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## **Snohomish County Surface Water Management Utility Releases 2018 State of Our Waters Reports**

*Discover the health of more than 60 county rivers, streams and lakes*

**EVERETT, Wash., September 10, 2019** – Beautiful rivers, lakes and streams are a hallmark of Snohomish County. Surface Water Management’s (SWM) State of Our Waters program seeks to understand the health of these resources. Last year’s data showed 27% of river and stream sites and 77% of lakes are in excellent or good health. Common problems found in streams are high temperatures, fecal bacteria pollution, and lack of salmon habitat. Lakes often suffer from phosphorus pollution from excess fertilizer use.

To best understand the health of local waters, the State of Our Waters program tracks five key indicators:

- **Water quality:** Oxygen, temperature, harmful pollutants such as bacteria and heavy metals, and nutrients
- **Hydrology:** Precipitation, flow in streams and rivers, and lake levels
- **Aquatic Life:** Numbers and types of insects living in streams and rivers
- **Habitat:** Amount and diversity of salmon habitat, such as gravel beds and large wood in streams, and condition of shorelines
- **Land Use:** Changes in land use, such as decreases in forested areas

The State of Our Waters reports that detail these and other findings are available for [streams, rivers](#) and [lakes](#).

Residents can protect and improve local waters by [practicing natural yard care](#), [picking up after pets](#), [maintaining their septic system](#), [fixing vehicle leaks](#), [building RainScapes](#), and [washing their car at a car](#)

[wash](#). Lake and streamside residents can learn about these and other ways to protect streams and lakes through the [LakeWise Program](#) and the County's [Stewardship](#) program.

SWM is a utility that is funded by and provides services to property owners in unincorporated Snohomish County. SWM strives to reduce flood damage and to protect and enhance our water resources for future generations. Working as partners with the community, SWM provides customers with services in four core areas: drainage and road flooding, water quality, salmon and marine habitat, and river flooding.

#### **About Snohomish County Public Works**

The Snohomish County Public Works Department constructs and maintains county roads; controls and manages surface water quantity, quality, and fish habitats; and oversees the recycling and disposal of solid waste. The department's main office is located at 3000 Rockefeller Ave., Everett, WA 98201. For more information about Snohomish County Public Works, visit [www.snohomishcountywa.gov/PublicWorks](http://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/PublicWorks).

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