

2014 Annual Report

Celebrating 75 Years of

LOCAL STEWARDS MAKING STATEWIDE IMPACTS



**Washington State
Conservation Commission**

CONTENTS

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR	1
MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR	2

WHO WE ARE 4

MEET THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	4
MEET THE CONSERVATION DISTRICTS	4
OUR HISTORY	5
DISTRICT MAP	6

WHAT WE DO 8

VOLUNTARY, INCENTIVE-BASED CONSERVATION	8
OUR PROGRAMS	9
POLICY ENGAGEMENT	11
NATURAL DISASTER RECOVERY EFFORTS	13
EDUCATION AND OUTREACH	14

WHY IT WORKS 16

WE'RE EFFICIENT—GETTING THE MOST OUT OF EVERY DOLLAR	16
WE'RE EFFECTIVE—MAKING AN IMPACT ON THE GROUND	17
WE'RE ACCOUNTABLE—SETTING STANDARDS FOR SUCCESS	18

CONSERVATION DISTRICT FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENTS 20-65

ACRONYMS	66
COMMISSION MEMBERS	67-68
COMMISSION STAFF	69-70
PARTNERS	71

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



Jim Peters, Commission Chair

As Chair of the Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC), each year I attend several meetings and tours that showcase the work of conservation districts in our state. The scope and scale of projects is always impressive, but equally what's impressive are the people.

Relationships are the heart of Washington's conservation district system. I've had the pleasure of meeting several conservation district staff and supervisors, and I see their dedication to working with partners to build strong, sustainable communities. Conservation district staff live in the community where they work. They share a common interest with local landowners in protecting both the livability and the economic vitality of their community, resulting in close ties between the conserva-

tion district and the people they serve. I've also met some of the landowners—the local champions of conservation—who voluntarily adopt practices on their property that protect natural resources for future generations. Their deep appreciation of natural resources is inspiring. And, it's clear how much they value the help, services, and friendship they receive from partners at their local conservation district.

Our challenge is to make sure more landowners in Washington State have the opportunity to foster relationships with their local conservation district. During conservation district tours, I often hear landowners say, "I wish I would have known about conservation district services sooner." And, there still are several landowners who remain unaware of conservation districts. I encourage everyone to spread the word about Washington's conservation districts and all their incredible services.

The more relationships we build with landowners, the closer we'll get to our goal of building strong, sustainable communities through resource stewardship.

In 2015 I look forward to meeting more of the people who are helping put conservation practices on the ground. Thank you for your continued dedication. I'm proud to be part of this "conservation family."

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Mark Clark, Executive Director

Washington State faces several natural resource challenges that threaten our health, culture, economy, and quality of life. We've made progress towards salmon recovery, but we still have a long way to go to improve habitat conditions. Shellfish harvest areas continue to close due to worsening water quality. And, the natural disasters we experienced this year with the Oso Landslide and Carlton Complex fires remind us of the potential impacts of climate change, including warmer temperatures and more extreme weather events. In the face of these threats, we in the field of conservation are under increased pressure to get projects on the ground that will protect and sustain our environment.

The feature accomplishments in this 2014 Annual Report showcase how the SCC and conservation district partnership helps local stewards make statewide impacts. These projects would not be possible without the incredible staff and supervisors at each conservation district and the landowners who willingly implement these practices on their property.

With a network of 45 conservation districts operating locally across the state, the Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) and partner districts are well-positioned to lead resource conservation efforts that will serve as a model to others in our field. Our ability to implement community-based solutions that address state natural resource priorities is unmatched by any other conservation delivery system. Conservation district staff has both the technical expertise to ensure quality work and the local knowledge needed to build trusting relationships with landowners. At the state-level, the SCC continues to work with natural resource agencies and decision-makers to find collaborative solutions that achieve state conservation priorities and work well on the ground.

I believe the partnership that the SCC and conservation districts share will help us lead the way to solving Washington State's natural resource challenges. And, in doing so, we'll continue to empower citizens with the ability to manage their land knowledgeably and responsibly into the future.

On behalf of all the Commission staff, thank you for all your hard work. And, while we continue to face complex natural resource challenges, we know that together we can lead our state to the solutions.



Our Mission:

To lead the citizens of the state in the wise stewardship, conservation, and protection of soil, water, and other related natural resources.

WHO WE ARE

The Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) is the coordinating state agency for all conservation districts in Washington State.

Together, the SCC and conservation districts provide incentive-based services that make it easier and more affordable for private landowners to implement conservation practices on their property.

Our programs are voluntary. This non-regulatory approach helps us develop strong, trusting relationships with landowners. Through these relationships, we find collaborative solutions to natural resource issues that integrate state- and local-level knowledge, values, and needs.

MEET THE COMMISSION

The SCC was created by the legislature in 1939 (RCW 89.08.070) to support conservation districts through financial and technical assistance; administrative and operational oversight; program coordination; and promotion of district activities and services.

The Commission consists of a ten-member governing board representing conservation districts, other state agencies, and Governor appointees. A small staff carries out the direction of the board, provides direct service to conservation districts, and coordinates the work of the Commission and districts with other natural resource and agricultural partners.

MEET THE CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Conservation districts are local units of government that serve as a “clearinghouse” of natural resource program information and assistance for landowners in their community. There are nearly 3,000 conservation districts located across America, including 45 conservation districts in Washington State.

Washington’s conservation districts turn state investment in natural resource protection into local action on the ground. Districts provide financial and technical assistance to landowners who voluntarily adopt stewardship practices, such as restoring streamside habitat on their property or reducing energy use on their farm. With 45 conservation districts helping landowners implement these practices statewide, that adds up to major, on-the-ground impacts for resource conservation in Washington State.

Conservation districts are locally led. Each district is directed by a five-member board of supervisors. Three members are elected locally, at least two of whom must be landowners or operators of a farm. The SCC appoints the remaining two members, including at least one landowner or farm operator.



OUR HISTORY

President Franklin D. Roosevelt famously wrote, “The Nation that destroys its soil destroys itself.” It was the era of the Dust Bowl, when a combination of drought, excessive cultivation, and wind triggered dust storms that uprooted thousands of people and caused widespread illness.

Roosevelt knew the success of soil conservation efforts depended on the willing participation of private landowners. That’s why, in his 1937 letter to all US governors, he urged states to adopt legislation allowing local landowners to form conservation districts that would carry out erosion control projects. These conservation districts would function as trusted, locally led entities to coordinate conservation efforts at a community level. He referred to the legislation as “imperative to enable farmers to take the necessary cooperative action.”

Two years after Roosevelt sent that letter, the Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) was established.

In 2014 the SCC and partner conservation districts celebrated 75 years of cooperative conservation with Washington State landowners. While many things have changed during that time, the philosophy behind our work remains the same — *landowner participation still is imperative to conservation success.*

Washington State has 45 conservation districts.

Find yours today!





“Our state’s conservation districts, and our Conservation Commission, have won broad support among landowners through many years of even-handed professionalism and quality service. Their approach simply cannot be and (despite frequent attempts) has not ever been duplicated by any other agency.”

Don Stuart, celebrated speaker, writer, consultant, and former Pacific Northwest Regional Director for American Farmland Trust.

WHAT WE DO

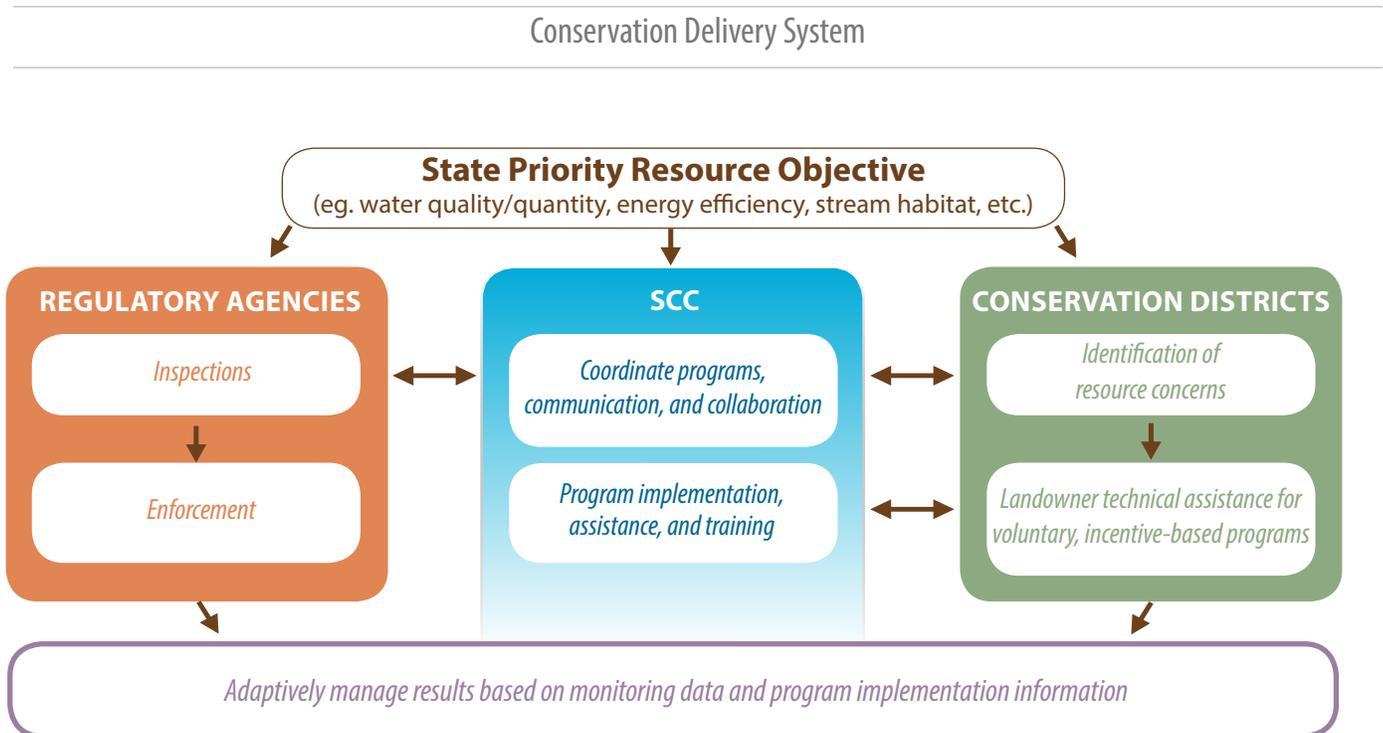
The Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) is a non-regulatory agency, and conservation districts implement a voluntary, incentive-based approach.

VOLUNTARY, INCENTIVE-BASED CONSERVATION

Sometimes the only thing standing in the way of landowners implementing conservation on their property is lack of information and/or lack of necessary resources, such as money or people to help.

Conservation districts work one-on-one with landowners to help them find ways to manage their land knowledgeably and responsibly. The SCC and conservation districts also provide financial assistance programs that make conservation more affordable. All of these services are voluntary, which encourages open communication and accelerates resource protection on private lands.

The SCC recognizes the importance of having a regulatory “backstop” for natural resource protection. That’s why we work hard to coordinate with regulatory entities in Washington to make sure the system for conserving our state’s resources best serves our people and the environment.





OUR PROGRAMS

The SCC offers a suite of financial and technical assistance programs that conservation districts use to implement on-the-ground conservation:

SCC Grant Programs

- **Capital Cost Share Investment:** Provides grants to cover a portion of the cost of capital projects (brick and mortar) that result in long-term conservation investment. This includes funding for projects such as building compost storage facilities, replacing culverts with fish-passable bridges, or installing off-creek watering troughs for livestock.
- **Implementation:** State general fund dollars that the SCC distributes to conservation districts for general operating costs (office space, equipment, staff, and administrative operations). This funding can also be used to implement additional cost-share programs that help landowners implement best management practices.
- **Livestock Technical Assistance:** Funds technicians at the conservation district-level who help livestock owners — from small farms to large dairies — develop nutrient management plans. These plans promote wise manure management through proper storage practices and by applying manure to fertilize crops. Practices are also installed that prevent livestock wastewater and contaminants from degrading water quality. The majority of this work is done on facilities with less than 50 acres and less than 100 animals, which can include cattle, horses, pigs, sheep, llamas, and others.
- **Professional Engineering:** A group of conservation districts covering a geographic area coordinate their application for funding to hire and share the services of a professional engineer. The SCC currently funds 12 engineers who cover nine “areas” that represent all 45 conservation districts. Engineering services are provided to landowners, cities or towns, groups (e.g. irrigation districts), conservation districts, conservation district planners, and government agencies (e.g. Washington State Parks). Services include investigations, feasibility studies, assessments, evaluations, surveys, designs, construction management, inspection, and engineering contract oversight and management. Projects vary in range, including streambank stabilization to reduce sedimentation; culverts and bridges to allow for fish passage; livestock and waste management practices to protect water quality; stormwater practices to reduce flooding; pipeline projects to reduce irrigation use and increase instream flows for fish; and rain water management practices to reduce potable water usage in towns or cities.

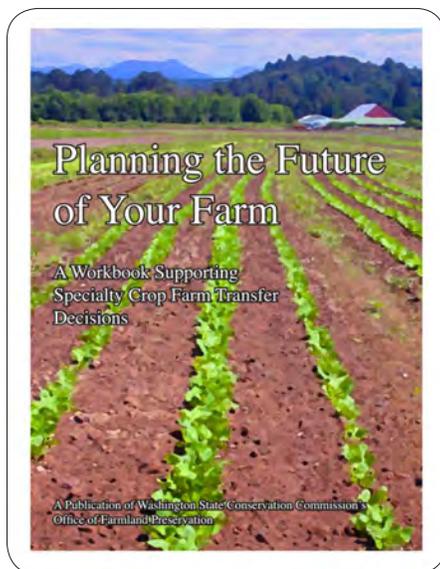
Partner Grant Programs (co-funded and/or co-administered by the SCC)

- **Firewise:** Helps communities and individuals protect people, property, and natural resources from wildfire. The program follows the national Firewise Communities/USA approach™ that promotes local solutions for preventing and responding to fires. Conservation districts use this funding to provide on-site property risk assessments, public workshops, fuels reduction projects, and cost-share assistance to landowners for other fire prevention practices. *Partners:* Washington State Department of Natural Resources and several conservation districts
- **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP):** Provides financial incentives that help agricultural producers protect salmon and shellfish while still maintaining the viability of their farm. Farmers receive financial payments for restoring riparian (streamside) habitat on their property and protecting it for at least 10-15 years. Native trees and shrubs are planted in “buffers” bordering streams to improve habitat while farming continues outside the buffers. The SCC provides program oversight and project monitoring, and conservation districts provide outreach and secure CREP contracts with landowners. *Partners:* USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA)
- **Critter Pads:** Funding for man-made, raised-earth plateaus that provide escape and safe containment for livestock during flood events. In the Chehalis River Basin alone, completed critter pad projects have the capacity to protect over 1,500 livestock from flooding. *Partners:* USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- **Irrigation Efficiencies:** Restores instream flows in rivers determined to not have enough water for fish populations and other competing needs. The SCC works with conservation districts to provide financial incentives — up to 85 percent of total project costs — to landowners willing to install best management practices that increase the efficiency of their water application and/or conveyance. The water saved is converted into beneficial instream flows in tributaries where ESA (Endangered Species Act)-listed species will benefit. Sixty projects have saved 15,754 acre feet of water and 65 cubic feet per second of flow back into 22 tributaries across the state. That’s enough water savings to cover the entire City of Kennewick with water one foot deep! *Partners:* Washington State Department of Ecology and the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
- **Technical Service Providers (TSP):** The SCC facilitates work order agreements between the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and conservation districts for implementation of Farm Bill programs. Districts use funding to design and review Farm Bill practices and/or plans, such as constructing roof runoff structures or developing Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans, which helps achieve local, state, and federal conservation goals. The SCC leverages NRCS federal funding for TSP with a 50 percent state match. *Partners:* USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service



POLICY ENGAGEMENT

Working with conservation districts and landowners affords SCC staff the opportunity to share the perspectives of private landowners with those working on conservation policy in local, state, federal, and tribal governments.



In 2014 the Office of Farmland Preservation used a grant from the USDA to publish a workbook supporting farm transfer decisions in Washington.

Policy Programs

In addition to facilitating and coordinating conservation district activities, the SCC administers policy programs that use collaborative methods to address natural resource issues, including:

- **Coordinated Resource Management (CRM):** Empowers local people to resolve land use and natural resource issues using collaborative problem solving. Facilitators work with local landowners and stakeholders to conceive effective, inclusive solutions that generate strong local support. CRM is co-administered by the SCC and a partnership of state and federal agencies. This year existing CRM groups continued to progress, and new CRM groups were formed, including: Black Wolf CRM (Stevens Conservation District) working on wolf predation, grazing management, and water quality issues; Three CRM groups formed in the Chehalis River Basin (Lewis, Grays Harbor, and Pacific Conservation Districts) working on project development for flooding concerns; Trout Lake CRM (Underwood Conservation District) working on water quality and animal waste management; Skagit livestock producers working on water quality and animal waste management; and North Lynden Watershed Improvement District CRM working on water quality, water quantity, land use, fisheries, and shellfish resource issues.
- **Office of Farmland Preservation (OFP):** Established to support the retention of farmland and the viability of farming for future generations (RCW 89.10.010). SCC staff work the farmland preservation issue with a variety of tools, including agricultural conservation easements, farm succession and estate planning, addressing regulatory issues, and land use. We also explore strategies to improve the economic viability of farms, such as promoting farmer access to farmers markets, local food availability, and value-added opportunities, such as mobile slaughter units. In 2014, OFP used a USDA grant to publish *Planning the Future of Your Farm*, a workbook supporting farm transfer decisions. OFP also partnered with Eastern Klickitat and North Yakima Conservation Districts to sponsor five agricultural easement projects on over 21,000 acres (funding for these will be determined by the 2015 legislature). OFP also completed an updated *Farmland Preservation Indicators* report for Washington State.
- **Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP):** Provides an alternative approach for counties to address Growth Management Act (GMA) requirements for agricultural activities. This program uses a watershed-based, collaborative stewardship planning process that relies on incentive-based practices to protect critical areas, promote viable agriculture, and encourage cooperation among diverse stakeholders. Twenty-eight counties have opted into VSP. However, they are not required to implement the program unless funding is made available. If no VSP funding is available by July 31, 2015, counties will revert to the traditional GMA requirements, which previously resulted in divisive processes and legal battles regarding the protection of critical areas associated with agricultural activities.

Policy Initiatives

The SCC works with partner conservation agencies — regulatory and non-regulatory — to encourage cooperation and collaboration in administering conservation activities. Staff participates on several work groups that address policy initiatives ranging from local food systems to salmon recovery.

Initiatives include:

- **Food Systems Roundtable:** The SCC is part of this interagency workgroup formed in 2010 by the Governor to take a “more focused examination of state food policy, food-related programs, and food-related issues.”
- **Puget Sound Action Agenda:** The SCC plays a key role in implementing near-term actions in the Puget Sound Action Agenda, addressing diverse topics such as an evaluation of incentive programs, implementing ecosystem markets in the Puget Sound basin, and assisting in the development of an agriculture strategy for the region.
- **Results Washington:** Results Washington is Governor Jay Inslee’s performance management system for “building a more responsive, data-driven state government to get results.” State agencies are required to work together to develop strategic plans to meet five top goal areas of the Inslee administration. The Conservation Commission is the lead state agency for two indicators (objectives) under the goal “Sustainable Energy and a Clean Environment.” Those indicators are: (1) Increase number of Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program sites to improve water temperature and habitat from 1,021 to 1,171 by 2015; and (2) Increase number of implemented agricultural best management practices to improve water quality in shellfish growing areas in Puget Sound, Grays Harbor, and Pacific counties from 345 in 2008 to 750 by 2016. The SCC is also participating on a third indicator led by the Department of Agriculture: (3) Maintain current level of statewide acreage dedicated to working farms with no net loss through 2015.
- **Salmon Recovery:** The SCC is an active member on the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council, and staff serves on the Salmon Recovery Funding Board. Internally, this year the Commission began developing an action plan to help us evaluate existing standards and practices related to salmon recovery and identify strategies to increase positive, sustainable impacts for habitat conditions.
- **Stormwater:** Commission staff participates in the Stormwater Workgroup convened by the Department of Ecology. The group consists of representatives from state and federal agencies, cities, and counties. This year SCC staff led a discussion in an agricultural stormwater runoff group examining actions that landowners can take to address stormwater.





NATURAL DISASTER RECOVERY EFFORTS

In 2014 Washington suffered many natural disasters, including two of historic proportions—the Oso landslide and the Carlton Complex fires. These events damaged natural resources and impacted several communities in our state.

Natural disaster preparedness, response, and recovery has become an increasing focus of the SCC and conservation districts. We play an important role in helping meet the needs of affected private landowners who have lost homes, animals, and infrastructure.

Oso Landslide

On March 22, a massive landslide in Snohomish County tore through a small community outside the town of Oso, destroying dozens of homes and killing more than 40 people. In the wake of the Oso landslide, specially trained SCC staff contributed to recovery efforts, including helping with operation and coordination of the Emergency Operations Center and coordinating volunteers to assist other state agencies with the disaster response. Snohomish Conservation District supported recovery efforts at a local level. The district began accepting donations of livestock supplies to give residents who had taken in animals for those who could not care for them as a result of the landslide.

The Carlton Complex Fire

In July 2014, four separate fires burning in the Methow Valley of Okanogan County merged, forming the largest wildfire in the recorded history of Washington. The Carlton Complex Fire burned over 250,000 acres, destroying hundreds of homes and structures in its path.

Immediately, Okanogan Conservation District sprang into action. The District is serving as a clearinghouse for landowners seeking recovery assistance, including restoring grazing lands, repairing fences and irrigation systems, replanting trees, helping with erosion control, and more. Okanogan Conservation District also took the lead on engaging the federal Emergency Watershed Program (EWP) in recovery efforts, and the Commission will serve as sponsor for the EWP. The SCC also worked with Okanogan and Cascadia Conservation Districts to organize a meeting to coordinate local, state, and federal programs that could be used in recovery efforts.

Okanogan Conservation District — and many other conservation districts in our state — continue to offer wildfire preparedness and recovery workshops and services. In doing so, they are addressing private landowners' needs that often are overlooked and unmet by the traditional emergency response network.



EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

The top priority of the SCC and conservation districts is on-the-ground conservation, and we see education as a key component to fostering natural resource stewardship.

Our work in this arena is extensive. Together, the SCC and conservation districts fund and support a variety of events and programs across the state.

The following list is just a sample of the education and outreach events that we provide and/or contribute to:

- Wheat Week
- Water on Wheels
- Salmon in the Classroom
- Water quality testing workshops
- Mother Earth News Fair
- Air quality tours
- Stream teams
- Soil testing and judging contests
- Field days and demonstration tours
- Forestry land judging
- Small Farms Conference
- Othello Sandhill Crane Festival
- Envirothon
- Salmon Summit



“Our increasing population and new issues, like global warming and endangered species, will only increase demand for district services. There will always be new technology to embrace to help solve problems, but local input and trusting relationships are the keys to success now and in the future.”

Lynn Brown, SCC Commissioner and former State Conservationist

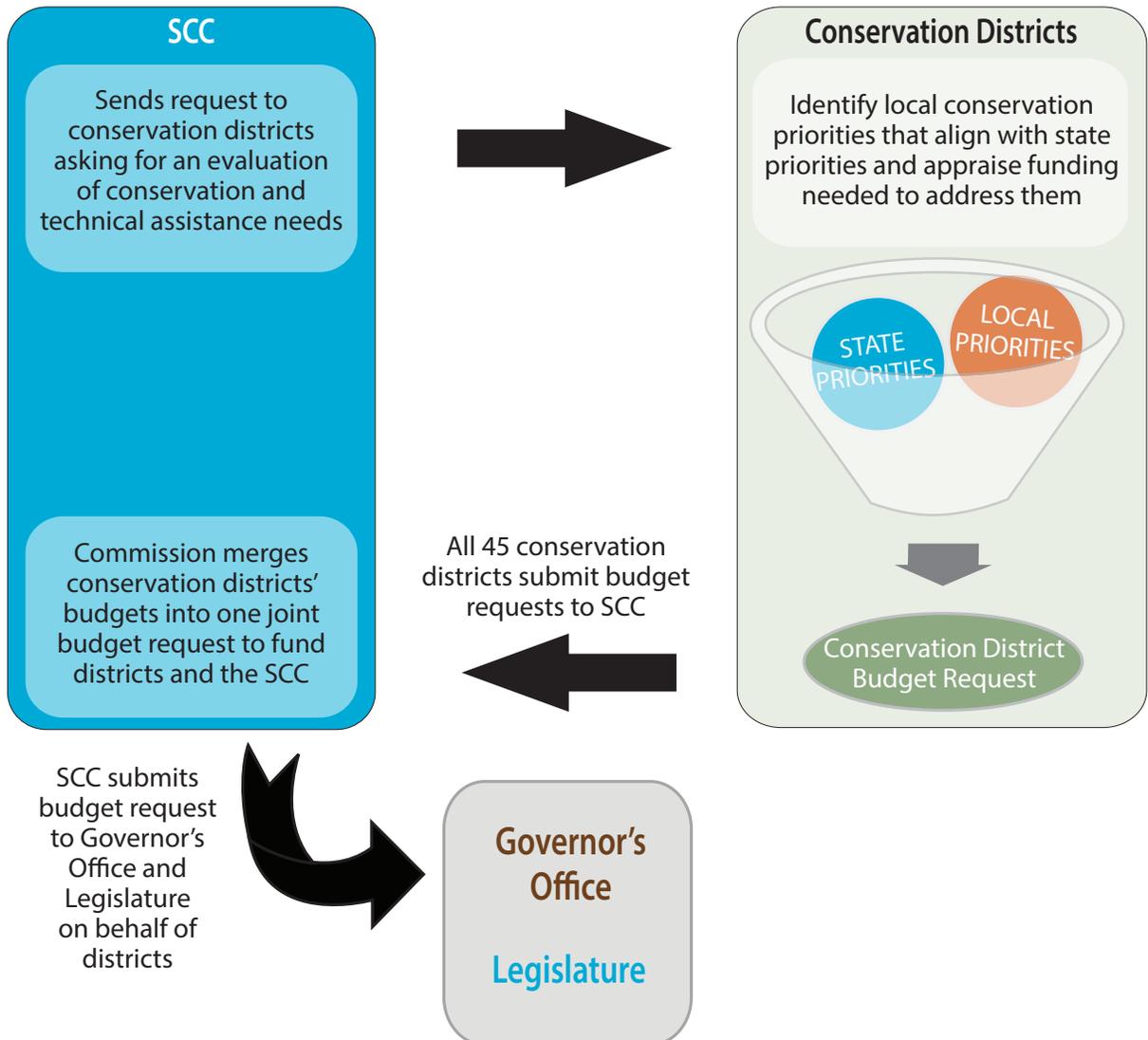
WHY IT WORKS

WE'RE EFFICIENT — GETTING THE MOST OUT OF EVERY DOLLAR

The Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) and conservation districts take pride in getting the most out of every dollar we spend. By offering cost-share programs to landowners, we leverage our funds and help landowners maximize their personal investment in conservation practices. Conservation districts also use some of the funding received from the SCC as match for additional conservation grants they receive from other partners.

In fact, every dollar the SCC invests in conservation district projects is leveraged an average of four times!

How We Build Our Budget



WE'RE EFFECTIVE — MAKING AN IMPACT ON THE GROUND

This year the SCC celebrated its 75th year — a milestone that gives us a chance to reflect on our accomplishments over the years.

When you consider the amount of work that conservation districts achieve each year, and then multiply that by the number of decades that the SCC and districts have been delivering services to landowners in Washington State, it's amazing to think of the impact we've made. In the last fiscal year alone, here's a snapshot of what conservation districts have achieved just through SCC-funded capital projects:

- Acres of land improved: 314,467
- Stream feet improved / protected: 76,717
- Number of best management practices (BMPs) installed: 1,239
- Trees / shrubs planted: 67,588
- Feet of fence installed: 36,920
- Area of buffer treated: 133 acres

Washington State Conservation Commission Budget Expenditures

	Actuals				Budgeted
	05-07 Biennium	07-09 Biennium	09-11 Biennium	11-13 Biennium	13-15 Biennium
Staffing/Salaries:					
Average Annual FTEs	15.9	22.3	19.3	17.5	22.1
Objects of Expenditure:					
Salaries and Wages	1,692	2,647	2,420	2,217	1,992
Employee Benefits	427	728	695	692	589
Professional Svc Contracts	428	430	236	225	116
Goods and Services	849	1,046	937	1,008	360
Travel	216	375	281	279	215
Capital Outlays	114	185	3	7	14
Grants, Benefits & Client Services	20,575	24,460	17,907	22,810	18,144
Interagency Reimbursements	-5,616	-5,547	-3,139	-2,264	-2,333
Total Objects	18,685	24,324	19,341	24,974	19,096
Source of Funds:					
General Fund-State (001-1)	4,710	5,822	14,031	13,209	7,894
State Building Construction Account-State (057-1)	3,630	3,524	2,044	8,293	8,615
State Taxable Bldg Constr Acct-State (355-1)			1,220	1,780	
State Toxics Control Account-State (173-1)					588
General Fund-Federal (001-2)	117	528	1,084	1,616	1,883
Water Quality Capital Account-State (11W-1)		3,693	667		
Water Quality Account-State (139-1)	10,056	10,535			
Conservation Assist Revolving Acct-State (552-1)	141		266	75	113
Industrial Insurance Premium Refund-Non-App (03K-6)				0	4
Savings Incentive Account-Non-App (290-6)	25	118			
Other Funds	6	104	30		
Total Funds	18,685	24,324	19,341	24,974	19,096

WE'RE ACCOUNTABLE — SETTING STANDARDS FOR SUCCESS

Conservation Commission Processing of Conservation District Payment Requests**			
	Vouchers Processed	Verification Time (avg)	Processing Days (avg)
FY14	2,090	3.26	1.65
FY13	2,154	2.42	2.52
FY12	1,677	1.89	2.15
FY11	1,634	--*	2.05
FY10	1,763	--*	2.24
FY09	1,355	--*	2.25

*did not track verification time during these periods

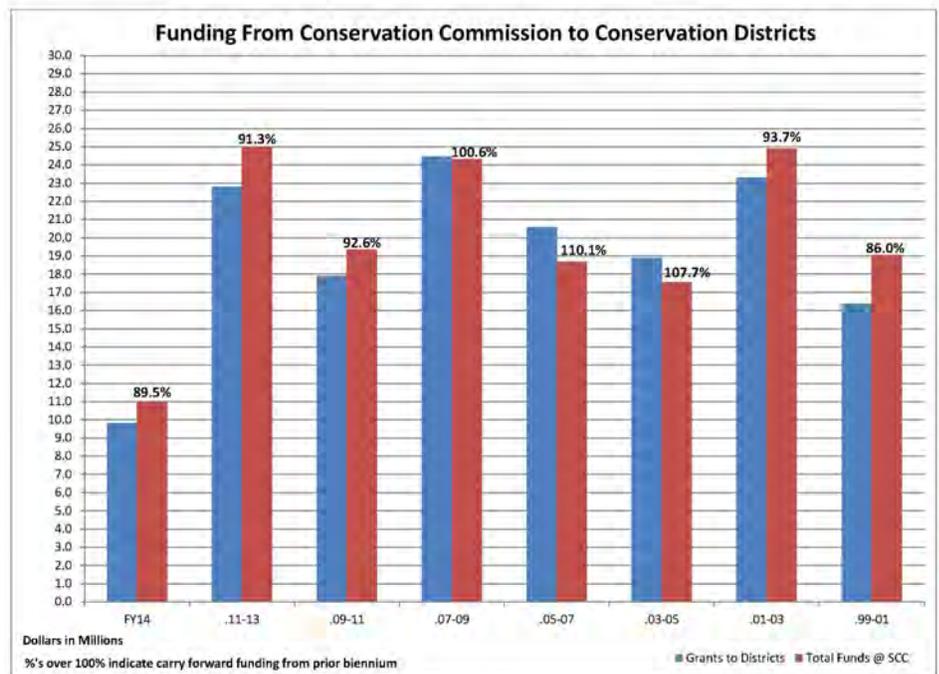
**does not include time on agency accounting, trainings, contracts, and other staff responsibilities

The SCC works with conservation districts to define measureable outcomes for every project we fund. We also ensure that projects address issues that have been identified as natural resource priorities for Washington State. When projects are implemented, SCC and district staff monitors progress to ensure work is on target and in compliance with all rules and standards.

We're accountable when it comes to processing conservation district grant voucher payments. Our payment processing averages 2.52 days. This rapid payment assists landowners who must pay for project materials and services up-front and then wait for reimbursement.

We also implement a "Good Governance" evaluation tool based on a set of performance standards for districts. Developed by the SCC in 2009, these performance standards serve as guidelines for districts to satisfy accountability requirements. In 2013, the SCC improved this evaluation process by adopting the current Good Governance Policy along with 23 accountability elements, in which the SCC states their intention to assist and guide local districts in carrying out programs for resource conservation by:

- Administering fair and transparent performance standards;
- Providing regular feedback to improve district performance;
- Enhancing public confidence in elected and appointed supervisors as well as in district programs and services;
- Ensuring that assistance is available to help districts achieve annual and long-range goals in an effective, efficient, economic, and ethical manner;
- Overseeing impeccable management and stewardship of public funds; and
- Assisting districts to engage the public in identifying and measuring desired outcomes.



“I can’t believe there’s help like this available. I wish I would have called sooner.”

Jerry Kersting of Wildberry Farm about the assistance he received from Pierce Conservation District

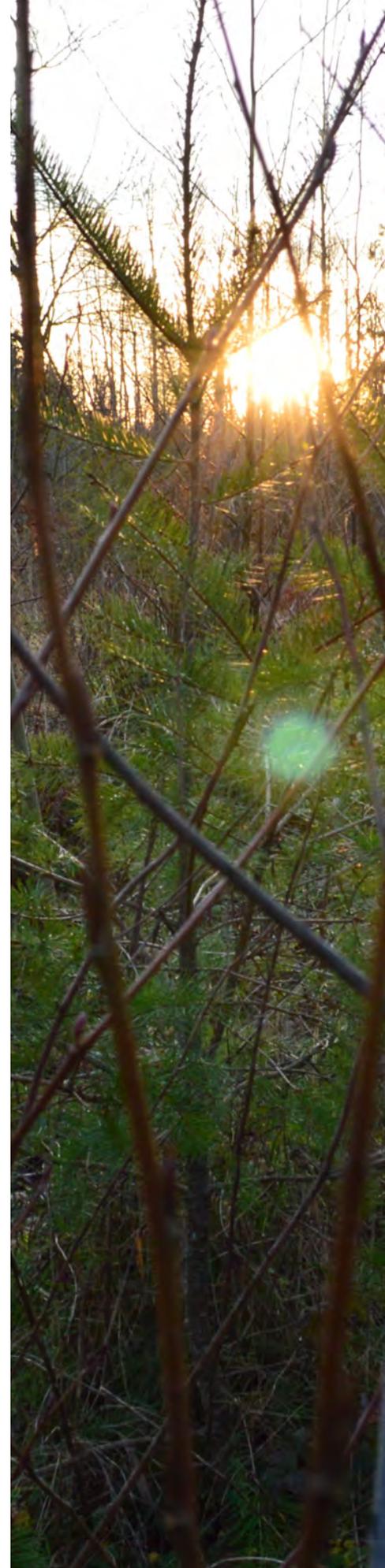


CONSERVATION DISTRICT FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SEEING IS BELIEVING

With 45 conservation districts implementing on-the-ground projects every day in Washington State, it's difficult to summarize the extent of natural resource impacts they make. This section provides a snapshot of 2014 feature accomplishments — one from every district — as a sample of the vital conservation work being done.

Conservation district pages are listed alphabetically, with a small Washington map at the top indicating where the district is located. Each page includes a detailed feature accomplishment, a sample of other accomplishments from 2014, a list of more work to do, and district contact information.





State Legislative District #9
Congressional District #4

Adams Conservation District

District Manager: Cara Hulce
118 East Main Avenue Ritzville, WA 99169
509-659-1553 | chadamscd@hotmail.com | www.adamscd.com
Board Chair: Curtis Hennings

Other Accomplishments



A pump system, 6,000 feet of pipe and a watering trough were installed off of Cow Creek to help protect water quality and expand grazing capability.



Our annual 5th grade field day included presentations about soil characteristics, weather monitoring, electrical safety, and water pollution.



We were proud to host 290 Future Farmers of America (FFA) students at this year's county soil judging contest. Bright minds and sun made for a wonderful morning in the dirt!

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Protecting Palouse River from impacts of grazing

RESOURCE CHALLENGE

The Palouse River does not meet Washington State's water quality standards for the following parameters: dissolved oxygen, fecal coliform bacteria, temperature, and pH. These parameters threaten local fishing, habitat, and recreation use on the Palouse River and downstream as it flows into the Snake River. Since the Palouse River is considered an impaired water body, Adams Conservation District acquired funding to implement better management practices along the river to help improve water quality.



Livestock exclusionary fencing along the Palouse River helps to protect the riparian area from degradation.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS Five miles of exclusionary fencing was installed on the main stem of the Palouse River to help protect water and riparian (streamside) areas from the impacts of grazing cattle. Over the past decade the operator has been modifying his grazing strategy to minimize riparian access. During this time vegetation on gravel bars and banks has increased dramatically. The operator is glad for this development and requested our assistance in helping him install fencing to fully protect the riparian zone. We hope to take cuttings from current vegetation and plant them along banks and side channels in the fall.



Willow growth along the river is helping to improve water quality by reducing erosion, filtering pollutants, and increasing shade.

KEY PARTNERS: WA State Department of Ecology

More Work to Do!

- Riparian planting: Cow Creek
- Riparian planting: Palouse River windbreaks

Asotin County Conservation District

Sandy Cunningham, District Manager
720 6th Street, Suite B Clarkston, WA 99403-2012
(509) 758-8012 x104 | sandyaccd@cableone.net | www.asotin.cd.net
Board Chair: Keith Ausman



State Legislative District #9
Congressional District #5

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Empowering Tenmile Creek landowner to protect spawning steelhead

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Tenmile Creek is more than a corridor for anadromous fish (fish that migrate from saltwater to freshwater to spawn). Steelhead aren't just swimming through — they're spawning. Some redds were perilously close to a rocky ford used as a water crossing for 300 cow-calf pairs and heavy equipment used in the spring pasture. It was imperative to find a solution. Realizing ESA-listed steelhead were nearby, the landowner eagerly worked with Asotin County Conservation District to address the water crossing issue.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS Asotin County Conservation District helped the landowner install fencing along seven stream miles to prevent cattle from accessing the creek. To fund the project, the District used their cost-share program and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), which provides financial incentives to landowners who restore and protect riparian (streamside) habitat on their property. The District also installed a bridge that spans roughly 55 feet to serve as a crossing for cattle and equipment. The landowner now uses a higher percentage of the pasture since the cattle previously would graze the riparian corridor.

KEY PARTNERS: WA State Conservation Commission; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; USDA Farm Service Agency; Bonneville Power Administration; WA State Department of Ecology



Before project implementation



After bridge is installed for livestock and equipment access

Other Accomplishments

- 42 cooperators received cost-share for best management practice (BMP) projects that improved natural resources as well as supported contractors and the local economy.
- Developed six Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans (CNMP) for livestock producers. CNMPs are site-specific plans for animal feeding operations that address both landowner and natural resource conservation objectives.
- Received Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) grants to remove a fish passage barrier on Rattlesnake Creek in the Grande Ronde watershed and enhance the riparian habitat on Charley Creek in the Asotin watershed.

More Work to Do!

- Seek additional funding to achieve natural resource goals.
- Continue technical and financial assistance to landowners for successful projects that result in landowners being spokespeople for conservation district work and services.
- Work with local experts and landowners to complete strategic planning that allows the District to better work with funding sources, enhance customer service to landowners, and ensure our projects yield high environmental benefits.



State Legislative District #8, 16
Congressional District #4

Benton Conservation District

Mark Nielson, District Manager
10121 W. Clearwater, Suite 101 Kennewick, WA 99336
(509) 736-6000 | mark-nielson@conservewa.net | www.bentoncd.org
Board Chair: Jack Clark

Other Accomplishments



Served 6,645 students, teaching how dams generate electricity while providing fish passage, with funding from Bonneville Power Administration.

Photo: BCD volunteer Bob Kolowitz



Engaged the community to discuss a controversial fisheries project proposal in a local habitat area prized for recreation and related businesses.

Photo: BCD staff Medora Robertson



Over 2,000 students released fish and learned about natural resource conservation at BCD's Salmon Summit. Volunteers contributed 2,894 service hours.

Photo: BCD volunteer Bob Kolowitz

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Improving water quality – one small farm at a time

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Small acreage farms seem to be an increasing trend, no matter where you are in Washington State. Five, ten, and fifteen acre tracts of land are being utilized for row crop production or to raise livestock. These small acreage farms face numerous challenges, including how to make their operations economically viable while protecting water quality. To address this issue, the Benton Conservation District developed and is implementing a Small Acreage Assistance Program.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS The Small Acreage Assistance Program provides conservation plans, technical assistance, and cost-share incentives to landowners to implement best management practices. This past year the Benton Conservation District (BCD) provided cost-share assistance to three landowners to convert inefficient irrigation systems to more efficient center pivot or solid set irrigation systems. The District has two additional projects currently under construction: one irrigation conversion and one fencing and watering facility project. In addition, the District provided technical assistance and/or conservation plans to 12 small acreage landowners.

KEY PARTNERS: WA State Conservation Commission; Benton County landowners; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service



Left: Inefficient irrigation systems can cause excess nutrients to be lost to surface and groundwater. Right: Efficient center pivot irrigation system saves water, energy, and protects water quality. Photos: BCD staff Erin Hightower

More Work to Do!

- Host two Heritage Garden workshops for landowners this fall. The workshops will provide information on how to implement low water-use landscaping.
- Benton Conservation District received a \$250,000 grant from the Dept. of Ecology's Clean Water Centennial Fund to characterize nitrate concentrations in groundwater, educate the public, and develop a preliminary plan on how to address nitrate loading.

Cascadia Conservation District

Peggy Entzel, District Administrator
14 North Mission St Wenatchee, WA 98801
(509) 664-9370 | valerieh@cascadiacd.org | www.cascadiacd.org
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.



State Legislative District #15
Congressional District #3

Central Klickitat Conservation District

Jim E. Hill, District Manager
1107 S Columbus Avenue Goldendale, WA 98620
(509) 773-5823 x5 | klickcon@gorge.net | www.ckcd.org
Board Chair: Dan McCarty

Other Accomplishments

- Charlotte Martin Foundation funding for Centerville School riparian planting on Swale Creek.
- Phase 3 of a livestock exclusion fence along a tributary to Rock Creek. Total on this farm is now 1,550 feet.
- Fish barrier removal with Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFPPP) funding.
- Funding from Bonneville Power Administration to educate Goldendale School students about energy production in Klickitat County.
- Funding from Department of Natural Resources to assist them with assessments for wildfire prevention for 100 property owners.
- Water quality monitoring and well monitoring with Klickitat County Natural Resources.

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Swale Creek cleanup and planting

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Swale Creek is on the state 303(d) list — the list of impaired or threatened bodies of water — for elevated temperatures. Projects that address sedimentation, shading, and fish habitat are necessary to improve water quality in Swale Creek. Projects in the lower 3.1 miles are especially important because of the year-round flow and presence of steelhead. A local landowner and Klickitat County requested assistance from the Central Klickitat Conservation District to remove possible contaminants and install shade plants in the riparian (streamside) area of Swale Creek.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS The project removed a pile of railroad ties that was left behind when the old railroad line was removed many years ago. The creosote — a wood preservative and potential source of pollution — raised concern about possible leaching into the creek only about 10 feet away.



Railroad ties along Swale Creek before (top) and after removal (bottom)

“I have been trying for years to get these removed, ever since we purchased the property,” said Bardel Bybee, the landowner. “I was concerned a large flood could wash them into the creek. Not to mention the fact they were an eyesore and the canyon is a much more beautiful place now. The Conservation District’s involvement is the difference that allowed their removal. It could not have been done without them.”

KEY PARTNERS: Klickitat County Natural Resources; Regional Disposal Company; WA State Parks; WA Department of Ecology

More Work to Do!

- Two projects on the Little Klickitat River will stabilize 2,800 feet of stream bank to be planted with native shrubs and grasses.
- Exclusion fence will eliminate livestock from 1,200 feet of stream.
- The District’s commitment to Farmland Preservation will be in the forefront as we begin the process of acquiring funding to purchase development rights on several farms.
- 12,900 feet of exclusion fence planned on Swale Creek tributary.

Clallam Conservation District

Joe Holtrop, District Manager
228 W. 1st St, Suite H Port Angeles, WA 98362
(360) 775-3747 | Joe.holtrop@clallamcd.org | www.clallamcd.org
Board Chair: Joe Murray



State Legislative District #24
Congressional District #6

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Sequim-Dungeness Pollution Identification and Correction Plan

RESOURCE CHALLENGE In 2011, years of work paid off in an upgrade of 500 Dungeness Bay acres for shellfish harvest. Unfortunately, bacterial contamination still plagues portions of Dungeness Bay, and nutrient levels are a growing concern in both Dungeness Bay and Sequim Bay. Poor water quality jeopardizes prospects for future commercial shellfish growing and the safety of recreational harvests. Therefore, CCD is leading an effort to systematically identify and correct the causes of these water quality problems.



Dungeness Bay Shellfish Closure Area
Photo: Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe



PIC area land use
Photo: Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

We partnered with Clallam County to secure a grant from the state Department of Health for development of a Pollution Identification & Correction (PIC) Plan for the Sequim Bay-Dungeness Watershed Clean Water District. The grant was awarded to us, and we are facilitating the planning process, including serving as the primary plan author. We convened a planning task force in the spring of 2013 that has met almost monthly to strategize about

how best to identify and correct water quality problems. The Kitsap County PIC plan serves as the model. This fall we will lead the effort to begin pilot testing plan implementation.

KEY PARTNERS: WA Department of Health; Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe; Clallam County Environmental Health; Clallam County Department of Community Development, and Streamkeepers of Clallam County; Kitsap County; Kitsap Conservation District

Other Accomplishments

- Onsite septic system repair cost sharing program initiated – repair of three systems underway.
- Two forest road culverts replaced, opening up 4 miles of fish habitat.
- Nearly 3.5 miles of Dungeness Irrigation Group ditch piped, resulting in a fully piped system and total water savings of 2-3 cubic feet per second.
- One aquifer recharge project designed and two others in the planning stage.
- Technical assistance provided to 55 horse and livestock operators.
- 7 horse and livestock educational events with 148 participants.
- 11 sustainable landscaping educational events with 185 participants.

More Work to Do!

- Continue cost sharing for repair of failing onsite septic systems.
- Continue culvert replacement projects.
- Complete next phase of Dungeness Irrigation District piping and Cline Irrigation District piping.
- Construct aquifer recharge projects.



Clark Conservation District

Denise Smee, District Manager
11104 NE 149th Street, Bldg C-400 Brush Prairie, WA 98606
(360) 883-1987 x110 | dsme@clarkcd.org | www.clarkcd.org
Board Chair: Dean Longrie

State Legislative District #15, 17, 18, 49
Congressional District #3

Other Accomplishments



Cattle in the mud before installing a heavy use area



Partnered with NRCS for a new heavy use area next to the manure storage facility

Photos: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Conservation on Plas Newydd Farm



Before: Cattle access to the river
Photo: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Plas Newydd Farm is a 1,500 acre forestry and livestock operation at the mouth of the Lewis River where it flows into the Columbia River. The Lewis River is a priority watershed for five species of salmonids. The stream systems in the watershed are a significant regional resource for salmon migration and production. Numerous waterways in these basins are also on the state's 303(d) list — the list of impaired or threatened bodies of water — for parameters of fecal coliform, temperature, and dissolved oxygen.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Livestock had unrestricted access to tributaries and points along the Lewis River. Areas adjacent to the river were primarily invasive reed canarygrass with some trees and a small amount of shrubs. Clark Conservation District partnered to install approximately 2,300 linear feet of livestock exclusion fence along the Lewis River and its tributaries with an average buffer width of 80 feet. An off-channel watering facility was constructed to provide multiple water sources in the pastures. The solar powered cattle watering system uses a ground water well instead of surface water from the river and has a large holding tank to consistently supply water.



Landowner installing trough system
Photo: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

KEY PARTNERS: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; WA State Department of Ecology; WA State Conservation Commission.

More Work to Do!

- Partnering with Vancouver Watersheds Alliance to assist urban homeowners with stormwater practices, such as rain gardens and lawn alternatives.
- Partnering with the Water Resources Education Center to bring stormwater education into classrooms and install rain gardens at schools.
- Working with homeowners' associations to restore and maintain private neighborhood stormwater facilities.

Columbia Conservation District

Terry Bruegman, District Manager
202 South 2nd Street Dayton, WA 99382-1327
(509) 382-4773 x5 | tb-ccd@columbiainet.com
Board Chair: Clay Hutchens



State Legislative District #16
Congressional District #5

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Researching relationship between reduced tillage and soil pH



Separating the soil sample for stratified depth analysis

RESOURCE CHALLENGE No-till/direct seed systems used by county producers have tremendously reduced soil erosion and sediment impacts to salmon recovery efforts. This alternative to conventional tillage reduces soil disturbance by creating seedbeds and planting seeds in one field pass. However, intense soil sampling indicates that reduced tillage may have created a stratified soil pH problem through continued injection of ammonium-based nitrogen. Lab

analysis shows soil pH levels have decreased to as low as 4.2 in the seed zone (0-6"). Research indicates that soil pH levels below 5.2 reduces available soil nutrients by 50 percent.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS This is year 2 of a multiyear, intense soil sampling program. The goal is to identify the severity of low soil pH and available nutrients, providing baseline data on soil health conditions. This project involves 36 producers, 76 field sites, 10 quality control sites, 2 labs performing sample analysis, and 2 graduate students (FTE.078). Stratified sampling and analysis has identified pH levels of 4.22-8.11 in the seed zone (0-6"). The use of agriculture lime to improve pH levels and soil nutrients is a possible solution, allowing producers to continue use of no-till/direct seed systems, improving conservation and sustainable agricultural alternatives.

KEY PARTNERS: Private landowners; WA State Conservation Commission; WSU Extension



Producer Spring Tour viewing lime application test plots post seed emergence

Other Accomplishments



Installing efficient irrigation system to return saved water (.2287 cubic feet per second) for instream use in Touchet River Watershed



Tucannon instream large wood habitat enhancement



Art and Jean Sunderland honored as lifetime natural resource enhancement pioneers

More Work to Do!

- Provide cost share to 36 producers addressing low pH/nutrient availability on production agriculture fields.
- Provide technical assistance to landowners who have been contacted by WA Department of Ecology regarding livestock-influenced water quality concerns.
- Install 2-4 salmonid habitat projects addressing Endangered Species Act (ESA) recovery efforts in the Tucannon River Subbasin.
- Provide technical assistance to producers requesting Irrigation Efficiency assessments.



State Legislative District #18, 19
Congressional District #3

Cowlitz Conservation District

Darin Houpt, District Manager
2125 8th Avenue Longview, WA 98632
(360) 425-1880 | ccddmgr@teamelect.com | www.cowlitzcd.wordpress.com
Board Chair: Russ Kastberg

Other Accomplishments

- Continued providing technical assistance to customers outside community watershed project areas.
- One additional project has been funded in the Abernathy Creek drainage encompassing 2,000 feet of mainstem and 800 feet of off-channel habitat.
- Working with Germany Creek to develop project proposals that will treat 5,000 feet of mainstem create 500 feet of side channel habitat.
- Two project sites have been funded in the Arkansas Creek Community Watershed. Surveying and design is underway.

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Community watershed projects



Large woody debris roughness structure: Creates pool, tail-out, and undercut bank habitat for spawning and rearing salmonids

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Most natural resource issues do not recognize property boundaries. Examples of this include water quality, salmon recovery, and invasive weeds. Resource improvement cannot typically be realized on a farm-by-farm basis. Cowlitz Conservation District utilizes a community watershed approach to effectively communicate, collaborate, coordinate, and implement restoration projects on a more comprehensive basis. This approach effectively generates enough focused implementation to realize a measureable difference.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS Cowlitz Conservation District has been working with the Coweeman, Arkansas, and MAG (Mill, Abernathy, and Germany) watershed communities. Predominant resource concerns include salmon recovery, water quality, and invasive weeds. Landowners have additional concerns including protection of their properties and infrastructure. Last year the District designed three projects and completed the second year of treatment for invasive knotweed in the Coweeman River. The District also implemented one stream restoration project, developed funding proposals for two projects sites, and began surveying and design for two project sites in the Arkansas Creek.



Porous debris jam: Designed to limit occupation of side channel by creek yet still keep side channel active (critical rearing habitat)

KEY PARTNERS: WA State Conservation Commission; WA Department of Fish and Wildlife; Cowlitz County Noxious Weed Board; Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board

More Work to Do!

- Working on partnership with Cowlitz County to develop an in-lieu fee wetland mitigation program in Cowlitz County.
- Working with Cowlitz Public Works to provide technical assistance for their wetland mitigation efforts.
- Expand Community Watershed Program into additional watersheds (Toutle River).

Eastern Klickitat Conservation District

Jim E. Hill, District Manager
1107 South Columbus Avenue Goldendale, WA 98620
(509) 773-5823 x5 | klickcon@gorge.net | www.ekcd.org
Board Chair: Steve Matsen



State Legislative District #15
Congressional District #3

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Agricultural conservation easement purchase



Upper Rock Creek pasture

After the vote EKCD began accepting applications for funding to purchase development rights to protect farmlands, and two landowners approached us to purchase their development rights.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS EKCD worked with the WA State Conservation Commission: Office of Farmland Preservation to apply to the WA Wildlife and Recreation Program for funding to purchase conservation easements on 18,000 acres of rangeland. We are awaiting news of the ranking and funding amount. EKCD will use these two properties as demonstration projects, and we anticipate further applications from other interested landowners in future funding cycles. EKCD was also asked by Western Pacific Timber to purchase grazing and timber rights in coordination with a land purchase on 23,000 acres by WA Department of Fish and Wildlife to maintain the historic grazing and forestry traditions of the property.

KEY PARTNERS: WA State Conservation Commission: Office of Farmland Preservation; WA Department of Fish and Wildlife; Central Klickitat Conservation District

RESOURCE CHALLENGE

In April of 2013, the Eastern Klickitat Conservation District (EKCD) Board of Supervisors voted to make protection of farmland their number one priority. The loss of farmland to non-agricultural uses is a growing concern in Klickitat County, which has grown at a rate of 2.79 percent the past three years, compared to the statewide average of 2.02 percent. After the

Other Accomplishments

- Exclusion fencing and spring enhancement on Wood Gulch Spring enhancement and offsite water trough on headwaters of Chapman Creek.
- Salmon Recovery Funding Board grants for studies and assessments on Rock Creek.
- Successful application to Salmon Recovery Board for Conservation Easement purchase on 850 acres of riparian area on Rock Creek and Squaw Creek.



Squaw Creek

More Work to Do!

- Work with WA Department of Fish and Wildlife, Western Pacific Timber, and others who have signed up for conservation easements.
- Salmon Recovery Funding Board grants are still in effect and studies and assessments will be completed.
- Spring enhancements and livestock best management practices (BMPs) will be implemented in the Rock Creek basin.
- Seasonal Water quality monitoring to continue.
- Assist Klickitat County Natural Resources install two new permanent gauging stations on Rock Creek.



State Legislative District #7
Congressional District #5

Ferry Conservation District

Lloyd Odell, District Manager
PO Box 1045 Republic, WA 99166
(509) 775-3473 | Lloyd.odell@conservewa.net | www.ferrycd.org
Board Chair: Dave Konz

Other Accomplishments



Riparian fencing is our most cost effective water quality improvement tool.



Help from our friends: A Job Corps student prunes plants in our wild plant nursery.

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Protecting the Sanpoil River corridor

RESOURCE CHALLENGE The Sanpoil River winds for 70 miles through Ferry County. Forty miles of that distance is through the Reservation of Colville Confederated Tribes. Most of the Reservation land is open range. To fence a traditional riparian (streamside) buffer (100 feet wide) to exclude livestock and protect water quality would cost at least \$1.6 million. Ferry Conservation District faced a challenge: how could we protect the riparian corridor at a reasonable cost? We were contacted by Colville Tribal Range Management with a proposal that met our needs.



Guardian walls of the Sanpoil River Valley

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS The Sanpoil River Valley has steep rock walls, and just a few narrow canyons pass through those walls. The Tribal Range Management plan was to install cattle guards in those canyon roads and then build fences from the cattle guards to the canyon walls. They had the plan. What they needed was financial assistance. For less than 20 percent of our original cost estimate, we will have adequate livestock exclusion. In addition we will have a much wider and more natural riparian corridor. This is the largest project that we have ever undertaken in cooperation with the Colville Confederated Tribes.



From the edge of the road, this fence line stretches to the canyon wall

KEY PARTNERS: Colville Confederated Tribes; Bureau of Indian Affairs; WA State Conservation Commission; USDA: Natural Resources Conservation Service; Colville Reservation Conservation District

More Work to Do!

- Forest health and wildfire danger remain a serious problem. The Colville Reservation was hit by a 26,000 acre wildfire in August 2014. We are reaching out to landowners within the burned area to offer assistance.
- Continue to work on water quality improvement projects in the Sanpoil Watershed.

Foster Creek Conservation District

Jon Merz, District Manager
PO Box 398 Waterville, WA 98858
(509) 888-6372 | kfisher@fostercreekcd.org | www.fostercreekcd.org
Board Chair: John McLean



State Legislative District #12
Congressional District #4

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Douglas County Multispecies General Conservation Plan



Over the past 50 years the Greater Sage Grouse in Douglas County have fallen from 100,000 to a little more than 700

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Douglas County is blessed with an abundance of natural resources in addition to land managers who appreciate the resources and work to protect them. These people drive the county's economy. Circumstances have developed that will most likely lead to the declaration by USFWS that the Greater Sage Grouse in Douglas County is endangered. To preserve the Greater Sage Grouse Habitat while preserving farming in Douglas County, the Douglas County Multiple Species General Conservation Plan was designed.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS The USFWS and Foster Creek Conservation District (FCCD) developed an agreement that will allow FCCD to administer the Section 10 permit (Incidental Take Permit) process

in the county. This will ensure local control over the rules that the USFWS would normally promulgate to protect the species, such as idling large tracts of public land, which would devastate the economy in Douglas County. This agreement allows FCCD to develop and approve farm plans, assist with permit acquisition, monitor implementation, and amend plan elements. This agreement will maintain local control over actions that affect the economic well-being of the county and enhance Sage Grouse Habitat.

KEY PARTNERS: Bureau of Land Management; WA Department of Fish and Wildlife; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Farm Service Agency; Douglas County; South Douglas Conservation District; Department of Natural Resources; US Fish and Wildlife Service; Douglas County Wheat Growers; Douglas County PUD; Douglas County Cattlemen Association



Farming is vital to the economy in Douglas County.

Other Accomplishments



35 landowners released 60,000 bioagents to control invasive species such as Dalmatian Toad-flax, Knapweed, and Canada Thistle.



Approximately 300 students participated in a Wheat Week Educational Program.

More Work to Do!

- Implementation of the Douglas County Multiple Species General Conservation Plan (MSGCP) where 20 Section 10 Permits will be processed.
- Continue implementation to control invasive weed species on approximately 25 properties in Douglas County.
- Participate in educational outreach events that will attract approximately 100 land managers, on use of soil testing and health that involves cover and rotational crops.



State Legislative District #9, 16
Congressional District #4

Franklin Conservation District

Mark Nielson, District Manager
1533 E Spokane Street, Suite C Pasco, WA 99301
(509) 545-8546 x4 | mark-nielson@conserveva.net | www.franklincd.org
Board Chair: Dick Bengen

Other Accomplishments

- The Franklin Conservation District (FCD), with funding from the WA State Conservation Commission (SCC), provided a cost-share incentive program for producers to implement irrigation water management. The District had 37 entities apply to treat 29,203 acres of row crops and 53 orchard sites. Funding levels only allowed for the application of irrigation water management on 7,488 acres and 20 orchard sites.
- The FCD, with funding from the SCC, provided a cost-share incentive program for producers to implement cover crops. The District had 11 entities apply to treat 5,355 acres. Funding levels only allowed for the implementation of cover crops on 2,500 acres.

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Stormwater education through conservation districts



Zach Hinman teaching students about stormwater runoff using the Enviroscape Model.
Photo: Naomi Alhadeff

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Stormwater runoff is a major concern in Washington State. Stormwater runoff is unfiltered water that reaches streams, rivers, aquifers, and the ocean. Many cities and counties hold stormwater permits through the Department of Ecology that require a certain level of public outreach and education concerning stormwater. Teaching the public good land practices as well as stormwater protection will continue to have a significant impact on local water bodies, including groundwater.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS Franklin Conservation District's Water on Wheels education program has been providing stormwater education in Eastern Washington for the past seven years. Recently the Department of Ecology provided a GROSS Grant (Grant of Regional or Statewide Significance) to implement and increase Water on Wheels across Eastern Washington. The focus has been to modify the program to include a stormwater component into each lesson; deliver the lessons to as many students and classrooms as possible between January and December 2014; and to provide feedback to the municipalities about the success of the program.

KEY PARTNERS: Water on Wheels partner funders include: WA Department of Ecology; North Yakima Conservation District; Spokane Conservation District; Grant County Conservation District; Asotin County; City of Asotin; City of Clarkston; City of Pasco; City of West Richland; City of Richland; City of Kennewick; Washington Potato Commission; Washington Grain Commission.



Student creating a paper watershed to understand the impact of land planning in a watershed.
Photo: Naomi Alhadeff

More Work to Do!

- Build a 4,000 square foot office building and shop to house the District's operations.
- Launch a cost-share program to implement Integrated Pest Management on 4,000 acres with funding from the SCC.
- Continue to assist USDA with the implementation of Irrigation Water Management.
- Ensure that 18 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contracts are completed.

Grant County Conservation District

Marie Lotz, District Manager
1107 S Juniper Drive Moses Lake, WA 98837
(509) 765-9618 | marie-lotz@conserveva.net | columbiabasincds.org
Board Chair: Dan Roseburg



State Legislative District #9, 12, 13
Congressional District #4

2014 Feature Accomplishment:

Improved pasture management - working with what you have

RESOURCE CHALLENGE In an area where irrigated land is usually reserved for the production of high value crops, one finds most un-irrigated pastureland often overgrazed, weedy, weak, or devoid of vegetation. Forage grasses cannot perform as intended. Bare ground in this part of Washington often leads to runoff, soil erosion, and large deposits of animal waste where cows tend to gather. Dust storms are a frequent occurrence, and contaminants are easily picked up and transported with the soil.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS Bruce Wilson heard about conservation districts from a neighbor. Bruce knows good grass raises great beef. And, he also wants to protect water quality. His pasture is under a center pivot sprinkler, making fencing and rotations difficult. He contacted Grant County Conservation District and requested grazing expertise, cost-share, and construction specs to ensure the system would last. Circular paddocks were created between the wheel tracks. He has the main herd broken into groups by age and management needs. Now he can rotate easier with the ability to irrigate and maintain the grass after planned grazing periods. Runoff is eliminated, and the forage is healthy and able to recycle nutrients.

KEY PARTNERS: WA State Conservation Commission



Left: Before rotational grazing scheme, cows were allowed to overgraze preferred areas and under graze others. Right: Separate grazing units created using breastblock method. Posts were driven to save time and money. Photos: Grant County CD

Other Accomplishments

- No-Till Drill Rental
- Othello Sandhill Crane Festival Coordinators
- Water on Wheels/Wheat Week Education
- Irrigation Water Management Cost-Share Program
- Energy Audits

More Work to Do!

- Moses Lake - Lake Shoreline Restoration
- Best Management Practices
- Cost Share Assistance
- Information and Education Outreach
- Seeking an Assessment



State Legislative District #19,24,35
Congressional District #6

Grays Harbor Conservation District

Mike Nordin, District Manager

330 W Pioneer Avenue Montesano, WA 98563

(360) 249-8532 | plutroll@willapabay.org | graysharborcd.wordpress.com

Board Chair: Carl Waara

Other Accomplishments

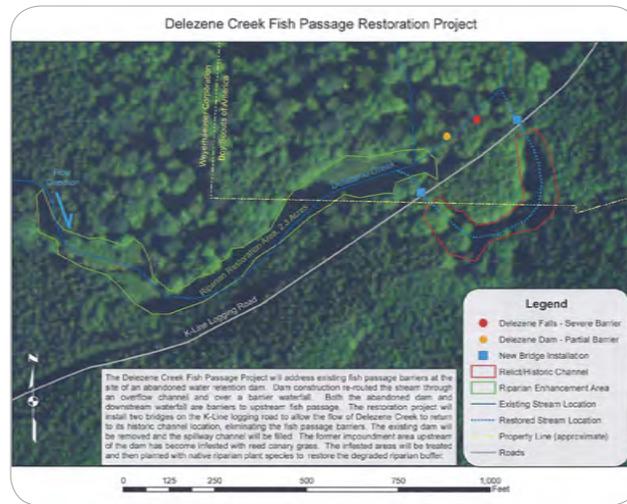
- 11 completed Forest Stewardship Plans in three districts
- 3 Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) plans completed
- 1 Farm Plan completed
- Engaged in the Coordinated Resource Management (CRM) Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority
- Helping 3 shellfish growers

2014 Feature Accomplishment:

Delezenne Creek fish passage restoration project

RESOURCE CHALLENGE This restoration project will correct two fish passage barriers consisting of a derelict dam and resulting man-caused falls in Delezenne Creek, a tributary to the Chehalis River in Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 22. Historically the stream was diverted from its original channel to accommodate a logging road and to create a lake for scouting activities. The road is still used, but the lake has dried up, and the dam no longer functions.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS The project will restore the historic channel and oxbow, correcting the passage barriers by bypassing the dam and falls. This will require installation of two concrete bridges each 55 feet long and 17 feet wide, one at each end of the oxbow. Riparian (streamside) habitat will be restored along the historic channel, by planting native conifers and shrubs. Instream work will include removing accumulated sediment from the channel, adding LWD (large woody debris) and placing streambed gravels in certain areas. The goal is to provide unimpeded fish passage to the upper seven miles of Delezenne Creek. The existing man-made channel will be filled in and abandoned.



KEY PARTNERS:

The plan has been reviewed and approved by the District, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Weyerhaeuser, and the Boy Scouts. Construction is anticipated to be completed during the summer of 2015.

Left: Delezenne Creek work site

More Work to Do!

- Delezenne Creek project needs completing
- 5 Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) plans need completing
- 1 more farm plan needs completing
- 3 livestock producers aided
- 3 livestock/equipment pads
- More shellfish projects
- Green Diamond South Wye Creek project
- 4 Weyerhaeuser fish passage projects

Jefferson County Conservation District

Dana Ecelberger, District Manager
205 W Patison Street Port Hadlock, WA 98339
(360) 385-4105 | dana@jeffersoncd.org | www.jeffersoncd.org
Board Chair: Roger Short



State Legislative District #24
Congressional District #6

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Restoring riparian habitat and managing beaver impacts

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Administered by the Farm Service Agency and the Washington State Conservation Commission, the Conservation Resource Enhancement Program (CREP) offers landowners financial incentives for restoring and protecting riparian habitat (areas in and around rivers and streams) on their property. CREP riparian plantings on Chimacum Creek have also re-created an ideal habitat for beaver, resulting in extensive tree damage, flooding, and landowner unhappiness. Jefferson County Conservation District (JCCD) is working to address issues in a non-lethal manner to save time, money, and the beaver.



Enterprising beavers!

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS JCCD assessed all CREP buffers for plant loss and beaver impacts. We then replanted riparian areas, protecting new plantings with beaver barriers made from re-purposed materials to keep costs down. Outreach to landowners, beaver experts, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife, WA Department of Transportation, and our local Public Works resulted in a broad-based partnership for solutions suitable to our unique geography. The District has bridged the gap between regulatory agencies and landowners to negotiate the often emotional, conflicting objectives. As this process continues, we will install flow-through devices and culvert protection fencing as public training events. This District also will monitor the sites with wildlife cameras.



Interns learn about beaver and how to protect trees.

KEY PARTNERS: WADepartment of Transportation; Jefferson County Public Works; Department of Fish and Wildlife; Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program; Benjamin Dittbrenner; and Mike Callahan of Beaver Solutions.

Other Accomplishments



Volunteers learn about Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program and help re-plant one of our biggest buffers.

Photo Credit: Ashlyn Brown



Many hands make light work!

More Work to Do!

This year we look forward to an increased number of farm plans, involvement in the Critical Areas Ordinance update process, a number of new CREP enrollments, two comprehensive water quality reports, another meander project, and continuing beaver related flood management.



King Conservation District

Sara Hemphill, District Manager
1107 SW Grady Way, Suite 130 Renton, WA 98057
(425) 282-1900 | district@kingcd.org | www.kingcd.org
Board Chair: Bill Knutsen

State Legislative District #1,5,11,30,31,
32, 33,34,36,37, 39, 41,43,45,46,47,48
Congressional District #1, 2, 7, 8, 9

Other Accomplishments



Hosted the 2014 State Envirothon Tournament. Photo: Mark Musick



Led tours of Boise Creek as part of a grant-funded project to work with creekside property owners to test and improve water quality. Photo: Mark Musick



Hosted the first ever conference on Climate Change and Horsekeeping, including streaming it live for a national audience. Photo: Alayne Blicke

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Rainier Beach urban farm and wetlands stewardship training

RESOURCE CHALLENGE

Many urban communities do not have access to fresh local food and do not understand the importance of soil health, clean water, and wildlife habitat. By developing a 10 acre site into a productive urban farm while restoring historic wetlands on the site, Seattle Tilth is creating a living laboratory that grows farmers and resource stewards in a dense neighborhood. King Conservation District (KCD) supports this effort through its member jurisdiction grant program and other mechanisms.



Boots sit ready for the next volunteer event

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS At 10 acres, the Rainier Beach Urban Farm and Wetlands (RBUFW) is Seattle's largest urban farm. Community members of all ages volunteer and participate, including restoring the natural wetlands habitat that runs down the middle of the farm. In 2013-2014, KCD supported the first phase of significant wetland restoration on the site. Wetland ecologists were hired, and in spring, work parties began! 840 volunteers worked 2,200 hours on the wetland restoration. Volunteers removed invasive species, and then planted 449 native plants. By the time summer arrived, over two acres of wetlands were restored, and nearly 3,000 square feet of area were added to the project. In addition to hands-on experience in wetland ecology, volunteers gained a deep understanding of soil and water health, taking that knowledge out into the community. They serve as ambassadors for Seattle Tilth's WaterSmart program and the ways in which the community is connected to its watershed.

KEY PARTNERS: Seattle Tilth; Friends of Rainier Beach Urban Farm and Wetlands

More Work to Do!

- Work with KCD Advisory Committee to develop programs for the regional food system and urban agriculture.
- Work with KCD Advisory Committee to develop programs for rural small lot forest owners and to develop urban tree canopy in member jurisdictions.
- Begin work on \$250,000 WA Department of Ecology grant to improve drainage for agriculture in the King County Flood Control District.

Kitsap Conservation District

Joy Garitone, District Manager
PO Box 2472 Silverdale, WA 98383
(360) 337-7171 | kcd@conservewa.net | www.kitsapcd.org
Board Chair: Jacqueline Lovely



State Legislative District #23,26,35
Congressional District #1,6

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Green stormwater solutions in the Steele Creek Watershed

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Watershed records show that Steele Creek Watershed was very productive for salmon and steelhead. Today, Steele Creek is impacted by runoff from major highways and development. This runoff has altered the hydrology of the watershed, resulting in erosion and sedimentation to its streams and tributaries. Stormwater brings other nutrients into the shellfish growing area at Burke Bay. Recommendations for Steele Creek include riparian (streamside) habitat restoration and green stormwater solutions.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS With restoration in mind, Kitsap Conservation District (KCD) began the retrofit of homes, farms, and small businesses. Together with the strength of the county's Clean Water Kitsap program, a holistic plan took shape. KCD solicited stormwater retrofits, farm plans, and habitat projects. KCD approached the WA State Conservation Commission (SCC) for specific shellfish-related assistance. In a pilot grant, funding was made available for the installation of rain gardens, pervious pavement, cisterns, and infiltration measures for homes and farmsteads. The tactical response by local agency partners and the SCC has offered a watershed-approach to Puget Sound restoration.



Burke Bay and adjacent shellfish growing area receives stormwater flowing from Steele Creek and numerous tributaries.

KEY PARTNERS: WA State Conservation Commission; Kitsap County's Storm Water division 'Clean Water Kitsap'; Kitsap Public Health District; WSU Extension

Other Accomplishments



KCD focused on pollinators this year. Xerces Society speaker, Eric Mader, brought new information to farmers and gardeners at our annual meeting.



Stream restoration work was an important part of KCD's program.



Mud-Free paddocks were created by local farmers to prevent nutrient runoff in winter.

More Work to Do!

- Kitsap CD is planning for projects and outreach on water conservation with Kitsap Public Utility District in the upcoming year.
- Firewise Program interest is growing in Kitsap County and KCD is looking forward to a role in the effort to inform homeowners countywide.
- Saving pollinators will be a focus for the 2015 tree sale as the district offers seed and plants that are beneficial to insects.



State Legislative District #13
Congressional District #8

Kittitas County Conservation District

Anna Lael, District Manager
2211 W Dolarway Road, Ste 4 Ellensburg, WA 98926
(509) 925-3352 x7 | a-lael@conservewa.net | www.kccd.net
Board Chair: Mark Moore

Other Accomplishments

- 526 acres of sprinkler system installation through cost share agreements with 7 landowners, reducing sediment and nutrient movement and improving water quality in the Upper Yakima (WRIA 39).
- 165 acres of irrigation system improvements through “small project” cost share agreements with 10 landowners improving irrigation water use efficiencies.
- 301 acres of Firewise implementation through cost share agreements and roving chipper program reducing fuel loads in the wildland urban interface.
- Assisted 12 communities with achieving or maintaining Firewise USA Community status.

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Manastash Creek restoration project — Pipeline installations

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Unscreened irrigation diversions and low instream flow in Manastash Creek impact Mid-Columbia River Steelhead, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). More than 20 miles of habitat are blocked in this watershed considered a “minor spawning area” necessary for long-term recovery. ESA listing means significant liabilities for local irrigators. The Kittitas County Conservation District (KCCD) has facilitated the Manastash Creek Restoration Project since 2003.



Top: Installation of the 30 inch diameter MWDA and Consolidated Pipelines near Manastash Creek. Excavation is monitored by an archaeologist (orange vest). Bottom: Construction of the outlet structures on the MWDA Ditch. Multiple vaults contain valves and flow meters.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Three pipelines were installed in 2013/2014 as part of the continuing effort to restore Manastash Creek. One was constructed by the KCCD, one by the US Bureau of Reclamation, and the third cooperatively by KCCD and Reclamation. More than 32,000 linear feet of PVC pipe was installed. One pipeline allowed 2 irrigation diversions that were unscreened to be relocated to an already constructed fish screen facility. The third and last unscreened diversion was removed from the creek by Reclamation. Instream flow improvements included approximately 4 cubic feet second (CFS) from the Reclamation portion and 1.7 CFS from KCCD portion.

KEY PARTNERS: WA Department of Ecology; US Bureau of Reclamation; Kittitas Reclamation District; Salmon Recovery Funding Board; Bonneville Power Administration; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

More Work to Do!

- 450 acres of sprinkler system implementation to reduce sediment movement and improve water quality in the Upper Yakima (WRIA 39).
- 430 acres of sprinkler system implementation through the Irrigation Efficiencies Program to reduce irrigation diversions and benefit instream flow in Cooke Creek, Caribou Creek, Manastash Creek, and Reecer Creek.
- 200 acres of Firewise/fuels reduction in the wildland urban interface to reduce risk.

Lewis County Conservation District

Bob Amrine, District Manager
1554 Bishop Road, Suite 100 Chehalis, WA 98532
(360) 748-0083 x115 | bob.amrine@wa.usda.gov | lewiscountycd.wordpress.com
Board Chair: Dave Fenn



State Legislative District #19, 20
Congressional District #3

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Van Ornum Creek fish passage project

RESOURCE CHALLENGE For generations, anadromous fish (migrating from saltwater to freshwater to spawn) and resident fish have been blocked throughout the Chehalis and Cowlitz rivers by barrier culverts. The Lewis County Conservation District (LCCD) has been working since 2000 to inventory and fix fish passage barriers. To date, LCCD has replaced 31 blockages, opening up over 87 miles of habitat. In addition, Lewis County Public Works and timber companies are fixing barriers. With over 2,000 barriers identified, there's still much work to be done.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS A completely impassable culvert located on Van Ornum Creek was identified in 2003. When the thousands of barriers were ranked in the Chehalis Basin, this barrier ranked at number 31. The landowner was interested in fixing the crossing, but no funding was available. The property is a dairy farm, but the project was eligible for the Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFFPP) because it's located in a forested portion of the farm. The barrier culvert was replaced by a concrete bridge opening up 4.68 miles of habitat.

KEY PARTNERS: Family Forest Fish Passage Program; WA State Recreation Conservation Office; WA State Department of Fish and Wildlife; WA State Department of Natural Resources; WA State Conservation Commission



Left: Preparing to remove the barrier culvert. Right: Setting the bridge.

Other Accomplishments

- Replacement of a forest barrier culvert on Taylor Creek opening up .62 miles.
- Completed 11 new or updated farm plans.
- Planted 27.2 acres of riparian (streamside) buffer with Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).
- Provided cost share to eight landowners for two spreaders, a watering facility, a dry stack, and cover crops.

More Work to Do!

- Continue to work with local landowners on new or updated farm plans.
- Continue to seek grants for fixing barrier culverts.
- Continue to sign up new cooperators and plant riparian buffers with CREP.
- Funding has been obtained to educate farmers on irrigation water management in the Chehalis Basin.



State Legislative District #7
Congressional District #5

Lincoln County Conservation District

Elsa Bowen, District Manager
1310 Morgan Street PO Box 46 Davenport, WA 99122
(509) 725-4181 x3 | ebowen@wadistrict.net | www.lincolncd.com
Board Chair: Mike Carstensen

Other Accomplishments



6th Grade Conservation Day - 174 students participated



Lincoln County Conservation District
Working toward District reorganization



The Mobile Weed Mapping Application was produced with a goal of limiting the spread of invasive weed species.

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Firewise - Fuels reduction projects

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Every summer dozens of structures and properties are threatened, damaged, and destroyed by wildfires in Washington State. To reduce the severity of wildfires, the Lincoln County Conservation District — in cooperation with federal, state, and local authorities — pursues grant assistance opportunities for hazardous wildland fuel reduction projects throughout the Fort Spokane area.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS Fuels reduction plans are being developed in cooperation with landowners. The plans focus on the development of strategically located fuel breaks and defensible space treatments that will modify fire size, intensity, and behavior, thereby reducing risk to lives, homes, infrastructure, and natural resources. The District has treated 150 acres and hopes to complete a total of 400 acres by 2016. A “firewise” participant explained that the cost share money was an incentive to accomplish the project that he knew was needed to protect his home and family.

KEY PARTNERS: WA Department of Natural Resources; Lincoln County Fire District 5 Davenport; Community Wildfire Protection Plan Committee



Before (left) and after fuels reduction project (right).

More Work to Do!

- Sage Grouse Habitat
- Fire Reduction Project
- Passive Rehydration Phase 3
- Field Borders Education
- Soil Quality Testing and Results

Mason Conservation District

John Bolender, District Manager
450 W Business Park Road Shelton, WA 98584
(360) 427-9436 x21 | jbolender@masoncd.org | www.masoncd.org
Board Chair: David Mackey



State Legislative District #35
Congressional District #6

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Skokomish River Estuary restoration project - Phase 3

RESOURCE CHALLENGE

The District continues restoration of the Skokomish River Estuary, the largest estuarine habitat in Hood Canal. The project is critical to the successful restoration of healthy salmon populations in the Hood Canal. Nearly 20,000 linear feet of dike had been constructed in the salt marsh wetlands. The goal of this project is to restore the natural habitat forming processes, functions, and connections that characterized this landscape prior to conversion to agriculture.



Skokomish Estuary on Southern Hood Canal

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS District staff designed and implemented all phases of the project. In 2007, the project removed over a mile of dike, restoring over 118 acres of salt marsh habitat. In 2010, Phase 2 removed an additional 13,000 feet of dike, restoring over 220 acres of estuarine habitat. Phase 3 (2013) restored historic hydrologic connectivity of large freshwater wetland complex to the estuary of the Skokomish River. This created brackish water conditions characterizing healthy estuarine ecosystems. This project resulted in significant improvements of quantity and quality of available estuarine habitat in the Skokomish estuary and mid-Hood Canal area.

KEY PARTNERS: Skokomish Indian Nation; Hood Canal Coordinating Council; WA Resource Conservation Office; US Fish and Wildlife Service; NOAA National Coastal Wetlands; WA Department of Fish and Wildlife

Other Accomplishments



Johnson Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFPPP) project



Greenfield livestock bridge



SkokomishEstuary culvert installation

More Work to Do!

- Continuing strong interest and requests for assistance for stormwater management and remediation.
- Increasing demand from landowners for salmon recovery projects to remove fish passage barriers, restoring watershed functions to benefit salmon spawning and rearing habitats.
- Respond to expanding interest in small farms and increasing demand for technical and financial assistance to implement water quality best management practices.



North Yakima Conservation District

Michael Tobin, District Manager
1606 Perry Street, Suite C Yakima, WA 98902
(509) 454-5736 x5 | mike-tobin@conservewa.net | northyakima.wordpress.com
Board Chair: Gail Thornton

State Legislative District #13, 14 15
Congressional District #4

Other Accomplishments



Wenas Creek before installation of Beaver Dam Analog used to enhance and restore stream function.



Wenas Creek after installation of Beaver Dam Analog. Note the wood posts pounded into the stream channel.



Washington Conservation Corps crew member “weaving” willow whips into the Beaver Dam Analog to accelerate the function of the structure.

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Cowiche Creek water users barrier removal and trust water project



Construction of pressurized “on-farm” delivery system serving 395 acres.

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Irrigation withdrawals impact habitat for Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed steelhead and threatened bull trout within the high-priority Cowiche Creek Watershed. This was causing low flows, check dams that impact fish passage, and lack of compliant fish screening at the point of water diversion. The goal of this project was to address each resource issue while maintaining viable agricultural lands. The true challenge was for North Yakima Conservation District to facilitate our creative solution through multiple entities.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

The project eliminated 2 check dams and 2 fish screens on Cowiche Creek. These dams were the last full barriers on the Creek. The project also placed 16 individual water rights into the state’s Trust Water Program for instream flow (7.915 cubic feet per second), while establishing 16 new water rights out of the Tieton River for continued irrigation. These actions addressed critical needs for survival of ESA-listed steelhead and bull trout. The new water is being “wheeled” via the Yakima-Tieton Irrigation Districts pressurized delivery system to a newly constructed “on-farm” delivery system serving the 16 water right holders.



Dedication ceremony signifying first delivery and establishment of the Trust Water Right.

KEY PARTNERS: Cowiche Creek Water Users Association; WA Water Project of Trout Unlimited; WA Recreation and Conservation Office – Salmon Recovery Funding Board; Yakima-Tieton Irrigation District; US Bureau of Reclamation; WA State Department of Ecology; WA State Department of Fish and Wildlife

More Work to Do!

- Continue to implement and expand our successful Firewise Program.
- Develop stream restoration projects in high priority watersheds, including the Ahtanum.
- Implement our Farmland Preservation Program, and partner with WA State Conservation Commission on program.
- Participate in the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan Implementation Process.

Okanogan Conservation District

Craig Nelson, District Manager
1251 2nd Avenue S, Rm 102 Okanogan, WA 98840
(509) 422-0855 x5 | ocd@okanogancd.org | www.okanogancd.org
Board Chair: Ivan Oberg



State Legislative District #7, 12
Congressional District #4

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Save Water, Save Energy Program

RESOURCE CHALLENGE

The Okanogan Conservation District, in partnership with Okanogan County Public Utility District #1, are implementing the *Save Water, Save Energy Program*. This program targets the reduction of energy use through improved irrigation pumping and system application efficiency. It reduces the amount of electrical generation and consumption and encourages the efficient and timely application of irrigation water, which has direct positive improvements to instream flows and water quality.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS Program co-operators have implemented practices that resulted in the savings of 170,675 Kilowatt Hours (KWh). That's the equivalent of nearly 17 homes worth of electricity for one full year, according to the US Energy Information Administration. The electrical savings also means an improvement in each producer's bottom line and more efficient application of a limited water resource. Better irrigation application rates will also reduce potential runoff and leaching of nutrients and other agricultural byproducts to surface and ground water.



KEY PARTNERS: Okanogan County Public Utility District #1

Left: Variable Frequency Drive controller used to control irrigation pumping based upon demand from the irrigation system. Photo: Bob Clark



Bob Clark, Okanogan CD Technical Lead, capturing system details for program eligibility. Photo: Craig Nelson

Other Accomplishments



Leslie Michel, Okanogan CD staff, conducting transect monitoring near Loomis, WA. Photo: Craig Nelson



Contractors installing a new screen on an irrigation withdrawal from the Okanogan River. Photo: Bob Clark



Okanogan High School students learning about anadromous fish species from a local biologist. Photo: Kirsten Cook

More Work to Do!

- The Okanogan Conservation District will be working with landowners to implement grass seeding, riparian vegetation establishment, fence construction, and livestock water system rehabilitation related to the recovery of the Carlton Complex Fire.
- District staff will also be demonstrating cover crops on extreme low-rainfall dryland fields that show the feasibility and benefits to soil health and erosion reduction.



State Legislative District #19
Congressional District #3

Pacific Conservation District

Mike Nordin, District Manager
PO Box 336 South Bend, WA 98586
(360) 875-6735 | plutroll@willapabay.org | pacificcd.wordpress.com
Board Chair: Mark Ashley

Other Accomplishments

- The Pacific Conservation District has built a strong relationship with many of the natural resource industries in Pacific County. The District engages with the Columbia River Crab Fisherman Assn.; the Willapa Bay Shellfish Growers Assn.; Cranberry growers; Farm Bureau; WA Cattlemen's Assn.; WA Farm and Forestry Assn.; and many others.
- The District also completed three Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) plantings. CREP is an incentive program designed to restore salmon habitat in agricultural areas while still maintaining the viability of farms.

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Leadership through Coordinated Resource Management (CRM)



Working on a solution in the field

RESOURCE CHALLENGE There are many natural resource issues and concerns in Pacific County but a serious shortfall in funds to solve these problems. Many constituents would like to help the community but lack direction and access to opportunities to work with government. The Pacific Conservation District acts as the conduit for these opportunities.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS The Pacific Conservation District facilitates the Pacific County Marine Resource Committee (PCMRC). The PCMRC provides support for several activities, including: the Grass Roots Garbage Gang (750 volunteers yearly) cleaning up 25 tons of garbage; many educational programs; a science conference; noxious weed survey in Willapa Bay and clean-up; and representation on the Washington Coast Marine Advisory Council (WCMAC). The Pacific Conservation District also facilitates the Water Resources Inventory Area (WRIA) #24 Lead Entity, a citizen and technical group leading salmon recovery in Willapa Bay. The District also has been leading a citizen Coordinated Resource Management (CRM) group in the Naselle watershed to restore 1.2 miles of stream riparian areas.

KEY PARTNERS: PCMRC; WRIA #24 L.E.; Naselle River Salmon Restoration Committee; Willapa Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group; Pacific County Vegetation Management; and many local citizens.



PCMRC Science Conference - Good Science and Good Food

More Work to Do!

- 5 Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) plantings
- 2 Family Forest Fish Passage Projects (FFPP)
- Thousands of feet of fence posted
- Chinook Beach restoration
- Loomis Lake noxious plants control

Palouse Conservation District

Jennifer Boie, District Manager
1300 NE Henley Court #6 Pullman, WA 99163
(509) 332-4101 | palousecd@palousecd.org | www.palousecd.org
Board Chair: Larry Cochran



State Legislative District #9
Congressional District #5

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Riparian restoration on the South Fork Palouse River



Top: Prior to project implementation, this site on the South Fork Palouse River lacked adequate riparian vegetation and had severe bank erosion in many places. Bottom: Project implementation included using native trees and shrubs to establish a one mile long, 50 foot riparian buffer on both sides of the river. Photos: Drew Schuldt, Palouse Conservation District

RESOURCE CHALLENGE The South Fork Palouse River has several water quality impairments that are a concern for watershed residents. To address these concerns, local landowners are stepping up to establish healthy, native vegetated strips along streams, called riparian buffers, to improve water quality and provide wildlife habitat. These riparian buffers improve water quality by providing protection from runoff from surrounding land uses, stabilizing eroding stream banks, and providing shade to reduce water temperatures.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS Palouse Conservation District worked with local landowners to relocate livestock feeding areas away from the South Fork Palouse River, develop off-stream water facilities for livestock, create livestock waste storage facilities, plant native riparian buffers, and install mulch to enhance buffer establishment and reduce weed pressure. These projects will help address many of the pollutants for which the South Fork Palouse River is impaired, including ammonia, dissolved oxygen,

fecal coliform bacteria, PCBs, chlorinated pesticides, temperature, and pH. The next steps include completing projects to enhance upland areas, increase wildlife habitat, and restore adjacent wetland areas.

KEY PARTNERS: Department of Ecology; WA State Conservation Commission; AmeriCorps

Other Accomplishments



The Palouse Prairie Restoration Cost Share Program

was launched to help landowners enhance Palouse Prairie sites with native grasses and forbs. Photo: Drew Schuldt, Palouse Conservation District



Through local partnerships, Water on Wheels was expanded in SE Washington. This EnviroScape Model was one tool used to teach about water quality. Photo: Mikaela Legarsky, Palouse Conservation District AmeriCorps Member



Participants view a demonstration of advanced spray systems through precision spraying during a Precision Agriculture Series event. Photo: Jennifer Boie, Palouse Conservation District

More Work to Do!

- **Direct Seed Partnership:** Expanding direct seed and precision agriculture education and cost-share.
- **Palouse River Basin Riparian Restoration:** Partnering with voluntary landowners to improve water quality and enhance wildlife habitat.
- **Palouse Prairie Phase III:** Conducting an inventory of Palouse Prairie remnant sites.
- **Snake River Salmon Recovery:** Providing outreach to landowners on opportunities to benefit salmon recovery.



State Legislative District #9
Congressional District #5

Palouse Rock Lake Conservation District

Dan Harwood, District Coordinator
North 3 Park Street PO Box 438 St. John, WA 99171
(509) 648-3680 | palrock@stjohncable.com | www.prlcd.org
Board Chair: Clinton O’Keefe

Other Accomplishments



Solar powered all-season piston pump for livestock off-site system



Ongoing direct seed education with Precision Spray Day



Cover crop demonstration program to create rotations to improve soil health

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Riparian poison hemlock weed control using biological methods

RESOURCE CHALLENGE One of the biggest challenges to overcome in adoption of riparian forest buffer programs is how to plant trees without having weed problems. Mowing weeds and using herbicides for control of poison hemlock have advantages and disadvantages. Herbicides can drift and may damage growing trees and shrubs, and steep slopes limit mowing. The challenge is to keep the riparian areas free of hemlock, which encourages greater riparian participation.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

By using multiple methods to control poison hemlock, Palouse Rock Lake Conservation District is improving adoption of riparian programs by landowners. Mowing cannot be used on steep slopes, and using herbicides has the potential to damage trees. Hemlock moth larva greatly improved weed control. The hemlock moth larva is safely used along the rivers while still not damaging trees. The district used this biological control to reduce poison hemlock within city limits of St. John along Pleasant Valley Creek. Roger Bly with the City said, “The success of the Poison Hemlock Biological Control Project allowed the reduction of the weed without the need for herbicides.”



Top: Poison hemlock along Cottonwood Creek prior to releasing the hemlock moth larva. Bottom: Poison hemlock stems after introduction of the hemlock moth larva.

KEY PARTNERS: Whitman County Weed Board; Washington State Department of Ecology Americorp Crews; Palouse Rock Lake Cooperators; City of St. John; and Washington State Department of Ecology.

More Work to Do!

- Utilize the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) to increase conservation projects
- Increase adoption of direct seed systems
- Continue soil health cover crop demonstrations
- Distribute the “Crawl-Walk-Run” riparian video found on You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M8LKUo9Yce>

Pend Oreille Conservation District

Andy Huddleston, Watershed Coordinator/Acting District Administrator
121 N Washington Ave PO Box 465 Newport, WA 99156
(509) 447-1155 | andy@pocd.org | www.pocd.org
Board Chair: Ralph Christiansen



State Legislative District #7
Congressional District #5

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Little Spokane River Watershed — reed canarygrass removal



Top: Windrow and plantings

Bottom: Project access road
through plantings

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Reed canarygrass is a thick-growing invasive species that takes nutrients from desired native plants. A local landowner wanted to restore the nearly half mile of shoreline on their property back to its native vegetation. The Pend Oreille Conservation District (POCD) got in touch with the landowner through a marketing campaign from the POCD to promote healthy watersheds within the Little Spokane River Watershed.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

The POCD worked with the landowner to identify the historical native plant species of the area, and — because reed canarygrass doesn't tolerate shade — developed a plan to control the invasive grass by shading it out. The plan called for brush pile windrows that served as wind protection for new plants and trees and provide habitat for birds and wildlife. In total, 1,200 plants and trees of several native species that grow 6-30 feet in height were planted on three foot centers with a goal to reduce the reed canarygrass. Results will likely be seen once the trees and plants reach their mature heights.

KEY PARTNERS: Landowners Pete Jackson and Cindy Knudsen

Other Accomplishments

- Off-Site watering facility in Elk, WA
- Hardened crossing in Usk, WA
- Hardened crossing in Newport, WA

More Work to Do!

- Two miles of exclusion fencing and 2-3 off-site watering facilities in Cusick, WA.
- 3-4 off-site watering facilities as part of a multi-year project in Usk, WA.
- Re-establish education events.



Pierce Conservation District

Ryan Mello, Executive Director
5430 66th Avenue E PO Box 1057 Puyallup, WA 98371
(253) 845-9770 | RyanM@PierceCountyCD.org | www.PierceCD.org
Board Chair: Jeanette Dorner

State Legislative District #2,25,26,27,28,29,31
Congressional District #6,8,9,10

Other Accomplishments



April 2014, partnered with PCC Farmland Trust to establish a 700' vegetated hedgerow on a farm property near Orting to protect soil erosion. Photo: Jo Arlow



February 2014, The District completed this 2,538' fencing project on Dropstone Farms, along the Carbon River to reduce water quality impacts. Photo: Rene Skaggs



Volunteers participate in the Veggie Coop Program, farming 20 acres of property to build their skills and produce farm-to-school produce. Photo: Matt Price

2014 Feature Accomplishment: From parking lots to paradise: Depaving to improve water quality



40 volunteers removed 650 sq. ft. of asphalt and planted 800 shrubs and trees filtering 16,000 gallons annually of polluted rainwater runoff. Photo: Melissa Buckingham

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Polluted rainwater runoff is a significant contributor to pollution in Puget Sound. In Tacoma, keeping Commencement Bay from returning to “superfund status” (the federal government’s program to clean up uncontrolled hazardous waste sites) is key for economic and environmental health reasons. With a goal to improve water quality, the Pierce Conservation District worked with partners to host the first-ever “depave” project in Puget Sound, bringing volunteers together to turn unnecessary asphalt in to a community open space and naturally filtering polluted rainwater.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS Forty volunteers from local churches, the neighborhood, and local businesses removed 650 square feet of asphalt. One week later, volunteers planted over 800 trees and shrubs in the depave site. Depave projects not only create community spaces and naturally filter polluted rainwater, they create community, allowing neighbors to work together to improve their environment and shared space. The Pierce Conservation District is excited to expand this opportunity all across Pierce County. This newly pervious surface will infiltrate 16,207 gallons of polluted rainwater falling on the site.

KEY PARTNERS: City of Tacoma Environmental Services; DePave; Stewardship Partners; The River Network; The Russell Family Foundation



Volunteers plant 800 shrubs and trees to replace the asphalt, creating a community open space that now naturally filters the rainwater. Photo: Melissa Buckingham

More Work to Do!

- Providing technical and resource support to 70 community gardens and over 2,500 community gardeners throughout Pierce County.
- Japanese knotweed eradication and riparian habitat enhancement throughout the Nisqually and Puyallup Watersheds.
- Lead a new channel migration – 1 new mile off-channel habitat creation and reforestation project along South Prairie Creek, improving habitat for endangered Chinook.

Pine Creek Conservation District

Raymond Brown, District Manager
401 South SR 27 Oakesdale, WA 99158
(509) 285-5122 | pinecreekcd@frontier.com | www.pinecreekcd.com
Board Chair: Tom Henning



State Legislative District #9
Congressional District #5

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Variable Rate Application Technology (VRT) for crop nutrients

RESOURCE CHALLENGE

The common practice in crop production is to apply crop inputs (substances used for soil fertility and/or pest control) as uniformly as possible. There is often variability within fields. Variable Rate Application Technology (VRT) is an effort to vary the rate of application across the landscape according to spatially variable factors that affect the optimum application rate. Efficient application can help increase profitability, reduce negative impacts to water caused by over application, and globally reduce the energy and petroleum inputs used to manufacture commercial fertilizer.



A custom operator using precision agriculture with VRT capabilities



Producer-owned VRT applicator showing close-up of custom control valves that allow the operator to change the rate of application.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

An 8,000 acre farm in Northern Whitman County asked the Pine Creek Conservation District for assistance in their effort to start a VRT program. The District provided soils maps and assisted with field mapping to begin the program. Recently the farm used VRT to vary the rate of nitrogen in one field. Their plan is to expand VRT application of nitrogen to all fields and to extend VRT to applications of other nutrients, the rate of seeding, and eventually changing the variety of seed planted according to spatial variables. The district will be working closely with the producers to provide the assistance needed to make this project a success.

Other Accomplishments



Grass seeding in critical areas



Precision Agriculture equipment cost-shared by district

More Work to Do!

- Expansion of the District's assistance with VRT to producers.
- Continued improvement in the District's water quality through the promotion and implementation of more direct seeded acres, grass buffer areas, and filter strips.
- Development of quality riparian areas.
- Continue to build partnerships with other districts and entities.



State Legislative District #9
Congressional District #5

Pomeroy Conservation District

Duane Bartels, District Manager
PO Box 468 Pomeroy, WA 99347
(509) 843-5008 | pcdistrict@qwestoffice.net | www.pomeroycd.com
Board Chair: Kyle Pearson

Other Accomplishments



Implementation and monitoring of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

and other riparian restoration programs increased over the last year. The Pomeroy Conservation District hired Mike Denny as the area riparian restoration coordinator. Mike will cover the Pomeroy Conservation District along with several districts in Whitman County in assisting with the implementation of additional CREP acres.



The Pomeroy Conservation District obtained an Aerial View Camera to monitor the implementation of CREP projects. Before, during, and after videos and pictures will be taken with permission from the landowner. The camera — a DJI Phantom Vision Plus — is pictured above.

2014 Feature Accomplishment:

Rainfall simulator demonstrates benefits of crop residue retention

RESOURCE CHALLENGE The Pomeroy Conservation District, with assistance from USDA: Natural Resources Conservation Service, took the lead on purchasing a Rainfall Simulator. The District solicited sponsors from other conservation districts in the area and local businesses to get the funds needed for the purchase of the trailer and simulator.



PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS The simulator was obtained to demonstrate the importance of the implementation of crop residue retention best management practices (BMPs). Crop residue refers to leftover field or process materials, such as stalks, leaves, roots, and husks. The main focus is the importance of residue cover and soil permeability. The impacts of severe rainstorms on the dryland areas of the state can be devastating to our soil structure and lead to severe erosion, runoff, and water quality degradation. The simulator produces an artificial rain storm producing between three-quarters to one inch of rain in a five-minute period. Very similar rainfall amounts

fall in that time period when thunderstorms move through the area. The importance of the amount of residue cover and the resulting soil moisture retention are shown during the demonstration. The simulator will be available to the sponsors for their county fairs and other farm-oriented activities, agriculture shows, school agriculture classes, soil judging activities, local Envirothons, and other educational activities in the area. The District hopes to train sponsors to operate the simulator so the local atmosphere is retained as the simulator is demonstrated in the area.

KEY PARTNERS: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Asotin, Columbia, Palouse, Palouse-Rock Lake, and Walla Walla Conservation Districts; Tri State Steelheaders; McGregors; Pomeroy Grain Growers; Farm and Home Supply; Shepherd Foundation; FastSigns

More Work to Do!

- Continue to introduce the newest technology and practices to producers.
- Use the rainfall simulator in sponsoring districts' information/education programs throughout the area to show the benefits of effective residue management and soil health programs.
- Intensify the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) in the area to get more riparian areas protected for improved water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.
- Continue to house the Engineer for southeast-area conservation districts.

San Juan Islands Conservation District

Linda Lyshall, District Manager
530 Guard Street, #150 Friday Harbor, WA 98250
(360) 378-6621 | linda@sjislandscd.org | www.sanjuanislandscd.org
Board Chair: Ron Zee



State Legislative District #40
Congressional District #2

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Energy resiliency

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Energy is a product of natural resources, so how we derive and consume it will have long-term impacts on the health and viability of forests and agriculture, rivers and wetlands, fish and wildlife, and ultimately humans and society. The San Juan Islands Conservation District (SJICD) is working collaboratively with our electric utility and community to develop and implement a comprehensive energy plan to reduce our energy use and increase reliance on local renewable energy sources.



Making solar cookies at the Energy Fair. Photo: Margie Doyle

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Actions taken:

- Facilitated three well-attended community Energy Fairs on San Juan, Orcas, and Lopez Islands.
- Completed a Youth Corps Energy Detective project.
- Launched a Community Solar for Our Schools program to increase local renewable energy generation in schools and educate kids about renewable energy production.

Actions in process:

- Developing a Community Energy Challenge.
- Designing 2015 Energy Fairs and Energy Summer Camp.
- Facilitating Energy Leadership Team to develop a comprehensive, county-wide energy plan that encompasses municipal buildings and operations, school facilities, and residential energy use.



KEY PARTNERS: Orcas Power and Light Cooperative (OPALCO), Bonneville Environmental Foundation, Islands Energy

Left: A collaborative partnership: SJICD, OPALCO, and Islands Energy. Photo: Margie Doyle

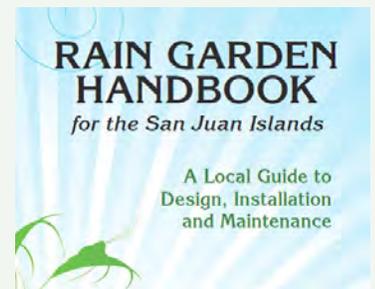
Other Accomplishments



The Watershed Stewardship program provides outreach and technical assistance for the community to help keep our waters clean and healthy.



Working with our partners, we are implementing best management farming practices on a 200 acre farm to create a working model for neighboring farmers.



The Rain Garden Handbook for the San Juans provides local information and works in conjunction with the Western Washington Rain Garden Handbook.

More Work to Do!

- Developing and implementing a restoration plan for False Bay Watershed.
- Augmenting farm planning to include energy efficiency and solar energy.
- Completing and initiating our county-wide energy savings plan.



Skagit Conservation District

Carolyn Kelly, District Manager
 2021 E College Way, Suite 203 Mount Vernon, WA 98273
 (360) 428-4313 | skagitcd@skagitcd.org | www.skagitcd.org
 Board Chair: Paul Blau

State Legislative District #39, 40, 10
 Congressional District #1, 2

Other Accomplishments



Partners in Firewise: SCD, WCD, and Seattle City Light worked together to make the town of Newhalem a nationally recognized Firewise Community/USA®. Photo: Seattle City Light



Construction of a waste storage facility



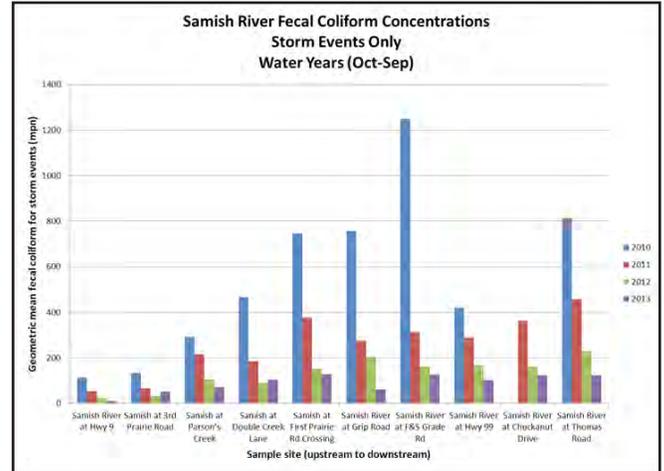
SCD established a new Demonstration Naturescape Garden in partnership with Alger neighbors and volunteers.

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Clean Samish Initiative

RESOURCE CHALLENGE

Poor water quality in the Samish Watershed threatens many uses including shellfish harvest. Negative impacts come from a variety of sources, such as failing septic systems, poor commercial/noncommercial livestock practices, wildlife, and pet waste. The Skagit Conservation District (SCD) works with stakeholders by providing

technical assistance and cost share to landowners to implement conservation plans and prescribed best management practices (BMPs), as well as educational resources to assist landowners in developing sustainable choices.



Graph courtesy of Skagit County Public Works

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

During the past several years, SCD has targeted available resources to address this challenge. And, we are demonstrating success! Due to the hard work of all participating residents, water quality has dramatically improved. However, monitoring during storm events continues to fail to meet state standards during critical periods. Next steps will include: working with a focus group to identify barriers to participation in SCD programs, redirecting monitoring volunteers to bracket and identify trouble spots, and follow-up with landowners to provide additional assistance and/or revisions of their conservation plans.

KEY PARTNERS:

Skagit County; WA State Dept. of Ecology; Samish Bay Shellfish Growers; Samish Indian Nation; WA State Dept. of Health; WA State Dept. of Ag; EPA; WA State Conservation Commission; Skagit Conservation Education Alliance; Western WA Ag Assoc.; WA State Dairy Federation; WA State Cattleman's Assoc.; Upper Skagit Indian Tribe; Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group

More Work to Do!

- Use recommendations from Samish Focus Group to increase program participation and accelerate best management practice (BMP) implementation.
- Provide follow up with landowners to update conservation plans and provide adaptive management mechanisms.
- Work with key landowners developing edge of field monitoring to demonstrate BMP effectiveness.
- Increase number of Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) participants.
- Update Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan-Wildfire Component for Skagit County.

Snohomish Conservation District

Monte Marti, District Manager
528 91st Ave NE, Suite A Lake Stevens, WA 98258
(425) 335-5634 | monte@snohomishcd.org | www.snohomishcd.org
Board Chair: Mark Craven



State Legislative District #3,10,21,32,38,39,44
Congressional District #1, 2

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Washington Conservation Corps: Boots on the ground



Department of Ecology Director Maia Bellon stopped in to a City of Everett Downspout Disconnect project site to meet the WCC crew.

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Snohomish Conservation District sponsored a Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) crew to boost on-the-ground conservation efforts. WCC is an AmeriCorps program for 18-25 year olds to serve for one year in natural resource fields. The District has three grants from Department of Ecology in priority salmon recovery areas—Woods Creek, Church Creek, and Skagit Flats. Given the ambitious goal to plant 45 acres in Woods Creek alone, the addition of an enthusiastic and hard-working crew was needed to help the District to keep pace.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS The WCC crew worked on streamside plantings, the annual plant sale, installing rain gardens, assisting with Everett's Downspout Disconnect project, and at the District's Plant Nursery. Streamside restoration projects included improving water quality and habitat by planting 11.6 acres of streamside buffer with over 9,300 native trees and shrubs. The crew has also worked on a variety of other projects and contributed to emergency response efforts throughout the state including the Carlton Complex fire and two weeks assisting with the Oso Slide Response, where they worked 16 hour days on the slide site digging drainage ditches.

KEY PARTNERS: WA Department of Ecology; WA State Conservation Commission; Snohomish County Surface Water Management



The WCC crew helped Stillaguamish Tribe biologists collect salmon and steelhead for their brood stocking program on the North Fork Stillaguamish.

Other Accomplishments



Snohomish Conservation District commissioned 18 videos in 2013-14 to help landowners with a host of topics. Here, farm planner Alan Shank takes a break from filming.



Snohomish Conservation District staff worked with a youth camp to learn about and then plant a pollinator garden on camp property.



The WCC helped with Oso slide recovery efforts after a devastating landslide, digging trenches to help drain impacted areas and sorting supplies.

More Work to Do!

- Continue promoting Better Ground with other conservation districts, WA State Conservation Commission, and others.
- Work with local, state, and federal agencies and other partners to develop and implement Floodplains by Design projects.
- Further develop partnership with RCO, DNR and WDFW on Family Forest Fish Passage Program.
- Work with partners to grow Low Impact Development cost share program for private landowners.



State Legislative District #12
Congressional District #4

South Douglas Conservation District

Carol Cowling, Coordinator
206 N. Chelan PO Box 246 Waterville, WA 98858
(509) 745-9160 | carol.cowling@gmail.com
Board Chair: Terry Besel

Other Accomplishments



Trusting Spirit Horse Rescue —
Before manure management



Trusting Spirit Horse Rescue —
site of new compost facility



Trusting Spirit Horse Rescue —
new compost facility in place —
SDCD Cost Share Project

2014 Feature Accomplishment:

Field dam protects water quality and prevents soil erosion

RESOURCE CHALLENGE

Soil erosion and water quality are major concerns of South Douglas Conservation District (SDCD). Spring runoff and summer storms can carry soil, nutrients, and contaminants off the fields and into water sources. By controlling the amount of water that leaves the field, this erosion can be controlled and the excess water can stay on the fields where it is needed by the crops, particularly during this period of drought. SDCD has a cost-share program that supports landowners with water quality projects.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

The landowner built the new dam after consulting with the CD engineer. One month after it was completed a summer storm came through and completely filled the area behind the dam. Without the dam in place, the water would have rushed down through the farmstead, carrying soil and nutrients to water-filled ditches and water sources. Instead, the water will remain on the field, and be utilized by the winter wheat planted this fall.



Dam before (top) and after new dam was constructed (bottom)

More Work to Do!

- Continue to develop Firewise program in Douglas County.
- Cost share projects for requested best management practices — soil erosion, water quality, wildlife habitat, windbreaks, fire prevention, etc.
- Conservation education for all cooperators — school age through adults.

South Yakima Conservation District

Laurie Crowe, District Coordinator
200 Cheyne Road PO Box 1766 Zillah, WA 98953
(509) 829-9025 | lc@sydc.us | www.sydc.us
Board Chair: Dirk Van Slageren



State Legislative District #15
Congressional District #4

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Protecting our natural resources — One acre at a time

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Conserving our natural resources is essential and has become a high priority both environmentally and economically. Irrigated agriculture is the prominent land use in the Lower Yakima Valley, and soil erosion poses a threat to water and air quality. To minimize water and air quality degradation, South Yakima Conservation District (SYCD) assists growers in reducing the loss of soil from fields through education on the benefits and conservation savings with no-till farming and a low-cost no-till drill equipment rental program.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS No-till farming offers far more protection of topsoil than conventional tillage. No-till farming has helped landowners minimize disturbance to the soil, protect the soil from erosion, improve soil quality, increase water infiltration, improve organic matter, and improve crop yields. A reduction in tillage passes also helps reduce fuel, saves water, saves labor and machinery costs, and prevents the compaction of soil. With conventional methods, it takes approximately 500 gallons of fuel to plant 100 acres of corn. The bottom line is no-till farming has helped SYCD landowners conserve our natural resources, one acre at a time.

KEY PARTNERS: Ty Meyer; Spokane Conservation District; Ray Ledgerwood; WA State Conservation Commission



Right: (Before) Conventional planting with Great Plains No-Till Drill. Estimated yearly no-till acres - 700. Left: (After) 35 acres of oats, grass seed, and alfalfa in one pass instead of three. No-till reduces fuel and saves water with minimal soil disturbance.

Other Accomplishments



Fish Tagging Game - Benton and Franklin CDs bring *Salmon in the Classroom*, *Water on Wheels*, and *Wheat Week* educational programs to 1,450 SYCD students.
Photo: Rachel Little, Benton Conservation District



Before: Surface irrigated grapes



After: Solid set sprinkler system installed. Water savings – 49 percent; Soil savings - 6 tons.

More Work to Do!

- Provide outreach/education for irrigation water management, nutrient management, air quality, and energy efficiency.
- Implement Lower Yakima Valley Ground Water Management Area Deep Soil Sampling Plan.
- Work with all dairy and livestock facilities to ensure all regulations are met. Develop/update nutrient management plans and provide technical assistance for best management practice implementation.
- Seek stable funding for technical and financial assistance for all district programs.



State Legislative District #3,4,6,7,9
Congressional District #5

Spokane Conservation District

Vicki Carter, Director
210 N Havana Street Spokane, WA 99202
(509) 535-7274 | info@sccd.org | www.sccd.org
Board Chair: Jerry Scheele

Other Accomplishments



Fueled by the dangerous wildfire season that swept through the state, the SCD Firewise Program completed more than 60 home site assessments in 2014. Photo: Jim Armstrong, 2014 Wildfire on Spokane's South Hill



Before: Fish passage and water quality were affected by livestock crossings. The SCD assisted in the design and construction of a livestock bridge.



After: An 8' wide livestock bridge was installed on the Kummer Ranch to protect Bear Creek. An emergency watering site was also installed.

2014 Feature Accomplishment: On Site Septic System Financial Assistance Program

RESOURCE CHALLENGE An estimated 15 percent of septic systems in Spokane County are considered failing and need to be repaired, replaced, or connected to the sewer system. Many of these homeowners cannot financially make this important home improvement. This presents a risk to ground water quality and the health of local watersheds. In order to help landowners protect water quality, the Spokane Conservation District (SCD) launched the On Site Septic System Financial Assistance Program.



This photo was taken during the installation of a connection to the municipal sewer system.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS The SCD launched the OSS (On-Site Septic System) Financial Assistance Program on May 1, 2014. As of August 2014, more than 80 landowners had contacted the SCD for information and applications. Eight municipal sewer connections were installed, and seven projects are pending. The average cost per project was approximately \$3,500. Landowners in the OSS program are grateful. Many are not financially able to complete septic improvements without the program and would be fined by Spokane County. All taxpayers of Washington State will reap the benefits in the protection of water quality and in return on investment through loan revenue.



The landowner said, "Working with Barry Tee at the SCD was a great experience. I don't know what I would have done without this program."

KEY PARTNERS: WA State Department of Ecology; Spokane Regional Health District; Spokane County Utilities Division; Spokane County Community Development; Spokane Neighborhood Action Program (SNAP)

More Work to Do!

- 200 people attended the 2013 Small Farms Conference (SFC). Record attendance is anticipated on Nov. 1, 2014 for the 4th Annual SFC: Farm-a-Palouse-A.
- With the Pacific Northwest Direct Seed Association and other agencies, SCD is establishing a Direct Seed Certification to give producers greater marketing potential.
- With continued funding, SCD will assist landowners with their livestock and land implementation projects.

Stevens County Conservation District

Dean Hellie, District Administrator
232 Williams Lake Road Colville, WA 99114-9638
(509) 685-0937 x3 | dhellie@co.stevens.wa.us | www.co.stevens.wa.us/cons_district
Board Chair: Andy Kroiss



State Legislative District #7
Congressional District #5

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Little Loon Lake railroad tie removal project



Before: Railroad ties in and at the edge of the wetland.

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Little Loon Lake is a wetland that feeds the southern end of 1.7 square mile Loon Lake in central Stevens County. Loon Lake is a primary water recreation area with summer and year around residences. During railroad track repair operations over the years, contractors routinely cast old ties over the fill slope into the wetlands. Members of the Loon Lake Land Conservancy

and the Loon Lake Property Owners Association approached Stevens County Conservation District (SCCD) seeking assistance in getting the ties removed.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS SCCD staff contacted a Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad engineer concerning the project and was directed to the regional environmental manager and a local contractor for further discussion. After a site meeting, it was decided that BNSF would conduct the cleanup and pay for all permits. The one request was that the landowners obtain the permits. SCCD staff worked with residents to fill out a Joint Aquatic Resource Permit Application (JARPA) for the project. Cleanup work was conducted in September when the water level was down, and the ties were readily visible and accessible. This project was a good example of the positive impact of a few dedicated people concerned about where they live.

KEY PARTNERS: Loon Lake Land Conservancy; Loon Lake Property Owners Association; BNSF Railroad; Sandry Construction of Spokane; WA Department of Fish and Wildlife



The claw removing decades of used railroad ties cast off from repairs from Little Loon Lake wetland.

Other Accomplishments



Chamokane Watershed Council tour visit to tribal fish hatchery discussing the importance of clean water coming from the headwaters.



Spokane Tribal fish hatchery fish pen



6th Grade Conservation Tour - fifty second of year kids outdoors learning about the environment.

More Work to Do!

- Promote working lands.
- Conservation on the ground with landowners.
- Coordination with local agencies and agricultural commodity groups.
- Offer complete resource management planning.
- Provide current technical information on best management practices.
- Work with WSU Extension for education and outreach.
- Profitable, stable agricultural producers are better equipped to protect the environment and comply with environmental regulations.



Thurston Conservation District

Kathleen Whalen, District Administrator
2918 Ferguson Street SW, Ste A Tumwater, WA 98512
(360) 754-3588 | kwhalen@thurstoncd.com | www.thurstoncd.com
Board Chair: Doug Rushton

State Legislative District #2,20,22,35
Congressional District #3,10

Other Accomplishments



Students learn about nearshore habitat, aquatic species, and the importance of good water quality through the District's South Sound GREEN program.
Photo: Kathleen Whalen



A cost-shared Compost Facility is constructed on an organic crop farm in the Nisqually watershed.
Photo: Dave Nygard



Due to overwhelming demand for our Poultry Processing Unit, the District purchased another complete unit. This is our most popular rental equipment!

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Nisqually Green Infrastructure Project: Kaufmann Rain Gardens

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Located in the Nisqually Watershed, the Kaufmanns are developing a new small farm business and hoping to build a successful microbrewery, organic farm, and cut-flower operation. However, they struggled with stormwater issues on their property each winter. Runoff consistently flooded their driveway and ponded around the central agricultural outbuilding where they work. The family welcomed Thurston Conservation District (TCD) as a partner, creating a demonstration site that responds to their stormwater by using green infrastructure.



Raingarden #3 is prepared, according to specifications. Next, engineered soils will fill this area, prior to the planting phase.
Photo: Karin Strelieff



Compost is applied to help retain moist soils and prevent weed invasion.
Photo: Kathleen Whalen

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS Together the Kaufmanns and TCD built three large raingardens to provide a destination for excess stormwater runoff. Measuring over 1,700 square feet, the gardens will capture and hold stormwater from the road and outbuilding roof, soaking it into the ground through specially engineered soils. Because of their location in the Nisqually basin, the gardens will at times function as temporary bog gardens if groundwater levels rise, providing a holding area for stormwater runoff until infiltration resumes with receding groundwater. Each garden was planted with native plants and ornamentals that provide additional color and pollinator habitat.

KEY PARTNERS: Mason Conservation District; Kaufmann family; community volunteers; Shellfish Stakeholders Group; AmeriCorps; WA Conservation Corps Crew (housed at Mason CD)

More Work to Do!

- Continue active participation in the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) planning work.
- Bring together a workable solution for working lands production and riparian habitat restoration.
- Work with partners to increase personal and regional food security.
- Assist the local agricultural community prepare/adapt for climate change resiliency.

Underwood Conservation District

Tova Tillinghast, District Manager

Park Center Building, 170 NW Lincoln St PO Box 96 White Salmon, WA 98672

(509) 493-1936 | tova@ucdwa.org | www.ucdwa.org

Board Chair: Jacob Anderson



State Legislative District #15
Congressional District #3

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Little Wind River habitat enhancement, Phase 2



View looking downstream at Phase 2 work showing constructed pool habitat and log jams in the distance and on left bank.

Photo: Dan Richardson, UCD Technician

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Underwood Conservation District (UCD) is working with the Gundersen family along the Little Wind River, a special tributary to the Wind River that provides habitat for wild Wind River steelhead, Coho, and Chinook salmon. The habitat has degraded over past years of intensive logging, road building, and landslides that decreased aquatic habitat complexity, spawning gravels, and instream refuge. UCD constructed Phase 1 of an in-stream habitat enhancement project here in 2012. In 2013, UCD carried out Phase 2.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS UCD teamed up with renowned restoration designers to plan and implement this exciting project. In Phase 2, UCD's contractor placed 34 logs to create extensive log jams and refuge habitat for fish. Multiple pools, riffles, and glides were also constructed to provide habitat, including spawning gravels for recovering salmon and steelhead. The entire project area was seeded and mulched to stabilize soils, and about 400 native trees and shrubs were planted at the site in an effort to re-establish native vegetation for riparian habitat restoration and future large wood recruitment in the stream. Phase 3 is being constructed in 2014!

KEY PARTNERS: Bonneville Power Administration Fish and Wildlife Division; Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area; Port of Skamania; Gundersen Family; Salmon River Engineering; Bair LLC; Crestline Construction



View looking upstream at Phase 2 work showing constructed log jams, riffle, pool, and spawning habitat. Spawning Coho salmon is seen in the forefront.

Photo: Dan Richardson, UCD Technician

Other Accomplishments



Muddy horse paddock before Strom cost share project.



Strom cost share project, after heavy use area (with geotextile fabric and gravel) is installed.

Photos: Carly McNeil, UCD Technician

More Work to Do!

- Secure district-wide funding for the Firewise and Forest Health Program.
- Construct the Cannavina Creek Fish Passage Project.
- Construct the Mill Creek Fish Passage Project.
- Plan and implement livestock water quality improvements in the White Salmon River watershed.
- Secure funding for the Buck Creek irrigation diversion project.



State Legislative District #19
Congressional District #3

Wahkiakum Conservation District

Darin Houpt, District Manager
PO Box 67 Cathlamet, WA 98612
(360) 795-8240 | ccddmgr@teamelect.com
Board Chair: Joe Florek

Other Accomplishments



Panoramic view of the upstream side of a new outlet structure showing access channel, float actuator tower, and trash rack



Middle Valley Stream Restoration Project showing bridge installation and two wood debris jam structures



Middle Valley Stream Restoration Project: Wood debris jam structure scouring mid-channel pool and protecting riparian vegetation

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Community watershed projects



Top: (Before) Tidegate at outlet of Historic Skamokawa Creek Channel installed in 1948 flood mitigation project (cast iron, flap style gate).
Bottom: (After) New structure is an 8-foot diameter, float actuated side hinge tidegate.

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Most natural resource issues do not recognize property boundaries. Examples of this include water quality, salmon recovery, and invasive weeds. Resource improvements typically cannot be realized on a farm-by-farm basis. Wahkiakum Conservation District employs a community watershed approach to effectively communicate, collaborate, coordinate, and implement restoration projects on a comprehensive basis. This approach helps the District generate high enough levels of targeted projects to realize measureable impacts in resource conditions.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Wahkiakum Conservation District has been working in the Skamokawa Creek Community Watershed. Predominant resource concerns include salmon recovery, water quality, and invasive weeds. Landowners share these concerns but have local concerns for property protection and farm economic viability. This past year the

District completed the Historic Skamokawa Creek Channel Restoration Project, one typical stream restoration project, and completed the first year of treatment for knotweed in the Community Watershed. The District is in the process of developing four additional funding proposals and completing design and permitting for two project sites.

KEY PARTNERS: Diking District 5 of Wahkiakum County; WA State Conservation Commission; WA Department of Fish and Wildlife; Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board; Skamokawa Creek Community Watershed; Landowners

More Work to Do!

- Expand our community watershed program into the Elochoman River. We are in the process of implementing one stream restoration project and design two additional projects.
- Received funding from Salmon Recovery Funding Board to assist a landowner in the Grays River Watershed with a river restoration project as part of efforts to provide assistance to all landowners that approach the District.

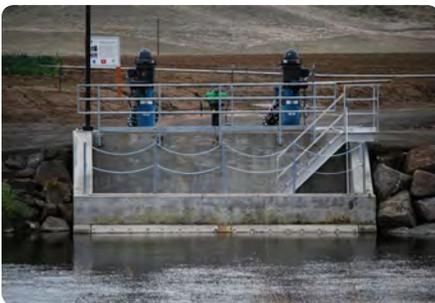
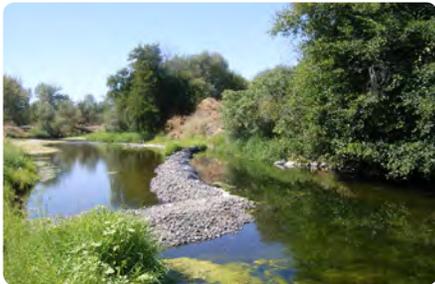
Walla Walla County Conservation District

Rick Jones, District Manager
325 North 13th Avenue Walla Walla, WA 99362
(509) 522-6340 x3 | rick.jones@my180.net | www.wwccd.net
Board Chair: Ed Chvatal, Chair



State Legislative District #16
Congressional District #5

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Bergevin-Williams/Old Lowden diversion consolidation and piping



Top: The Old Lowden Ditch gravel push-up dam — one of two such dams eliminated by the consolidated structure. Bottom: The new Bergevin-Williams/Old Lowden consolidated diversion structure and fish screen on the Walla Walla River.

Photos: Larry Hooker, Ag. Projects Coord., WWCCD

including an automated fish screen. Inefficient delivery ditches were replaced with 9.6 miles of buried pipeline serving 1,840 acres. This resulted in 2,404 acre-feet of water (over 780 million gallons!) saved through conveyance efficiency and put into Trust for fish. Farmers got a reliable delivery system allowing more efficient water management.

KEY PARTNERS: Bonneville Power Administration Fish & Wildlife Program; WA Department of Ecology Water Resources Program; WA Department of Fish and Wildlife; Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation; WA State Conservation Commission; Walla Walla Watershed Management Partnership

RESOURCE CHALLENGE The Walla Walla River is home to Mid-Columbia Basin steelhead and bull trout — both listed as “Threatened” under the Endangered Species Act — as well as reintroduced spring Chinook salmon. Yearly construction of gravel “dams” built to feed irrigation water into the Bergevin-Williams and Old Lowden irrigation systems often resulted in obstructions to fish passage and an imminent threat of “take”. Local irrigators sought assistance from Walla Walla County Conservation District (WWCCD) to obtain grants and build a new diversion.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS Removal of two push-up dams/obstructions was made possible through funding by Bonneville Power Administration for a consolidated diversion. In-stream flow enhancement through the piping of irrigation ditches was funded by the Department of Ecology. As a result, a diversion structure was constructed includ-

Other Accomplishments



One of two large engineered log jams constructed on the McCaw Reach of the Touchet River to improve water quality and fish habitat.



One of two apex log jams constructed on the McCaw Reach of the Touchet River to activate a secondary flow channel and improve fish habitat.



Over 1,000 ft. of secondary channels were developed to improve flood plain connectivity on the McCaw Reach of the Touchet River.

Photos: Larry Hooker, Ag. Projects Coord., WWCCD

More Work to Do!

- Jones Fish Habitat Enhancement and Screening Project
- McCaw Fish Habitat Restoration Project, Phase B
- Titus Creek Diversion Fish Passage and Screening Project
- Garden City/Lowden 2/Mud 7 Complex Irrigation Piping Project



Whatcom Conservation District

George Boggs, Executive Director
6975 Hannegan Road Lynden, WA 98624
(360) 354-2035 x3 | wcd@whatcomcd.org | www.whatcomcd.org
Board Chair: Joseph Heller

State Legislative District #39, 40, 42
Congressional District #1, 2

Other Accomplishments



Whatcom Conservation District installed 23 Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and riparian projects improving 43,596 feet of stream bank with 41,965 native plants, while maintaining 137 existing projects.



Outreach events promoted watershed improvements through workshops, volunteer work parties, and a 5K Fun Run directly engaged over 700 local citizens.



Manure lagoon lining and pump installed with WA State Conservation Commission cost-share funds to reduce input of nutrients flowing into shellfish growing areas of Portage Bay.

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Stream crossings protect water quality

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Many streams are not as clean as they look. Fecal coliform bacteria, pesticides, sediment, petroleum products, and heavy metals are commonly found in the water. We must have clean water for crop irrigation, fish to live, kids to play, and for healthy shellfish downstream. Everyone near a stream must be a steward of the water resource. Stream crossings are an opportunity to make improvements to a farm property that also helps improve water quality while also improving efficiencies on the farm.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Two bridges were installed in September 2013, replacing in-stream farm crossings. Although once common, this type of in-stream farm crossing results in contamination with grease, oils, and heavy metals from vehicles with the possibility of major discharge from cargo, such as pesticides or manure. Each replacement bridge was installed in less than two days and proved to be a win both for the landowners and the resources. The blueberry and dairy farms now have safe year-round access to fields on both sides of the stream, and vehicle contaminants no longer reach the water. As a bonus, gravels placed under the new structures were immediately used by spawning salmon.



(Top) Before: 1 of 2 in-stream crossings threatening water quality. NRCS Puget Sound Salmon Partnership funding was used to install farm bridge crossings. (Bottom) After: Bridge crossing on blueberry farm was installed in September 2013 by the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association & Harkness Construction.

KEY PARTNERS: Natural Resources Conservation Service (funding); Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association (implementation); Harkness Contracting (construction); WA State Department of Fish and Wildlife (permitting); U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (permitting)

More Work to Do!

- Riparian Restoration: 20 CREP projects planned for installation in spring 2015; NRCS Salmon Partnership Projects
- Livestock: Continue technical assistance to 110 dairies and hundreds of small farms; Provide engineering services to recipients of state and federal cost-share project funding.
- Education/Outreach: Partner with Whatcom County through PIC process; Engage Birch Bay residence with water quality workshops and events.

Whidbey Island Conservation District

Karen Bishop, District Manager
1 NE 4th Street PO Box 490 Coupeville, WA 98239
(360) 678-4708 | karen@whidbeycd.org | www.whidbeycd.org
Board Chair: Wendi Hilborn



State Legislative District #10
Congressional District #2

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Local farmers improve resource management and public connection

RESOURCE CHALLENGE One overarching agricultural goal of Whidbey Island Conservation District (WICD) is to support and preserve productive local farmland through economic development, which depends on community support. Real and perceived environmental impacts from farming activities can reduce support from the community and drive development of regulations that create additional hurdles for farmers, reducing the likelihood of their long-term success. WICD works with volunteers and farmers to develop outreach programs to bring the community together.



Farm intern at Willowood Farm explains varieties of garlic to a farm tour visitor. Local farms appreciate the end-of-year sales the tour provides.



Janiece Black, North Whidbey CSA farm coordinator, talks with a customer picking up produce, increasing awareness of local farm products available.

locally-grown food within Oak Harbor, the largest community on the island. Plans for the future are to grow the CSA until it becomes self-sustaining.

KEY PARTNERS: Washington State University Extension; Northwest Agriculture Business Center

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS WICD initiated the annual Whidbey Island Farm Tour in 2006 with a mission of educating the public about local working farms. The farms showcase their products as well as highlight measures they take to protect natural resources. For most farms, the tour is the best weekend of the year for meeting new visitors and gaining new customers. With a USDA Rural Development Block Grant, WICD began coordinating a 5-farm collaborative Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) in 2013 to increase awareness of local farms and

Other Accomplishments



WICD works with farmers in the Maxwelton watershed to implement best management practices, allowing continued farming while protecting habitat and water quality.



WICD and local landowners improve water quality in Ebey's Prairie watershed with funding through the National Estuary Program implemented through Department of Ecology.



WICD stormwater project included a green roof and grass-lined bioswale basin to detain and filter stormwater, which eventually flows into Penn Cove.

More Work to Do!

- Work with Maxwelton Valley and Ebey's Prairie farmers and Whidbey landowners on resource management to protect habitat and improve water quality through planning and implementation of appropriate conservation best management practices.
- Assist residential landowners on alternate stormwater management practices to reduce run off into Puget Sound.
- Continue to be the local resource for general, sound conservation information to residents.



State Legislative District #9
Congressional District #5

Whitman Conservation District

Nancy Hoobler, Natural Resources Coordinator
601 N Main #A Colfax, WA 99111
(509) 288-4644 | nancywhitmancd@gmail.com | www.whitmancd.org
www.facebook.com/Whitmancd | Board Chair: David Lange

Other Accomplishments

- Partnered with a farmer with visual impairments to install equipment in his tractor to prevent over application of fertilizers and pesticides. Now he can drive the tractor, spray weeds, and reduce application of chemicals.
- Cost shared to direct seed spring barley into a 150 acre field. The goal: reduce/prevent risk of precipitation from harsh summer storms, creating soil to erode into storm water drains, basements, and the Palouse River.
- Partnered with a rancher to install a frost free water system to provide water to livestock and wildlife, eliminating over flow, muddy areas in pasture, and water runoff to a nearby stream.

2014 Feature Accomplishment: Apple Pie Water Project: Weed suppression and grazing practices

RESOURCE CHALLENGE A local landowner in the Palouse River watershed was experiencing several resource issues on their property that were impacting water quality, wildlife, and weeds. A stream on the property was choked out by reed canarygrass, and weeds prevented native vegetation from re-establishing. And, their pasture borders Highway 26, where deer are hit by vehicles. The landowner asked Whitman Conservation District to help with a management plan that would address weed control, enhance livestock management, reduce reed canarygrass without chemicals, and reduce wildlife mortality on the highway.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS The District wrote the management plan and worked with the landowner to implement cross fences, water facilities, and a livestock grazing plan. Timing of cattle movement is used to eliminate weeds and reduce reed canarygrass. Native rushes, sedges, and woody vegetation are reestablishing. Alternative water on slopes has reduced deer migration across the highway. Yellow star thistle has been eliminated, and native grasses are increasing. More cross fences and water facilities are planned. Water quality improved with the reestablishment of native vegetation that reduced temperature, sediment, and pathogens. The land manager is pleased with the increase of pasture productivity.



Top: Stream area where cattle drank water before installation of practices.
Bottom: Stream area after installation of water and fencing upstream of road crossing.

KEY PARTNERS: Washington State University Extension

More Work to Do!

- Install water facilities, fences, and implement an intense grazing management plan.
- Native planting to enhance a wildlife project.
- Host workshops on soil health and livestock issues.
- Educate public on benefits of livestock grazing to enhance wildlife habitat, riparian areas, and native Palouse prairie.
- Begin a cooperative project with farmers and ranchers for alternatives to deal with crop residue, weeds, and grazing issues.

Acronyms

BMP Best Management Practice

BPA Bonneville Power Administration

CD Conservation District

CREP Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

CRM Coordinated Resource Management

CWMA Cooperative Weed Management Area

WDFW Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife

DNR Washington Department of Natural Resources

DOA Washington Department of Agriculture

DOE Washington Department of Ecology

EQIP Environmental Quality Incentives Program

EPA US Environmental Protection Agency

FFFP Family Forest Fish Passage Projects

FSA USDA Farm Services Agency

LID Low Impact Development

LWD Large Woody Debris

IWM Irrigation Water Management

NFWF National Fish & Wildlife Foundation

NRCS USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

OFP Office of Farmland Preservation

RCO Recreation and Conservation Office

RCW Revised Code of Washington

SCC State Conservation Commission

SRFB Salmon Recovery Funding Board

TA Technical Assistance

TAG Technical Advisory Group

TMDL Total Maximum Daily Load

USDA US Department of Agriculture

USFS US Forest Service

USFW US Fish and Wildlife

USGS US Geological Services

WACD Washington Association of Conservation Districts

WADE Washington Association of District Employees

WHIP Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

WQ Water Quality

WSU Washington State University

WRIA Water Resource Inventory Area

WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION



James Peters, Chair

Commissioner James (Jim) Peters was appointed by Governor Gary Locke in 1998 and is currently Chair. He attended Centralia College and earned an associate degree in Forestry Technology. After graduating he became the Natural Resources

Director at the Squaxin Island Tribe. From 1991 through 1996 Jim worked as the Tribal Relations Coordinator for the Washington DNR. Jim is a member of the Squaxin Island Tribe and has served on the Tribal Council for six plus years, as well as the Inter-Tribal Court Board. He is currently the Tribal Council Chair. Jim currently resides in the Olympia-area and is the Habitat Policy Analyst at the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission.



Lynn Bahrych

Commissioner Lynn Bahrych was appointed by Governor Gary Locke in January of 2004. She graduated with Honors in Humanities from Stanford

University and received a Masters Degree in English Education from the University of Texas. Lynn received a Ph.D. in Medieval and Renaissance Literature and a law degree from the U.W. Law School. Lynn practiced Maritime and Admiralty law in Seattle for ten years before focusing exclusively on land use and environmental law. She is currently Co-Chair of Farming & the Environment, a non-profit organization promoting sustainable stewardship on agricultural lands.



Clinton O'Keefe, Vice-Chair

Clinton O'Keefe joined the Commission in 2012 and serves as the Conservation District Eastern Representative on the Commission. He currently serves as the Chair of the Palouse-Rock Lake Conservation District. He is a wheat farmer living in Lamont, WA.



Perry Beale

Commissioner Perry Beale joined the Commission in 2014 representing the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA). Perry Beale is the

Agricultural Land Use Lead and Eastern WA supervisor for the WSDA Natural Resources Assessment Section. His primary duty is coordinating crop mapping activities within the state. Perry was raised on a wheat and cattle ranch in southeastern Washington and is the Vice President of the family farm. He graduated from Washington State University with a degree in Agronomy. Perry is also a graduate of the Ag Forestry Leadership program.

OUR COMMISSION MEMBERS



Lynn Brown

Commissioner Lynn Brown serves as the Conservation District Central Representative on the Commission. Commissioner Brown serves as the Vice Chair on the Kittitas County Conservation District Board and on the Board of the Washington Association of Conservation District Plant Materials Center. Lynn graduated from the University of Wyoming with a BS and MS in Civil Engineering and from Harvard with a Masters in Public Administration. He spent 18 years as the Washington State Conservationist and was instrumental in coordinating recovery resources following the eruption of Mount St. Helens. He also led the effort to transfer the plant material center from the Natural Resources Conservation Service to the Washington Association of Conservation Districts.



Dean Longrie

Commissioner Longrie serves as the Conservation District Western Representative on the Commission. He also serves on the Board of Supervisors at Clark Conservation District.



Alan Stromberger

Commissioner Stromberger is President of the Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) and a supervisor for Lincoln County Conservation District. He is a long-time farmer and has been a fire commissioner for Lincoln County Fire District #1 for more than 20 years.



Jim Kropf

Jim Kropf joined the Commission in 2010, representing Washington State University (WSU) Extension. Jim has been a faculty member of WSU Extension since 1979, serving as an Extension educator on the Spokane Indian Reservation in Stevens County, Douglas and Chelan Counties, and Pierce and King Counties. He served as the Western District Director for WSU Extension from 1999 through 2010 and currently serves as the Extension Natural Resources Program Director. His Extension work primarily has focused on the production of agronomic and horticultural crops, agricultural marketing, and water quality. A Washington native, Jim grew up in Pierce County and has a B.S. and M.S. in Agronomy from Washington State University.



Kelly Susewind

Commissioner Kelly Susewind joined the Commission in 2013 and represents the Director of the Washington State Department of Ecology, Maia Bellon.



Todd Welker

Commissioner Todd Welker joined the Commission in 2014 and represents the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Commissioner Welker serves as manager of DNR's Southeast Region.

WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION



Mark Clark
Executive Director

Mark Clark has been the Executive Director of the Washington State Conservation Commission since December 2002, after serving as the agency's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) coordinator and field operation manager for Puget Sound districts. Mark is a native of Thurston County and has a B.S. degree in Agricultural Engineering from Washington State University. He has been involved with the horticulture wholesale industry for over 18 years. Prior to that, he was a research engineer for the Food and Agriculture Section of Battelle Pacific Laboratories.

Email: mclark@scc.wa.gov
Phone: (360) 407-6200



Debbie Becker
Director of Budget,
Accounting, & Grant
Services

Debbie Becker was raised on a small, third generation dairy farm in Pacific County. She spent 13 years at the Washington State Dairy Federation and 9 years as the Executive Director. In 2000, she joined the Conservation Commission as the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Coordinator. Today, Debbie manages the \$30 million Financial Division of the Commission.

Email: dbecker@scc.wa.gov
Phone: (360) 407-6211



Ray Ledgerwood
Regional Manager
Coordinator / Program
Facilitator

Ray Ledgerwood has been the Program Facilitator since 2003. He is a native of Eastern Washington and graduate of WSU. Ray has worked with districts and their associations since 1979. Ray currently provides service and support to Palouse, Pine Creek, Spokane, and Whitman Conservation Districts along with managing the Regional Manager staff.

Email: rledgerwood@scc.wa.gov
Phone: (208) 301-4728

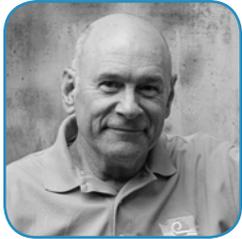


Ron Shultz
Director of Policy &
Intergovernmental
Relations

Ron Shultz joined the SCC in 2007. He represents the agency in a variety of policy forums including the Puget Sound State Caucus. Ron was formerly the Director of Programs and the Acting Executive Director at the Puget Sound Partnership and was the Natural Resources Advisor to Governor Gary Locke. He was also Policy Director for Audubon Washington from 1995 to 2001. Ron is an attorney and a fourth generation Washingtonian.

Email: rshultz@scc.wa.gov
Phone: (360) 407-7507

OUR STAFF



Larry Brewer
Eastern WA
Regional Manager



Jon Culp
Water Resources
Program Manager



Bill Eller
Central WA
Regional Manager



Josh Giuntoli
Office of Farmland
Preservation Coordinator



Lori Gonzalez
Administrative
Assistant



Karla Heinitz
Program Specialist



Shana Joy
Puget Sound Regional
Manager & Policy Assistant



Alicia Johnson
Administrative
Assistant



Laura Johnson
Communication &
Outreach Coordinator



Jack Myrick
Irrigation Efficiencies
Technical Coordinator



Melissa Vander Linden
Fiscal Analyst



Butch Ogden
Shellfish Program Coordinator /
Conservation Project Development
& Implementation Manager



Stu Trefry
Conservation District Development
& Capacity Manager / Southwest
WA Regional Manager



Courtney Woods
Program Specialist

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS!

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National Association of Conservation Districts
National Association of State Conservation Agencies
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
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Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
Pacific Education Institute
Puget Sound Partnership
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Washington Potato Commission
Washington State Department of Agriculture
Washington State Department of Commerce
Washington State Department of Ecology
Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Washington State Department of Health
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Washington State Conservation Commission

PO Box 47721
Olympia, WA 98504
(360) 407-6200

www.scc.wa.gov

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