

Quarterly Summary to Washington State Department of Health On-the-Ground Efforts in the Portage Bay Shellfish Protection District 2nd-4th Quarters of 2005

Efforts continue in the Portage Bay Shellfish Protection District to effect change in the water quality over the shellfish beds and throughout the district as a whole. The following is a summarized list of activities that have occurred in the district over the last three quarters of 2005.

Agricultural practices (Department of Agriculture)

Livestock Nutrient Management Plan (LNMP) Inspections

- **107**- routine dairy farm inspections completed
- **34** - dairy farm follow up inspections
- **15** - dairy complaint investigations that include manure spill, early applications, excessive applications and insufficient buffers
- **5** - technical assistance inspections
- **64** - other inspections

LNMP Compliance

- **20** - letters of warning
- **7**- notices of violation
- **4** - administration orders
- **4** - penalties
- **64** - referrals to the Conservation District for plan updates and/or technical assistance
- **2** - referrals to Whatcom County Planning and Development Services for CAO violations
- One operator/facility was served court papers for non-compliance with a WSDA Administrative Order.

Special Project- Lagoon Assessment (See Attachment)

- **118** storage lagoons reviewed during 3-day process

Nutrient Management Plans (Whatcom Conservation District)

1st Quarter (not previously reported)

- **5**- dairy farm plans approved
- **2**- small farm plans approved

2nd Quarter

- **3**- small farm plans approved

3rd Quarter

- **1**- dairy plan certified

4th Quarter

- **1**- dairy plan certified
- **1**- dairy plan approved

Critical Areas Ordinance (Whatcom County Planning and Development Services)

Updates to the Critical Areas Ordinance were adopted by the Whatcom County Council in September 2005, including revisions to the Conservation Program on Agricultural Lands (CPAL). These updates continue the farm plan provisions to limit impacts on agricultural activities in Whatcom County; provide clearer direction and clarify roles and responsibilities between applicants, the Conservation District, consultants and County staff; allow for better oversight and adaptive management of the farm plan program; and include updates to farm plan requirements based on new information.

On-site Septic Systems (Whatcom County Health Department)

Operations and Maintenance Program

A committee of interested persons met with County Health Department staff on a regular basis during 2005 to discuss and provide input regarding local OSS code changes. O&M was a large part of the discussions. The recommendations include requiring that OSS owners have maintenance inspections of their OSS at appropriate intervals. The Board of Health will be considering an ordinance amendment that will require O&M updating of OSS when property served by OSS are transferred. The Health Department is currently working on their OSS database and the development of software designed for tracking O&M.

2nd Quarter

- 4 – OSS complaint inspections
- 9 – OSS loan inspections

3rd Quarter

- 7 – OSS complaint inspections
- 15 – OSS loan inspections

4th Quarter

- 7 – OSS complaint inspections
- 10 – OSS loan inspections
- 1 – OSS survey

Municipalities

Wastewater Discharge Permits

Washington Department of Ecology drafted and finalized for signature the City of Everson's wastewater discharge permit. The City of Lynden's facility is in the public review process. The wastewater discharge permit for the City of Ferndale was written in 2004 and the five-year permit cycle will end in 2009.

City of Lynden Wastewater Treatment Plant

Upgrades to the City of Lynden wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) in 2005 consisted of the purchase and installation of a second rotary mechanical screen with a 1/4 inch sieve zone to remove screenings from raw wastewater. This screen provides redundancy in the screening process. Monthly averages of effluent fecal coliform levels in 2005 ranged from 2 to 12 cfu/100mL with an annual average of 4 cfu/100mL.

Tennile Creek Watershed Project

This community-based project has involved a variety of elements including development and distribution of educational materials, an oral history project, landowner visits, neighborhood

meetings, stream restoration, farmers growing trees for salmon, high school involvement, and a survey.

A survey was sent to the 480 landowners that live along Tenmile Creek to evaluate the effectiveness of this community-based watershed project. There was a 16% return rate on the surveys. Some key results of the survey are summarized below. In terms of measuring change in attitude from 2002 to 2005:

- Just over 83% of the respondents in 2005 believed that changes to improve water quality can go hand in hand with land use needs, versus 63% in 2002.
- Fifty-one percent (51%) feel more strongly about leaving the next generation a healthier ecosystem within our Tenmile Creek watershed and about having farming around in the future.
- Approximately 35% of respondents said that the health of the Tenmile Creek watershed matters more, that the community in the Tenmile Creek watershed is important, and that as a member of this community, everyone has a part to play in restoration.

Water Quality Monitoring (conducted by Northwest Indian College)

TMDL Summary- Water quality at station M1 (Marine Drive Bridge, most downstream station on the Nooksack mainstem) has been meeting the TMDL target goals, however many stations are not meeting their interim target. There are fifteen stations meeting their ultimate target for nearly 32% compliance. Twenty-three stations, or 49%, are not meeting their interim target, but their geometric mean is less than 100cfu/100mL, and ten stations, or 21%, are exceeding 100cfu/100mL.