



5-Year Plan (July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2017) **Asotin County Conservation District**

For More Information Contact:

Sandy Cunningham, 509-758-8012, sandyaccd@cableone.net



Organization of the Asotin County Conservation District

A political subdivision of the State of Washington – authorities, powers and structure contained in RCW 89.08.

- The Asotin County Conservation District was organized in 1940. The District includes all of Asotin County excluding incorporated cities and towns. The Conservation District also serves the Grouse Flat area of Garfield County. A Board of Supervisor governs the District, of whom local electors elect three and the State Conservation Commission appoints two. The primary function of the District is to assist landowners and others who participate in making land use decisions. This takes the form of encouraging proper use and treatment of renewable natural resources and making available the necessary technical and financial assistance. The District also identifies resource conservation problems and opportunities for solving these problems.

Function of the Asotin County Conservation District

To make available technical, financial and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land manager with conservation of soil, water and related natural resources.

We Serve

- Land owners & land managers within district boundaries
- Asotin County Citizens within district boundaries
- Local Students
- Other partners, agencies, and organizations

Mission of the Asotin County Conservation District

- “To advocate, educate and assist people in responsible land management and agricultural practices that conserve and improve air, soil, water quality, energy, and fish and wildlife habitat natural resources for present and future generations.”

Vision of the Asotin County Conservation District

- *People and agencies* working together as one to protect and enhance all natural resources for present and future generations.

Values of the Asotin County Conservation District

- Natural Resource Conservation
- Provide on-the-ground restoration and protection of water quality, riparian and fish & wildlife resources
- Helping the citizens of Asotin County with conservation issues and practices
- Provide services with integrity and professionalism
- Promote future of sustainable agriculture– successful, profitable, safe food production
- Provide on-the-ground activities to protect soil
- Protect farming, ranching and rural life
- Protect private property rights
- Promote Long term conservation planning, implementation, and management

Natural Resource Priorities and Goals:

Manure & Nutrient Management

- *Manure and nutrient management associated with commercial and non-commercial livestock operations have the potential to cause negative impacts to ground and surface water.*
- *Better manure management is needed especially along streams and systems need to be in place for the collection and distribution/disposal of manure.*

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Create manure management program	July 2012 to June 2013	Develop guidelines, cost-share and policies for program and roll out to the public
Seek funding	July 2013 to June 2014	Build support to continue and increase funding opportunities for landowners implementing manure management BMPs
Develop and implement manure management plans	Through June 2017	Set goals for number of plans developed and implemented during annual planning each year

Riparian Enhancement & Protection

- *ESA listed fish and water quality are concerns throughout Asotin County and many funding sources and agencies have identified these as high priorities. Many streams have degraded riparian areas which have a negative impact on ESA listed fish and water quality.*
- *Utilize funding opportunities from multiple agencies/partner to enhance and protect riparian habitat while addressing the landowner's needs and regulatory requirements*

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Continue BPA, DOE, WSCC, SRFB and other project work in riparian areas	July 2012 to June 2013	
Complete inventory	Through June 2014	Have complete inventory of all stream miles not currently protected or needing additional enhancement
Continue George Creek Project	Through June 2016	Provide financial assistance to improve vegetation on the George Creek meander and floodplain
Re-enrollment of CREP acres that expire	Through June 2017	Inform all eligible cooperators of re-enrollment requirements/options
Increase CREP, CCRP and other riparian buffers by 250 acres with 10 miles of stream protected	Through June 2017	

Water Quality

- *The Clean Water Act is the driving force behind water quality. There are several streams in Asotin County on the 303d list as well as others that need improvements too.*
- *Continue the ridge top to ridge top approach to increase the overall health of the watersheds in the county. Continue monitoring efforts to document improvements in water quality on major tributaries in Asotin County*

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Gather water quality data from past monitoring activities and compare results	July 2012 to June 2013	

STI Activities	Through June 2017	Implement activities identified in the Straight to Implementation Plan developed by WA DOE
Seek funding for future monitoring	July 2014 to June 2015	

Erosion Control & Cropland Sustainability

- *Soil erosion caused by wind and water has the potential to have a negative impact on cropland sustainability throughout Asotin County.*
- *The adoption of conservation practices can reduce the potential soil loss while improving the soil quality and condition for present and future farming sustainability.*

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Identify landowners with severe erosion	July 2012 to June 2013	Work with NRCS to run soil comparisons and provide results to landowner
Planning & Implementation	July 2013 to July 2017	Work with landowners to adopt conservation practices to address soil erosion concerns
Continue Residue Management Program & CRP Take Out Residue Management Program	Through June 2017	
Information & Education	Through June 2017	Provide information and education opportunities to landowners on new technology and conservation options for cropland

Storm Water Management

- *Storm Water Management has been mandated by the federal government. Currently the Storm Water Management Area in Asotin County does not include the majoring of the agriculture lands.*
- *Work with landowners on a grass roots storm water plan that can address the federal requirements while protection landowner rights*

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Work with DOE & County on areas not included in current storm water area	July 2012 to June 2013	Take an active role in the development of storm water planning in areas throughout the District boundaries that are currently outside the present storm water area. Determine future role in Storm Water Coordination

Upland & Rangeland Improvements

- *Lack of management on upland rangeland has caused degraded conditions that has reduce the forage quality for livestock and wildlife and can negatively impact natural resources throughout the watershed.*
- *The development of prescribed grazing plans and practice will provide the tools for better upland and rangeland management.*

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Outreach to landowners	July 2012 to June 2013	Provide workshop/seminar to educate landowners on management practices and the benefits of prescribed grazing plans
Identify landowners in need of grazing plans	Through June 2017	

Create and implement grazing plans	Through June 2017	Work with NRCS to create grazing plans Provide cost-share for BMPs prescribed in plans
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Forest Health

- *The lack of forestry management had lead to forest health concerns and potentially increased the risk of catastrophic wildfire events*
- *The development of plans and practices will provide landowners the ability to properly manage their forest lands, increasing forest health and reducing the risk of wildfire, especially in the urban interface areas*

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Complete work identified in the National Fire Plan agreement	July 2012 to November 2012	Provide cost-share to landowners implementing fuel reduction practices
Assessment of Forestry Program	January 2013 to June 2013	Evaluate the role the District will have in future forestry land management based on landowner needs and funding availability
Information and education for landowner	Through June 2017	Provide information on the District's website to assist landowners in managing their forest land property

Weed Management

- *Weed infestations throughout the county have a detrimental impact to wildlife, native vegetation, water quality, aesthetics, agricultural production and forest*
- *Better weed management will protect our agricultural and forest lands and natural resources from being degraded by invasive noxious weeds.*

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Agreement with Asotin Co. Noxious Weed Control Board	July 2012 to June 2013	Meet with the weed board to create an agreement to work on a collaborative plan to address weed concerns and identify priority areas
Create Individual Weed Management Plans	July 2013 through June 2017	Work with ACNWCB and NRCS to create individual weed management plans for landowners
Outreach	Through June 2017	Provide workshops, tours and educational material for landowners to assist with identification and control of weeds
Seek funding work weed control efforts		Apply for funding jointly with ACNWCB to plan, implement and monitor weed control efforts in priority areas

Public Land Management

- *In the past 25 years agricultural lands have been purchased by public agencies and in many cases not been maintained as working land. More land purchases are planning for Asotin County and management will be crucial to maintain the overall health of the property*
- *Development and implementation of management plans will have a positive impact on natural resources*

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Agreement with Public Landowners in Asotin	July 2012 to June 2013	Identify and meet with public landowners in Asotin County to determine potential partnership on natural

County		resource conservation and active “working land” management
Assist agencies	Through June 2017	Assist with working land management plans and identify priority areas and projects for implementation activities

LongTerm Conservation Planning

- *Funding for conservation plans is becoming more difficult due to federal and state budget deficits and project planning is essential for seeking funding*
- *Long Term Conservation Planning will provide key information for the District when seeking funding opportunities for conservation activities on behalf of landowners, evaluating workload and project priorities.*

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Develop plan template	July 2012 to December 2012	Develop a plan template to ensure interagency usability
Test plan template	January 2013 to June 2013	Pilot the template with board members to ensure the template meets the needs of landowners
Outreach to landowners	July 2013 to June 2017	Promote the benefits of long range planning and create a list of landowners willing to create plans
Write Long Term Plans	July 2013 to June 2017	Create Long Term Plans that will address conservation needs for whole farm/ranch and utilize information to seek funding for projects

Information & Technology

- *Providing up to date information regarding District activities and new technology is crucial to continue progress in conservation efforts*
- *Expanding and enhancing communication options with landowners and partner agencies will provide exposure of District projects, funding opportunities new opportunities*

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Website usability	Through June 2017	Update and improve website to provide better information including video streaming options
Increase education opportunities	Through June 2017	Host meetings and workshops to provide landowners with information on “hot” topics

Information – Education Priorities, Measures of Success, and Goals:

- *Outreach to the public, landowners and students is crucial to continue and improve education regarding the importance of natural resource conservation.*

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Student Education	Through June 2017	Continue education opportunities through Envirothon, Salmon in the Classroom, Wheat Week, 4-H youth camp and field days. Seek new educational opportunities and funding
Public Outreach	Through June 2017	Provide quarterly newsletters, annual report of accomplishments and workshops/tours

District Operations:

- *The Asotin County Conservation District's main function is to assist and provide landowners with the tools and knowledge necessary for addressing natural resource concerns while maintaining partnerships with other agencies, groups and the public.*

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Workload	Through June 2017	Annually evaluate workload and staffing/training needs
Funding	Through June 2017	Annually evaluate the funding level and future needs
Policies & Agreements	Through June 2017	Annually review policies and agreements with other agencies

Trends Impacting Conservation in the Asotin County Conservation District

- *Agricultural lands being purchased for development & mini ranches*
- *Agricultural lands being purchased by public agencies*
- *New technology advancements in agriculture*
- *Promotion of energy as natural resource priority*

Staffing Needs

- *Currently the Asotin County Conservation District has 4 full time employees and 1 part time employee. Each year, when preparing the Annual Plan the supervisors and manager evaluate the current staffing level and determine future needs based on workload and budget available.*

Annual Budget Needs

- *The annual budget needs and availability will be evaluated and this information will be utilized to assist in the development of the goals and priorities each year. A detailed budget will be included in the Annual Plan that is developed by the Board of Supervisors.*

Washington Conservation Districts assisting land managers with their conservation choices