

# SKAGIT CONSERVATION DISTRICT STORMWATER EDUCATION PROGRAM 2022 REPORT

For: City of Anacortes, City of Burlington, City of Mount Vernon,  
City of Sedro-Woolley, & Skagit County

The primary purpose of the Skagit Conservation District’s Storm Water Education Program is to assist local jurisdictions with compliance efforts for the “Public Education and Outreach” requirements of the NPDES storm water permit by facilitating greater public awareness of the sensitivity of local surface waters, their beneficial uses, the detrimental effects of polluted stormwater and illicit discharges, and measures that can be taken to reduce stormwater pollution.

The purpose of the partnership is to work together cooperatively, share a common message, avoid duplication of efforts (which in turn will save money and resources), utilize existing programs when possible and to share resources and expertise.

Program Overview: An informed, knowledgeable, and engaged community is crucial to the success of a stormwater management program. Skagit Conservation District, in partnership with the Cities of Anacortes, Burlington, Mount Vernon, and Sedro-Woolley, and Skagit County, has provided a comprehensive and multifaceted series of programs and opportunities aimed at educating, engaging, and inspiring local stewardship so that the goal of reducing stormwater pollution impacts to our local waterways can be achieved. A variety of education methods and stewardship opportunities were incorporated to reach a wide range of interest groups, including homeowners, businesses, contractors, youth, and the general public.

## 1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT

### Stormwater Facilities Maintenance workshop: Task 1.1

(Sep. 29,2022) Workshop was coordinated and held at the Port of Skagit County with 10 attendees. municipal overview provided by Jason Quigley, Stormwater Coordinator, Skagit County and Detention Pond Maintenance: Nuts and Bolts provided by Mark Howard of Storm Water Solutions, LLC. There were 10 in attendance. Promotion of the event was conducted via direct mailing to HOA contact lists in each jurisdiction promotional fliers distributed throughout the community and posted on websites and SCD Facebook, and through SCD and partners email distribution lists. Flyer shared on Facebook and Instagram including FB event page.



## Watershed Masters Volunteer Training Program

### Task 1.2

(Oct. 18- Nov. 19, 2022 ) Due to the new O&E team turnover we got a late start on this program. Participants attended 7 evening lecture sessions and 2 Saturday field days. Learning about Shellfish farming, Estuaries and Watersheds, Riparian restoration, and more. Between 5 and 9 people attended each session. Each class was created as an event on Facebook.



### Skagit Stream Team Task 1.3

- 63 volunteers participated in the 2021-22 Stream Team Program.
- The Annual Stream Team Appreciation event was scheduled and held at Padilla Bay Research Reserve on July 22, 2022.
- Training was held Sept. 21, 22, and 24, 2022.
- Data entry began for 2022-2023 sampling season.
- Volunteer coordination and correspondence and equipment maintenance is ongoing.

### Skagit Storm Team

- 14 volunteers participated in the 2022-2023 Storm Team program.
- Storm Team volunteers sampled 12 sites in the Padilla Bay Watershed during the 2022-23 monitoring year during high rain events and continued to sample the Thomas Road Samish River site when needed on weekends or holidays and report results to County & State Health.

Paid FB advertisement requesting volunteers

### Storm Drain Labeling Task 1.4

Storm drain marking kits are available at the Skagit Conservation District. Community groups and residents are encouraged to participate in the protection of water quality by marking storm drains in their neighborhoods and throughout the community.

- 86 storm drains were installed by 2 volunteers in Mount Vernon and Burlington.

### Poop Fairy Outreach Events: County CWD Contract Task 3 & Social Marketing Task 1.5

- *Skagit Watershed Council's Illuminight* (January 28<sup>th</sup>): Nine Families Took the "We scoop pledge. A positive response from the crowd and overall good for a small event that had little advertisement and was still under Covid restrictions.

- *Nature Discovery Day* (May 15<sup>th</sup>): Our outreach at this event had 2 parts. One was our poop toss game which teaches the importance of picking up poop and putting it in the trash. The other was “building a Critter house” craft which discussed habitat needs; Food, Water, Shelter, and a place to raise the young. Event attendance was about 25 people, which was not bad considering the rainy weather.



- *Skagit Water weeks* event (May 1- 31): “We Scoop” poster contest. The event “reached” at least 170 people on social media but had zero entries. Promo shared on Instagram and FB. During the same time and on fewer social media platforms our pet waste poll “reached’ 1,670 with 46 responses.
- During *water weeks*, staff was at the Children’s Museum in Burlington providing watershed model presentations to 80 children and adults.

- *Anacortes Energy Fair*: Conservation District services, Waterwise planting, and 50+ people were given pet waste bags.

- *Concrete Youth Activity Day* (July 14): Watershed model, button maker, and poop toss game. 200 participants, 35 people given pet waste bags. Photos shared on FB and event page shared.



- *Kids in Nature* (7/23/2022): Bilingual event, English and Spanish, for kids to learn about pet waste, clean water, salmon habitat, insects, and wildlife habitat. About seven families attended. Promo shared on Instagram and Facebook including a FB event page.

- *Family Festival of Farms* (Oct. 1 & 2):
  - Taylor Shellfish farm, 14 people took the “We scoop pledge.

- *Fidalgo Bay Day* (Aug. 20): Watershed model, button maker, and “critter house” crafts to teach people about watersheds, water quality, and wildlife habitat needs. 300+ contacts. FB photo shared of Watershed Model, event page shared (2).



## 2. PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

### The Backyard Conservation workshops: Task 2.1

(March 2<sup>nd</sup> through April 6<sup>th</sup>) Held Wednesday evenings with 1 Saturday fieldtrip to the WSU Extension Discovery Garden for a garden tour and composting presentation.

69 people signed up for the program. Because of Covid restrictions the primary venue was virtual via Zoom. The average attendance of the 5 Virtual classes was approximately 30 (Ranging between 25 and 45). The average attendance of the 2 in person events was about 15.

The virtual classes provided information on Rainwise gardening, Planting native plants for pollinators, Integrated pest management, sustainable energy, Pet waste and water quality, invasive plants, rainwater harvesting, and LID rain gardens and permeable pavers. Each class was created as an event on Facebook. LID, soils, and composting classes were shared on Instagram. Recording uploaded to YouTube.



### Resource Materials/Education for Local Schools Task 2.2

- Skagit Conservation District provides support to local schools by providing educational resources and presentations throughout the year.
- Educational packets were prepared and distributed to 525 local teachers. The packets include information on stormwater, watersheds, and other resources and educational programs available for teachers and classrooms through the Skagit Conservation District. Promotion of the EnviroScape Model classroom presentations
- Stormwater runoff and non-point source pollution was also distributed.
- 14 storm water education presentations, using the EnviroScape watershed model, were conducted in 2022 at local elementary schools and outreach events reaching over 500 Skagit County students and adults.
- Lake water quality sampling with Clear Lake elementary – 50 students.

### Miscellaneous: Task 2.3

Work conducted under this task included project administration and tracking, preparation of the annual report, and meetings and project/contract planning with partners.

### Storm Water Educational Brochures and Fact Sheets: Task 2.4

A “We Scoop Poster Contest” promotion designed and published on website & social media.  
“What every Homeowner should know about Low Impact development” tri-fold brochure.

## Workshop for Local Contractors: Task 2.5

During the new O&E team turnover, this task lapsed, however the time was used to create pages on our website that explain the basics of all of the “Low Impact Development” techniques (Use natural features, Minimize soil disturbance, Use Native plants, Rainwater Catchment, Rainwater Dispersion, Raingardens, Vegetated buffers, Permeable Pavement, & Green Roofs), why we need them, how to implement simple LID techniques, and links to find out more in depth information.



## PSSH Community Event Display Board: Task 2.6

## Produce Media Advertisements Task 2.7

Creation of YouTube channel, NextDoor and Instagram accounts.

*What's the Scoop (On poop)*: Blog post and shared on social media.

*Low Impact Development*: Full page in the SCD Newsletter. Shared on all social media and print outs for events.

## Looking Ahead to 2023

All programs will be continued with additional emphasis on getting the message to unreached groups by adding hybrid options at workshops and using new outreach mediums (such as social media and working with college and high school clubs).

We are trying to move away from so much wasted paper, by using more digital means.

Additionally, we are seeking opportunities to expand our outreach including different venues to our current queue of events.

We would like to update our event display boards with current program information.

Additional outreach to regain classroom participation after the pandemic.

We are hoping to initiate a program to reward people who have displays of beneficial practices with a nice sign (similar to the Dairy of Merit idea)

We are also hoping to bring back the award banquet honor.