

Symbols for historical map	Features	Symbols for present-day map
A	Northernmost slough of delta	
B	Channel north of Samish River mouth	
C	Channel between Samish and Padilla Bays	
—	Shoreline	—
—	Mean lower low-water line	—
—	Boundaries for agricultural plots	—
—	Dikes or levees	—
—	Subaerial wetland (salt-water or fresh-water marsh)	—
—	Intertidal wetland	—
—	Forested upland	—
—	Grassland	—

**SAMISH RIVER AND SAMISH BAY**

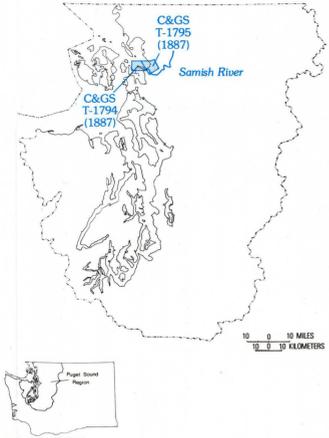
**Setting**  
The Samish originates in low foothills southeast of Bellingham and discharges into Samish Bay. The broad, flat-lying delta lands are used almost entirely for farming.

**Shoreline and Wetland Changes**  
At the time of the 1887 mapping, dikes had already been constructed and much of the wetland had been developed for agricultural use. Land seaward of the dikes was shown as marsh and landward of the dikes as grassland. Additional dikes have been constructed since 1887 to develop more agricultural lands, especially in the vicinity of the Samish River mouth and along the neck of land between Samish Island and the delta.

**Compilation of Map**  
Two 1887 topographic surveys (T-1794, T-1795) were used as source materials for map compilation. An extensive system of dikes and several roads that existed in 1887 and remain today were used as control for data transfer.

**Summary of Environmental Changes and Some Planning Considerations**

Progradation (seaward advance of shoreline)	Minor.
Recession (landward retreat of shoreline)	Minor.
Channel migration	None apparent.
Channel straightening	None apparent.
Diking or substantial filling of subaerial delta land near salt-water shoreline	Subaerial lands have been diked very close to seaward margin, leaving only a narrow fringe of marsh.
Diking or substantial filling near stream banks	Dikes have been placed along the main channels of the Samish River and the slough near Edison. Continuous dikes confine the river on both banks upstream about 4.5 km from the river mouth.
Other artificial landfill on subaerial delta land	In the process of agricultural development several former sloughs and channels have been filled or converted to smaller drainage ditches. Examples of major filling are at: (A) the northernmost slough of the delta, (B) a channel north of the Samish River mouth, and (C) a channel that once connected Samish and Padilla Bay.
Landfill on intertidal delta land	None apparent.
Loss of subaerial wetland	About 0.4 sq km of marsh remain from 1.9 sq km mapped in 1887 (table 2). The original marsh may have been as extensive as 11 sq km (table 2).
Loss of intertidal wetland	Historical data not available for comparison.
Some planning considerations	Diking and bank stabilization, and channel filling, have reduced habitat diversity and availability to fish and wildlife. Diking has reduced incidence of flooding and salt-water incursion and enhanced productivity of agricultural land.



SOURCE MAPS FOR COMPILATION OF HISTORICAL SHORELINE AND LOCATION OF RIVER-MOUTH DELTA

**HISTORICAL CHANGES OF SHORELINE AND WETLAND AT SAMISH RIVER AND SAMISH BAY, WASHINGTON**  
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