

# Skyview Tracts Acquisition and Cleanup



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Located across the Skykomish River from the city of Sultan, Skyview tracts neighborhood consisted of over 100 residential and recreational lots. Because of the neighborhood's position between Shinglebolt and Sky River Sloughs, most properties in the subdivision fell entirely within the Skykomish River floodway and were subject to repetitive river flooding, with reported flood depths of up to ten feet. The few houses that existed in this neighborhood were built before the county adopted the National Flood Insurance Program, which now prohibits building permanent structures in river floodways.

As a result of regular flooding, primarily absent landowners, and relative seclusion, several Skyview properties were dumped on illegally. The site accumulated garbage including building materials, tires and abandoned cars and RVs. Over the past two decades, Snohomish County used a variety of funding sources to purchase Skyview tracts property from willing landowners, and led several significant cleanup efforts. The most recent cleanup was completed in 2016, removing 792 tons of debris and contaminated soil for proper disposal. County efforts at this site protect citizens from future flood damage, the river from waste contamination, and also conserve public open space that provides recreation and restoration opportunities.

The Skyview Tracts area presented an opportunity to clean up and protect some of this critical floodplain habitat that is designated as a high priority restoration area in the Snohomish Basin Salmonid Conservation Plan. The Skykomish River contains critical habitat for Endangered Species Act listed Chinook salmon and Steelhead trout, and the Skykomish and Sultan Rivers are priority habitat restoration areas for salmon and steelhead spawning. The County has a goal to restore river side channels that young salmon use to hide, feed, and grow before migrating downriver to salt water.

