



Skagit County Public Works
Natural Resources Division
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Mount Vernon, WA 98273

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2025 SAMISH BAY

CLEAN WATER NEWSLETTER

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ABOUT YOUR WATERSHED

If you're getting this newsletter, then you live in the Samish Watershed!

The Samish Watershed is made up of all the rivers, streams, and ditches that flow into Samish Bay. These waters, when they are clean and healthy, make your watershed the wonderful place that it is! They provide resources for us, support shellfish farming, and are important for fish and wildlife like salmon and orca whales.

Keeping our water healthy and safe from pollution is everyone's job! We at Skagit County Natural Resources work hard to protect clean water, but we need help from residents like you. All kinds of human activities can pollute our water, but all kinds of pollution can be reduced or stopped.

Read inside to learn about your watershed's health, what we're doing to protect your watershed, and what YOU can do!

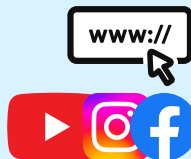
YOUR PART

We're proud of the work we do, but your watershed needs YOU to protect it, too! Luckily, there are a lot of ways to help make sure your water stays clean. Here's what to do if you have...

A dog	A septic system	Farm animals	A yard
Scoop poop on walks and hikes and throw it in the trash.	Get your system inspected regularly and fix problems right away.	Fence animals away from water.	Reduce fertilizer and chemical use.
Scoop poop in your yard at least weekly and throw it in the trash.	Keep fats, oils, greases, and wipes out of your system.	Cover your manure.	Plant native plants.
	Keep vehicles and heavy animals off of your drain field.	Manage your pastures and protect them in the wet and cold season.	Compost yard waste.

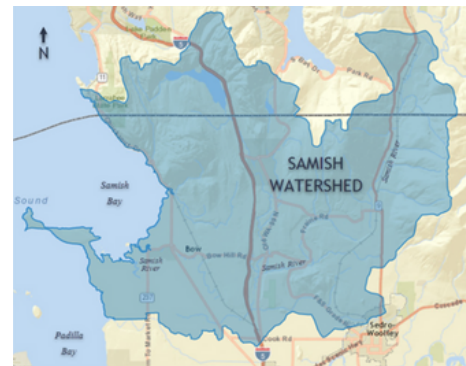


Find us **online**
for more tips
and info!



SkagitCounty.net/CleanWater

[@SkagitCountyCleanWater](https://www.instagram.com/SkagitCountyCleanWater)



143 sq. miles



~19,600 people



**11 routine water quality
sampling sites**



Top 3 Land Covers:
forest, cultivated crops,
and development



**~74% of watershed has
tree cover**



**~18% of watershed is
used for agriculture**

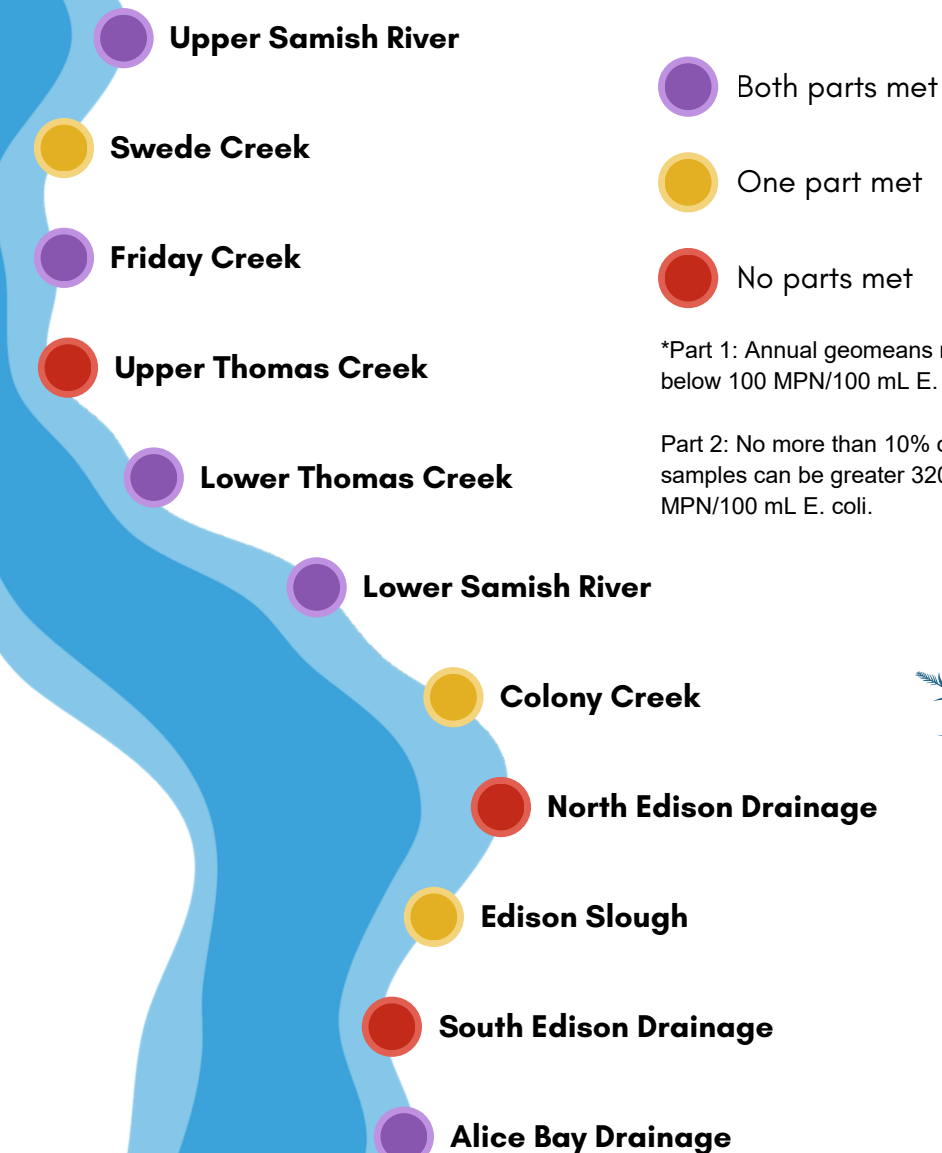
WHAT WE DO

Water Sampling

The Skagit County Monitoring Program measures water quality at 11 sites in the Samish Bay Watershed and over 40 across the County. Once we find out *where* water health is getting worse, we can find out why, and how to fix it.

Bacteria level data is important because it tells us if the water is safe for activities like shellfish harvesting.

Here are bacteria results for Samish Bay Watershed sample sites in the 2025 water year. The color shows if they met one, both, or neither parts of Washington's E. coli standard*:



Projects

Between planting native plants, restoring streams, removing noxious weeds like spartina, putting up fencing to keep farm animals out of waterways, doing outreach, and more, we work hard to protect Samish Bay Watershed. Here's some of what we got done in 2025!

PLANTED
24,440
NATIVE PLANTS*



RESTORED
120
FEET OF STREAMBANK*



INSTALLED
1,300
FEET OF LIVESTOCK
FENCING*



SURVEYED
12.27
MILES FOR SPARTINA



PROVIDED
>1,800
DOG POOP SCOOPING
SUPPLIES*



*Throughout all of Skagit County



A PROJECT IN YOUR WATERSHED

This time last year, blackberry bushes were eating up Durwin Hurley's land—and the 340 feet of Friday Creek streambank that runs through it. In August, Hurley reached out to Skagit County's Natural Resources Stewardship Program (NRSP) for help. Now, his property is being transformed, and Hurley won't have to pay a penny!

After visiting the property and talking with Hurley, NRSP was able to tame the blackberries. We will plant hundreds of native trees and shrubs along both sides of Friday Creek throughout 2026, and then care for them the next three years. The total cost of the project will reach around \$25,000, all covered by NRSP.

Restoration work like this supports both landowners and water quality. Hurley will have better access to his land thanks to the blackberry removal. The native plants will help keep Friday Creek clean so we can do more fishing and playing downstream. The planting will also make the creek better habitat for the steelhead, coho, chum, and other fish that call it home!

Native plants reduce erosion and help slow polluted runoff, keeping water cleaner. The plants will shade the water, keeping it at the cold temperature that fish thrive in. The leaves and stems will even be homes and food for the bugs that our fish eat. And cold, clean water upstream means less bacteria in the Samish Watershed. Hurley's choice to restore the streambank on his property makes a big difference for everyone!



Are you interested in help with a project like weed removal, restoration planting, livestock fencing, or a manure bin on your property? Reach out to Emily Derenne, our Restoration Project Manager:

Email: emilyjd@co.skagit.wa.us

Phone: 360-416-1449