



Snohomish County
County Executive's Office

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Tribes, dairy farmers, County honored for creative partnership to save salmon

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*Reardon, Jones, Williams and Reiner accept award on partnership's behalf
with promise of more collaboration to come*

TACOMA – The Tulalip Tribes, dairy farmers and Snohomish County shared an award today for a local partnership that boosts agriculture's economic prospects even as it advances salmon recovery.

“Our partnership is about fish and farms,” said Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon. “We’re in this for the long term. Agriculture and salmon can co-exist – and we’re proving it here every day.”

The honor was given by Shared Strategy for Puget Sound, which for the past three years has been working to build a collaborative, cost-effective salmon recovery plan that is endorsed by people working and living in the region. The award was announced at the Shared Strategy Summit where more than 300 people gathered for a two-day conference on Puget Sound salmon recovery.

Over the past year, Reardon and Snohomish County have pursued an aggressive initiative that has brought together the agriculture community, the business sector, the Tribes and various agricultural agencies and institutions to develop an action plan for the long-term success of farming.

In November more than 300 people gathered in Monroe for the County's Focus on Farming Conference that promoted local agriculture.

Jim Kramer, Shared Strategy's executive director, pointed to the collaboration between the Tulalip Tribes, the Snohomish County Farm Bureau and Snohomish County as an example of the sort of partnerships his group is promoting. He specifically highlighted the Snohomish Basin Biogas Partnership as an example of innovative action that benefits both farmers and fish.

Said Kramer, "The work being done by Snohomish County, the Tribes and the farm bureau not only represents mutually beneficial solutions to shared challenges, but this collaborative partnership is an outstanding example of the kind of leadership and creativity it will take to recover salmon in the Puget Sound."

In accepting the award, Reardon was joined by Dale Reiner, president of the Snohomish County Farm Bureau; Stan Jones, Sr., chairman of the Tulalip Tribes' Board of Directors; and Herm Williams, immediate past chairman of the Tribes' board.

The Snohomish Basin Biogas Partnership aim is to convert cow manure into biogas that will be burned to generate electricity. The facility is being built on a 227-acre site that was once the Washington State Reformatory at Monroe's honor farm. When the plant begins operation, it will meet dairy farmers' need to find alternative ways to dispose of manure.

Moreover, the facility will allow four participating farms to increase their herds by a total of 1,735 cows, generating \$19.7 million economic stimulus and employing 95 people.

The end result is that the partnership is helping to promote and protect agriculture over time while making Snohomish County rivers safer for salmon.

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