

# What Clark County is doing

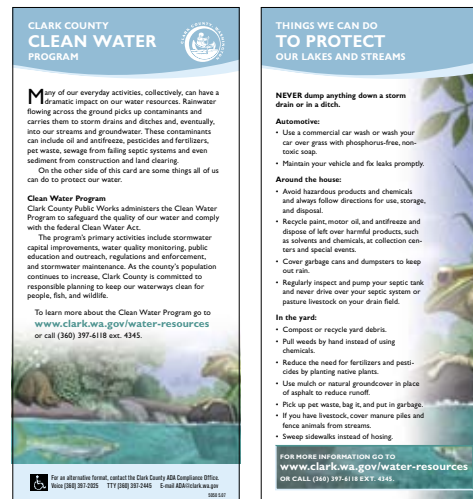
Clark County Environmental Services implements numerous programs that help strategically protect and enhance our natural environment, including the health of our streams. Some of the benefits and responsibilities of these programs are listed below. Contact the county for more information about any of our activities.

## Protecting streams

- **Stormwater treatment and detention.** Inspection, maintenance, and upgrades ensure that stormwater facilities function as effectively as possible. Construction of new facilities helps protect developing areas.
- **Pollution control.** Working with property owners to remove illegal discharges to the stormwater system helps eliminate pollution sources.
- **Erosion control.** Enforcing regulations to control erosion reduces impacts to stream water quality.
- **Development review.** Reviewing development proposals for environmental compliance can eliminate problems before they start.
- **Solid waste disposal and recycling.** Managing trash wisely reduces streamside dumping and leaves a cleaner and healthier watershed.
- **Conservation of high quality areas.** Purchasing lands with high quality habitat protects sensitive streams and provides open space.
- **Endangered species.** Implementing policies that help protect threatened fish and other species often provides direct benefits to stream health as well.

## Enhancing streams

- **Weed control.** Controlling invasive plants helps native plants thrive and protects the natural habitats of our region.
- **Re-forestation.** Re-planting previously cleared forest lands improves critical headwaters and stream function.
- **Habitat restoration.** Restoring natural streambanks and channels in degraded areas helps streams recover from damage and creates healthy floodplains.
- **Educational outreach.** Offering opportunities to learn about how we affect our watersheds helps build partnerships to improve stream health.



More tips for protecting stream health

## Engaging partners

Clark County Environmental Services cooperates with local agencies and organizations to monitor streams, carry out cleanup plans, and raise awareness about water quality issues. Recent partnerships include:

- Working with the six cities in Clark County (Battle Ground, Camas, La Center, Ridgefield, Vancouver, and Washougal) to show homeowners and businesses how to properly maintain their private stormwater treatment facilities.
- Maintaining outreach partnerships with the City of Vancouver, Washington State University Clark County Extension, and Columbia Springs Environmental Education Center to maximize resources and provide a common “clean water” message.
- Providing specialized monitoring to help the Clark Regional Wastewater District prioritize areas for sewer installation.
- Founding the Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership with the Port of Vancouver and the City of Vancouver. The 20-member stakeholder group is dedicated to improving Vancouver Lake.



Washington State University brochure

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- Training and mentoring teachers and students in water quality monitoring as part of The Student Watershed Research Project.
- Contributing to the Regional Coalition for Clean Rivers and Streams, an educational partnership of agencies and municipalities in the Portland/Vancouver metro area. Member organizations pool resources annually to develop a regional stormwater public awareness campaign to reach more than 1.4 million people.
- Working with Ecology, Clark County Public Health, Clark Public Utilities, Cities, and the Clark Conservation District to implement state Water Cleanup Plans for polluted streams (*see sidebar*).
- Locating streamside trash dump sites and supporting cleanup through local organizations like the Salmon Creek Watershed Council and scout groups.

## Helping citizens improve streams

All of us can help protect our streams. This report shows how actions in the watershed, at our businesses, farms, managed forests, and residences can affect streams. But the good news is that those potential effects can be reduced and even eliminated. Clark County offers many programs and resources to help you protect our streams. Available information includes tips for managing stormwater at your home or business, gardening without pesticides, managing your rural property, and conserving water. For more information, call Clark County Environmental Services at (360) 397-2121, or go to [www.clark.wa.gov/water-resources](http://www.clark.wa.gov/water-resources). A list of additional helpful websites is provided in the next section.

## Salmon Creek success!

Since 1995, Clark County's Clean Water Program, Clark County Public Health, Clark Public Utilities, the Clark Conservation District, and Ecology have partnered to improve turbidity and bacteria problems in Salmon Creek. In 2009, Ecology analyzed recent Clark County data and compared it to conditions in the 1990s. The result? All long-term monitoring locations in Salmon Creek now meet water quality standards for turbidity, and fecal coliform bacteria has decreased by up to 98% in some locations. Reduced nutrient levels (phosphorus and nitrogen) were also found in most locations. How did we do it? Improved stormwater management, streamside tree planting, habitat restoration, public education, monitoring, and improved septic system oversight have resulted in measurable improvements in water quality. With time, resources, and most importantly, the help of committed agencies, stakeholders, and residents, it can be done!



**Salmon Creek  
Nonpoint Source Pollution  
Total Maximum Daily Load  
Water Quality  
Effectiveness Monitoring Report**



August 2009  
Publication No. 09-03-042

View the entire report at:  
<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/tmdl/SalmonCr/SalmonCr.html>

## Improving decision making

Monitoring and evaluation are two steps in a larger adaptive management process. Adaptive management is a cycle that emphasizes using a learning process to make better decisions to achieve management goals. Information about a problem, such as declining stream health, is gained from monitoring and evaluation. This improved understanding is used to develop appropriate plans that can be implemented to address the identified problem. Over time, additional monitoring can determine whether the actions are effective or need to be modified.

