



# Skagit Conservation District

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Board Chair: Paul Blau

State Legislative District #10, 39, 40  
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## Other Accomplishments



Installation of a livestock solar water pump system.



Skagit Watershed Masters field day at Padilla Bay. 510 participants have graduated from the program and have volunteered over 46,700 hours.



NRCS Soils Station at the annual Skagit Conservation Youth Tour. Between 750 and 800 students attend each year.

## 2016 Feature Accomplishment Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)



Before photo: The very first CREP project in Skagit County was installed in the Childs Creek Watershed 16 years ago

### RESOURCE CHALLENGE

According to the 2016 State of Our Watersheds report by the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, we are losing salmon habitat faster than we are creating it. In Skagit County, we are reversing that trend. The Skagit Conservation District uses CREP to restore riparian forest buffers (streamside vegetation) adjacent to salmon-bearing streams on agricultural land. In turn for enrolling

in CREP, landowners are paid an annual rental rate for the amount of acres enrolled. The district has been providing technical assistance and program guidance for CREP in Skagit County since 2000. Although the program has been quite successful in Skagit County, it can be a difficult decision for producers to take farmland out of production when signing a 10-15 year contract. As an incentive to enroll in the program, CREP offers to pay the producer twice the soil rental rate that they might receive if they were to rent the land to a different producer.

### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Over the past 16 years, the Skagit Conservation District has assisted in implementing 98 CREP projects, 684 acres of buffer (vegetation), 43 miles of stream bank treated, and 81,120 feet of fencing. This includes planting 312,068 trees and shrubs.



Photo after 15 years: A well-established buffer, and the cooperator has re-enrolled in CREP for another 15-year contract

**KEY PARTNERS:** Washington State Conservation Commission; USDA Farm Service Agency; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

## More work to do!

- Continue with the Samish/Padilla Bay Pollution Identification and Correction program to increase participation and accelerate implementation of best management practices (BMPs) to protect shellfish resources.
- Implement Firewise projects in Skagit County.
- Continue work to protect and enhance natural resources through the development of farm plans and implementation of BMPs.
- Increase the number of CREP participants.