



WASHINGTON STATE
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION
Kitsap County



WATER STEWARDSHIP 2022

QUOTES

“ We are surrounded by the amazing beaches of the Salish Sea. Seeing the shoreline up close personally changes how we all relate to our community, and how we value the Salish Sea.”

“ ...The Salish Sea is the heart of the Northwest environment, if it's not healthy none of us and the things that make up the web of life in this community can be healthy. The more people know about what goes into maintaining this complex web the more likely they are to protect it. The training provided by the Beach Naturalist program is one of the best opportunities to learn this essential information and to become connected with the organizations that are working so hard to enhance life here on the Kitsap Peninsula.”

“ This (Stream Steward training) is the best thing I've been involved in over the past five years. I'm already using it in my daily life and sharing what I'm learning with others.”

“ If it is to be effective, conservation must be supported and practiced by all. The first step is education of the general public on what they can do and why it is important.”

“ Public education on natural resource issues and solutions is the best way to protect our beautiful home. Each stream steward who walks away with a more informed understanding of best practices and choices we can make, has an exponential effect on Kitsap County because they share this knowledge with their friends, family, and community.”

ISSUE

With approximately 250 miles of marine shoreline, over 10,000 acres of public lands managed by Kitsap County Parks, and hundreds of streams that feed into Puget Sound and Hood Canal, Kitsap County supports a wide array of diverse ecosystems. Kitsap County is one of the smallest counties in Washington State with about 395 square miles of land. Kitsap is also home to a steadily increasing population. In 2022, Kitsap County's population density was the third highest density of any county in Washington State, estimated at 635 people per square mile. The land and water resources that make Kitsap such a beautiful place to live are threatened by this growth and urban development. The Puget Sound Institute estimates that 52,000 – 66,000 pounds of pollutants are released into the Puget Sound each day, and the cost of stormwater pollution is expected to exceed \$1 billion over the next ten years. Pollution and habitat loss threaten some the Pacific Northwest's most iconic species including the endangered Southern Resident Killer Whales and the Pacific salmon populations. The road to ecosystem recovery is long, making education and engagement critical for the recovery, protection, and preservation of our region for future generations.

RESPONSE

The WSU Extension Water Stewardship Program provides Kitsap residents with educational training programs, volunteer opportunities, and educational events to help turn environmental knowledge into action.

WSU Kitsap Extension employs a three-pronged approach to tackling water and natural resource issues:

1. We teach people to value and protect our natural resources through public events, and three in-depth training programs led by staff and local experts.
2. We train people to be volunteer educators, to share knowledge and inspire stewardship ethics in others.
3. Through partnerships with local agencies and governments, we connect people with local restoration, enhancement, and monitoring projects.



BY THE NUMBERS

- Trained 98 new volunteers across Kitsap – 33 Beach Naturalists, 25 Stream Stewards, and 40 Salmon Docents.
- Over 1859 contacts were made at Kitsap Salmon Tours at 7 sites across Kitsap County.
- Trained volunteers committed 3541 hours to improving local ecosystems through education, stewardship, and community science.
- Water Stewardship volunteers participated in 8 enrichment events totaling over 20 hours of continuing education.

CITED RESOURCES:

- <https://esd.wa.gov/labormarketinfo/county-profiles/kitsap> - by Jim Vleming, regional labor economist - updated May 2022
- <https://www.eopugetsound.org/articles/stormwater-facts>

IMPACTS

- In 2022, the Water Stewardship Program trained 98 new volunteers across the Stream Steward, Salmon Docent, and Beach Naturalist training programs. Collectively, trainees engaged in 71 hours of instruction. Post training evaluations indicated that most trainees across the three programs, 98% plan to apply what they have learned by getting involved with local volunteer and/or citizen science opportunities.
- Presentation topics varied based on training focus, and in 2022, examples of these included:
 - Stream Stewards – Low impact development, stream invertebrates, watershed geology and hydrology.
 - Salmon Docents – Salmon life cycle and physiology, interpretation, and habitat importance.
 - Beach Naturalist – Salish Sea oceanography, intertidal invertebrates, invasive green crab research, and community science.
- From volunteering to protect water quality to preserving Kitsap salmon habitat, trainees appreciate the opportunity to turn their training experience into meaningful action. Alumni and new trainees of the educational programs contributed more than 3541 hours of service to improve Kitsap ecosystems through education, stewardship and community service.
- Below are few examples of how volunteers made a difference in 2022:
 - Educated the public: shared salmon information with visitors at Kitsap Salmon Tours; worked with GPC to educate students in the Land Labs Programs, led beach explorations for the public
 - Stewardship: trail maintenance, tree plantings, invasive weed removal, and beach clean-ups
 - Community science: green crab monitoring, oyster sampling for water quality monitoring, amphibian monitoring and forest monitoring



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