skagit County classrooms -grades 3 through 6 – to provide stormwater/watershed education. Over 825 students learned about watersheds and the importance of keeping them healthy.

The presentations began with a video. For the younger groups, a music video was played featuring children learning about the importance of stormwater runoff and pollution, and how storm drains lead to waterways – "where we fish and swim and play." For the older students, a Skagit Watershed video was shown that defines our watershed, its land uses, and the importance of a healthy, clean environment.

Next, enthusiastic students circled around the EnviroScape^R watershed model, which was defined as the "Skagit Watershed" where they were asked to identify different land uses. The students took turns placing soil (cocoa powder) on the freshly plowed farm field, erosion on the hillsides, and on a construction site. Coffee grounds were used to represent fertilizer (manure) for the crops and pet waste that might be in the yards of our

Planning a Fundraising

Car Wash?

READ THIS FIRST!

residential areas. Chocolate syrup was used as oil on our roadways and parking lots left behind by automobiles in need of repair. A variety of colored gelatin powders were used to represent chemicals such as pesticides, detergents, antifreeze and fertilizer. Students were asked to place these items where they thought they would most likely be found on the landscape. The watershed was then sprayed with water from a squirt bottle, representing the rain in our valley. Students watched as all of the different pollutants ran down the slopes and off the landscape, into the streams, ditches, storm drains, rivers, and eventually out to Skagit Bay.

The students were then asked what solutions they could provide to prevent these problems from happening in the future. There were several smart ideas which included replanting trees and leaving grass filter strips to prevent sediment run-off and filter toxins, while also providing shade to keep the waterways cool for our important salmon runs; proper maintenance of our vehicles; minimal use of pesticides, as they destroy our beneficial insects as well as the pests; and picking up pet waste.



Students get to see where pollutants on the landscape end up when it "rains" in the watershed.

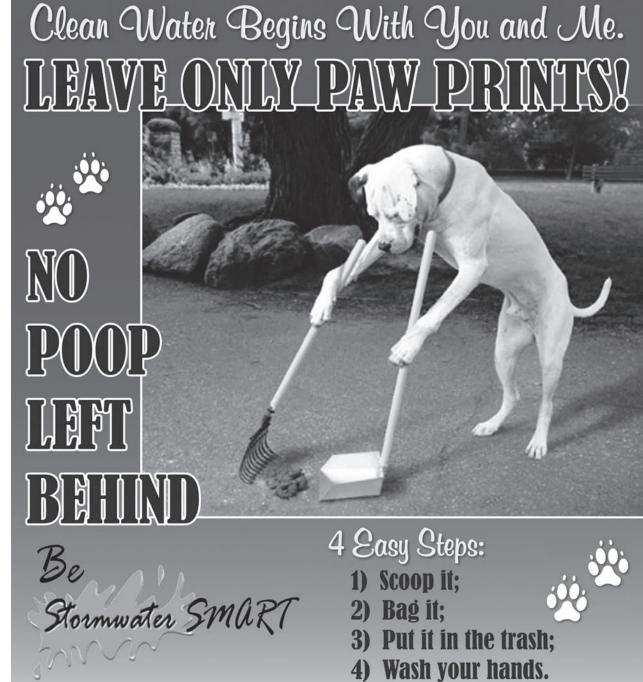
Stormwater – It's everybody's business!



 $StreamGuard^{TM}$ $Sudsafe^{TM}$ Car Wash Kit

Storm drains convey water through the public stormwater system to the nearest stream or lake without treatment. It is important to keep vehicle wash water from entering storm drains because detergents, oils, and heavy metals can be toxic to aquatic life. The SudSafe™ car wash kit captures wash water before it enters the storm drain and pumps it to either a grassy area or sanitary sewer. Using this kit helps to protect the quality of water in streams, lakes and Puget Sound.

To see a video, go to the link on our website: http://www.skagitcd.org/car_wash_kits



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
Skagit Conservation District • 360-428-4313 or visit www.skagitcd.org

Burlington

These new pet waste educational posters were designed this spring as part of the district's stormwater education program. If you would like a free copy, they are available at the Skagit Conservation District office – contact Kristi Carpenter at (360) 428-4313 or email: kristi@skagitcd.org.





MOUNT VERNON, CLEAR LAKE, BOW, AND CONWAY EARN NATIONAL DESIGNATION AS A CERTIFIED

"COMMUNITY WILDLIFE HABITAT"

....One Yard at a Time!



Donna Schram of Mount Vernon has spearheaded participation n the National Federation's "Community Wildlife labitat" program and serves as Chair for the Skagit Valley Backyard Wildlife Habitat

Leading a nationwide trend in community concern for habitat loss, the City of Mount Vernon and communities of Bow, Clear Lake and Conway will be officially designated a "Community Wildlife Habitat," at a celebration scheduled from 1 pm-3:30 pm on Thursday, August 26th at the new Kulshan Creek Community Butterfly Garden ~ the public is invited. The Skagit Valley Backyard Wildlife Habitat Team volunteers, in partnership with the Skagit Conservation District and the National Wildlife Federation, spearheaded the effort in 2007. The local effort has also been supported by the City of Mount Vernon, Skagit County, numerous local residents, and the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife.

The community program requires a certain percentage of homeowner yards, as well as public spaces (such as schools, parks, businesses, places of worship), to be certified under the National Wildlife Federation's "Backyard Wildlife Habitat" Program. To be certified, each participating yard or outdoor space must offer food, water, cover and a place for wildlife to raise their young. Homeowners must also follow healthy. sustainable gardening practices, such as water conservation, soil conservation, controlling exotic species, reducing or eliminating the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, planting native plants, removing invasive plants, and composting. Gardening for wildlife projects help keep water and air resources clean, they are healthier for people and the environment, and are less resource-dependent than conventional landscapes. Habitat landscapes also beautify our community and give residents pride in their neighborhoods.

In the Puget Sound region, Skagit Valley will join Fidalgo Island/Anacortes, Camano Island, Lake Forest Park, Alki, Kirkland, Bellingham, Edmonds, and Tukwila as "Certified Community Wildlife Habitats". Other Puget Sound communities currently registered and working on meeting the requirements, include Bainbridge Island, Crescent Valley, Mercer Island, NE Seattle, Poulsbo, Sammamish, Shoreline and Whidbey Island.

The Skagit Valley Backyard Wildlife Habitat Team will continue their outreach efforts in the community and are hoping to inspire and support county-wide participation in the program. Informational workshops for Burlington, Sedro-Woolley, and the upper Skagit areas are planned for later this year. For information about the celebration contact Donna Schram, Skagit Valley Backyard Wildlife Habitat Team at 848-0692 or Kristi Carpenter, Skagit Conservation District at 428-4313 or email: Kristi@skagitcd.org



The Kulshan Creek trail will soon be aflutter with birds, bees, and butterflies!

This fun and exciting Community Wildlife Habitat project was rekindled late this spring after a setback last fall when it had to be temporarily removed for the new PUD waterline. The project, lead by the Skagit Valley Backyard Wildlife Habitat Team volunteers and the Skagit Conservation District, has inspired many partnerships including the City of Mount Vernon Police Department, the Skagit County Youth and Family Services, the Kulshan Creek Neighborhood kids, and local Scout Group 4100, who built the garden fence and arbor. Invaluable support for the project has also been provided by Ani Gurnee of Aulos Design (landscape design), Rodda Paint, BTI Landscape Supplies, Wells Nursery, City of Mount Vernon Parks and Recreation, Richard Jiles and Jeff Lacey, who provided a backhoe and labor to prepare the site, numerous community volunteers, and Skagit PUD who placed all the boulders around the garden parimeter.

The demonstration butterfly garden is being designed to provide valuable habitat for butterflies, birds, and bees, to create a sense of community, raise public awareness, provide an outdoor learning experience for the neighborhood children, and to beautify the environment. The garden is located on the walking trail on the corner of 26th Street and Kulshan in Mount Vernon.

Numerous work parties were held at the garden during June and July and work will continue through the summer and fall. We are hoping that when the garden is done, the opportunity to see the beautiful plants, flowers, and butterflies in the garden will brighten your day; bring a smile to your face and joy to your heart!



Join us at the garden on Thursday, August 26th from 1 to 3:30 pm where we will celebrate our community as a "Certified Wildlife Habitat Community".





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.

Concrete Nor'West **Double O Ranch NW Farm Credit Services Puget Sound Energy** Schuh Farms **Skagit Farmers Supply** Wallace and Associates William F. Black Soil Testing

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



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Joe Holtcamp, CREP/GIS Coordinator Lori Kyle, Resource Monitoring Specialist Cindy Pierce, Youth Education & Data Information Coordinator John Schuh, Livestock, Small Farm Planning & Technical Program Coordinator Tom Slocum, Professional Engineer

Board of Supervisors

Janet McRae, Chair Paul Blau, Vice Chair Thijs Jacobson, Auditor Dean Wesen, Member Ryan Sakuma, Member





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 \Box



Correction: Dorothy Haase was recognized as a Community Volunteer at our Annual Award Banquet last September. Unfortunately her name was left off the list for that mistake.

What's Inside ... FIRE & FORESTRY AGRICULTURAL HAPPENINGS.... 4-5 KIDS FOR CONSERVATION 6-7 COMMUNITY STEWARDSHIP....8-10 **KEEPING IT CLEAN** AFTER THE STORM IN YOUR BACKYARD.....

Skagit Conservation District Board 2010 Election and Appointment Results

Congratulations to Skagit Conservation District Board Supervisors Janet McRae, who was reappointed by the Washington State Conservation Commission, and Dean Wesen, who was elected in a public election in March.

Janet has served as a Board Supervisor since 1994 in both elected and appointed positions and has been the Chair since 2007. Janet and her husband, Jim, raise cattle and are members of the Island Grown Farmers Coop, which

operates the Northwest Home Grown Ranch Meats in Bow at which Janet is the Manager. Janet also serves on the Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland (SPF) Board. SPF acquires development rights on agricultural land in Skagit County to "ensure that Skagit farming remains a permanent part of the region's identity for the benefit of local farmers and residents whose livelihoods depend on the land; Puget Sound citizens and visitors who enjoy the natural beauty of a pastoral landscape; and waterfowl, raptors, salmon, and other wildlife that depend on the managed farm landscape as habitat."

Dean was elected a Skagit Conservation District Board Supervisor in the District's March 16th public election held in Mount Vernon. The election was certified by the Washington State Conservation Commission Board at its board meeting on May 18th, and Dean was sworn in as a new Supervisor at the District's June 15th board meeting. Dean joins Chair Janet McRae, Vice Chair Paul Blau, Auditor Thijs Jacobson, and Member Ryan Sakuma as a volunteer on the Board of Supervisors, who oversee the work of the District, which provide voluntary, incentive based options that support working landscapes while protecting and enhancing our natural resource land base.

Dean is one of many Wesens who live in the Valley and are members of a fourth generation dairy family. Wesen Farms has been in existence for 100 years, and the Organic Wesen Dairy opened in 2006. As a consumer, you probably have tasted their milk, but may not have heard of either dairy because they sell their milk directly to Darigold and Organic Valley, both coops. Dean is a graduate of Burlington-Edison High School and Cal Polytechnic at San Luis Obispo, CA. He and his wife, Danielle, have two red-headed boys, Drew 9 and Dylan 12. In his spare time, Dean is the leader of the Sunshine Dairy 4-H Club, in which his two boys are involved and through which they show cattle at local fairs, and he is a Lt. Colonel in the U.S. Army Reserves. Dean hopes to further the work of the District's mission and work with the local community in reaching these goals.

The staff and Board of Supervisors welcomes Dean to the District team!

Other changes on the District Board:

Tony Hansen, who has served as an elected Supervisor since 2007 did not run for office this year, but will continue on the Board of Supervisors as an appointed Associate Supervisor. Thank you Tony for your three years of service and for continuing to be part of the District team!



SCD Board Meetings are held at 2021 E. College Way on the third Tuesday of every month at 6:30 a.m. and are open to the public. Please call (360) 428-4313 to verify meeting dates.

in the Winter 2010 Newsletter. Our apology