Water quality monitoring results released by Department of Ecology’s (DOE) Bellingham Field Office for the 2nd quarter 2002 show that fecal coliform counts are continuing to decrease in the six north county watersheds draining to the Nooksack River. All six watersheds met the water clean up plan, or the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), goal set for the quarter by the DOE. Table 1 summarizes the water quality monitoring results.

Water quality results in seven other north county drainages listed in Table 2 (see page 6) also show improvement. The “Class A” water quality standard for fecal coliform is 100 colonies/100 ml. Five of the seven streams met this standard during the 2nd quarter of this year.

**What is a TMDL?**

The federal Clean Water Act requires states to prepare a list every two years of water bodies that do not meet water quality standards for ensuring water is healthy for activities such as swimming, boating, industries, and fish and aquatic habitat. Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE) uses data collected by a variety of sources to prepare the list.

### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Watershed</th>
<th>Fecal coliform count (col./100ml)</th>
<th>TMDL Goal</th>
<th>% +/- TMDL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kamm Creek</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>-13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Ditch</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>-53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishtrap Creek</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bertrand Creek</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>-48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LLPL Ditch*</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>-41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten Mile Creek</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>-9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nooksack River**</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>-54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a ditch that outlets on the Nooksack River’s south bank about 1/2 mile below the Guide-Meridian bridge.

**at Marine Drive**

### Electric fence installed to thwart pesky beavers

**BEAVERS: if you can’t trap ‘em, then zap ‘em**

*Submited by John Gillies, NRCS District Conservationist*

When beavers discover a riparian plantation during the first few years of its establishment, their mighty appetite can lead to total devastation of the young forest. Only two options are available to the landowner when Mr. & Mrs. Beaver and family take up residence and begin to turn a young tree plantations into a cafeteria. One option is to remove the beaver by trapping and relocating them to an area where they are less likely to cause harm.

**Jerry VanDellen Elected to Conservation District Board**

On June 18th, Whatcom County voters chose Jerry VanDellen over Hank Reasoner to serve on Whatcom Conservation District’s Board of Supervisors. Van Dellen, an Everson area dairy farmer, replaces Debbie DeJong who served one term on the five-member District Board and decided not to seek re-election. Jerry’s term of office is for three years. We welcome Jerry to the District Board!
Mark Ockey Welcomed to the District

On July 1st, the District welcomed Mark Ockey as our newest staff member. As a planner, Mark will be working both with the dairy team and with non-commercial farms to develop conservation plans. Mark has past work experience in western Washington. During the summer of 2000, Mark worked with Snohomish Conservation District to write an educational packet of information to educate dairy farmers about their responsibilities according to new dairy nutrient management laws.

As a child, Mark enjoyed living on a small farm in Oregon with sheep, goats, and a cow. In the eighth grade, he moved to Camano Island with his family. After finishing Stanwood High School, Mark attended Brigham Young University (BYU) in Provo, Utah, where he graduated from in 2001 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agronomy (emphasizing crop and soil science).

After graduating form BYU, Mark lived for a year in Helena, Montana, where he met and married his wife, Jennifer. Mark is happy to return to western Washington and looks forward to working with local landowners to address resource management concerns.

We welcome Mark to our staff!!

New Soil Conservationist Joins NRCS Staff

Here at the Ag Service Center, Whatcom Conservation District staff work closely with members of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff to provide resource management information and technical assistance to local cooperators.

Anitra Gorham recently joined the NRCS staff with a botany degree from Washington State University (WSU). During her years at WSU, Anitra worked as a NRCS intern at the Chehalis and Whitman County field offices where she was involved in surveying, water quality monitoring, field inspections and the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).

Anitra, a Washington State native from Lewis County, was interested in coming to Whatcom County because she wanted to live in a rural setting and put her training as a botanist to use in the field. Anitra will be working with small acreage farms. Outside of work, Anitra plans to enjoy hiking in the Cascades, practicing her Tae Kwon Do and identifying plants. Welcome Anitra!!

Summer Interns:

SHEILA SCHOUTEN:

Sheila, a Lynden native, has joined the District for a second summer of full-time work during her vacation from Seattle Pacific University, where she is a junior studying studio art. Last year Sheila assisted with a variety of projects such as updating the District’s informational display, creating posters and brochures, and completing other administrative projects. She has a great eye for graphics and brings creative energy into the realm of managing manure in Whatcom County. Sheila says, “I love coming home and being in this area. It’s so beautiful and relaxed around here, and it’s fun to see familiar faces.” She loves being outside enjoying the mountains, farms, open fields and sunny skies. Check out the Kids Page in this issue-just one of Sheila’s creations! WELCOME BACK Sheila!

Sheila Schouten returns to the District for a second summer as an intern.

Jessie Ramsey:

Jessie is a senior studying Environmental Resource Management at Western Washington University’s Huxley College. Jessie grew up on a 13-acre farm in Pierce County, spending lots of time camping in the Mount Rainier area and participating in 4H with her dogs and horses. At the District, Jessie has been assisting with Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program fieldwork and GIS mapping. Jessie loves Whatcom County and hopes to do salmon and...
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Alayne Blickle, program director for Horses for Clean Water (HCW) program, is pictured here with her horses Pepper and Annie. Alayne will bring her HCW program to Whatcom County in November.

Alayne Blickle is fortunate enough to make a living doing what she loves - working with horses, the environment, communications and education. Her lab is her barn, pastures, and paddocks. Her office is her house with horses residing just outside her window.

Alayne is the program director for Horses for Clean Water (HCW), a program run and supported by horse owners promoting horse health and environmentally sensitive horse keeping. HCW uses a system of classroom workshops and model farms as demonstration and educational sites. Educational topics include composting horse manure, how to reduce mud in horse paddocks, managing small pastures for horses, using environmentally-sensitive insect control methods, and enhancing wildlife habitat.

HCW’s emphasis is on a “holistic approach” to horse care. Program participants are encouraged to evaluate their time, money, resources, and the needs of their horse(s) while designing a system for effectively managing their horse places. The goal is to come up with a system to meet the needs of owners, their horses, their community and the environment. During the five years in which HCW program has existed, as many as 5,000 people per year have attended the educational events.

Alayne has over 20 years of equestrian experience - a lifelong passion. Alayne and her husband Matt Livengood raise American Quarter Horse Association reining horses on their 10-acre demonstration farm in Maple Valley, Washington. Both Alayne and her husband compete in reining events and are active in horse organizations. Alayne and Matt are on the show committee for Washington Reining Horse Association’s Summer Classic and are members of local horse groups such as the King County Executive Horse Council, Puget Sound Quar-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

NORTHWEST WASHINGTON FAIR - August 12th-17th at Lynden Fairgrounds. The District’s booth will be in the new Mt. Baker Rotary Building Community Center with the Whatcom Farm Friends exhibit. The theme is FARMING, FOR LIFE! to celebrate farming in Whatcom County.

NORTHWEST HERBAL FAIRE - August 17th & 18th at River Farm in Van Zandt. The festival offers workshops and kids’ activities. River Farm offers guided tours of their cooperative organic farm and nursery. Evening music provided by a variety of local bands. For more details, check out http://www.nwherbalfaire.com.

WORLD OF WOOD FESTIVAL - August 24th-25th at Silver Lake Park. The third annual World of Wood festival will celebrate the history of forestry in Northwest Washington with games, live music, food, museum and forestry tours at Black Mountain Forestry Center, Smokey Bear and other educational programs. For more information, see www.blackmountainforestry.com.

SUBDUED STRINGBAND JAMBOREE - September 7th in Deming. The jamboree is a one-day picnic featuring the best of the Bellingham bluegrass and roots country scene, as well as regional/national acts. Noon to 10 pm. For more information call 360-966-2048.

2002 SALMON SUMMIT - October 17, 2002. Best Western Lakeway Inn in Bellingham. Join us for the 7th annual conference related to salmon recovery and watershed restoration in Whatcom County. Three hundred people attended last year’s event! For conference details and updates, see insert in this newsletter or website www.whatcomcd.org/salmonrecovery/salmonrecovery.htm

NATIONAL WATER QUALITY MONITORING DAY - October 18, 2002. To celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Clean Water Act, 2002 has been declared the Year of Clean Water. Volunteer monitors, agency staff, and members of the public are invited to participate in National Water Monitoring Day (NWMD), scheduled to honor the very day - October 18, 1972 - on which the Act was signed into law. This fall, Conservation District staff will join with volunteers on or about October 18th to sample a core set of water quality parameters, including temperature, pH, turbidity, and dissolved oxygen. As the date gets closer, the District will provide more details as to location and time of sampling event(s). For updates on NWMD, including information on ordering an easy-to-use monitoring kit ($16.75), check website www.yearofcleanwater.org or contact Beth or Andrea at the District (354-2035).
Time and time again those of you who live close to the Canadian border may wonder, “What’s going on up there to the north?” One group that can help answer questions is the Langley Environmental Partners Society (LEPS) of British Columbia (www.leps.bc.ca).

LEPS is a registered charity based in the Township of Langley, a rural community existing on the urban fringe about 25 miles east of Vancouver, B.C. Since 1993 LEPS has worked among community groups, educational institutions, First Nations, local and senior government agencies, landowners and community stakeholders to improve conditions of the Bertrand Creek watershed in Canada.

Since 1993 LEPS has completed 17 large-scale agricultural stewardship projects and restored over 8 miles of degraded stream banks on the Canadian side of the Bertrand watershed. In the past LEPS has worked with Whatcom Conservation District to strengthen watershed partnerships and communication on both sides of the border. The District is looking forward to continuing that partnership through meetings, workshops and tours later this summer and fall, including another watershed bicycle tour.

Look for the District’s Watershed Bicycle Tour scheduled for Saturday, September 14, 2002 at 10:00 a.m.

Throughout the summer LEPS will be conducting watershed projects such as door-to-door visits seeking potential riparian restoration projects, instream work along Pepin Brook (Canadian side of Double Ditch), and removal of invasive species (Scotch broom and blackberry) along Bertrand Creek. Following removal of invasive species, LEPs members will replant with native species.

This summer in Whatcom County, the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association (NSEA) is finishing a habitat survey along the tributaries of Bertrand Creek. The goal of the habitat survey is to determine the density, type, and extent of the riparian corridor (the area adjacent to the creek that supports vegetation) habitat along tributaries and ditches that connect to the Bertrand Creek system. To complete the survey work, the NSEA crew will need to walk directly in or immediately alongside the stream channel to take various measurements. NSEA’s survey crew is seeking landowner permission to access the tributaries and ditches. Information collected will be added to survey information previously collected from the mainstem of Bertrand Creek to complete an overall picture of habitat conditions within the Bertrand watershed.

All habitat survey information will be used to prioritize future restoration efforts. If you live along Bertrand Creek or its tributaries and would like more information about the survey, please contact Beth or Andrea at the WCD 354-2035 ext 3.
Almost anywhere in Whatcom County, one of the most formidable challenges to re-establishing native trees and shrubs along watercourses is controlling reed canarygrass. Reed canarygrass is a tall, non-native, perennial grass that thrives in wet areas and spreads by underground rhizomes. Canarygrass readily outcompetes newly planted trees and shrubs for light, water and nutrients. Canarygrass also often harbors large numbers of voles (small rodents) that destroy woody plants by chewing on bark and roots.

In 2001 Tim Miller, a weed scientist at WSU Cooperative Extension’s Mount Vernon Research Station, began a study to test several different ways to eliminate canarygrass. Tim established 24 research plots in an area already infested with canarygrass near Four Mile Creek, on property owned by John Davies.

Miller used four different strategies to try and eliminate this noxious weed from his plots. All strategies involved spraying the canarygrass with a 2% solution of the herbicide glyphosphate, better known as Roundup. The four strategies were:
* Spray with Roundup alone
* Spray with Roundup mixed with ammonium sulfate (a common fertilizer)
* Mow a month before spraying with Roundup
* Mow and then spray with a Roundup - ammonium sulfate mix

In order to find out if the time of year when canarygrass was treated affected his results, Miller varied the date he sprayed and/or mowed by about one month.

In early October 2001 and toward the end of April 2002, Miller asked a 3-member panel to rate the kill in each of the plots. The lowest level of canarygrass control was observed in plots that were sprayed and/or sprayed and mowed too early in the spring. Control of canarygrass in plots that were sprayed in mid April or that were mowed in mid April and then sprayed in mid May was less than 50%. The best kill occurred in plots that were sprayed in mid April or that were mowed once between mid-May and mid-July and then sprayed about 30 days later. In some of these plots, canarygrass was totally eradicated and had not begun to regrow by the following April. Adding ammonium sulfate to glyphosphate seemed to provide no benefit.

(More information and photos are available at Cooperative Extension’s website: www.whatcom.wsu.edu/environ/environment.htm).

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH:
Control reed canarygrass through the right combination of mowing and spraying

Students express thanks continued from page 4

The District received wonderful cards from the students, expressing their thanks for the opportunity to learn about how salmon live and what helps to keep salmon healthy. The cards illustrated some of the things that the students learned, such as the salmon lifecycle and the connectedness between healthy habitat and healthy salmon.
Beavers continued from page 1

an area where their presence is desired or tolerated. The removal option presents problems in that one must capture and relocate all the beaver and one must have a suitable receiving area for the deported beaver. Also, there is no guarantee that more beaver will not move in. Although there has been some limited success with beaver relocation, it is not viewed as the preferred option.

Another option is fencing. Fencing offers the opportunity to protect the plantation by encircling trees individually or by constructing a barrier fence between the beaver and the riparian forest area. A stout fence at least three feet high is required for either the individual or area protection approach. While either method works equally well, cost becomes a factor.

Individual fencing is labor and material intensive. Erecting a barrier fence is generally the more cost-effective approach when protecting a large area or number of trees. Agencies and groups involved in riparian restoration in Whatcom County have found that a 48-inch high 1x2 inch welded-wire mesh fence works well. The fence is constructed with the bottom foot of fence folded parallel to and placed on the ground surface toward the beaver side to prevent burrowing. This leaves a three-foot high barrier. The welded-wire fence works well but its cost at $2-3 per foot is still a major consideration.

This past May an electric fence field trial was installed to protect an area experiencing beaver damage. If the trial fence proves successful, its main advantage will be the reduced cost, at about half the cost per foot of welded-wire. The battery-powered electric beaver fence consists of two strands of energized wire running 6 and 12 inches above the ground surface. Site preparation included mowing a six-foot swath through mostly reed canarygrass along the proposed fence line and placing six-foot wide landscaping fabric for weed control. It is critical to control vegetation along the fence to prevent grounding. The evaluation site is subject to occasional flooding so we should be able to evaluate the electric fence performance during flood periods. In addition to cost, another advantage of electric fence is that it is relatively easy to install and once it has done its job, it is relatively easy to remove.

Water quality continued from page 1

to develop the list, which then goes through an intensive public process.

A Water Clean Up Plan, or Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), must be developed for each of the polluted water bodies. A TMDL:

1. Identifies the maximum amount of a pollutant allowed to be released into a waterbody so as not to impair uses of the water, and
2. Allocates that maximum amount among various sources

Ecology conducted a TMDL evaluation of the lower Nooksack basin in 1997-1998. Because the lower river basin has a history of state bacteria standard violations, the TMDL focused on fecal coliform bacteria loading to the river from tributaries, sewage treatment plants, and other sources. In 2000, DOE established fecal coliform pollution limits for the Nooksack watershed through adoption of the Lower Nooksack River Basin Bacteria TMDL. The TMDL goals listed in the Table 1 are the fecal coliform count goals established by the DOE for that stream.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WATERSHED</th>
<th>2ND QUARTER 2002</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fecal coliform count (col./100ml)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumas River</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumas Creek *</td>
<td>67</td>
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<tr>
<td>Squaw Creek</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pangborn Creek</td>
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<td>Johnson Creek</td>
<td>49</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dakota Creek</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California Creek</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*also called VanValkenberg Creek</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Environmental Sensitive Horsekeeping Classes Coming This Fall

Whatcom Conservation District will be working with Alayne Blickle and her Horses for Clean Water Program to present educational events (workshop and tour of a horse facility) covering mud, manure, and pasture management for horse farms. (See related article in this issue). The classes will provide horse owners with practical measures for improving horse health while decreasing impacts that horses have on soil and water resources. Mark your calendars now for Saturday, November 2nd & November 9th, 2002. Funding for this event provided by Washington Department of Ecology in cooperation with the Whatcom Conservation District. As details about time and location for the workshops are finalized, they will be posted at websites www.whatcomcd.org or http://members.aol.com/arblickle/.
CASSIE HILLER:
Cassie, who is a sophomore at Western Washington University studying Environmental Science, is an intern with NRCS this summer. Cassie is originally from Illinois where she grew up on the 3000-acre family farm. Cassie loved to work on the farm but since the tradition is to pass it down to the sons in the family, she decided to pursue an environmental science degree. Cassie says, “Staying involved with agriculture is what makes me happy. I believe growing up on a farm and having an environmental science degree will be a good mix for a diverse career in agriculture.”

JASON DUBA:
Jason is participating in NRCS’s Student Career Experience Program (SCEP). He is a civil and environmental engineering major at Whitworth College in Spokane. Jason grew up all over the country but considers Spokane home because that’s where he graduated from high school (University) and his family lives. One thing Jason says he likes about his job is that he gets to work outdoors.

Beavers can be found in rivers, streams, marshes, lakes, and ponds throughout most of the U.S. and Canada. The beaver has thick, long, light to dark brown hair that looks like silky fur. Its legs are short and strong. Its neck and head are also short, but powerful and flexible. A beaver is one of the largest rodents around, with an adult beaver weighing between 40-60 pounds. In captivity, a beaver can live for 30 years. In the wild, a beaver’s average lifespan is about 10 years because of predators and trapping. Beavers are very skilled swimmers, and usually spend more time in water than on the land. If baby beavers, called “kits”, are tired, a mother beaver will often either carry them in her “hands” or on her broad, flat tail. The tail is also used to sound an emergency signal to other beavers; when a beaver senses danger he slaps it against the water before he swims down under the water to safety. Beavers can stay completely under water for 15 minutes!

Beavers have powerful jaws and chisel-sharp incisor teeth, which are perfectly designed to bite through tree branches and gnaw at bark. Besides bark, some favorite beaver foods include clover, grasses, raspberry canes and water lily tubes. Beavers build homes, called “lodges”, from branches and reeds, which they caulk with mud. They stay busy all year repairing their dams. Beavers also spend time in the summer and fall gathering up food to keep in their lodges for the winter. Beavers love company and usually live in pairs or groups. They mark their territories with a scent, but sometimes let other families live in their area with them and share the huge task of maintaining the dam and waterways.

Summer interns continued from page 3
stream restoration work in the future.

Whatcom Conservation
KIDS’ PAGE

Did you know that beavers are some of the best engineers and builders in the world, as far as animals go? Read on to find out more, and then find the underlined words in the word search below.

The underlined words from the story can be found forward and backward, horizontally or diagonally.

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccccccccccccccc}
\text{W} & \text{N} & \text{R} & \text{E} & \text{D} & \text{D} & \text{R} & \text{O} & \text{H} & \text{U} & \text{A} & \text{I} & \text{U} & \text{W} & \text{N} \\
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Getting Rid of Reed Canarygrass ....................... page 5
KIDS’ Page ....................................................... page 7

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