



Skagit County Public Works
Natural Resources Division
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2025 **PADILLA BAY** CLEAN WATER NEWSLETTER

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ABOUT YOUR WATERSHED

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

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



44 sq. miles



~9,800 people



6 routine water quality sampling sites



Top 3 Land Covers:
crops, development, pastures



~19% of watershed has tree cover



~66% of watershed is used for agriculture

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



SkagitCounty.net/CleanWater



@SkagitCountyCleanWater

WHAT WE DO

Water Sampling

The Skagit County Monitoring Program measures water quality at 6 sites in the Padilla 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 swimming, boating, and fishing.

Here are bacteria results for Padilla 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*:



 **Mid Joe Leary Slough**

 **Lower Joe Leary Slough**

 **No Name Slough**

 **Big Indian Slough**

 **Little Indian Slough**

Washington E. coli standard

 Both parts met

 One part met

 No parts met

*Part 1: Annual geomeans must be below 100 MPN/100 mL E. coli.

Part 2: No more than 10% of the samples can be greater 320 MPN/100 mL E. coli.

How We Respond

When we see water quality problems, we do more sampling and work with residents in the area to pinpoint a pollution source.

Once we find the source, we try to fix it by offering information, project help, and funding.

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 Padilla Bay Watershed. Here's some of what we got done in 2025!

PLANTED
24,440
NATIVE PLANTS*



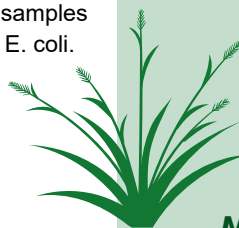
RESTORED
120
FEET OF STREAMBANK*



INSTALLED
1,300
FEET OF LIVESTOCK
FENCING*



SURVEYED
3.35
MILES FOR SPARTINA



PROVIDED
>1,800
DOG POOP SCOOPING
SUPPLIES*



*Throughout all of Skagit County



TARPS: THEY'VE GOT CLEAN WATER COVERED

They may seem like simple tools, but tarps are the unsung heroes of clean water!

Rain washes a lot of pollution into our waterways, including manure from fields and manure piles. Rain picks up everything it touches and carries it to rivers and streams, or into storm drains that lead to natural waterways. When rain picks up manure, it also picks up all of the bacteria and parasites in it and carries them to our water. Bacterial pollution like this makes it unsafe for us to swim, fish, and play in our water.

Tarps are an easy way to cover outdoor pollution sources like manure and stop them from getting washed into waterways. If the rain can't touch the manure, it can't transport its bacteria and parasites into our water.

Plus, covering manure helps it keep all of its valuable nutrients, too! Rainwater leaches nutrients out of manure, making it less useful as fertilizer. Instead, the nutrients fuel algae and weeds in our waterways.

Cheap, portable, and easily to secure, tarps are great tools for protecting your manure *and* our waterways!

FREE Manure Tarps for Padilla Watershed Residents!

Reach out to Leanne Ingman, Skagit County Natural Resources Technician:

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