



Other Accomplishments

Nisqually Rain Garden

Before:



After:



- Installed ~2,300 sq. ft. rain garden in public right-a-way (the first)
- Treats ~4,062 sq. ft. of stormwater runoff (from roadway and cul de sac)
- 90+ middle school students involved in salvaging plants & installing ~250 plants
- Partners include: Mason Conservation District, South Sound GREEN, Komachin Middle School, Nisqually Highlands HOA, Shellfish Fund, and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

2012 Feature Accomplishment

Additional Acres of Shellfish Growing Area Re-Opened in South Puget Sound Inlet

Resource Challenge – Declining water quality from the heavily developed areas of Lacey, Olympia, and other parts of Thurston County led to several shellfish classification downgrades between 1985 and 2005 in Henderson Inlet. Contributors were stormwater runoff, failing or improperly managed septic systems, pet waste, and agricultural farming.



Students learn about the anatomy of an oyster

Project Summary and Results – In 2001 Thurston County formed a shellfish protection district (SPD) to address the water quality problems in the watershed. Soon after, the Thurston Conservation District agreed to dedicate 28% of the District’s annual assessment funds specifically for work within the SPD. Together with other entities, we have utilized those funds (along with grant dollars) to address those water quality issues. The *Clear Choices for Clean Water* program, an incentive-based program which challenges residents to take actions to help improve the water quality in Puget Sound. To date, 237 participants that have taken 1,925 actions in this program! The District has also helped 192 farms implement 563 Best Management Practices aimed at reducing water quality impacts.

After 26 years of over 650 acres of shellfish beds degraded in Henderson Inlet the situation is now turning around and shellfish beds are now being upgraded. In June, the Department of Health upgraded 100 acres of commercial shellfish beds in Henderson Inlet due to improved water quality. This adds to the 240 acres in area that was upgraded in 2010.

Key Project Partners – Thurston Co. Environmental Health, WA Dept. of Health, WA Dept. of Ecology, Henderson Community Shellfish Farm, Pacific Shellfish Institute, Henderson/Nisqually Shellfish Stakeholders Group, South Sound GREEN, Nisqually River Education Project, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, and numerous local landowners and shellfish growers.

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More Work To Do

- Secure funding to implement livestock projects currently on the waiting list.
- Provide support to new & beginning farmers, helping to keep agriculture viable.
- Expand stormwater management on private property through the installation of rain gardens and Splash Boxes.
- Secure funding to assist agricultural landowners in complying with the local Critical Areas Ordinance.
- Continue focus on restoring Puget Sound and areas that affect shellfish harvest and other activities.
- Continue to be a partner in implementing local TMDL plans.