



A Newsletter, to inform and update you about your Clean Water District

To: Watershed Resident

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Port Angeles, WA 98362-0149
P.O. Box 863

Clallam County
Environmental Health/Natural Resources
Clean Water Herald



Calendar of Events

Agnew/Carlsborg Neighborhood Meeting June 30 Agnew
Learn about nitrates in groundwater 6:30 PM **Helpful Neighbors Club**
1241 N. Barr Rd

StreamKeepers Events: Training Sessions for Volunteers
Learn how to monitor the health of our streams Call 417-2281 for info.

StreamKeepers in Depth	June 23	6 to 9 PM	HHS Conference Room*
County Orientation/Noxious Weeds	June 30	6 to 9 PM	HHS Conference Room*
Field Monitoring Procedures Intro.	July 14	6 to 9 PM	HHS Conference Room*
Monitoring Procedures Field Day	July 17	8 to 4 PM	WestWind Farm
StreamKeepers annual BBQ & Potluck	July 17	4 to 8 PM	WestWind Farm
"Stream-Bug" Sampling	Sept 11	9 to 1 PM	HHS Conference Room*

*HHS (Health & Human Services) Conference Room in Clallam County Courthouse

Summer River Talks

Located at the Dungeness River Audubon Center Call 681-4076 for info.

Native American Uses of Native Plants <i>with Peggy Adams</i>	July 3	10:00 AM
OPAS Field Trip to Hurricane Ridge <i>(call the River Center for meeting place)</i>	July 10	7:30 AM
Restoring Fish Habitat in the Dungeness River <i>with Byron Rot</i>	July 10	10:00 AM
Butterflies of Railroad Bridge Park <i>with Kristi Knowles</i>	July 17	1:00 PM
Invasive Plants along the Dungeness River <i>with Cathy Lucero</i>	July 24	10:00 AM
Insects of Railroad Bridge Park <i>with Ron Stecker</i>	July 31	10:00 AM
Shellfish of Dungeness Bay <i>with Lyn Muench</i>	Aug. 7	10:00 AM
The History & Use of Railroad Bridge <i>with Ken Wiersema</i>	Aug. 14	10:00 AM

Clean Water Herald

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Jamestown S'klallam Tribe
(360) 681-4631

Questions? Comments? Confused?
Call Val Streeter for the straight scoop

Funded through a grant from WA
Department of Ecology

Septics of Concern

Properties next to streams with high bacteria levels, which had an older septic system, a history of previous repairs, or no record on file of a septic system, were identified as having a septic of concern



Valerie Streeter

So long...

By Val Streeter

This is the last issue of the **Clean Water Herald** newsletter! Funded by a grant from WA Dept. of Ecology, the grant ends at the end of June. Many issues were covered, such as groundwater resources and quality, local watershed events (e.g., Sequim 7th grade field trip), Dungeness Bay shellfish closure, bacterial pollution, and monitoring & remediation activities. We hope you enjoyed the Clean Water Herald.

Check out Sequim
Middle School's
artwork inside...

A Big Thank You!

By Val Streeter & Janine Reed

Although the bacterial pollution that threatens public health comes from many different kinds of sources in the watershed, Clallam County needs to verify that septic systems are being properly maintained, particularly in areas with documented water quality problems. Clallam County identified **septics of concern** and grant funds were directed to provide economic incentives for these systems to be inspected. Letters to people with a septic of concern were mailed by Clallam County Environmental Health last January. Several people responded to the call and have had their septic systems inspected and, if needed, repaired.

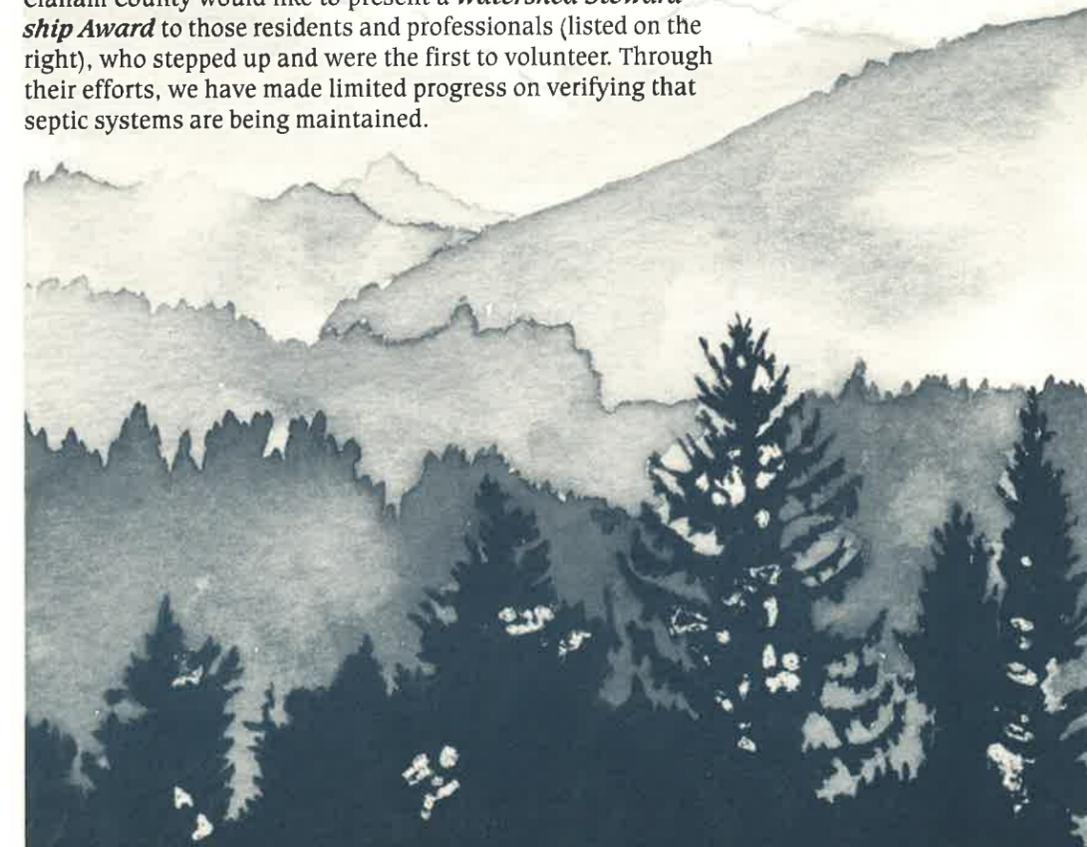
Because it is up to individual property owners to make sure that their septic system is maintained and functioning, the old adage, "you can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink" can be applied to people and their septic systems. Clallam County would like to present a **Watershed Stewardship Award** to those residents and professionals (listed on the right), who stepped up and were the first to volunteer. Through their efforts, we have made limited progress on verifying that septic systems are being maintained.

Watershed Stewardship Awards

- George Brown
- Sydney Carr
- Sandra Coen
- Steven Connelly
- Louis Fusari
- Ray Gorynski
- Debra Keeting
- Mary Kay Kittleson
- David & Carol Persing
- Harold Richardson
- Jack Riesau
- Catherine Steinke

Onsite professionals participating in the Septic of Concern evaluations

- Arrow Septic
- Olympic Sewer & Drain
- Dennis Swope
- Paul Gruver



Students at Sequim Middle School remind us: Keep Waste In It's Place!

By Val Streeter & Lisa Shindler



Amelia Barth



Rachel Thompson

As most of us know, improving the quality of our water will take a community effort. Bacteria is a major cause of contamination, and there are many sources of bacteria spread out over the watershed area; animal waste (cows, horses, dogs, birds, and other wildlife) and human waste (failing septic systems or illegal septic discharges) are some of the major culprits. Although many of the solutions are simple, all watershed residents and visitors need to participate. We can't control the waste from wild mammals and birds, but we can control ourselves and our behaviors that lead to poor water quality.

This spring we decided to challenge Sequim Middle School students from Martha Rudersdorf's morning Art Class to come up with an advertising campaign to help remind folks of ways they can reduce bacteria in our watershed. The campaign was to include a "catchy slogan" and a related illustration. These eighth grade students put their artistic efforts towards helping our community solve some of its water problems.

Five drawings were chosen to be showcased in this newsletter. The choices were made based on how closely the artist's rendering met our specifications - primarily ideas which deal with reducing bacteria in the Dungeness Watershed.

A special thanks to Sara Daniels, Amber Nelson and Meghan Kennedy. We sure appreciated everyone's ideas.

Way to go kids!



From left to right: Austin Henry, Rachel Thompson, Medea Bernsten, Michelle Loerlein, Amelia Barth



Dungeness River (River's End) January 2002, day after flooding

A River Runs Through It

By Cathy Lear

Back in the 1800's, the Dungeness River took a left hand turn, downstream from Schoolhouse Bridge, and flowed through its estuary to Dungeness Bay. At higher flows, it still does this - pouring right through people's houses, wells, and septic systems, affecting water quality and public health. A dike built on the east side of the river in the 1960's kept the river from moving east, and a berm built on the west side holds the water in until the river reaches a certain height, or stage - at which time it over tops or erodes the berm, and the river finds its old path.

As a result, the houses in an area called River's End, are prone to flooding. One homeowner was flooded nine times in eight years! People, fish, and water quality are all affected by this situation. Department of Ecology's water quality study indicates that bacteria are elevated in this reach during the winter, particularly when the soil is saturated with water (such as high rainfall or flood events).

Through a partnership with River's End landowners, the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Forest Service, and others, Clallam County is buying property from willing landowners to restore the area to estuary and floodplain. Once the properties are purchased, the houses will be moved or demolished. Wells and septic systems will be decommissioned, and floodplain estuary restoration will begin. To date, seven parcels have been purchased and five landowners are waiting to sell their property.



Michelle Loerlein

Many hands make light work

By Val Streeter

Clallam Conservation District nominated organizations and people who improved land management to prevent bacterial pollution from entering the ditches, streams and Dungeness River. A **BIG THANK YOU** to these organizations and people who are a part of the solution. Every effort on the part of watershed residents will improve the quality of our waters.



Medea Bernsten

Watershed Stewardship Awards will be sent to the following:

Five Acre School (Bill and Juanita Jevne) for implementing BMPs associated with their horse-keeping operation as well as habitat improvements.

Clallam Ditch Company for eliminating polluted irrigation tailwater to Matriotti Creek through piping projects (these projects also resulted in significant water conservation).

Al Bruck (Clallam Ditch Company board member) for dedicating many volunteer hours to ensure that the above piping projects were managed properly.

Dan Smith for piping open irrigation ditches on his property to eliminate polluted tailwater to Matriotti Creek.

Each of the five dairies in the Dungeness Valley (**Maple View Dairy, Willow-Wist Dairy, Elida Smith Dairy, Lonnie Booth Dairy, and Blue Mountain View Dairy**) for completing their dairy nutrient management plans and implementing the plans. [Only Willow-Wist and Elida Smith dairies are located within the Dungeness Bay watershed, but the others farm land within the watershed]

Thank You!

Strategic Update

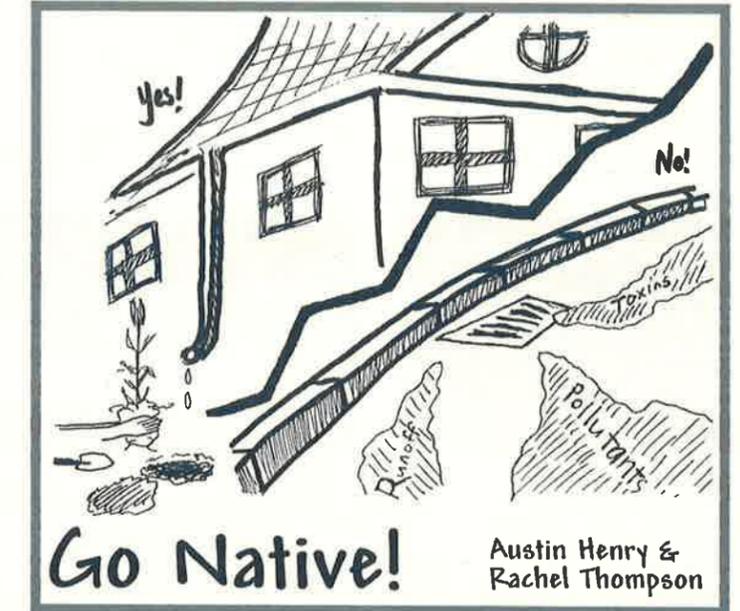
By Val Streeter

Plagued by bacterial pollution, water quality in Dungeness Bay has been declining since 1997. Even before the official shellfish closure area by WA Dept. of Health, federal, state and local governments/ organizations were working together developing a strategy to improve water quality. The Clean Water Strategy, as it is called today, started as a prevention strategy. It has evolved into a strategy to address bacterial pollution in Dungeness Bay and lower Watershed (focused on the lower Dungeness River and its tributaries).

The Strategy has several goals:

- To protect public health
- To identify and correct sources of bacterial contamination associated with human activities that are impacting water quality in Dungeness Bay
- To restore and maintain water quality in the freshwater ditches, streams and river and in marine waters within the bay
- To re-open areas closed to commercial shellfish harvest and prevent future closures
- To continue to harvest shellfish for commercial, subsistence and recreational purposes
- To protect habitat for shellfish and other wildlife species

A Strategy update is in progress. Information from Dr. Rensel's study of Dungeness Bay and the associated **TMDL/Water Clean-up Plan** needs to be incorporated in the Clean Water Strategy.



Go Native!

Austin Henry & Rachel Thompson

The federal, state and local governments/organizations, called the Clean Water Workgroup, have been evaluating the successes or failures of past water clean-up activities and are developing a new list, *projects/activities*, to add to the Strategy. The update of the Clean Water Strategy will also serve as the Detailed Implementation Plan required by US EPA in the TMDL process.

We will need public input for the Strategy update! The plan is to present the draft Strategy

at two evening meetings and one open house at the Dungeness River Audubon Center at Railroad Bridge Park in the *middle of August (2004)*. We will need to refine the Strategy based on ideas and comments from the watershed residents. The Clean Water Strategy will be the guide for funding and implementing projects with the ultimate goal of clean water. Look for the announcement in the local newspapers in August.