

Quarterly Summary to Washington State Department of Health On-the-Ground Efforts in the Portage Bay Shellfish Protection District 3rd Quarter of 2004

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 third quarter of 2004.

Agricultural practices (Washington Department of Ecology and Department of Agriculture)

- Ecology hosted the first Nooksack watershed data review meeting on September 28, 2004. It was determined at the meeting that data review should be conducted monthly to review the latest Nooksack TMDL and Portage Bay data since several sampling stations on Nooksack tributaries were not meeting their targets. Stations in Portage Bay were seeing a rise in bacterial counts from samples taken during periods of low salinity, which points to the Nooksack River as the major source of freshwater and possible fecal bacteria. It was determined at the meeting that if violations were reported or seen that Wash. Dept. of Agriculture, Dept. of Ecology, Whatcom County Planning and Development, and Whatcom County Health would coordinate inspections, sampling, and results with each other.
- **15** dairy farm inspections were performed over the last two quarters of 2004. Note: Washington State Dept. of Agriculture has successfully hired an inspector for its northwest region.

County Ordinance Investigations (Whatcom County Planning and Development)

- **0** reported critical area ordinance investigations

On-site Septic Systems (Whatcom County Health Department)

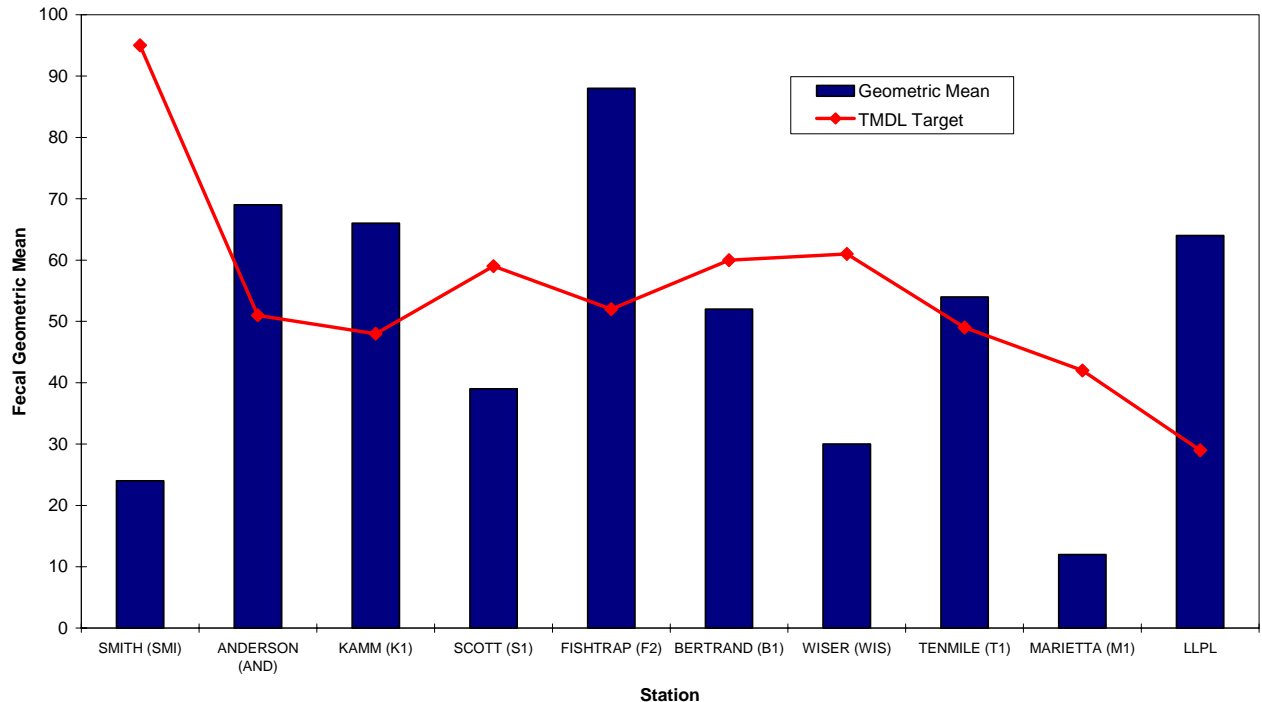
- **21**- loan report inspections performed- **4** based on complaints
- **3** have been repaired, and **1** is in the process of being repaired

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

- The City of Everson STP averaged monthly fecal coliform levels (geometric mean) of 4.7 CFU/100mL, for the month of July 2004.
- Ferndale's STP plant recorded an average of 10 CFU/100mL for July, August, and September 2004.
- The City of Lynden STP averaged monthly fecal coliform levels (geometric mean) of 2.6 CFU/100mL for July 2004.

Water Quality Monitoring (Northwest Indian College)

- *Freshwater sites*- 52 sites- monitored bi-weekly (twice a month)
 - Half of the ten sites used for the Nooksack TMDL for fecal coliform bacteria are meeting their target TMDL goals for the second quarter of 2004.



Other Projects/Events in 2004

Mutt Mitt Stations-

- The City of Ferndale established a station at Vanderyacht Park. One box of mitts was used from July through September 2004, so roughly 1.00×10^{12} (1,000,000,000,000) fecal coliform bacteria were removed from the system before they could enter the Nooksack River.

Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team-

- Update on the Shellfish/Urbanization study: the first part of the project (literature review) is available at: http://www.psat.wa.gov/Programs/shellfish/sf_lit_review0604.pdf. The second part (the UW research report correlating different landscape metrics with bacterial pollution in selected shellfish growing areas) is nearly done and will be available by year's end (among other preliminary findings, loss of forest cover and impervious cover both correlate with pollution levels). The third part (management guidelines) will come out next year. Stuart gave a presentation on the project to the Semiahmoo Bay Shared Waters Roundtable in September. If you have any questions or if there are issues you would like to discuss, please contact Stuart Glasoe, our shellfish program lead, at 360-725-5449 or sglasoe@psat.wa.gov.
- There is an article in the summer Sound Waves on the recent shellfish upgrades in Puget Sound, including Drayton Harbor at http://www.psat.wa.gov/Publications/soundwaves/archive_sw/sw_summer_04_rev.pdf

- PSAT is working with other groups on developing transboundary indicators, including a shellfish indicator. The initial shellfish indicator will likely focus on changes in acreage available for commercial harvest in the Puget Sound and Georgia Basin, which is a good news story on our side, at least, with a net increase of approximately 8,000 acres over the past 10 years.

Port of Bellingham

- The Port continues monthly water quality monitoring at ten sites within Blaine Harbor and three sites outside the marina.
- In 2003, the Port has partnered with the Whatcom County Marine Resource Committee the Blaine Harbor Pilot project aimed at developing and implementing management option(s) to reduce fecal coliform loading from upland species (birds/rodent). The Port continued working with the MRC on the project. The pilot management options (stormwater planters and bird harassment) were installed by the Port in April 2004. Hirsch Consulting Services is sampling the inflow and outflow of the stormwater planters during the 3rd quarter. Monitoring results will be available in the latter half of the 4th quarter.