

Stillaguamish River Clean Water District Advisory Board

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Stillaguamish Drainage Basin*
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Vacant

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Tulalip Tribes
Vacant by agency choice

Surface Water Management Staff
Sean Edwards

Snohomish County Public Works,
Surface Water Management
3000 Rockefeller Avenue,
Everett, WA 98201
(425) 388-3464

www.cwd.surfacewater.info

June 27, 2016

Monte Marti, District Manager
Snohomish Conservation District
528 91st Ave NE Suite A
Lake Stevens, WA 98258

Dear Mr. Marti,

Pursuant to Title 25A.30.030 SCC, the Stillaguamish River Clean Water District (CWD) Advisory Board (the Board) offers the following recommendations and comments relating to Snohomish Conservation District (SCD) services in the CWD:

Alternatives for Horse Bedding – The accumulation of horse-stall waste piles poses a risk to water quality in the CWD. Because bedding sawdust or wood shavings are high in lignin, local composting or spreading on fields as soil amendment is problematic, making disposal of these waste piles typically difficult and expensive. Despite some success in disposal efforts by SCD and the County, a long-term, preventative, horse-stall waste management solution is called for.

More easily degradable chopped-straw bedding offers an alternative. A quick internet survey reveals that many horse owners prefer straw when available. **The Board recommends** that SCD investigate and report on the pros and cons of chopped-straw bedding, how its use differs in practice from wood fiber bedding, and its comparative costs (including disposal), and that you assess the opportunities for field trials through your farm and horse-owner outreach programs.

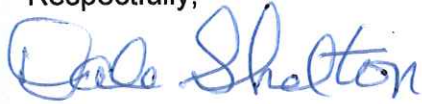
Work Requirements – The Board notes a shift in SCD work, away from farm plans and towards technical assistance letters to landowners. This has created a disparity between the specified Work Requirements and actual Work Accomplished. The Board would like more information on why you think this shift to technical assistance letters is beneficial and appropriate, and if so, we urge SCD to formally incorporate it into future work plans and County contracts.

Discretionary Fund Projects – The Board appreciates SCD's contribution in previous years of water quality projects to be funded through the CWD Discretionary Fund Grant Program. **We recommend** that SCD vigorously pursue every opportunity to bring us more such projects.

Education and Outreach – SCD's outstanding work in educating the farmers and homeowners of the CWD plays a crucial role in achieving our clean water goals. We are pleased with the level of emphasis placed on education in your 2015 Work Accomplished, and in the 2016 Contract Budget.

The Board thanks SCD for its continuing assistance to CWD landowners, in both resource management and clean water education and outreach. We hope our recommendations and comments will be helpful to you in the coming year, and look forward to your response.

Respectfully,



Dale Shelton, Chair



Bob Landles, Vice Chair

cc:

Will Hall, Director, Snohomish County Surface Water Management