Clean water is essential for human health and for the health of fish, shellfish, wildlife, and livestock. Human contact with fecal contaminated waters can cause illnesses such as gastroenteritis, skin rashes and upper respiratory infections.

Wetlands act as biofilters, specialized plants and animals remove nutrients and toxins from the water, reduced water speed allows sediments to settle.

WCD works with landowners on a voluntary, no fee basis. WCD is a non-regulatory sub-unit of state government funded by grants.
Some things to consider in maintaining water quality with efficient and productive berry production

Food production is a crucial part of Washington’s economy and a vital component to the success of the region.

- A vibrant and efficient berry industry
- A strong coalition of dairies
- Healthy fishing and shellfish industry

Fertilizer applications are most effective during periods of peak demand

- Applying more than the recommended amount increases the application cost without increasing yield
- Separated solids are a great mulch material and fertilizer
- Manure integration can decrease compaction and increase organic matter

Manure should be used judiciously and stored with care

- Manure contains pathogens that can be harmful to human health
- Erosion along waterways allows for run-off
- Increased sediment in the water can physically harm fish and fill-in spawning areas
- Nutrients contribute to toxins in the water supply and toxic algae bloom

Surface water quality is monitored around Whatcom County. See www.whatcomcd.org/watershed-health-assessment