

VOLUME 37 NUMBER 1

SKAGIT CONSERVATION NEWS

PLANT SALE EDITION

FEATURING:

Annual plant sale information

Board election details

Much more...!



SKAGIT CONSERVATION NEWS IS GOING ALL DIGITAL!

Come with us! If you are only receiving the Skagit Conservation News via post mail, please visit our website and click on the "eNews Sign Up" button to register for our eNews and ensure that you continue to have access to our newsletters. Questions? Call us: 360.428.4313 Email us: skagitcd@skagitcd.org

SKAGIT CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD SUPERVISOR ELECTION

One elected position on the Skagit Conservation District (SCD) Board will expire in 2021. The position is currently held by Dave Malsed. There are no term limits and the candidate may choose to continue on the Board if elected by the public.

To vote, request an absentee ballot by 4:30 p.m. Wednesday February 3, 2021 by calling the SCD at 360.428.4313 or cast your vote at our public walk-in poll election, which will be held from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Wednesday February 24th at 2021 E College Way, Mount Vernon, WA. Voters must be WA State registered voters and live in Skagit County. To be an elected candidate, you must be a WA State registered voter, live in Skagit County and file an information form with

SCD by 4:30 p.m. Wednesday January 27, 2021. Candidate information forms are available by contacting Cindy Pierce at 360.428.4313.

More about the Board of Supervisors

The SCD Board is a governing body of five supervisors who are unpaid public officials. The Board oversees the work of the SCD, which provides voluntary, incentive-based options that support working landscapes while protecting and enhancing our natural resource land base. Three of the Board of Supervisors are elected by the voters of Skagit County and two are appointed by the WA State Conservation Commission.



CANDIDATE FILING DEADLINE

4:30 P.M. WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2021

ABSENTEE BALLOTS REQUEST DEADLINE

4:30 P.M. WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2021

ABSENTEE BALLOTS RECEIPT DEADLINE

1:00 P.M. WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2021

PUBLIC POLL ELECTION

7 A.M. TO 1 P.M. WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2021

2021 E. COLLEGE WAY, MOUNT VERNON, WA

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REQUEST A FORM OR BALLOT
CONTACT CINDY PIERCE AT 360.428.4313 OR EMAIL CINDY@SKAGITCD.ORG

COMMISSION WEBSITE: [HTTP://WWW.SCC.WA.GOV](http://www.scc.wa.gov)

SCD RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS AWARD!

Skagit CD is honored to have been voted 2020 Conservation District of the year by the Washington Association of Conservation Districts. We would like to recognize our partners including landowners, volunteers, funders, agencies & other diverse partners that work to assure healthy natural resources for all future generations.

Thank You!



2021 NATIVE PLANT SALE

THE SKAGIT CD PLANT SALE WILL BE DIFFERENT THIS YEAR.

For many reasons related to the pandemic, we are having to scale back on our plant sale offerings this year. We are not able to carry as many species as we normally do, & will be selling them in higher bulk quantities. Because of this we are offering a 25% discounted price on our plants.

- Evergreen species will be sold in bulk quantities of 100 seedlings
- Deciduous & shrub species will be sold in bulk quantities of 50 seedlings

We recognize that there are mitigation & restoration projects that are still being implemented during these times & are hoping to help meet those needs.

PLANT ORDER INFORMATION

- All orders will be taken over the phone to ensure that the inventory is current at the time of ordering.
- Plants will be packaged in advance of pick-up.
- A contact-less drive-through system for order pick-up will be in place.

TO PLACE AN ORDER, PLEASE CALL CINDY PIERCE AT 360.428.4313

Plant pick-up is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, April 10, 2021 in Bow. Once your order is placed & paid, you will receive your invoice with complete instructions & directions for pick-up.

PLANT SALE PROCEEDS

The proceeds from our plant sale are used to support our K-12 education programs that provide students fun, hands-on education about our natural resources.

We sincerely apologize to all of our loyal customers for the inconvenience the changes to our plant sale will cause. We believe that by 2022 we'll be back to our normal operations. Thank you for understanding!

Please check for updates on our website
& be sure to sign up for our e-news as well.

Conifers (sold in bundles of 100)



Max. Ht. - 300'
Prefers acidic, well-drained soils; Christmas tree, lumber, wildlife food & shelter

Size: 12"+
2-0

Douglas Fir,
Pseudotsuga menziesii

~~\$116~~
\$87



Max. Ht. - 200'
Moist to dry well-drained soils; Christmas tree, lumber, wildlife food & shelter

Size: 12"+
2-0

Grand Fir,
Abies grandis

~~\$116~~
\$87



Max. Ht. - 200'
Prefers cool, moist, well-drained soil; Christmas trees, wildlife food & shelter

Size: 12"+
P-1

Noble Fir,
Abies nobilis

~~\$148~~
\$111



Max. Ht. - 65'
Prefers acidic, well-drained soils; Christmas tree, lumber, wildlife food & shelter

Size: 12"+
2-0

Shore Pine,
Pinus Contorta

~~\$128~~
\$96



Max. Ht. - 200'
Moist forests & forested bogs; erosion control, wildlife food & shelter, lumber

Size: 12"+
2-0

Sitka Spruce,
Picea sitchensis

~~\$128~~
\$96



Max. Ht. - 80'
Grows in dry to moist soil; wildlife food & shelter, early bloom for pollinators

Size: 18"+
1-0

Big Leaf Maple,
Acer macrophyllum

~~\$120~~
\$90



Max. Ht. - 80'
Prefers moist, well-drained soils; wildlife food & shelter, fuel, lumber, windbreak

Size: 18"+
2-0

Birch,
Betula papyrifera

~~\$115~~
\$86.25



Max. Ht. - 35'
Prefers shady & moist areas in forest openings; wildlife food, good for bees

Size: 18"+
2-0

Cascara,
Rhamnus purshiana

~~\$115~~
\$86.25



Max. Ht. - 25'
Grows in dry to wet areas; wildlife shelter, host for the Wstrn. Tiger Swallowtail

Size: 12"+
1-0

Vine Maple,
Acer circinatum

~~\$120~~
\$90

Shrubs (sold in bundles of 50)



Max. Ht. - 20'
Grows in moist to wet sites; erosion control, benefits birds & butterflies

Size: 36"
whip

Hooker willow,
Salix hookeriana

~~\$105~~
\$78.75



Max. Ht. - 20'
Grows in dry to moist soils, wildlife food, attracts pollinators

Size: 12"+
2-0

Mock Orange,
Philadelphus lewisii

~~\$115~~
\$86.25



Max. Ht. - 10'
Dry to moist sites; wildlife food & shelter, host plant for numerous butterflies

Size: 12"+
1-0

Nootka Rose
Rosa nutkana

~~\$115~~
\$86.25



Max. Ht. - 60'
Dry to moist sites; wildlife food & shelter, pollen, edible

Size: 36"
whip

Pacific willow,
Salix lucida

~~\$105~~
\$78.75



Max. Ht. - 10'
Grows in dry to moist soil at low & mid-elevation; wildlife food

Size: 12"+
1-0

Red Flowering Currant,
Ribes sanguineum

~~\$115~~
\$86.25



Max. Ht. - 20'
Grows in moist to wet sites; red twigs; wildlife food & shelter, erosion control

Size: 12"+
1-0

Red Osier Dogwood,
Cornus stolonifera

~~\$115~~
\$86.25

HEDGEROWS

MORE THAN
A LIVING FENCE.
A
LONG
SKINNY
FOREST

Hedgerows have been in existence for more than 1,000 years. As they have been woven into the landscape from England to the Northwest, their form & function have evolved to address resource problems which have developed as land use has changed. Hedgerows not only provide a visual screen & reduce noise, they beautify the landscape with foliage, blooms, fruit, & fall color. More than that, a 10ft wide hedgerow along a waterway can reduce the sediment in surface runoff by 60 - 70%. Hedgerows increase filtration & decrease the rate of surface water runoff, trap & utilize nutrients that might escape nutrient management systems, & act as a buffer for agricultural chemical applications. Additionally, the shade from the trees & shrubs reduces water temperatures. Hedgerows at

least 5ft wide used as field or garden borders attract native pollinators & increase crop production. Many insects, birds, & small critters beneficial to farmers & gardeners are found in hedgerows. They help pollinate over 75% of flowering plants & nearly all crops. Native plants in hedgerows serve as sources of nectar & pollen for adult pollinators & provide habitat for nesting & larvae production. A hedgerow bordering 1/3 of a commercial berry field eliminates the need for commercial honeybee colonies.

When installing a hedgerow, choose species that fulfill the desired goals. Select plants that will thrive in the intended location. Sun or shade? Wet or dry? Hedgerows designed for wildlife habitat should be planted with at least 50% native plants. For pollinators,

think diversity. Select plants with early, mid, & late season bloom times to provide consistent forage. Plant fast & slow growing, tall & short, evergreen & deciduous.

Select a good "backbone" plant, which will be 60-70% of the hedgerow. Then select at least 4-6 more shrubs or small trees. Prepare the site by removing competing species as thoroughly as possible. A properly prepared site will greatly reduce the work required to manage competing vegetation as the hedge gets established. Plant in late fall, winter or early spring when plants are dormant. The more time the plants have to establish roots before the summer, the better. The plants will need to be watered during their first summer. Maintain the plants for 2-3 years or until established.



**HEDGEROW WITH
NOOTKA ROSE**



**HEDGEROW WITH
DOUGLAS SPIREA**



**HEDGEROW WITH
OCEAN SPRAY**

HEDGEROW PLANT CHART

Native, pollinator friendly shrubs & trees for your hedgerow

E = EVERGREEN D = DECIDUOUS

	Trees/Shrubs	Bloom Time	Sun/Water	Typical Size
D	American Cranberrybush, <i>Viburnum opulus</i>	Mid	Sun - part sun/moist	3-12 ft
D	Black Hawthorn, <i>Crataegus douglasii</i>	Mid	Sun - part sun/moist-dry	20-45 ft
D	Blueblossom, <i>Ceanothus thyrsiflorus</i>	Early - Mid	Sun - part sun/dry	3-18 ft
D	Cascara Buckthorn, <i>Rhamnus purshiana</i>	Early - Mid	Sun - shade/moist	to 50 ft
D	Indian Plum, <i>Oemleria cerasiformis</i>	Early	Part sun - shade/moderate	4 - 20 ft
D	Nootka Rose, <i>Rosa nutkana</i>	Mid	Sun - part sun/dry-wet	2 - 10 ft
D	Ocean Spray, <i>Holodiscus discolor</i>	Late	Sun - part sun/moderate	3 - 10 ft
D	Pacific crabapple, <i>Malus fusca</i>	Mid	Sun - shade/moist	20 - 40 ft
D	Pacific Mock Orange, <i>Phliadelphus lewisii</i>	Mid	Sun - part sun/moderate	4 - 9 ft
D	Pacific Ninebark, <i>Physocarpus capitatus</i>	Early-Mid	Sun - part sun/moist	12 ft
E	Pacific Rhododendron, <i>Rhododendron macrophyllum</i>	Early-Mid	Sun - part sun/moderate	to 24 ft
E	Pacific Wax Myrtle, <i>Myrica californica</i>	Early-Mid	Sun/moist	10 - 30 ft
D	Red Elderberry, <i>Sambucus racemosa</i>	Mid	Part sun - shade/moist	3 - 9 ft
D	Red-flowering Currant, <i>Ribes Sanguineum</i>	Early-Mid	Sun - part sun/dry	3 - 9 ft
D	Red-twig Dogwood, <i>Cornus sericea</i>	Early-Mid	Sun - part sun/moist	6 - 18 ft
D	Saskatoon Serviceberry, <i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>	Mid	Sun - part sun/moderate	3 - 15 ft
D	Snowberry, <i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>	Mid	Sun - part sun/moderate	3 - 9 ft
E	Tall Oregon Grape, <i>Mahonia aquifolium</i>	Early-Mid	Sun - part sun/moderate	6 - 8 ft
D	Vine Maple, <i>Acer circinatum</i>	Early-Mid	Sun - shade/moist	21 ft
E	Western Azalea, <i>Rhododendron occidentale</i>	Mid	Sun - part sun/moist	9 - 15 ft
D	Western Hazlenut, <i>Corylus cornuta</i>	Early	Sun - part sun/moderate	3 - 12 ft

More information on hedgerows

www.nwcb.wa.gov/pdfs/pacificLowlandrx8.pdf

www.whatcomcd.org/hedgerows

www.pacifichorticulture.org/articles/hedgerows-as-habitat

piercecd.org/162/hedgerow-how-to

NEWS & TIPS FROM SKAGIT COUNTY'S CLEAN WATER PROGRAM

Financial Assistance for Septic Inspections: If you can't afford a septic system inspection, we may be able to help! Skagit County's Public Health Dept. has a new program to help low-income residents meet the state's septic inspection requirement. Eligibility depends on your household income. If you meet the requirements, you can get a free inspection. For more details, contact Skagit County Public Health at eh@co.skagit.wa.us or 360.416.1500.

FREE RV Sewage Disposal: Did you know you can empty your RV's sewage tank for FREE or low cost at several different sites around Skagit County? It's all part of our effort to make sure that sewage stays out of our creeks and beaches, & our community stays healthy and safe.

You can find all locations in the county here: bit.ly/RVDumpStations

If your RV doesn't move, you have a couple of options. The easiest is to pump your RV sewage into the septic system or municipal sewage system.

If you're going the septic route, be sure to contact a septic system maintenance provider to make sure the septic system can handle extra flow.

They can also give you tips on how to do it without damaging your system. You may have to pump the septic system more often if you're adding RV sewage to it. (Septic system inspections are required by state law every year. If you have a gravity-fed septic system, inspections are required every three years. Pumping a septic system is not the same as an inspection.)

If you're pumping into the municipal sewer system, contact your sewage treatment provider (typically your city) to make sure you don't accidentally cause a problem with the house's sewer pipes.

It is NEVER ok to dump sewage into a storm drain, roadside ditch, creek, "the back 40", or anywhere on the ground surface. None of these are treated in any way, & sewage dumped in these places is a threat to the health of our children, pets, & community.



For more information on financial assistance for septic inspections, contact Skagit County Public Health eh@co.skagit.wa.us or call 360.416.1500

FREE RV dump site locations:
bit.ly/RVDumpStations





SCD WAS PLEASED TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO OUR LOCAL PARTNERS FOR THIS LONG-AWAITED CONSERVATION PROJECT!

MADDOX CREEK FISH BARRIER REMOVED

This fall Skagit Conservation District (SCD) & our project partners were gratified to see water flowing freely through Maddox Creek for the first time in over 50 years. Since the 1990s, long-time WDFW biologist Kurt Buchanan, local resident Hal Lee, & many others have advocated for removing a 230-ft long culvert & over 25 feet of fill from the creek in Mount Vernon's Bonnie Rae Park. The culvert, originally built to extend S. 18th Street to Anderson Road, was so undersized that it trapped sediment upstream, eroded the channel downstream, & blocked fish passage upstream for coho salmon & other fish. In recent years it had rusted out & begun to collapse. In the early 2000s Mount Vernon initiated two design studies for removing it, but the project languished until 2018, when Emily Derenne of Skagit County Public Works (SCPW) Natural Resources Program secured a grant from the Department of Ecology. SCPW then entered into an interlocal

agreement with SCD to complete the project's engineering design. SCD's engineer Tom Slocum was intrigued by the design's many challenges, including how best to remove 15,000 cubic yards of fill & construct a stream channel that allowed natural transport of sediment & fish passage at the bottom of a steep-sided, forested ravine, in a city park located within a few hundred feet of a residential neighborhood. SCPW, SCD & City of Mount Vernon staff collaborated on design revisions & permitting, & in June SCPW hired Williamson Construction Co. to do the construction work. By October as the fall rain returned flow to Maddox Creek, construction work was completed at a cost of about \$512,000. Coho salmon were swimming through the new channel by late November. SCPW will oversee revegetation of the project site in early 2021, & Mount Vernon plans to construct a public hiking trail & foot bridge across the restored creek in the near future.

PLAN AHEAD: EQIP 2021

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a program made available through the Natural Resources Conservation Service - SCD's federal sister agency. It provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural & forestland producers to address natural resource concerns. This program provides many benefits to producers & the environment; however, it can be a lengthy process to participate. Although the 2021 EQIP sign-up deadline has not yet been released, SCD is encouraging producers who may be interested to contact us now. An SCD farm planner will help you complete sign-up paperwork & work with you to develop a farm plan, which is a prerequisite for eligibility.



Common EQIP practices that SCD can help you plan for include waste storage facilities, waste transfer equipment, heavy use areas for livestock, roof runoff structures & underground outlet piping, cross & buffer fencing, cover crops, high tunnels, irrigation systems, nutrient management, & tree & shrub planting. These practices deliver a host of environmental benefits such as improved water quality, conserved ground & surface water, increased soil health, reduced soil erosion & sedimentation, improved or new wildlife habitat, & mitigation against drought & increasing weather volatility. Each practice installed through EQIP is cost-shared; meaning more money left in your pocket!

EQIP also offers USDA energy audits. These audits are paid for through EQIP & provide producers great information about their on-farm energy use & how to reduce it. Implementing energy use reductions can be cost-shared through EQIP.



This fall, SCD piloted a cover crop program to help establish winter cover crops following the harvest of a cash crop. The program was funded by Skagit County Public Works & the Voluntary Stewardship Program; kicked off in July and went through October. Winter cover crops provide many benefits including reduced soil erosion & compaction, weed suppression, nutrient scavenging, increased biodiversity, improved organic matter, & promotion of biological nitrogen fixation.

SCD farm planners worked with 13 farms, 10 of which were able to plant cover crops between harvest & fall rains. Triticale was the top choice for most farms. It is a hybrid of winter wheat & cereal rye with excellent

disease resistance, uniform germination, great nutrient scavenging capabilities, & excellent soil coverage. It has been shown to provide more biomass available for spring green-chop or grazing than either of its parent species. Farmers in the program also planted annual ryegrass, cereal rye/vetch mix, winter wheat & fava bean.

Program participants planted 439 acres of cover crops at an average cost of \$44/acre.

We hope to offer this program again if funding is reauthorized. If you are interested in participating in the cover crop program check with your SCD farm planner for updates.

HOW A LOCAL HOA DISCOVERED THE BENEFITS OF CONSERVATION

After participating in the Skagit Conservation District's Watershed Masters program in 2018, Ron Raczkowski, & other members of Mount Vernon's Montreaux HOA Grounds & Maintenance Committee began looking at their own 55+ neighborhood community & envisioned how they could apply water conservation principles that would reduce water use, reduce runoff to protect local streams, & hopefully save their homeowners association some money in the process.

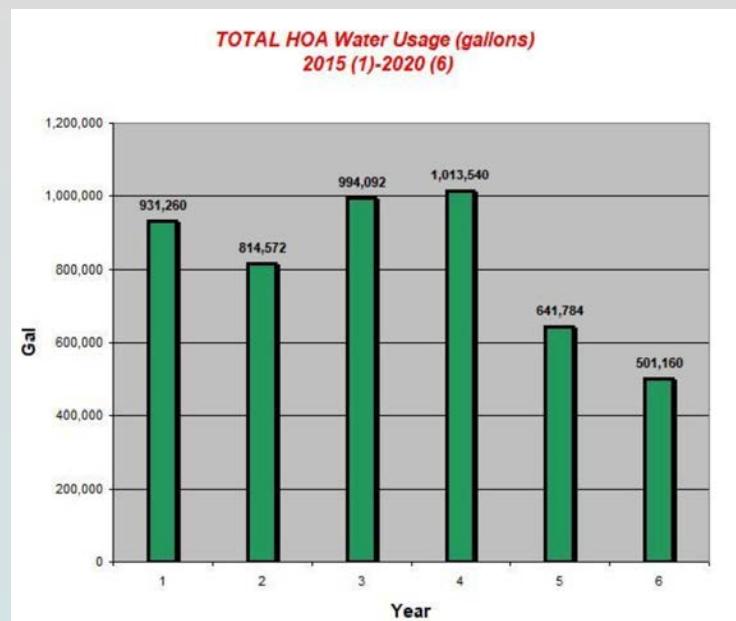
He began by recording monthly water use in the common areas of the HOA & researching their historical water use since 2015. As part of the effort to track & reduce water usage, they also mapped their entire irrigation system, installed new rain sensors on each irrigation controller, & replaced several controllers with a newer version of the device.

Within the past two years they have concluded that the costs associated with these improvements have already been paid back with the amount of water savings.

The new controllers are quite sophisticated & have an algorithm that can consider what is being watered (grass, trees, shrubs), the location of the controller by zip code, type of soil & temperature.

To date the HOA has been able to reduce their yearly water usage & the cost of water by ALMOST HALF!

Over the last two years, the Montreaux HOA has implemented several projects intended to reduce water usage & runoff as well as water costs. One of the first projects was to remove the grass in a median entrance strip to the HOA & replace it with arborist chips. Large lawns require not only frequent watering, but weekly cutting & edging, fertilizer, & moss control. The chips eliminated the need to water the median strip (except the trees) while also retaining soil moisture, controlling weeds, & preventing soil erosion - & reduced maintenance costs. They have shut off all redundant sprinkler heads & converted one sprinkler head per tree to a drip system.



The grass in this median was replaced with arborist chips.

HOW A LOCAL HOA DISCOVERED THE BENEFITS OF CONSERVATION... CONTINUED

Another project in the development involved removing about 600 sq.ft. of grass near a cul-de-sac. The area abuts a protected natural growth area & is in the shade almost all day long. Historically, it was being over watered & tended to be something of a bog. Again, arborist chips were installed over the entire area adjacent to the protected growth area. Many of the irrigation sprinkler heads were shut off as they were deemed unnecessary but will be monitored to assure the health of the remaining landscaping.



Arborist chips were installed over this cul-de-sac area that used to be overwatered, boggy, lawn.

The accomplishments have been a team effort. The HOA formed a very active "Sprinkler Club," including members who have volunteered their time to maintain the entire irrigation system. They have also been optimizing the watering schedules as well as maintaining the sprinkler heads in the system. The water meters are read & recorded the first day of each month so they can track their water use & make adjustments if needed. The "Sprinkler Club" also provides support to individual homeowners in the HOA, assuring that each personal water system is working properly, is set up to make optimal use of their irrigation system, & assure water is directed where needed & not watering sidewalks & driveways.

"In the future, we are also entertaining the idea of replacing many of our sprinkler heads with more efficient units," notes Ron.

There's no such thing as the Poop Fairy

Only you can make your pet's waste disappear.

Pet waste contains harmful bacteria and parasites that make people and pets sick. When it is left on the ground, it washes down storm drains and contaminates our streams and rivers.

Scoop it. Bag it. Trash it.

Logos for Skagit Conservation District, City of Mount Vernon, City of Sedro-Woolley, City of Macarty, Burlington, Skagit County, Port of Skagit, and City of Oak Harbor.

SKAGIT CONSERVATION DISTRICT
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PHONE: 360.428.4313
WEBSITE: www.skagitcd.org

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Skagit Conservation News sponsorships cost \$50/year for listed business names or \$100/year for business cards, and are seen by over 3,500 readers.

The Skagit Conservation District recognizes the following businesses as Skagit Conservation News sponsors:



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SCD Board meetings are held at 2021 E College Way, 2nd floor conference room on the fourth Wednesday of every month at 7:30am and are open to the public. Please call 360-428-4313 x1000 to verify dates.



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