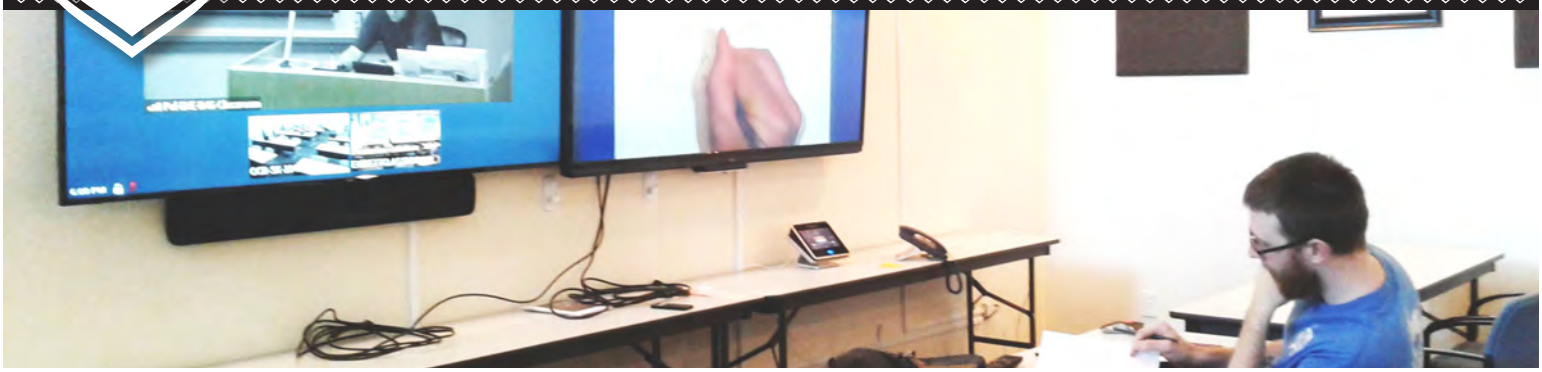
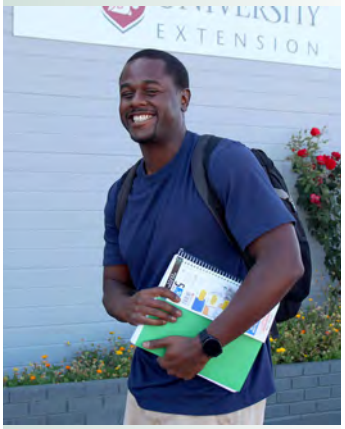
# Washington State University

Extension Island County 2018-2019



# Island County Impact Statement

**Serving Island County for more than 100 years**




*"...in addition to saving the hour and a half each way to Everett, I save money on gas and childcare through the program "*

-Antonio Barber
Software Engineering Student

*"...this is saving me time, hundreds of dollars in gas and ferry tolls, and is just 15 minutes from my house "*

-Josh Gowdey

## MISSION

Washington State University Extension engages people, organizations, and communities to advance knowledge, economic well-being, and quality of life by fostering inquiry, learning, and the application of research.

## VISION

As the front door to the University, Washington State University Extension extends non-credit education and degree opportunities to people and communities throughout the state. Extension builds the capacity of individuals, organizations, businesses, and communities, empowering them to find solutions for local issues and to improve their quality of life. Extension is recognized for its accessible, learner-centered, relevant, high quality, and unbiased educational programs. Extension collaborates with communities to create a culture of life-long learning.

WSU Extension is here to serve the educational needs of all Island County resident's with impartial science-based information and Extension programming. In addition to the traditional Extension programming, listed on the back of this sheet, 2019 marks a new era for Island County with for-credit courses now offered in Coupeville. Island County is the only County Extension office offering courses as an option for WSU students. Currently, two students are taking a total of four classes, three from the WSU Everett campus and one from the Pullman campus. As word gets out, we are confident more students will take advantage of this opportunity to achieve their higher educational goals and objectives. Some of the programs offered through the Everett campus include the following:

- *Data Analytics*
- *Electrical Engineering*
- *Hospitality Business Management*
- *Integrated Strategic Communication*
- *Mechanical Engineering*
- *Organic and Sustainable Agriculture*
- *Software Engineering*

## WSU SEMINAR SERIES

Throughout the school year seminars in Entomology, Crop and Soil Sciences, Plant Pathology, and Environmental Sciences are offered on a weekly basis through the video conference center in the WSU Extension Island County office. Seminars are often given by WSU professors, visiting scholars and graduate students. These seminars are posted on the WSU Extension Island County website and are free and open to the public.

Since 1914 , Washington State University Extension has adapted to changing times and landscapes. Fewer than 2 percent of Americans farm for a living today, and only 17 percent of Americans now live in rural areas. Yet, extension still plays a significant role in American life — rural, urban, and suburban. With its unprecedented reach, extension helps farmers and gardeners achieve greater success, assists families with nutrition and home economics and prepares today's youth to become leaders.

**Tim Lawrence, Ph.D.**
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# EXTENSION PROGRAMMING

## 4-H Youth Development

The 4H program has operated in Island County since the 1940's. This long tradition of engaging youth in the development of positive attitudes and life skills such as decision-making, responsibility, interpersonal skills, a service ethic, and social skills in addition to various practical and technical skills, culminates each year in participation at the Whidbey Area Fair.

## Community Litter Cleanup Program (CLCP)

The CLCP litter program works in partnership with Island County Solid Waste to engage Island County residents and community groups in removing litter along our most pristine beaches. Clean beaches protect marine wildlife and make our islands a destination for tourists and homeowners. In addition, the CLCP provides educational opportunities on the impacts of litter to schools and community groups.

## Food Systems

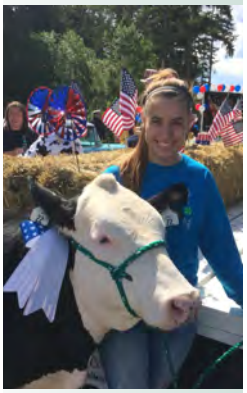
Our food systems program focuses on helping farmers implement state of the art technology and practices to achieve cultural, production and financial sustainability in locally produced foods. Whether they are brand new farmers with only 5 acres of land, or a large, multi-generational farm, the program brings the knowledge and expertise of WSU research to Island County farmers to help them achieve their goals.

## Forestry

A 2009 University of Washington study found the most threatened forestlands in Western Washington are in Island County. The WSU forestry program helps land owners learn more about their property and develop solid timber management plans. The program also brings the knowledge and expertise of WSU research to Island County forest owners to help them achieve their goals.

## Master Gardeners

The Master Gardener program is the quintessential Extension program where WSU trains and certifies volunteers in basic botanical and horticultural practices and these individuals use their expertise to help others with plant problems. This approach allows us to more efficiently reach a larger segment of the population with science-based information.

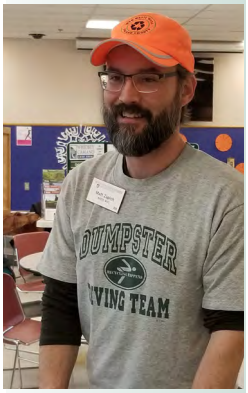


## Shore Stewards

Island County has nearly 200 miles of shoreline surrounded by marine waters, and the second highest percent of shoreline parcels in the Puget Sound. Shore Stewards helps Island County residents who live along the shore to make sound decisions to protect their property and the environment.

## SNAP-Ed

A national program funded through the USDA, SNAP-Ed educates lower income populations on growing their own food and food nutrition. In Island County we have developed a partnership with the Oak Harbor School District, the Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, the Island County Health Communities, and other WSU Extension programs in delivery of the SNAP-Ed Program.




## Waste Wise

Working in partnership with Island County Solid Waste, the WSU Waste Wise program educates the public to help reduce the amount of waste that ends up in our landfills. Special emphasis is placed on youth in public schools throughout the county to educate and encourage increased rates of composting, recycling, and reuse of products.

Island County
Washington State University
Extension

Visit Our Web site at: ISLAND.WSU.EDU
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# Washington State University

Extension Island County 2018-2019

# Island County 4-H

Youth Development

## BY THE NUMBERS

- *Seventeen 4-H Clubs in Island County*
- *4-H Youth Enrollment increased 17%*
- *4-H Adult Leaders increased 4.8%*
- *4-H Youth Leaders increased 28%*
- *4-H Youth Enrolled in Projects like:*
  *(Some youth enrolled in multiple projects)*
  *40 in market animals*
  *66 in training animals*
  *52 in companion animals*
  *4 in entomology*
  *41 in communication and arts*
  *14 in food and nutrition*
  *6 in leadership*
  *2 in Know Your Government*
- *Attendance at 4-H Youth Leadership Conference more than doubled*

## ISSUE

Today's youth are growing up in a rapidly changing world which can be chaotic at times. There are scores of distractions that can interfere with healthy development. Young people need to learn the necessary skills to succeed in the adult world. During this developmental stage, children and adolescents need the support of a strong structural framework which provides mentoring and teaches skills in leadership, resiliency, and cooperation.

## RESPONSE

The 4-H Youth Development program is designed to provide a supportive and inclusive environment where youth can learn leadership and life skills that help them succeed now and in the future in an environment open to all regardless of race, sex, religion, age, color, creed, or national or ethnic origin.

In the 4-H Youth Development Program, the members can enroll in projects to study a subject of their choice in depth, creating the foundation of competence and life-long learning. While working on the project, the 4H'ers learn valuable leadership and life skills that can be used to benefit themselves and their community. 4-H programming helps to contribute to life skill development by teaching young people sportsmanship, cooperation, leadership, time management, teamwork, responsibility, knowledge development, positive personal interrelationships, respect for self and others, and communication skills.

In Island County, we are using the 4-H Regional Teen Programming model. This approach teaches age-appropriate leadership and life skills to the youth members, with each level building on the previous ones. As an example: junior members learn about public speaking, goal setting, communication, helping to plan community service, and the duties of the club officers.

The older 4H youth mentor the younger ones, and the advance seniors can work on district or state level events. Three Island County 4-H'ers have advanced from just attending leadership conferences, to now being on the committee to facilitating them.

There has been an increase in Island County youth members attending both district and state leadership activities over last year. This year fifteen youth attended SW District Teen Summit, Speak Easy, Know Your Government (KYG), and NW District Teen Summit. Along with encouraging the members to participate in the leadership activities, scholarships funds have been developed to help offset the cost of these events. The seventeen 4-H clubs in Island County provide youth multiple opportunities to engage in various leadership and service learning projects.

Washington State University 4-H Youth Development helps young people become productive citizens who are engaged in positive change, meeting the needs of a diverse and changing society. 4-H empowers youth to reach their full potential, working and learning in partnership with caring adults.

**Cathi Mann-Fisher**
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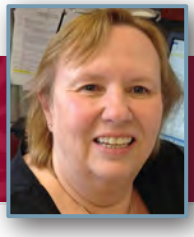

## QUOTES

"I have been in 4-H for nine years now, and it has changed my life. I am no longer a shy person who hides away from big crowds. Instead, I am now the person who will go into a big group and talk to new people. 4-H has allowed me to have a voice and learn how to become a leader. Next year, I am hoping to become president of the Coupeville ASB executive board, and that is only possible because I learned from 4-H how to become a great leader and role model."

*-Megan Thorn*
*Whidbey Wranglers*
*4-H club member*

"4-H has helped me learn about how working hard at all the little things result in achieving your overall goal."

-Camden Miller,
*4-H'er of the Year*
*Member of the SW Swine &*
*CW Cattlemen 4-H clubs*

## PARTNERS

Bell Farms – Rally Day
Island County Fair Association
NASWI Youth Center
Oak Harbor School District
Pacific Rim Institute
Port of South Whidbey
Sherman Pioneer Farms
South Whidbey Parks and Recreation

## RESPONSE *continued*

The cornerstone of the 4-H youth program is the Youth/Adult Partnership. A youth member works with a caring adult who acts as a guide, advisor and mentor to the youth. The adult volunteers help set boundaries and expectations for the youth members.

In the 2013 report "The Positive Development of Youth" researchers at Tufts University Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development found 4-H'ers are nearly four times more likely to make contributions to their communities and about two times more likely to be civically active.

## IMPACTS

Island County 4-H youth members use their leadership and life skills on projects that help educate and serve members of our community. Here are just a few examples from our 2018-2019 program year:

- Samantha Ollis, South Whidbey High (SWHS) student and member of the South Whidbey Swine & Central Whidbey Cattlemen, served as a member of the KYG committee and helped to facilitate the State KYG conference in Olympia.
- Madison Ellerby-Muse (SWHS) and Megan Thorn, Coupeville High School (CHS), served on the planning committee for the Northwest District Teen Summit on Orcas Island the first weekend in May. In addition, both Madison and Megan taught workshops at the teen summit.
- Megan Thorn also served on the planning committee for Speakeasy, a training for younger 4-H'ers in public speaking that is planned and conducted by senior 4-H'ers using interactive video conferencing as part of the exercise giving the distant learning skills they will need in the future.
- Youth members who attend teen leadership conferences are part of the planning and leadership of these conferences. Island County has increased the number enrolling as youth leaders over last year by 20%.
- The Whidbey Island Homesteaders 4-H Club members moved roughly 1,680 pounds of rock at the fairgrounds assisting with the installation of a drainage system around the McLeod historic building.
- The Knight Riders baked an array of goods for the Whidbey Island Nourishes (WIN) program which has, for ten years, been delivering food to those in need.
- Several clubs took their project animals to assisted living facilities on Whidbey to share and to spend time with the residents. The Just Kidding Goats club set up an entire petting zoo at Carriage of Whidbey for the residents.
- The Kool Kritters, the South Whidbey Swine and Central Whidbey Cattlemen work on environmental stewardship with cleanups of Island County beaches and roads.
- All American Puppy Paws and the Homesteaders provided care and food for rescue animals on Whidbey Island.
- Two Island County 4-H Clubs worked on projects to help Island County residents in need stay warm last winter. The North Whidbey Rock'N Doodle Poultry Club collected and donated winter jackets and sweaters. The Teen Leadership Club created felt tie blankets and donated them to several local homeless shelters.
- The Four Seasons Farm club held its second annual Goat University. The youth members of the club planned and executed the day-long educational event with several workshops on a variety of topics for local and regional residents.
- The popular New Year Polar Bear Dive at Double Bluff beach was co-hosted by the 4H Teen Leadership Club (TLC) and the South Whidbey Parks and Recreation Department again this year. This annual fun event is a favorite with island residents and a way for islanders to celebrate the New Year together. Proceeds from this event go towards Island County 4H teen leadership events.
- The Kool Kritters donated meals to the Spin Café, and the Artsy Animals Poultry 4-H Club donated fresh eggs from their birds to Good Cheer Food Bank. Clover 360, SW Swine, and CW Cattlemen sponsored families during the holidays with donations of food baskets.
- 4-H Youth Development Coordinator, Cathi Mann-Fisher and 4-H Regional Specialist, Michael Wallace presented, "Parenting and Communicating with Teens" to youth and their parents at the Juvenile Justice Parents And Teens Changing Habits (PATCH) training on two separate days.

## FUNDING

4-H Military Program Grant
South Whidbey Parks and Recreation Department


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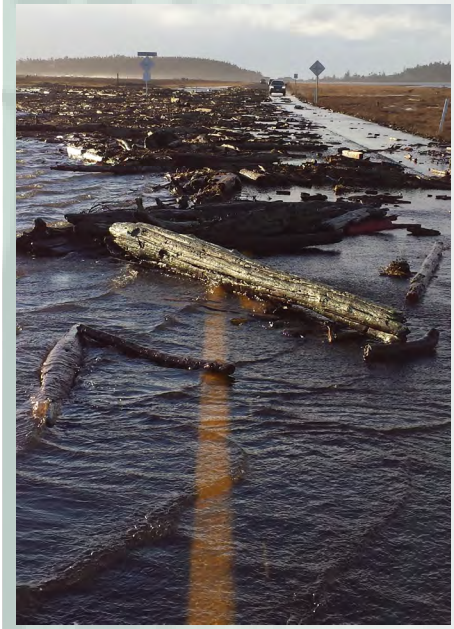
# Washington State University

Extension Island County 2018-2019

## BY THE NUMBERS

- *11,135 pounds of litter and 626 pounds of recyclables collected*
- *1432 hours donated by volunteer litter crews*
- *CLCP conducted twenty-two storm mitigation cleanups collecting more than two tons of litter*
- *The Ecology Youth Corps contributed 360 volunteer hours and collected 1,930 lbs. of litter along Island County roads and beaches*



*Beaches in the Fort Casey/Keystone Spit area were especially hard hit by a major windstorm that blew through Whidbey and Camano Islands on December 22, 2018 exposing tons of litter and debris.*

# CLCP

**Community Litter Cleanup Program**

## ISSUE

Littered single-use plastics, such as packaging for consumable products, have become the most common items found along the roadways and shorelines of Island County. These products, along with pieces of rope and netting improperly discarded by passing vessels, make up most debris choking our beaches. Whether this litter is intentional or unintentional, large or small, it can drastically affect the environment for years to come.

Twenty years ago, recognizing that litter and debris along the shoreline of Whidbey and Camano Islands was having a negative impact on marine wildlife, Island County became the first county in Washington to request funds from the Washington Department of Ecology's Community Litter Cleanup Program to be used exclusively for collecting, disposing, and educating the public about beach litter collected along Island County shoreline.

## RESPONSE

The state-funded Community Litter Cleanup Program in Island County consists of four parts: weekly community volunteer litter pickups along state and county beaches, Ecology Youth Corps quarterly cleanups, the Island County Solid Waste Purple Card program, and community education.

- Weekly or bi-weekly beach litter cleanups are conducted year-round. Volunteers for these events are recruited from the community at large. Many of these individuals are already members of other volunteer organizations such as Sound Water Stewards and WSU Waste Wise.
- The Ecology Youth Corps (EYC) is Washington State's most extensive youth employment program. These youth provide a vital service to their community while gaining valuable job skills, teamwork experience, safety awareness, and an environmental education. As part of the CLCP agreement, ECY crews contribute more than four hundred hours of litter collection along Island County roads and shoreline each year.

Weekly volunteer beach litter cleanups are a fun, free, easy way to give back to the community by keeping pollution from damaging marine organisms in and around Island County. It's easy to participate and the effort benefits both the community and the environment.

**Stinger Anderson**
Beach Litter Coordinator
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## QUOTES

"You provided the education/awareness part, as well as the communication and necessary things like bags, gloves, parking permits and "pickers" that made it very easy to get out on the beaches to clean up.
Scheduling the same locations over and over again helped people see that once a beach is relatively clear of junk, it doesn't stay that way! Thanks so much for making use of the state funds in such a valuable way.
A small pocket of $$ went a long way!"

*Kathy Bender*
*Volunteer*

"Thank you for speaking with my 8th-grade technology students. They are participating in a plastics pollution STEM challenge hosted by National Geographic and appreciate your knowledge on the subject."

*Susan Z. Johnson NBCT*
*Coupeville Middle/High School*

"Island County volunteers is one of the best success stories of CLCP!"

*Steven Williams*
*Northwest Region Litter Grant Administrator*

## PARTNERS

Coupeville School District
Oak Harbor School District
Sound Water Stewards
South Whidbey School District
US Naval Air Station
Washington Dept of Ecology
WSU Master Gardeners
WSU Waste Wise

## RESPONSE *continued*

- The Purple Card program allows Island County residents to dispose of litter collected from their private shores without cost to them. A Purple Card, when presented at any Island County Solid Waste Transfer Station, covers the cost of the beach litter disposal. Any Island County resident may apply for and make use of a free Purple Card.
- Community Education for adults and youth, which focuses on the impact that litter, (especially single-use plastics) is having on the wildlife along our shores and out in the ocean. Presentations are made in the public schools and at community functions.

## IMPACTS

- Seventy-two public beach litter cleanups were conducted in state and county parks across Island County using adult volunteer crews. Volunteer litter crews donated 1432 volunteer hours and collected 11,135 pounds of litter and 626 pounds of recyclables.
- Purple Card volunteers reported disposing of 652 pounds of beach litter collected along privately owned shorelines.
- A major windstorm blew through Whidbey and Camano of December 22, 2018. Beaches in the Fort Casey/Keystone Spit area were especially hard hit, causing the shoreline berms to collapse and flood SR20 near the Port Townsend ferry dock and leaving massive amounts of litter and debris in its wake. CLCP conducted twenty-two storm mitigation cleanups resulting in more than two tons of litter being removed from this area alone.
- CLCP partnered with eight neighborhood associations on Whidbey and Camano to remove litter from along the shoreline. Pebble Beach got access to long-neglected private shoreline on Camano and collected more than half a ton of litter, including some large items like boat parts. Driftwood Shores community reported 340 pounds of litter collected. Mutiny Bay Community Association collected more than 500 pounds of litter during their event, and the Coupeville Methodist Church adopted a section of beach south of Ebey's Landing, collecting eighty pounds of litter on their first visit.
- Marine litter education was conducted at Olympic View Elementary School in Oak Harbor for eighty seven children. Students were made aware of the cumulative impact single-use plastics are having on our waterways.
- In March, CLCP again set up an educational booth at the Whidbey Gardening Workshop at Oak Harbor High School. This was an excellent opportunity to recruit new volunteer litter crew members from the four hundred and fifty attendees. CLCP also participated in the 2019 Earth Day activities on south Whidbey Island.
- "The Trouble with Plastics" PowerPoint was presented to the 2018 class of the Sound Water Stewards.
- The Coupeville High School Ecology Club filmed the CLCP PowerPoint "The Trouble with Plastics" when it was presented to them. This video will be included as part of the club's submission to the National Geographic multimedia "Planet or Plastic" challenge.
- The Ecology Youth Corps contributed 360 volunteer hours and collected 1,930 pounds of litter along twenty-eight miles Island County roads and beaches.

## FUNDING

Washington's statewide litter collection, waste reduction, and recycling programs are all funded by a tax placed on wrappers, bottles and other items typically found in roadside litter. Through grants administered by the Washington Department of Ecology, the Community Litter Cleanup Program has provided funding to local governments for litter pickup, illegal dump cleanup, and litter prevention and education, based on geographic and demographic factors, efficiency, and effectiveness.


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# Washington State University

Extension Island County 2018-2019

# Food Systems

**Strengthening Agricultural Producers and Preserving Farmland**

## BY THE NUMBERS

- *Nearly 30 farmers learned the importance of controlling brassica diseases to protect our region's valuable seed crops*
- *12 Island County women farmers strengthened their business knowledge at WSU Extension's Women in Agriculture event*
- *More than 20 farmers regularly attend monthly Whidbey Island Growers Association meetings to further their knowledge on issues affecting farmers*
- *21 farmers learned through WSU Extension soil research how soil fertility practices and cover cropping help their farms be more resilient*

## ISSUE

According to newly released data from the USDA 2017 Census of Agriculture, Island County has a growing number of farms. After a dip, due to the 2007 recession, our number of farms has increased 3% from 2012, with most of that growth in farms that are 10-49 acres in size, bucking the national trend. Compared with the rest of the United States, Island County is also attracting a significant percentage of new and beginning farmers who have no formal training in agriculture.

## RESPONSE

The WSU Extension Island County Food Systems program provides educational opportunities to small and medium-sized farms, growers and their employees that enhance their knowledge, economic well-being and quality of life through the application of knowledge generated by WSU and other university institutions. The WSU Food Systems program is a statewide effort of a diverse team of faculty and staff to foster the success of small farms, promote good stewardship of our natural resources and to ensure that all Washington State residents have access to healthy food.

The Food Systems program offers several opportunities for small farms to gain knowledge that can help them to improve their operations:

- The Cultivating Success Program, in partnership with Skagit Valley College and WSU Extension Skagit County, offers two multi-week courses that provide beginning and existing farmers with the planning and decision-making tools, production skills and support necessary to develop and sustain a small acreage farm.
- Monthly Whidbey Island Grower Association meetings in partnership with the Whidbey Island Conservation District feature presentations from local and state organizations.
- A monthly newsletter that shares current news and events from WSU Extension and partners.
- A yearly Women in Agriculture workshop to share issues of importance to women, build relationships, and gain valuable knowledge to strengthen their farms.

The Food Systems Program works with local farmers and other community members and organizations to foster profitable farms, optimize land, water, and resource stewardship, promote scalable processing and distribution, and to encourage access to healthy food for all.

**Loren Imes**
Food Systems Program Coordinator
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## RESPONSE *continued*

- Interactive seminars broadcast to our conference room live from the WSU Pullman campus that discuss current ag-related research from university faculty and staff.
- Access to current and long-term local weather data collected at two farms on Whidbey Island through the WSU AgWeatherNet system.
- An email distribution list to share announcements of regional events of interest to farmers and growers.
- Two social media accounts that promote Island County agricultural interests and Extension news and events.

## IMPACTS

- Monthly meetings of the Whidbey Island Growers Association bring local growers together to increase their knowledge in areas including:
  - ◊ Soil fertility, microbiology, soil tests, and cover cropping
  - ◊ Increasing farm profitability through value-added farm products
  - ◊ Increasing crop productivity through the support of pollinator hedgerow habitat
  - ◊ Research into pest control practices
- Twelve Island County women farmers shared experiences and best practices with hundreds of other women farmers in the Pacific Northwest.
- WSU Vegetable Seed Pathologist Dr. Lindsey du Toit spared Island County brassica seed growers from the devastating impact of a quarantine due to an incorrect disease diagnosis of a local seed sample from a respected out of state seed certification lab. The erroneous findings were reported in a statewide AG related publication, however WSU acted quickly to correct the error and used this as an opportunity to highlight the importance of staying vigilant against the disease to Island County growers.
- More than fifteen Camano Island farmers and residents attended an open house event to discuss how Extension can address their needs.
- One hundred and twenty-four Whidbey and Camano farmers belong to an email distribution list and learn of WSU sponsored educational opportunities and agricultural information.
- Social media posts shared farming information with more than 22,000 people.

## QUOTES

"As an aspiring farmer, I'm so glad that this conference exists. So WELL DONE."

*Women in Agriculture participant*

"Great session yesterday! I have tons of notes that I'm going through this morning."

*Whidbey Island Growers Association meeting participant*

## PARTNERS

Island County Farm Bureau
Whidbey Island Conservation District
Whidbey Island Grown
WSU Extension Food Systems team

## FUNDING

Funding comes from Island County, Washington State University Extension, donations, and class fees collected from participants.


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# Washington State University

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# Forestry

**Planning, maintaining, and preservng forests and forest resources**

## BY THE NUMBERS

### *Forestry Classes*

- 2019 Camano Island Forest Stewardship Coached Planning
  (Turned people away due to lack of capacity)
  *31 total participants*
  *23 small forest owners representing 167 acres of forest*

### *Forestry Seminars*

- Our Earth Our Home, Forest Health in the Puget Sound
  *57 attendees - Camano Library*
- Native Trees
  *25 attendees - Clinton Library*
- Why Trees Are Dying and What to Do, And What Not To Do
  *42 Master Gardeners - PRI*

## ISSUE

Small-acreage properties comprise more than 99% of the private forestland in Island County. With just over 56,000 acres of these small-acreage forests owned by almost 8,000 individuals, the average forest size in Island County is nine acres. It is estimated that 97% of the forestland in Island County is at high risk of conversion, more than any other county in the state. Providing impartial science based information for these land owners is an essential service to help them make appropriate decisions

## RESPONSE

The Washington State University Extension Forestry program provides objective, research-based forest stewardship education programs and resources for owners of small-acreage forested properties. These properties are typically family-owned and have between one and several thousand forested acres. Most owners have fewer than twenty acres. The average acreage varies by county.

WSU Extension Forestry's flagship program is Forest Stewardship Coached Planning, which is an educational partnership between WSU, the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and local counties. This eight-week short course covers all aspects of forest stewardship and coaches participants in writing their own personalized forest stewardship plans. The course is offered both in-person and Online, and it includes weekly class sessions, an all-day field trip, and a library of reference materials and how-to guides. Each participant receives an on-the-ground site visit by a state service forester from either DNR or WSU Extension.

Other key WSU Extension Forestry resources include individual consultations, newsletters and publications that have won national awards, forest owner field days, and topical workshops, and seminars.

The WSU Forestry Program provides objective, research-based information and resources to forest and woodland owners in the North Puget Sound Area through a variety of forestry classes, publications, and Online resources that are designed for people with just a few acres of woods as well those with larger forests or tree farms. This program serves King, Snohomish, Skagit, San Juan, and Whatcom Counties.

**Kevin Zobrist**
Forestry Educator
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## QUOTES

"Wished I had this many years ago! What a wealth of info."

"So great. Can't find enough words to say thank you – course info and resources handed out was worth many times the cost of the course."

"Terrific class! Recommend it to any forest owner! I knew zip before class and now I know enough to be dangerous! Seriously, this had a HUGE impact on my appreciation and ability to manage our forest."

"We had no plan before! Now we know what direction to go!"

"Just can't say enough good things about this class! Informative, entertaining, great atmosphere, excellent instruction!!!"

"First time I've ever had my interest held (for 3 hours!) in anything even faintly resembling a science class. Great info, interesting presentations, amazing resources!""

"Wish everyone could take it. Will encourage neighbors to do so for sure!"

"I'll never look at a forest the same way ever again."

## IMPACTS

The WSU Extension Forestry program routinely follows up with participants who complete the Coached Planning Workshop . In aggregate the results demonstrate the benefit of individuals who have completed the training shows a knowledge change that leads to behavior change that leads to condition change.

Within one year of taking the course:

- 92% used course knowledge to implement new or different forest stewardship practices, including invasive species removal, wildlife habitat enhancement, tree planting, and thinning.
- 96% shared course knowledge with an average of eight other people.
- 96% reported that the course increased their enjoyment of their property.
- 87% reported that the course decreased the likelihood that they would convert their forest to non-forest use.

As a result of applying course knowledge, within three years of taking the course:

- 64% observed increased wildlife use.
- 53% observed decreased invasive species cover.
- 29% generated income and county tax revenue through sustainable production of forest products.
- 69% reduced their taxes by qualifying for current use programs.
- 94% reported increased confidence in managing their property.
- 87% reported an overall increase in their quality of life.

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# Washington State University

Extension Island County 2018-2019

# Master Gardeners

**Cultivating Plants, People and Communities**

## BY THE NUMBERS

- *More than 80 active volunteers contributed more than 6500 hours of service*
- *30 educational and 35 plant clinics seminars helped thousands of residents become better gardeners*
- *More than 5000 lbs. of produce grown and donated to food banks by volunteers*
- *18 new Master Gardener Volunteers were trained in 2019 and will donate 1080 hours of service to the community*
- *Master Gardeners helped more than 400 hundred children learn about science and healthy eating through gardening*

## ISSUE

Information on gardening can be found everywhere. Unfortunately, much of this information is based on unreliable sources and unproven data. Where can Island County residents go to find accurate, non-biased, science-based information to help them improve their gardening practices while protecting the environment and the natural resources that sustain us?

## RESPONSE

The WSU Extension Master Gardener program was developed to train volunteers to be community educators in gardening and environmental stewardship. Using research generated from Washington State University and other institutions, Master Gardener volunteers teach local community members to:

- Manage their gardens and landscapes in a science-based and sustainable manner
- Protect environmental resources through water conservation and minimizing the use of chemicals
- Reduce the impact of invasive weeds, pests, and plant diseases
- Increase public awareness of healthy living and increased food security through gardening

In Island County, this is achieved through several important community outreach programs including:

- Weekly "Ask a Master Gardener" Plant Clinics at three community locations where residents can ask questions, learn about common plant and pest problems in our area, and receive recommendations on organic and low input conventional solutions that are safe for the gardener and the environment.
- Free Educational Seminars that provide gardening advice and education for beginner to advanced gardeners with a focus on issues specific to Island County's climate and soils.

Master Gardeners are trained volunteers that help residents in Island County with their gardening problems. Master Gardeners provide answers to basic gardening questions, help identify plants, insects and diseases and demonstrate the proper use of pesticides.

**Loren Imes**
Master Gardener Coordinator
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## QUOTES

"This is great, thank you! I appreciate you addressing my lawn problem and I've grown to admire dandelions as do the British!"

*Whidbey Island resident*

"Keep up the good work! I look forward to this every year."

*Attendee of the Whidbey Gardening Workshop*

"The classes put the 'why' behind the 'what' that my Dad taught me. Looking forward to putting all this information to use."

*New Master Gardener Intern*

## PARTNERS

Coupeville Farm to School Program
Good Cheer Food Bank
Island County Master Gardener Foundation
Meerkerk Garden
Naval Air Station Whidbey Island
Oak Harbor School District
Port of Coupeville
Sno-Isle Libraries
South Whidbey School Gardens
Whidbey Island Conservation District

## RESPONSE *continued*

- The Master Gardener Education Garden at Greenbank Farm where visitors can enjoy garden displays that provide ideas for appropriate plantings and demonstrate environmentally responsible gardening techniques.

Each year, 15 to 20 new volunteers train to become Master Gardeners. Trainees go through an 11-week program that includes more than 70 hours of study, involving lectures from WSU faculty and other gardening experts, reading assignments, hands-on practice, Online testing, and field trips. After their study is completed, interns volunteer 60 hours of service over the following year to become certified Master Gardeners. To maintain their active status, certified Master Gardeners agree to perform 25 hours of educationally related volunteer service and commit to 10 hours of continuing education each year. Many of our Master Gardeners easily exceed 100 hours of service each year.

## IMPACTS

- 80 active volunteers contributed nearly 6,500 hours of service valued at $165,295
- More than 300 residents asked questions about gardening at one of 35 plant clinics in 8 locations
- More than 1,000 people were taught a wide range of gardening advice at 30 educational seminars
- 18 new Master Gardeners Volunteers were trained and will donate 1,080 hours of community service in the next year
- Master Gardeners worked in 2 elementary schools assisting the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) coordinator in maintaining the school gardens that educate nearly 200 children on the importance of growing and eating fresh vegetables
- Master Gardeners helped more than 250 school children learn the concepts of botany by partnering with Meerkerk Garden's Botany Adventure program.
- An estimated 5,000 visitors toured the Educational Garden at Greenbank Farm to learn about gardening in Island County
- The Master Gardener display at the Whidbey Island Fair received the Best Educational Display Award
- Master Gardeners devoted more than 675 hours to continuing their own education in horticulture and environmental stewardship to better serve the public.
- Social media posts about Master Gardener program activities reached more than 14,000 people

The Master Gardener Foundation also conducts the annual Whidbey Gardening Workshop which not only attracts gardeners from Island County, but throughout the entire Puget Sound. Since it's beginning more than 30 years ago, thousands of gardeners from the region have learned sustainable gardening techniques from WSU trained Master Gardener volunteers, Extension faculty, and gardening professionals.

## FUNDING

Funding is from Island County, with additional funds provided by the Island County Master Gardener Foundation, fees from Master Gardener training classes, and Washington State University Extension.


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# Washington State University

Extension Island County 2018-2019

# Shore Stewards

**Protect the wildlife, waters, and way of life in the Salish Sea**

## ISSUE

The Salish Sea is a wondrous place, offering beautiful scenery, many recreational opportunities and is home to a host of fish, shellfish, and wildlife. Our county's two islands, Whidbey and Camano, are centerpieces in this network of coastal waterways with more than 212 miles of shoreline. Whidbey and Camano are particularly unique to our region in that most residents have septic systems and rely on aquifers for the water they consume. Whether our residents live directly on the beach or further inland, all affect the health of our marine environment. Land and water use directly influences the health of all who share our islands, including salmon, orcas, birds, and vegetative species, as well as impacts our ability to enjoy fishing, shellfish harvesting, and other recreational activities.

## RESPONSE

In 2003 the Shore Stewards program was developed here in Island County to help residents, parks, farmers, port districts, cities, and businesses understand our personal impact on the Salish Sea, and to offer better ways of managing their land to preserve critical habitat for fish, wildlife, and birds. Since then it has expanded to many other counties in the Puget Sound region.

Members receive a free Shore Stewards book called Guide to Shoreline Living, a peer-reviewed WSU Extension publication and reference guide with 10 principles for shoreline living. They also receive a DVD with learning modules about living near and recreating on our waters and regular electronic newsletters on a variety of relevant topics. Members learn better ways to reduce erosion and water runoff, how to protect lakes, streams and seas while boating, the importance of plants to prevent landslides, how to maintain their septic systems, low impact development techniques, and more. In addition, Shore Stewards receive a metal sign to display on their property and are alerted of the many workshops and presentations available that can help them better protect their family and property investment. All Shore Stewards materials and opportunities work in concert to teach ways to protect and preserve our waters and shores for future generations to enjoy.

## BY THE NUMBERS

- *More than 975 members since 2003*
- *4 newsletters sent to members and associated recipients in 2018/19 and 123 newsletters since 2004*
- *203 Facebook followers*
- *615 Listserv recipients*

The Shore Steward program provides residents with solid science-driven information on land and water stewardship practices in an effort to preserve critical habitat for birds, fish and wildlife, and to protect their property investments and our island environments for future generations.

**Jerilyn Ritzman**
Shore Stewards Coordinator
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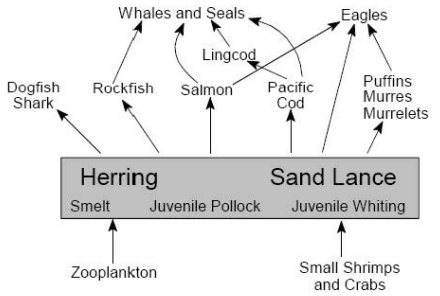
## QUOTES

"Thank you so much for your work with the Shore Stewards project. A few of the changes I've made are we- recycle and compost regularly, don't use fertilizer or weed chemicals on the lawn, have our septic inspected and maintained regularly and have added rain barrels off the shed for watering!"

*-E.S.*
*Camano Island*

"Thank you for continuing the newsletter!"

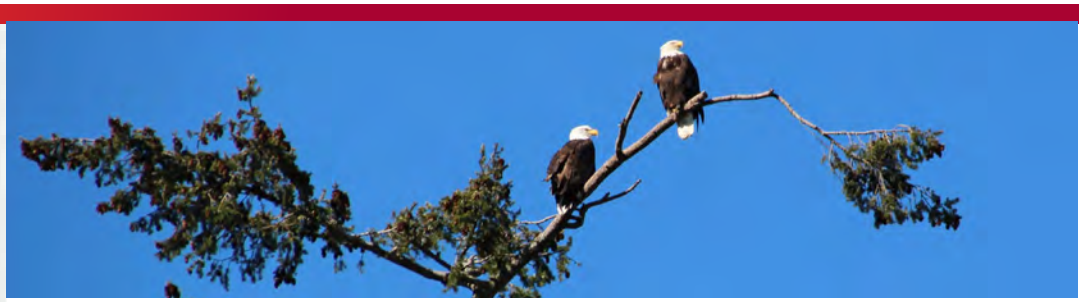
*-B.S.*
*Whidbey Island*




*Shore Stewards newsletters discuss topics of interest to island residents such as the importance of forage fish to the Puget Sound food web*

## PARTNERS

Backyard Wildlife Habitat
Camano Emergency Preparedness
Friend of Camano Island Park
Island County Environmental Health
Island County Marine Resources Committee
Island Transit
Northwest Straits Foundation
Other regional Shore Stewards programs
Snohomish Conservation District
Sno-Isle Library System
Sound Water Stewards
Washington State Parks
Whidbey Camano Land Trust
Whidbey Conservation District
WSU Master Gardeners
WSU Waste Wise



## IMPACTS

To date, more than 975 Island County residents, parks, businesses, port districts, farmers, and cities have joined Shore Stewards. This past year, the Shore Stewards program has offered a myriad of opportunities for its members to engage in education and to attract new Shore Steward members.

- Workshops were offered to teach landowners how to use native plants, shrubs ,and trees to help limit erosion and slides, restore and encourage wildlife habitat, and improve water quality. For example, working alongside the Island County Marine Resources Committee and the Northwest Straits Foundation, Whidbey and Camano real estate professionals participated in full day programs to assist them in understanding the special processes at work on beach and bluff properties, with the goal they can better assess properties for their clients. A habitat restoration seminar was held on Whidbey Island to help landowners mitigate issues on their properties and adopt principles to rehabilitate habitat for native plants and to encourage wildlife and pollinators. A shoreline vegetation management program was presented to local beachfront property owners. Residents participated in Septic 101, a class aimed at teaching homeowners about system options, care and maintenance, inspections, potential problems and solutions, and septic field landscaping. A rain barrel workshop instructed residents how to build and maintain a rain catchment system in effort to manage run off and take advantage of "free water" to irrigate plants.
- Exhibits demonstrated the value of the Shore Stewards program and offered science-based information and education at many events, including:
    - ◊ Camano 101
    - ◊ Conservation Day
    - ◊ WSU Extension Open House
    - ◊ Whidbey Gardening Workshop
    - ◊ Sound Water Stewards Volunteer Fair
    - ◊ WSU Extension Island County learning series Our Earth Our Home
- Approximately 4,200 people were reached via posts on the Shore Stewards Facebook page, an increase of 250% over last year.
- More than 975 regional residents viewed our newsletter by email, our Facebook, and the Island County Shore Stewards website.
- Shore Stewards informational materials are always available at the WSU Extension Island County offices in Coupeville and at the Camano Island County Annex.

Our Shore Steward members understand that with the privilege of living near the Salish Sea comes responsibility. Their stewardship protects and improves the natural beauty and abundance of our island and is instrumental to the preservation of diverse marine life in and around our shoreline.

## FUNDING

Funding is provided through Island County government thanks to the insight and support of Island County Commissioners.

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# Washington State University

Extension Island County 2018-2019

# SNAP-Ed

**SNAP- USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**

## BY THE NUMBERS

- *471 Olympic View Elementary students and their families learned gardening techniques, tried healthy recipes and had access to fresh produce*
- *486 Crescent Harbor Elementary students and their parents learned gardening methods and had access to a variety of fruits and vegetables*
- *Worms fed by school lunchroom scraps produce castings that improve the school garden soil at Crescent Harbor Elementary*
- *Hundreds of pounds of excess produce harvested from Oak Harbor school gardens is donated to local food banks*
- *On the Naval Air Station, personnel learn hands-on gardening and have access to fresh produce harvested from NAS vegetable gardens and fruit trees*
- *SNAP low sugar, low fat recipes have introduced sailors and base employees to new foods like tomatillos and ground cherries*

## ISSUE

Oak Harbor has a diverse population with a strong military presence from the Naval Air Station Whidbey Island (NASWI), robust businesses, talented artisans, and a thriving farm community. However, despite these many advantages, a significant number of families in Oak Harbor experience food insecurity. As a result of food insecurity, families are forced to make difficult decisions about choosing healthier options over what is affordable and convenient. Choosing foods that are less nutritious puts these families at an increased risk for diet-related diseases, including diabetes and heart disease. Lack of access to fresh fruit and vegetables makes it particularly hard for families to follow recommended guidelines for healthy eating.

Two schools in Oak Harbor School District (Crescent Harbor Elementary and Olympic View Elementary) have more than 50% of students who are eligible for the free or reduced lunch program. The Naval Air Station also falls into a census tract in which greater than 50% of residents are at or below the federal poverty level. This demonstrates a high concentration of families struggling to make ends meet.

## RESPONSE

Due to the income data for both the two schools and the NASWI, these sites qualify for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) funding through the USDA. WSU Extension Island County partners with SNAP-Ed to work in these sites to improve the policies, systems, and the nutrition and physical activity environment to make the healthy choice the easy choice.

WSU Extension SNAP-Ed staff coordinate activities in the gardens at the two elementary schools closest to the Naval Air Station and two gardens on the base itself. At the schools, children are actively engaged with all aspects of the garden including planting, weeding, watering, and maintaining worm and compost bins. Most importantly, children get to taste and experience the foods that grow in their garden. A school Garden Steering Committee meets monthly to discuss garden plans and coordinate efforts among community partners. This year, WSU Extension staff

SNAP-Ed is an evidence-based program that helps people lead healthier lives. SNAP-Ed teaches people using or eligible for SNAP about good nutrition and how to make their food dollars stretch further.

**Liz Stoffel**
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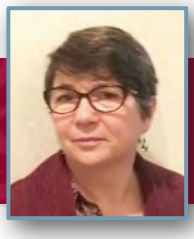

## QUOTES

"You have to taste the kale, Mom."

"I really like kale, but I didn't know you did."

"I really do!"

*-Conversation between 1st grader, Dorian and his mom during an after-school volunteer garden work party at Crescent Harbor Elementary School*

"I like to come here because I like to work, I like to help, I like to plant. Almost everything about garden is good!"

*-Rashad*
*Third grader at Crescent Harbor Elementary School*

## PARTNERS

California Certified Organic Farmers Foundation

California Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom

Crescent Harbor Elementary School

Island County Health Department

Island County Master Gardener Foundation

Naval Air Station Whidbey Island

North Island Help House

Oak Harbor Educational Foundation

Oak Harbor School District

Olympic View Elementary School

Spin Cafe

WSU Island County Master Gardeners

## RESPONSE *continued*

have increased the number of students reached by moving away from focusing on a specific curriculum to working with the whole school to integrate the garden into everyday activities. With the success of the SNAP-Ed gardens, the school district has hired a "Teacher on Special Assignment" and now has gardens at all 5 elementary schools in the district.

The Naval Air Station Gardens includes three raised beds for dependent families and eight raised beds for the single sailors. Sailors, their families and other employees volunteer their time to work with WSU Extension SNAP-Ed staff and Island County Master Gardeners to learn gardening techniques and try recipes made from the produce grown.

WSU Extension Island County and its partners encourage families to make good nutritional choices by:

- Developing and coordinating school garden activities at 2 schools.
- Helping sailors and families learn to grow their own food by demonstrating growing techniques and corresponding recipe demonstrations on the base.
- Coordinating summer activities in the garden to extend the learning and share the bounty with families.
- Integrating garden activities into the broader school goals and objectives.
- Coordinating with Island County Public Health to provide complementary and coordinated programming at the schools and in the community.

## IMPACTS

The success of the garden program at the Naval Air Station has been noticed by Naval staff. As a result, other Naval bases in Washington State are implementing similar garden programs.

In the school gardens, SNAP-Ed staff has worked closely with its partners at the Island County Health Department and the School Cafeteria run by Sodexo to incorporate garden activities that support the Harvest of the Month tastings which feature a fruit or vegetable each month. Through these activities, children gained more knowledge about where their food comes from and how to grow it. Local food banks receive some of the produce from the school gardens, helping to improve access to fresh vegetable to a larger segment of the community. The school gardens and other green initiatives at the schools have been so successful that the whole Oak Harbor School District has been named a Statewide Green Ribbon School District.

Oak Harbor School District was named a Washington Green Ribbon District for incorporating green initiatives like SNAP, recycling and edible gardens in all its schools


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# Washington State University

Extension Island County 2018-2019

# Waste Wise

**Waste Reduction Education in Island County**

## BY THE NUMBERS

- *Reached more than 24,000 residents through presentations, classes, and active event recycling and composting.*
- *Developed fact sheet on Biosolids in Island County.*
- *Piloting a waste-sorting activity that will be distributed to all elementary schools in Oak Harbor in 2019-20.*
- *More than 70 classes or presentations were conducted on natural resources, our trash problem, recycling, composting, vermiculture, household hazard wastes, and plastics.*
- *Collection and exchange events recapture plastics and metals, diverting more than 6,000 pounds of valuable resources from the landfill.*
- *Provided recycling services/consultation to 35 community events .*

## ISSUE

Global waste production is expected to increase by 70% within the next 30 years (World Bank). In the United States, we use approximately 30% of the world's resources and are responsible for producing an average of 6.5 pounds of waste per person each day. Decreasing resources, increasing waste, and global recycling issues require us to look more closely at not only how we recycle, but how we might reduce our consumption. The Washington State University Extension Island County Waste Wise program addresses these concerns by raising awareness, providing guidance, and encouraging informed action.

## RESPONSE

The Waste Wise program increases awareness in youth and adults about issues surrounding our individual and societal waste production. The program coordinator and volunteers emphasize a "reuse, reduce, repurpose, recycle, and rot" strategy. We encourage proper recycling, increasing reuse of items, and adopting more thoughtful purchasing habits to limit the amount of waste generated in Island County. The program employs a multi-faceted educational approach. Program coordinators and trained volunteers:

- Interact with the community in various ways including presentations, workshops, and events all focused on waste reduction and appropriate diversion.
- Work within the schools to bring waste reduction education to children, where life-long habits begin.
- Partner with local agencies and organizations, promoting waste reduction at businesses, venues, and during events.
- Provide information on recycling, composting, biosolids, household hazardous waste, and more, offered in an easily accessible format for self-learning via hard copy and digitally on the WSU Waste Wise webpage and Facebook page.

Waste Wise volunteers are dedicated to waste reduction in Island County through community education and public awareness. They help Island County residents, businesses and schools learn how to reduce household, yard and food waste, avoid using hazardous household cleaners, the why's and how's of recycling and composting, smart shopping and sustainable living.

**Sara Bergquist**
Waste Wise Educator
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## QUOTES

"For me, you changed the way I considered recycling due to your factual, data-based insights."

*-Sounds Water Stewards volunteer*

"Thank you for your ability to teach, to give the big picture, and then bring it right down to something we can do immediately. You provided context and continued on to give us hope as we do our little part. Your article on recycling should be read by everyone. "

*-Langley resident (Referring to a recycling article in Whidbey Weekly)*

"I am so grateful for a program that provides us with the opportunity to recycle things that we cannot usually recycle here."

*-Light and Cord Drive recycler*

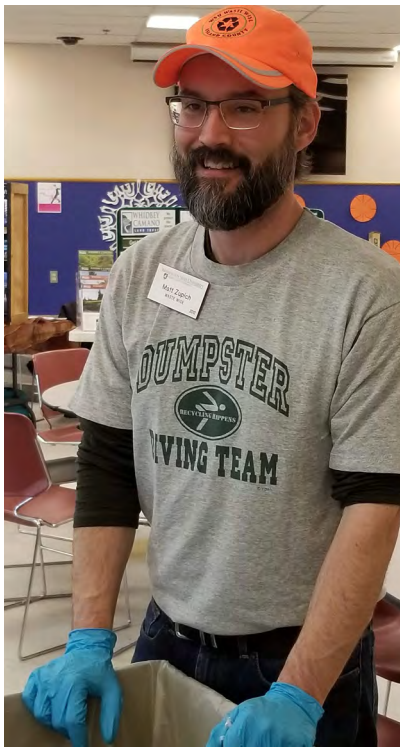
"It is essential that we make ourselves aware of the issues and you have provided us with positive steps to make a difference."

*-"Waste Situation" presentation attendee*

## PARTNERS

Camano Stanwood Chamber of Commerce
Camano Stanwood School District
Coupeville School District
Lighthouse Environmental Program
Oak Harbor Green Schools Program
Oak Harbor School District
Senior Services
Sno-Isle Libraries
Snohomish Conservation District
Sound Water Stewards
South Whidbey Community Center
South Whidbey School District
Whidbey Island Conservation District
Whidbey Island Shakespeare Festival
WSU Master Gardeners
Yeshe Long Temple

# IMPACTS




The Waste Wise program has directly or indirectly reached more than 24,000 individuals in Island County in 2018 and 2019. Direct education includes a variety of classes and workshops, while teaching by example includes hosting recycling and compost services for community events. Below are examples of the Waste Wise outreach education program:

- Recycling Right: With changes in the recycling market, recycling correctly is essential. People often avoid recycling or do so improperly because they are unaware of the benefits or unsure of the process. WSU Waste Wise promotes recycling education with educational materials, classes, community clean-ups, recyclable material drives, and informational displays. The program keeps recycling at the forefront of behavioral patterns by supporting three dozen community events with recycling consultation and on-the-ground support.
- Youth Education: By teaching waste reduction and recycling to youth we extend knowledge into homes and reach into the future by promoting environmentally responsible habits. To support this early learning, WSU Waste Wise presents all or parts of a 5-unit curriculum on waste reduction at five elementary schools in Island County. This program is available to all schools upon request. This curriculum has been presented to more than 1,700 youth, grades k-5, in 2018 and 2019. In 2019 we began expanding our reach by providing waste sorting kits to teachers at one Oak Harbor elementary school for beta testing. We have also begun food waste diversion in two schools with vermiculture.

- Organic Waste: Up to 35% of the material entering our landfills is organic waste, which releases harmful methane gas into the atmosphere. WSU Waste Wise teaches composting and vermiculture to residents to encourage the recycling of organic waste into usable garden material. In addition to classes on composting and vermiculture, Waste Wise provided organic waste collection at 20 events. This effort resulted in an average diversion rate from Island County Solid Waste of more than 85% from these events.

Through continued outreach, via classes, presentations, printed and digital materials, and event support, Waste Wise increases community knowledge and understanding of our waste problem and encourages environmentally responsible habits among the residents of Island County.

# FUNDING

The Waste Wise Program is funded by Island County Solid Waste and Washington State University Extension, with additional support from the Department of Ecology and the Lighthouse Environmental Program.

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