

Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland position on the Clean Samish Initiative

Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland (SPF) has a long history of strongly advocating for responsible environmental stewardship of farmland, including our tidelands, and supports environmental and agricultural research initiatives to protect our natural resources. Additionally, SPF is actively engaged on issues relating to wildlife and salmon habitat protection, environmental stewardship and the continued viability of Skagit agriculture.

SPF is committed to supporting the objectives and roles of the many partners involved in Clean Samish Initiative (CSI) in order to protect our important fish and shellfish resources, which make up a vital and integral component of our agricultural industry. In 2009 the SPF Board passed a resolution supporting and encouraging

“ . . .scientifically valid sampling and testing methods to provide information regarding fecal pollution impacts on stream health, and to encourage federal, state and local agencies to design, fund and implement research and education strategies that help reduce or eliminate sources of fecal pollution in Skagit Valley’s Watersheds.”

The Board of Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland takes very seriously our commitment to the responsible stewardship of farmland and believes improving water quality in impaired streams is a shared responsibility.

SPF support the CSI and its partners in achieving the goals of the CSI and is encouraged to see that voluntary steward programs, such as those offered through the Skagit Conservation District, are working in concert with existing regulations and compliance measures, to protect our water resources.

In particular the SPF Board recognizes the significant accomplishments made by Skagit County and the Skagit Conservation District since 2009 in achieving the following through research, education and voluntary stewardship.

- Microbial Source Tracking (DNA testing) initiated.
- 2,909 acres protected by resource management plans.
- 2,207 citizens participated in water quality workshops.
- 1,707 acres protected by nutrient management plans.
- 1,584 residential on-site septic systems inspected
- 164 acres of riparian buffers planted.

- 115 on-site septic systems repaired or replaced.
- 55 landowners received technical assistance to improve water quality.
- 27 water quality workshops conducted.
- 23.66 miles of stream miles protected by farm plans.
- 17 pet waste stations and 12 portable toilets installed.

SPF will continue to support the CSI and its partners in achieving the goals of the CSI and we will continue to advocate for the implementation of responsible stewardship programs and practices offered through the Skagit Conservation District.

When it is determined that voluntary efforts of education, outreach, and technical assistance are not effective in encouraging landowners to take timely voluntary actions to solve known and identified problems, then formal compliance measures, under existing regulations, are a necessary and appropriate step to protect our water resources and our tideland farmers.

SPF recognizes that that the Department of Ecology (DOE), as the principal enforcement agency for water quality protection, has one of the more unpopular tasks when voluntary stewardship measures go unheeded and unused. SPF understands and agrees that to date, DOE has taken reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure water quality is not being further impaired when voluntary stewardship has not been demonstrated.