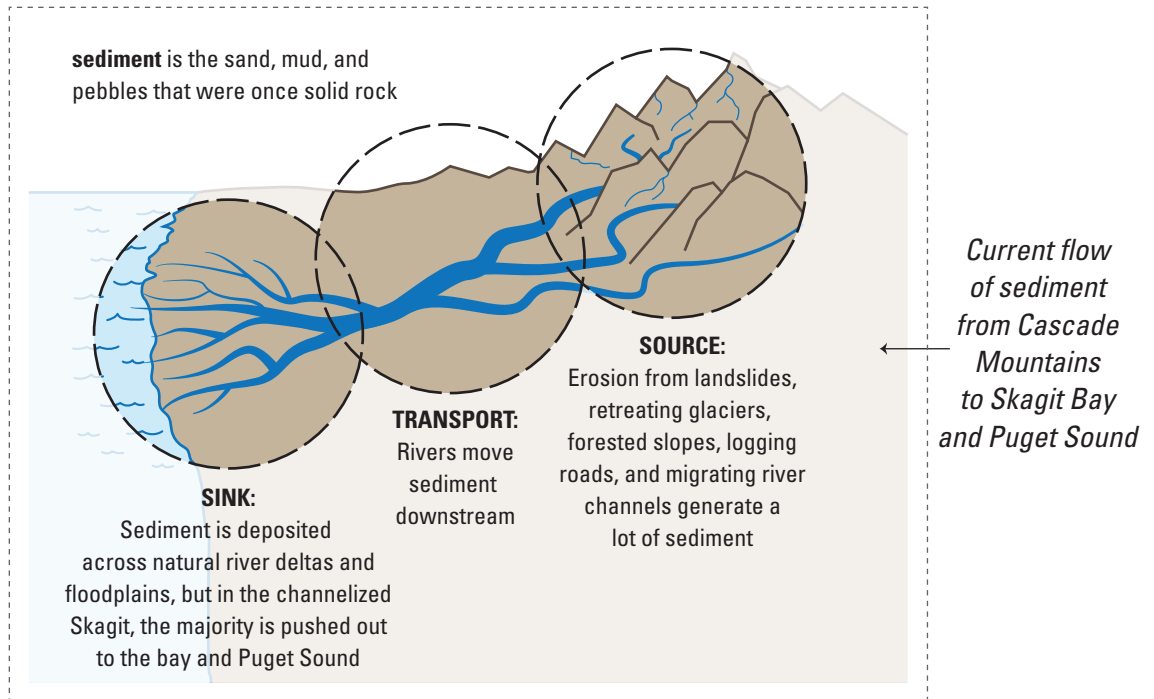


Flow of Sediment

How Climate Change Affects Sediment in the Skagit River



Some sand and gravel fills in river channels between dikes and levees, increasing the risk of flood (A). Dikes and levees steer sediment-laden waters away from valuable farmland and cities such as Mt. Vernon, Burlington, and Sedro-Woolley. Increased sediment puts pressure on levees as well as bridges during flood events.

Some sediment covers eelgrass beds, a key nursery habitat for many fish and aquatic species (B). And some sediment keeps moving out to Skagit Bay and Puget Sound.

As temperatures warm, glaciers shrink and snow falls only at higher elevations. This means less ice and snow cover to help keep the slopes from eroding. More rain and snow melt carries this newly exposed sediment downslope (C).

Projected impacts from climate change

