



FY2014 (7/1/13 – 6/30/14) Annual Work Plan Benton Conservation District

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Mission of the Benton Conservation District

- *The Mission of the Benton Conservation District is to facilitate responsible stewardship of the land and resources for the residents of Benton County through the application and administration of various volunteer and cooperative partnership programs using all available funding sources.*

Natural Resource Priorities

- Water Quality / Quantity Issues / Monitoring & Urban Water Conservation Issues
 - **Natural resource priority description:** *Water is a valuable resource in Washington. Using our resources wisely will help us fill the needs of people, industries, businesses and farms, while also keeping fish and other aquatic life alive and well. Across the state these water users have diverse needs and goals we must find a way to share limited, fluctuating supplies. Water conservation—using water efficiently and avoiding waste—is fundamental to ensuring water availability in the future. In order to protect our water supply everyone can practice conservation. In our businesses, schools, and homes, using water more efficiently will lessen the effects of limited water supply. ~ [ECY](#)*

Much of the water in the Rock Glade Watershed and the Alkli-Squilchuck Watershed has already been spoken for. Increased demands from population growth, declining groundwater levels, and impacts from climate change are adding to the challenge of finding new water supplies in WRIA 31 and 40, especially during the summer months. The Yakima River basin consists of three Water Resource Inventory areas, the Lower Yakima (WRIA 37), Upper Yakima (WRIA 39) and Naches (WRIA 38). Surface waters in the Yakima Basin are currently under adjudication and thus unavailable for new appropriations. Adjudications in an area are an indication that most if not all of the available water has already been allocated to existing uses. ~ [ECY](#)

Over 2,000 people in the Lower Yakima Valley GWMA area are exposed to nitrate over the maximum contaminant level (MCL) through their drinking water. While not all groundwater supplies have been impacted, many residents rely on private wells that are in the most vulnerable portions of the aquifer. Approximately 12% of domestic well users are exposed to nitrate levels in their drinking water that exceed the health-based standard of 10 mg/L. Water quality issues related to groundwater in the Lower Yakima River can impact surface water. The Lower Yakima River is listed on the Department of Ecology's 303(d) list for violations of numerous Water Quality Standards (WQS). Listings of pH and Dissolved Oxygen are related directly to surface water nutrient levels and the growth and decay of aquatic organisms in surface waters. Ecology is required to develop Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) or action plans to obtain future compliance with WQS related to surface water. Connection between surface water and groundwater exists, and there is a potential for nutrients to move from ground to surface waters. ~ [ECY](#)

- **Is this a state and or regional natural resource priority?** YES (See Priority Description Above and Source Data below)
- **Source of data:** BCD's Five Year Plan, Tri-Cities Urban Area Landscape Irrigation Plan, 2006, ECY Publication 11-11-035, ECY Publication 11-11-041, ECY Publication 11-11-044, WRIA 31 Plan, WRIA 37 Plan, ECY Publication 10-10-009 and ECY Publication 96-17.
- **Other entities:** Columbia Snake River Irrigators Association, Lower Yakima Valley GWMA, NRCS, Benton Franklin Health District

- Small Acreage Conservation Issues
 - **Natural resource priority description:** *Small acreage landowners face the same water quality and water conservation issues that their large-scale agricultural counterparts do without the benefit of robust government funding programs to address natural resource issues that arise from keeping livestock and growing crops.*
 - **Is this a state and or regional natural resource priority?** YES (See Priority Description Above and Source Data below)
 - **Source of data:** WRIA 31 Plan, WRIA 37 Plan, Benton CD's 5 Year Plan, Site Specific Inventories
 - **Other entities:** Lower Yakima Valley GWMA, Cooperative Extension, Benton Franklin Health District

- Air Quality & Wind Erosion Issues
 - **Natural resource priority description:** *Natural resource priority description: During the late 1980s and early 1990s a large number of exceedances of the 24-hour National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) from particulate matter ten microns or less (PM10) were recorded in Spokane, Kennewick, and Wallula, Washington. An examination showed a close correlation to high wind events. The exceedances are primarily attributable to activity on agricultural fields, although other sources may contribute. If any area exceeds pollution concentrations defined by the National Ambient Air Quality Standards or NAAQS more frequently than is permitted by the rule, the area is put into "non-attainment". The non-attainment status has **significant planning** and **possibly economic impacts** to that area. Since the policy does require that dust originating from man-made sources be controlled according to a best practice, documenting that essentially "nothing more could have been done" to prevent the exceedances avoids a determination of non-attainment. ~ [BCAA](#)*
 - **Is this a state and or regional natural resource priority?** YES (See Priority Description Above and Source Data below)
 - **Source of data:** WRIA 31 Plan, WRIA 37 Plan, Benton CD's 5 Year Plan and Annual Plan of Work, Site Specific Inventories, ECY Air Quality Monitoring Stations, Columbia Plateau PM10 Project Research, WSU, USDA-ARS, FSA
 - **Other entities:** Benton Clean Air Authority, ECY, NRCS

- Noxious Weed Issues
 - **Natural resource priority description:** *'Noxious weed' is the traditional, legal term for invasive, non-native plants that are so aggressive they harm our local ecosystems or disrupt agricultural production. These plants crowd out the native species that fish and wildlife depend on. They also cost farmers, orchardists and ranchers millions of dollars in control efforts and lost production – and that can make the food we buy more expensive. So while ordinary weeds may be annoying, noxious weeds are a genuine threat to the natural resources, ecology and economy of our state.~ [Washington State NWCB](#)*
 - **Is this a state and or regional natural resource priority?** YES (See Priority Description Above and Source Data below)
 - **Source of data:** Benton County Weed Board, Washington State Weed Board, local inventories, BCD Five Year Plan
 - **Other entities:** Benton County Noxious Weed Control Board

- Wildlife Habitat & Public Access Issues
 - **Natural resource priority description:** *Shoreline vegetation conservation is a critical component when considering public access to Benton County's Shorelines. The County is currently in the process of developing its Shoreline Master Plan. The Shoreline Master Plan will protect environmental resources of Benton County shorelines; promote public access and enjoyment opportunities and plan for water-dependent uses. ~ [ECY](#)*

Shrubsteppe communities form the iconic, western landscape of open sagebrush plains, rim rock, and tumbleweeds. Described as vegetation communities consisting of one or more layers of perennial grass with a discontinuous over story layer of shrubs, shrubsteppe historically dominated the landscape in eastern Washington. Some of the many species of wildlife that inhabit shrubsteppe can only be found in these semi-arid communities. Today, less than 50% of Washington's historic shrubsteppe remains and much of it is degraded, fragmented, and/or isolated from other similar habitats. Conversion to cropland has resulted in the greatest loss of shrubsteppe in Washington, leading to a fragmented landscape and a differentially high loss of deep-soil communities. Across the Intermountain West, shrubsteppe communities have been lost or degraded by conversion to cropland, extensive energy extraction, and alteration of the vegetation through over-grazing, invasion by exotic plants and changes in fire frequency. ~ [WDFW](#)

Pollinators are essential to our environment. The ecological service they provide is necessary for the reproduction of nearly 70 percent of the world's flowering plants, including more than two-thirds of the world's crop species. The United States alone grows more than one hundred crops that either need or benefit from pollinators, and the economic value of these native pollinators is estimated at \$3 billion per year in the U.S. Beyond agriculture, pollinators are keystone species in most terrestrial ecosystems. Fruits and seeds derived from insect pollination are a major part of the diet of approximately 25 percent of all birds, and of mammals ranging from red-backed voles to grizzly bears. In many places, the essential service of pollination is at risk from habitat loss, pesticide use, and introduced diseases. ~ [Xerces](#)

- **Is this a state and or regional natural resource priority?** YES (See Priority Description Above and Source Data below)
- **Source of data:** WRIA 31 Plan, WRIA 37 Plan, Benton CD's 5 Year Plan, Site Specific Inventories, Inadequate Habitat for Wildlife in areas adjacent to cropland that have been degraded per BCD's Five Year Plan and as described in WDFW's Management Recommendations for Washington's Priority Species – Volume IV, 2004 and MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR WASHINGTON'S PRIORITY HABITATS: Managing Shrub-steppe in Developing Landscapes, 2011, Shoreline Analysis Report for Shorelines in Benton County: Yakima and Columbia Rivers
- **Other entities:** Benton County Parks Board, Xerces, NRCS

Washington Conservation Districts assisting land managers with their conservation choices



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Natural Resource Priority Program Area: Water Quality / Quantity Issues / Monitoring & Urban Water Conservation

Goal(s): By 2015 have a comprehensive water quality monitoring program providing results to target conservation programs. Implementation of a waterstar grass management plan. Demonstrated increase in conservation planning and systems implemented for water resources. Program recognized by regulatory agencies. Create an urban water efficiencies program in cooperation with the cities and irrigation districts. Demonstrated increase in number of people using technology and practices to conserve water and related reduction in water use.

Natural Resource Measurable Result Objective: To Be Determined Based on Actual Grant Funding Levels

Programmatic Measurable Result Objective: To Be Determined Based on Actual Grant Funding Levels

Funding Source(s): See Notes Section

Activities for FY2014	Target Dates	Person Responsible	Time(Days) Required	Estimated Funding	Notes
Participate in the Lower Yakima Valley GWMA or a Benton County GWMA to address elevated levels of nitrates in groundwater in Benton County	7/13 – 6/14	Heather / Mark / Rachel	47	\$15,000	Assessment
Continue working with Columbia Snake River Irrigators Association on water quantity issues	7/13 – 6/14	Mark	4	\$1,000	Assessment
Submit implementation documentation to Ecology as part of producers participating in the Voluntary Regional Agreement	7/13 – 6/14	Mark / Erin	4	\$1,000	Assessment
Work to secure funding to monitor and improve the water quality in the streams and rivers that are of concern	7/13 – 6/14	All Staff	4	\$1,000	Seeking Funding
Implement Commercial Livestock Nutrient Management Program	7/13 – 6/14	Erin	30	\$5,000	WSSC
Cost-share on the implementation of best management practices.	7/13 – 6/14	Staff	20	\$20,000	WSSC / Assessment
Implement Irrigation Water Management Cost-share Program	7/13 - 6/14	Mark / Erin	30	TBD	WSSC CAT 3 / GWMA
Implement a Deep Soil Sampling Education Program for	7/13 – 6/14	Mark / Heather	30	TBD	GWMA

nitrates					
Implement Yakima Delta Project	7/13 - 12/13	Marcie / Staff	4	\$1,300	MCFG Assessment
Yakima Delta Phase 2	7/13 – 6/14	Marcie / Staff	30	\$30,000	Seeking Funding
Implement the BPA/RC&D Energy Conservation Program	7/13 – 6/14	Mark / Erin	7	\$10,500	BPA/RC&D
Implement variable speed drive cost-share program in the irrigated acres of Benton County	7/13 - 6/14	Erin / Heather / Mark	4	TBD	WSSC CAT 3/ Electrical Utilities
Work with RC&D on Ecosystem Services	7/13 – 6/14	Staff / Board	6	\$3,000	Assessment / RC&D
Seek additional funding for the installation of fish screens, livestock fencing, riparian buffers and shoreline stabilization projects	7/13 - 6/14	Marcie / Rachel	4	\$1,000	Seeking Funding
Implement Heritage Garden Program and a pilot project for irrigation controllers	7/13 – 6/14	Heather/Erin/Mark	100	\$32,000	WSSC / Grants / Assessment
Seek funding for urban irrigation water management program	7/13 – 6/14	Mark / Heather / Erin	4	\$1,000	Seeking Funding
Research new water efficiency technologies.	7/13 – 6/14	Mark / Heather	4	\$1,000	Assessment

Natural Resource Priority Program Area: Small Acreage Conservation Issues

Goal(s): Increase in conservation plans, programs, and related acreage to address small acreage usage.

Natural Resource Measurable Result Objective: To Be Determined Based on Actual Grant Funding Levels

Programmatic Measurable Result Objective: To Be Determined Based on Actual Grant Funding Levels

Funding Source(s): See Notes Section

Activities for FY2014	Target Dates	Person Responsible	Time(Days) Required	Estimated Funding	Notes
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Implement the District's Small Acreage Livestock Program	7/13 – 6/14	Erin	50	\$10,000	WSCC
Implement the use of the Rotowiper for pasture management	7/13 – 6/14	Erin	4	\$1,000	WSCC
Work with Ecology, Benton Franklin Health Department and WSDA to explore the options for livestock mortality management on small acreage parcels.	7/13 – 6/14	Heather	4	\$1,000	WSCC
Seek funding to purchase pasture aerator	7/13 - 6/14	Heather / Erin	4	\$1,000	Seeking Funding

Natural Resource Priority Program Area: Air Quality & Wind Erosion Issues

Goal(s): Demonstrated reduction in PM-10 emissions and exceedances. Increase in acreage of air quality practices and systems.

Natural Resource Measurable Result Objective: To Be Determined Based on Actual Grant Funding Levels

Programmatic Measurable Result Objective: To Be Determined Based on Actual Grant Funding Levels

Funding Source(s): See Notes Section

Activities for FY2014	Target Dates	Person Responsible	Time(Days) Required	Estimated Funding	Notes
Continue implementation of field borders program on critical areas of SR 221	7/13 – 6/14	Erin / Mark	2	\$5,000	WSCC / Assessment
Develop a Partnership with WSU on collecting & measuring soil erosion after wind storms along SR 221	7/13 – 6/14	Erin	4	\$1,000	Seeking Funding
Implement the use of the large straw bale spreader in the Horse Heaven Hills	7/13 – 6/14	Erin	2	\$500	Assessment
Look for funding to implement the use of No-till Drills in the Horse Heaven Hills	7/13 – 6/14	Erin	4	\$1,000	Seeking Funding
Assist NRCS with the implementation of the Conservation Reserve Program	7/13 – 9/14	Erin	40	\$9,000	NRCS / WSCC
Provide Firewise Assessments when requested	7/13 – 6/14	Erin	4	\$1,000	Assessment

Natural Resource Priority Program Area: Noxious Weed Issues

Goal(s): Demonstrated increase in numbers of acres treated for noxious weed control.

Natural Resource Measurable Result Objective: To Be Determined Based on Actual Grant Funding Levels

Programmatic Measurable Result Objective: To Be Determined Based on Actual Grant Funding Levels

Funding Source(s): See Notes Section

Activities for FY2014	Target Dates	Person Responsible	Time(Days) Required	Estimated Funding	Notes
Enter into an Inter-local Agreement with the Benton County Noxious Weed Control Board (BCNWCB) to provide Administrative Services to restore a functioning Weed Board and an active weed abatement program in Benton County.	7/13 - 6/14	Mark/Heather	104	\$40,000	Inter-local Agreement
Seek Funding in partnership with the BCNWCB to map existing weed infestations and prioritize treatment areas and programs (include biological, mechanical, cultural and chemical controls).	7/13 – 6/14	Mark / Heather / Erin	4	\$1,000	Assessment

Natural Resource Priority Program Area: Wildlife Habitat & Public Access Issues

Goal(s): Demonstrated increase in amount and quality of wildlife habitat and related acreage with plans and implementation & increase in amount of access.

Natural Resource Measurable Result Objective: To Be Determined Based on Actual Grant Funding Levels

Programmatic Measurable Result Objective: To Be Determined Based on Actual Grant Funding Levels

Funding Source(s): See Notes Section

Activities for FY2014	Target Dates	Person Responsible	Time(Days) Required	Estimated Funding	Notes
Providing planting plans and seeding recommendation for riparian and upland sites per landowner requests.	7/13 – 6/14	Heather / Mark	5	\$4,000	WSCC
Provide pollinator habitat and insectary planting plans upon request.	7/13 – 6/14	Heather / Erin / Mark	2	\$1,000	WSCC
Provide engineering and technical assistance for streambank stabilization and riparian restoration projects that improve fish	7/13 – 6/14	Rachel	6	\$5,000	WSCC / Grants

habitat and water quality.					
Seek funding for a pilot project for large scale removal of Water Stargrass through dredging or chemical applications	7/13 – 6/14	Staff	4	\$1,000	Assessment
Identify additional access sites for public access on the Yakima River. Seek funding for land purchase or easements in partnership with Benton County, WDFW and City Parks Boards.	7/13 – 6/14	Mark / Board	4	\$1,000	Assessment

District Program Area: Information – Education & District Operations Priorities

Goal(s): Demonstrated increase in district capacity and successful district operations. Administer a successful Voluntary Stewardship Program (funding dependent). Lead the state in the development and implementation of a statewide marketing and public outreach plan. Demonstrated increase in people number of people reached and number asking for services. Demonstrated increase in public awareness (survey & media).

Programmatic Measurable Result Objective: To Be Determined Based on Actual Grant Funding Levels

Funding Source(s): See Notes Section

Activities for FY2014	Target Dates	Person Responsible	Time(Days) Required	Estimated Funding	Notes
Implement BCD Education & Outreach Program Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salmon in the Classroom Program • Farm Fair, Kids Fishing Day, etc. • Junior Board Member Program • Web Based Media / Social Marketing • Print Media (Press Releases / News Articles) • Signage & Brand Development • Conservationist of the Year Award Program, etc. 	7/13 - 6/14	Rachel / Medora	271	\$68,000	WSCC / Assessment / Grants
Implement successful programs utilized by other agencies (Water on Wheels / Wheat Week / Stormwater Education)	7/13 - 6/14	Kara	77	\$22,000	WWC / Quad Cities / Assessment
Host Land Judging competition in fall of 2014	7/13 – 6/14	Erin	15	\$5,000	Assessment
Work with State Auditor's Office 2009 – 2012 Audit	10/13 – 1/14	Patty / Mark /	5	\$6,000	Assessment

		Heather			
Promote Farmland Preservation	7/13 – 6/14	Staff	2	\$500	Seeking Funding
Keep County Commissioners apprised of activities funded through assessment funds	7/12 – 6/13	Mark / Heather / Board	2	\$500	Assessment
Increase expertise in accounting procedures and software	7/12 - 6/13	Mark / Heather / Bookkeeper	4	\$1,000	WSCC / Assessment
Administer funds, prepare required reports, maintain financial records, manage district activities and personnel	7/12 - 6/13	Mark / Heather / Bookkeeper	325	\$82,500	Grants / Assessment
Continue to update the District's capital asset list	7/12 - 6/13	Staff	1	\$250	Assessment



FY2014 Annual Budget BENTON Conservation District

Proposed FY 2014
7/1/2013 – 6/30/2014

Income

Grants

3331001 · NRCS Task Order	\$	9,000
3340333 · State Conservation Commission	\$	64,884
3331006 · SC RC&D	\$	10,500
3380310 · Services to other Govt. Entities	\$	60,000

Sub-total \$ **144,384**

Misc. Income

3611110 · Checking Interest	\$	50
3611150 · Interest-WA Invesmt Pool	\$	500
3611160 · Money Market Interest	\$	150
3671100 · Private Grants, Gift Donations	\$	3,000
3690001 · Landowner Contribution	\$	3,000
3690010 · Miscellaneous Revenue	\$	750
3810010 · Other Nonrevenue	\$	1,000

Sub-total \$ **8,450**

Assessment

3370710 · District Assessment from County	\$	192,622
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Sub-total \$ **192,622**

Total Income

\$ **345,456**

Expense

531.10 · Salaries & Wages	\$	89,911
5311820 · Personnel Benefits	\$	21,747
5311831 · Office & Oper Supplies	\$	10,000
5311832 · Fuel	\$	2,500
5311835 · Tools & Equipment	\$	1,000
5311841 · Professional Services	\$	4,000
5311842 · Communication	\$	8,000
5311843 · Travel	\$	8,500
5311844 · Advertising	\$	600
5311845 · Rentals & Leases	\$	16,500
5311846 · Insurance	\$	3,500
5311847 · Utilities	\$	1,650
5311848 · Repairs & Maintenance	\$	1,000
5311849 · Miscellaneous	\$	7,500
5311851 · Intergov Service-Training etc.	\$	500
5311864 · Machinery & Equipment	\$	5,000
5983151 · Intergovernmental Prof Services	\$	95,000
5983152 · Intergov Pymt other gov funds	\$	1,200
5989600 · Cost Share/Incentive Programs	\$	60,000
5810010 · Other Nonexpenditures	\$	1,000

Total Expense

\$ **339,108**