



# Whatcom Conservation District

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Legislative District: 40, 42 Congressional District: 1, 2

## Other Accomplishments



Five communities in Whatcom County received wildfire preparedness support and recognition from Whatcom CD.



Partnered with City of Bellingham and Whatcom County on the Lake Whatcom Homeowner Incentive Program for phosphorus reduction.



Over 100 farmers in Whatcom County received voluntary technical assistance from Whatcom CD following a robust outreach program.

### 2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

## Local Dairy Farm Becomes Fish Friendly

### Resource Challenge

Clarkson Creek flowed under a levee through culverts and past floodgates that were a 100 percent barrier to fish passage. The floodgates, installed in the 1950s, were old, failing, and a priority fish barrier for removal. The failing culverts also didn't meet U.S. Army Corps of Engineers levee standards. Farm fields lacked adequate flood protection during the growing season. The solution demonstrates the commitment to farms, fish, and flood protection from a diverse group of partners.

### Project Summary and Results

Whatcom Conservation District (CD) collaborated with partners to install new culverts and self-regulating floodgates, opening 2.2 miles of fish habitat upstream. The new floodgates are adjustable to protect fields in the growing season and better connect the river to its floodplain in the wet seasons. The gates typically are open, resulting in both fish passage and better drainage of the farm fields.

"I feel good for my family going forward that this part of the farm is secure. They won't be dealing with this again in their lifetime," said farm operator Rich Appel of the project.

### Key Partners

Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District; Appel Farms; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Diking District #3; Washington State Conservation Commission; Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife



Left: Floodgates on Clarkson Creek prior to removal were fish barriers and threatened farm productivity. Right: Appel Farm is a leader in farm stewardship with new fish-friendly floodgates in the Nooksack floodplain.

## Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Certify 20 farms in the Whatcom Sound Horsekeeping Program, and launch manure spreader loan program thanks to a Rose Foundation Grant.
- ▶ Provide cost share to 10 farmers for water quality best management practices in partnership with the Whatcom County Pollution Identification and Correction Program.
- ▶ Plan and install 30 riparian restoration and habitat projects.
- ▶ New Research - Improve water pollution source characterization using whole genomic molecular source tracking (MST) techniques by building a local fecal reference catalog and validating with water samples.