

Triangle Cove Watershed

NEWSLETTER

Working with you to improve water quality in your watershed

Island County Public Health

Spring 2011



What Can You Do to Keep Pollutants Out of Triangle Cove?

Stormwater

- Divert stormwater to a swale
- Construct a rain garden
- Add a rain barrel or two
- Use permeable pavement

Pet waste

- Remember to pick up your pet's waste and dispose of it properly. The average dog produces ¾ lb of poop a day! The National Institute of Health estimates that one gram of dog waste contains approximately 31 million fecal coliform (bacteria).

Car Washing & Maintenance

- Use a commercial car wash that treats or recycles its wastewater, or
- Wash your car on your lawn so the water goes into the ground.
- Repair leaks and dispose of used auto fluids and batteries at designated drop-off or recycling locations.

Lawn Care

- Don't over water your lawn.
- Use pesticides and fertilizers only when necessary, and be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Use organic mulch for weed control.
- Keep yard clippings and leaves out of storm drains.
- Consider using a soaker hose instead of a sprinkler.

Solid Waste

- Sweep up debris from sidewalks and driveways.
- Report chemical spills to the local hazardous waste cleanup team.

Septic Systems

- Inspect and maintain your system regularly.

The Faces of Triangle Cove

What are your neighbors doing to protect Triangle Cove?

Plenty, meet some of your neighbors and learn about things you can do around your home, farm, or place of business to help keep Triangle Cove clean and pristine.



Jon and Elaine Stevens operated a farm stand at Open Gate Farm until last Fall. They have since turned over the farm operation to Bobby, a WSU Organic Agriculture student. The Stevens still live on their small two acre crop farm north of the Cove, but they are now focused on helping youth in several Mexican orphanages learn to live sustainably and grow food through the non-profit Growing Gardens for Life (www.growinggardensforlife.org).

The Stevens do not use herbicides or pesticides, choosing instead to use more natural approaches to disease and insect problems. They practice no-till farming, which helps retain topsoil in place, and limiting the amount of 'human-work' needed to till the soil. According to Jon, "The frogs and fish are smiling".

Jon also works with his site. He plants black currants, which have shallow root systems that are close to the surface. They are great for dry slopes to help retain soil. He received a drainage design from an engineer at Snohomish Conservation District to address stormwater coming onto his property from the county road. Plum trees along the road provide a windbreak and manure from the chickens is contained and later used as a soil amendment.

Jon is also a big proponent of Permaculture. Permaculture is the development of agricultural ecosystems intended to be sustainable and self-sufficient. Jon says, "Permaculture is near and dear to our hearts. That's the system we use in Mexico." Permaculture is also good for the environment, and Triangle Cove and Port Susan Bay all benefit from environmentally-safer practices.

Debbie and Duane Holtmann live on the north side of the lake in Camaloch. They enjoy the lifestyle of living on the lake, but also know the need to do their part to limit impacts to the small lake. Avid gardeners (they also developed and maintain a community garden at their church in Stanwood), Debbie and Duane know that using organic, non-chemical methods is better for their pets, their honey bees, the lake and their human guests.



Wildlife is abundant on the lake. Debbie has seen geese, ducks, frogs, heron, eagles, deer, and otter.

The Holtmann's never have mosquito problems because bats are out and about at night. They also maintain a buffer of grass, cattails, and shrubs such as willow and dogwood along the edge of the lake to help filter anything coming off their property. Pet waste from Jasmine, the poodle, is picked up. (dog Bella was visiting)

Stay tuned for more stories of the residents of the Triangle Cove watershed in future fliers.

Help is Available For Small Livestock Farms

Many people enjoy raising goats, horses, llamas, and alpacas. They can be seen throughout the Triangle Cove watershed, are fun to watch, and add to the rural qualities of the Island.

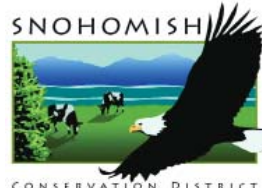


There are ways though, that livestock owners can make improvements that help protect water flowing off the farm, and ultimately into Triangle Cove. If you, or someone you know, has livestock, you are eligible for free assistance from the Snohomish Conservation District. The District has offered technical and farm planning services to farm and forest landowners on Camano Island since 1961.

Any size or type of farm has the potential to impact water quality. Many factors come into play, such as types of crops, use of fertilizers, presence of livestock, soil types, and slope.

By managing a farm well, farmers can achieve their land-use goals while protecting natural resources. A farm plan is an effective tool to help reach these goals. It helps landowners identify their objectives, evaluate resource concerns, and offers management options.

You can request a visit from a District farm planner by emailing: farmpanners@snohomishcd.org.



Did you also know the Conservation District can share the costs of some projects too? And you can get engineering designs and soil tests at no cost as well. The District will be offering classes and farm tours as part of this grant. Watch the website to stay informed of classes and tours.

Watch for classes at www.snohomishcd.org.



Residents of Triangle Cove watershed - we have news for you!
There is new grant funding to help protect and clean up Triangle Cove, and you can help!

How Can You Learn More About Triangle Cove?

Come to an Open House!

Enjoy some snacks, meet your neighbors, and learn how you can help protect Triangle Cove for the next generation!

Island County and our project partners are hosting a public meeting on:

June 27, 2013
5:30 pm to 7 pm
Camano Multi-Purpose Center
(the "blue building next to CASA")
141 East Camano Drive, Camano Island

Take Advantage of Three Septic Classes!

Inspecting your own onsite septic system saves you money and helps keep our groundwater clean!

On the following dates, Island County Public Health is offering **Septic 101 and Septic 201**

Septic 101: September 17, 7-8:30 pm

Septic 201: July 25, 3-4:30 pm & 6:30-8 pm

Aug. 22 3-4:30 pm & 6:30-8 pm



All classes will be located at Four Springs Preserve House, 585 Lewis Lane, Camano Island

Map to location:

http://www.fourspringshouse.com/docs/location_map.pdf

Triangle Cove Will Be Part of a Water Pollution Survey

from Island County Department of Natural Resources

The Triangle Cove watershed makes up one of the largest drainage basins on Camano Island. Kristoferson Creek, which provides habitat for salmon, is the primary drainage feature flowing into Triangle Cove.

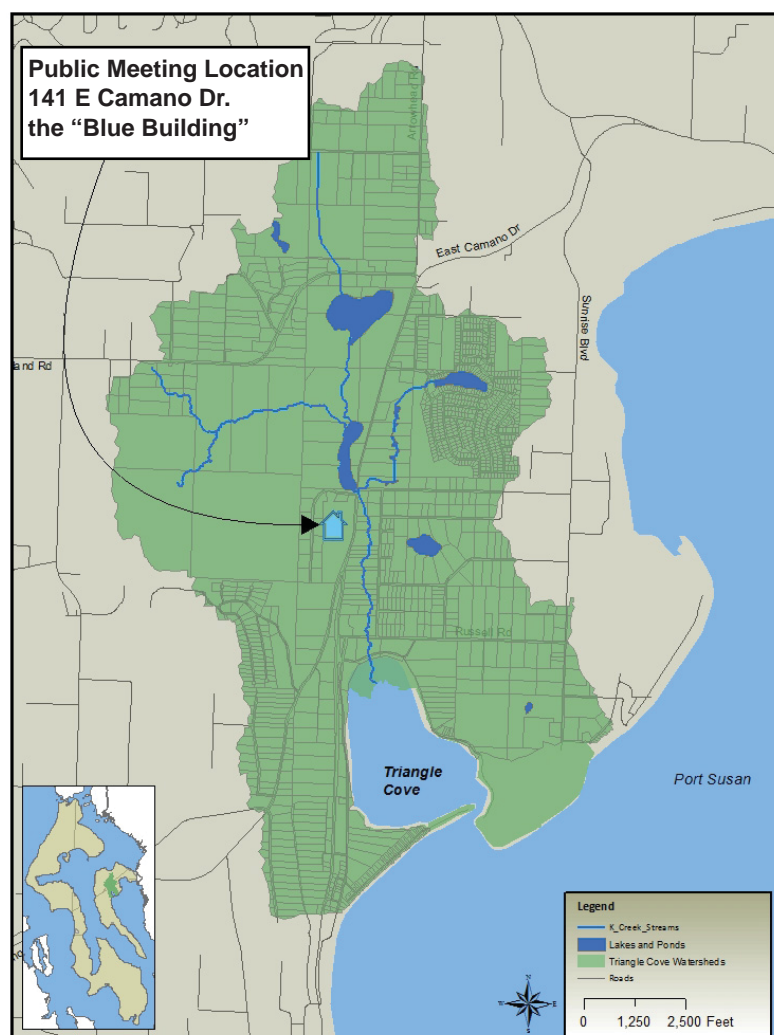
The watershed includes areas like Camaloch, Camaloch Golf Course, Camano Hills, Camano Plaza, Barnum Point and vicinity. If you received this newsletter in the mail, you likely reside or work in the Triangle Cove watershed.

So, Is There a Problem with Triangle Cove?

The short answer is yes. The Department of Ecology's 303(d) impaired waters list identifies Kristoferson Creek as exceeding water quality parameters for fecal coliform bacteria, pH, and dissolved oxygen. The privately held tidelands in Triangle Cove are currently unclassified by the State Department of Health for shellfish harvest. Island County was recently awarded a **National Estuary Program** grant that will focus on water quality improvements in the Triangle Cove area.

What Will be Done to Help Clean Up the Cove?

- A shoreline survey will be completed to sample water quality draining into the cove. The water test results will be available online once sampling begins.
- The source of bacteria will be identified (i.e. failing septic systems, pet or livestock waste, or wildlife)
- Education and outreach activities will be offered
- On-going septic inspections and compliance monitoring will occur
- Help with agricultural best management practices will be available for farms and rural landowners



Come to the June 27 Open House to learn more!
See arrow above for location of the Camano Multi-Purpose Center