



# Whatcom Conservation District

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Board Chair: Joseph Heller

State Legislative District #39, 40, 42  
Congressional District #1, 2

## Other Accomplishments



Whatcom Conservation District installed 23 Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and riparian projects improving 43,596 feet of stream bank with 41,965 native plants, while maintaining 137 existing projects.



Outreach events promoted watershed improvements through workshops, volunteer work parties, and a 5K Fun Run directly engaged over 700 local citizens.



Manure lagoon lining and pump installed with WA State Conservation Commission cost-share funds to reduce input of nutrients flowing into shellfish growing areas of Portage Bay.

## 2014 Feature Accomplishment: Stream crossings protect water quality

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Many streams are not as clean as they look. Fecal coliform bacteria, pesticides, sediment, petroleum products, and heavy metals are commonly found in the water. We must have clean water for crop irrigation, fish to live, kids to play, and for healthy shellfish downstream. Everyone near a stream must be a steward of the water resource. Stream crossings are an opportunity to make improvements to a farm property that also helps improve water quality while also improving efficiencies on the farm.

### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Two bridges were installed in September 2013, replacing in-stream farm crossings. Although once common, this type of in-stream farm crossing results in contamination with grease, oils, and heavy metals from vehicles with the possibility of major discharge from cargo, such as pesticides or manure. Each replacement bridge was installed in less than two days and proved to be a win both for the landowners and the resources. The blueberry and dairy farms now have safe year-round access to fields on both sides of the stream, and vehicle contaminants no longer reach the water. As a bonus, gravels placed under the new structures were immediately used by spawning salmon.



(Top) Before: 1 of 2 in-stream crossings threatening water quality. NRCS Puget Sound Salmon Partnership funding was used to install farm bridge crossings. (Bottom) After: Bridge crossing on blueberry farm was installed in September 2013 by the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association & Harkness Construction.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Natural Resources Conservation Service (funding); Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association (implementation); Harkness Contracting (construction); WA State Department of Fish and Wildlife (permitting); U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (permitting)

## More Work to Do!

- Riparian Restoration: 20 CREP projects planned for installation in spring 2015; NRCS Salmon Partnership Projects
- Livestock: Continue technical assistance to 110 dairies and hundreds of small farms; Provide engineering services to recipients of state and federal cost-share project funding.
- Education/Outreach: Partner with Whatcom County through PIC process; Engage Birch Bay residence with water quality workshops and events.