

Cascadia Conservation District

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Board Chair: Josh Koempel



State Legislative District #12
Congressional District #8

2014 Feature Accomplishment:

High and dry Wanapum water users get help through partnership

RESOURCE CHALLENGE The 2014 discovery of a crack in the Wanapum Dam on the Columbia River had far-reaching effects. Miles upriver, the dam pools had to be lowered to take pressure off the Wanapum Dam and manage variable river flows. The significant water level drop left many irrigators unable to draw water. A lost water season for orchards affects not just one season of operations, but many years of investment in tree establishment, growth, and production, and potentially dozens of years of lost income potential.



Top: WSU Tree Fruit Research Center orchard irrigation intake exposed by Wanapum pool drawdown, 3/21/14.

Bottom: Divers setting new intake screen for WSU Tree Fruit Research Center experimental orchard irrigation water, 4/22/14.
Photo: Gray's Electric LLC

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS Twenty site visits were conducted in one month to assess needs. This was done with close partner coordination, allowing for a streamlined process. Permits were issued for 14 intake projects and 3 on-the-ground design changes, with required archaeology monitoring provided for 3 sites. Permitting for the modification or removal of extended intakes will be needed as pool levels return to normal. Jay Brunner, Director of WSU Tree Fruit Research and Extension Center, said this has been a costly challenge. Despite ongoing complications, he noted that the center was able to get enough water through this assistance to keep the research orchards functioning.

KEY PARTNERS: Columbia River landowners and irrigators; Grant Co. Public Utility District; Chelan Co. Public Utility District; WA State Conservation Commission; WA State Department of Fish and Wildlife; WA State Department of Ecology; WSU Tree Fruit Research and Extension Center; United States Army Corps of Engineers; Colville Confederated Tribes; Yakama Nation

Other Accomplishments



Kids in the Creek outdoor education field experience at Entiat National Fish Hatchery; multiple partner agencies



Wildfire fuels chipping event for landowners in Plain, WA with Timberline Silvics Inc.; partner agency WA Department of Natural Resources



Chinook salmon, one of several species studied in a Joint Venture with the US Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station in the Entiat River

More Work to Do!

- Forest Health: Assist with fire/flood recovery, fuels reduction, FireWise education, and Forest Health Collaborative.
- Water Quality and Habitat Restoration Projects: Riparian plantings, stream restoration, and best management practices on private land.
- Outreach and Conservation Education: Kids in the Creek field experience, Chelan County Clean Water Campaign photo contest/calendar, and various community events.