

Quarterly Summary to Washington State Department of Health On-the-Ground Efforts in the Portage Bay Shellfish Protection District 2nd Quarter of 2002

Efforts continue in the Portage Bay Shellfish Protection District to affect 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 second quarter of 2002.

Agricultural practices (Department of Ecology and Whatcom Conservation District)

- 20- dairy farm inspections completed (goal was for 23 to be completed)
- 0- Notice of Correction or Civil Penalty were issued for the Nooksack River Basin
- 3- Warning Letters were issued
- 1- Notice of Violation was issued
- 1- Administrative Order was issued
- All but two dairy farms within the Portage Bay Shellfish Protection District and throughout Whatcom County have met the compliance deadline of July 1, 2002 for development of nutrient management plans.

On-site Septic Systems (County Health and Human Services)

- 19- OSS inspections performed- 14 loan inspections, 5 based on complaints
- 5- found to be violations, 3 of the 5 have been abated
- No low interest loans were applied for from the County program to affect repairs.

Municipal Sewer Systems (DOE, Cities of Everson, Lynden and Ferndale)

- The City of Everson STP averaged monthly fecal coliform levels of 3, 3, and 6 CFU/100mL, respectively, for the months of April, May and June 2002. This continues to keep them well below their new discharge permit limit of 28 CFU/100mL (monthly average).
- The new NPDES permit for the City of Lynden STP goes into effect on July 1, 2002. The facility is currently meeting all of the new more stringent limits of the new permit.
- The City of Lynden had average monthly fecal coliform levels of 13, 7 and 8 CFU/100mL for the months of April, May and June 2002 all well within the new lower limit of 28 CFU/100mL.
- The City of Lynden continues work on their wastewater treatment facility expansion.
- The City of Ferndale had average monthly fecal coliform levels of 12, 10 and 11 CFU/100mL for the months of April, May and June, all well below the limit of 28 CFU/100mL which will be their new limit when their permit is revised in 2003.
- The secondary TMDL target is a daily maximum <64 CFU/100mL. Lynden exceeded the target in only 3 of its 26 samples. Everson exceeded the target in only 3 of 66 samples. Ferndale did not exceed the target in any of its 26 samples.

Water Quality Monitoring (Northwest Indian College, B. Marcy/Stream Team, C. Woodward)

- *Freshwater sites*- 52 sites- monitored bi-weekly (twice a month)

- The main-stem of the Nooksack continues to meet the freshwater standards at all 4 sites.
- Seven out of eight sites sampled as part of the TMDL for bacteria for the Nooksack watershed are currently meeting the target goals set forth in the DOE's Detailed Management Plan. The site on Fishtrap Creek is the only one not meeting its target goal of 117CFU/100mL for fecal coliform bacteria.
- Marine sites- 3 sites- monitored bi-weekly (twice a month)
 - Site #50 and #51 currently are meeting the two-part standard for shellfish growing waters, with geometric means of 42.5 and 30.1, respectively. Site #2 is currently not meeting the standard, with a geometric mean of 43.9.

Other Projects/Events in 2001

- **Tenmile Creek Watershed Project**- The 2nd quarter of 2002 saw numerous activities occurring in the Tenmile Creek watershed. Here is a partial listing of some of those activities:
 - 3 advisory meetings were held
 - A pre-survey was developed; it will be distributed to landowners within 100 feet of Tenmile, Fourmile or Deer Creek.
 - 5 farms have planted trees to be used for restoration projects within the watershed
 - 14,270 trees have been re-planted along streams and other waterbodies throughout Whatcom County as part of the "Farmers Growing Trees for Salmon" program
 - 4 sites on Tenmile Creek have been planted; 3 more are in the planning stage
 - 9 sites on Fourmile Creek have plans developed
 - 36 landowner visits were conducted to provide education and to help plan, plant or maintain plantings
 - 3 neighborhood meetings were held
 - 3 educational opportunities occurred in the 2nd quarter: Shuckin' on the Spit ([a new annual event designed to highlight marine issues in Whatcom County](#)), the Walla Walla Watershed Alliance Spring Confluence and a tour of a Tenmile Creek site by the Washington Agriculture and Forestry Leadership class
 - 18 educational binders were developed and shared with the neighborhoods and with landowners
 - Horticultural classes at Lynden and Meridian High Schools grew over 600 plants that were distributed to landowners and other groups involved in restoration projects in the Nooksack watershed.

This project has provided a wonderful example of how communities and neighborhoods working together can affect change. The Portage Bay Shellfish District hopes to be able to use this example as well as the Bertrand Creek Stream Team Program to help get other communities interested in starting similar programs within their sub-watersheds.

- **Bertrand Creek Stream Team**- The Stream Team group has been busy in the 2nd quarter of 2002:
 - Over 400 copies of the Spring 2002 Bertrand Creek Stream Team News were mailed out.
 - A Power Point presentation was developed to help educate others on what the Stream Team program is all about.

- A couple of second grade classes from Fisher Elementary participated in native planting along Fishtrap Creek. The children planted approximately 30 shrubs and trees on the private property, which is located directly across the creek from the school. This proximity will allow the children to monitor the plants' growth.
 - Efforts are being made to bring the "Horses for Clean Water Program" to the Bertrand Creek watershed. Contact has been made with the head of this program and once the appropriate contracts are in place, coordination will take place to have workshops held in the Bertrand Creek watershed.
 - Signage has been developed (Bertrand Creek Stewardship Farm) to draw attention to this wonderful, community-based program.
 - Conservation District staff have reviewed past Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) referrals and created a follow-up list, which they have shared with County Planning staff. For status review.
 - Sampling in Bertrand Creek continues. Two Stream Team volunteers sample the creek twice a month.
 - The Conservation District and NSEA are working together to create a map of parcels within 100' of Bertrand Creek or its tributaries. This map will be used for habitat assessment work and to help prioritize future restoration work, such as the Stream Team's work in Fishtrap Creek, which will begin this fall.
- **TMDL Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP)**- Department of Ecology has released the 2002- 1st quarter report of the TMDL DIP for the Nooksack watershed. Fishtrap and Smith Creek are the only tributaries not meeting their target bacteria goals for the 1st quarter. All sampling sites on the main stem of the Nooksack are meeting their target levels. Not all agencies were able to reach their targets for the 1st quarter of 2002, due to funding issues or due to a reduction in the number of citizen-driven referrals/requests. DOE will wait one more quarter before determining whether they need to adjust their control measures to help reach the water quality standards of the plan.
 - **Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team**- The PSWQAT is involved in numerous aspects of water quality and water quality issues in the Puget Sound area. They deal with issues from shellfish to stormwater to land use. The PSWQAT has been involved in both the Drayton Harbor and Portage Bay Shellfish Protection Districts.
 - In May of 2002, the PSWQAT sponsored a low impact development workshop for northern Puget Sound, dealing with ecologically friendly approaches to land development and stormwater management. It is estimated that 200 people participated in the event.
 - The PSWQAT worked with the Bellingham Herald to distribute approximately 26,000 copies of their Puget Sound Health 2002 to citizens in Whatcom County. This informational report gives an update on the current status of Puget Sound. Additional copies of the report were distributed to various organizations and groups in the area.
 - The PSWQAT provided information to the City of Ferndale on the Puget Sound stormwater program and provided clarification on the point that all local governments are expected to implement all components of this comprehensive plan.