



# 2015 ANNUAL REPORT



**CONSERVATION DISTRICTS  
OF WASHINGTON STATE**

*your window to healthy lands*

*Empowering people to care for natural resources  
through their own land management decisions*



# Contents

Message from our leaders.....	2
Who We Are.....	3
About the Conservation Commission.....	3
About conservation districts.....	4
Conservation district map.....	4
Incentive-based conservation.....	5
Progress Report.....	7
Strengthening capacity and services.....	8
Supporting stewardship of our water.....	9
Preserving our farmland.....	11
Maximizing on-the-ground impacts.....	12
Supporting natural disaster preparedness and response.....	13
Engaging the public.....	14
Operations Overview.....	15
How we build our budget.....	16
Financial report.....	17
Administrative functions.....	18
Conservation District Accomplishments.....	19-65
Partners.....	66
Conservation Commission Members.....	67-68
Conservation Commission Staff.....	69-70
Acronyms.....	71



*If you would like copies of this document in an alternative format, please contact the Washington State Conservation Commission: 360-407-6936.*

## State Conservation Commission Mission:

To conserve natural resources on private lands, in collaboration with conservation districts and other partners





## Message from our leaders

When you travel across Washington, you can't help being amazed at the constantly changing scenery. Our diverse landscape creates a variety of opportunities for agriculture, recreation, and the economy. But, it also presents a challenge for conservation.

There's no "one-size-fits-all" solution for natural resource challenges when land forms and land uses vary as much as they do in our state. In the midst of natural resource emergencies, such as the drought and wildfires we experienced this year, there's no universal answer that we can apply. To be feasible and effective, conservation solutions must be tailored to the unique features and challenges of each region. That requires a lot of work, technical expertise, and local knowledge. There are strong conservation agencies and partnerships at work in our state, but we can't do it on our own.

Luckily, we don't have to.

We're proud to say there are countless private landowners in Washington who want to play a role in sustainable natural resource management. And — with 45 conservation districts located throughout the state — those landowners have access to locally knowledgeable and technically trained staff who are there to help. Conservation districts help landowners better understand resource concerns and implement conservation solutions specific to their property and land use needs.

At the Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC), we develop flexible strategies and programs that conservation districts and other partners use to help landowners meet site-specific conservation goals. We also have the privilege of witnessing the value and outcomes of the work that Washington landowners are accomplishing every day with help from conservation districts. That's what we wanted to celebrate in our 2015 Annual Report — empowering people to become natural resource stewards. The following pages present not only the services that the SCC and conservation districts provide, but the natural resource outcomes that have been

achieved thanks to the landowners who utilize those services.



Clinton O'Keefe  
SCC Chair



Mark Clark  
SCC Executive Director

On behalf of the SCC, we extend a huge "thank you" to the conservation districts and all the landowners who implement natural resource stewardship. We're also grateful to the long list of local, state, federal, tribal, and non-governmental partners who support this work.

We look forward to celebrating more accomplishments with you in 2016.



# WHO WE ARE

For more than 75 years, conservation districts have worked side-by-side with landowners, empowering them to care for natural resources through their own land management decisions. The Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) is proud to be the agency that coordinates all 45 conservation districts and administers voluntary natural resource programs for our state. Together, the SCC and conservation districts provide incentive-based services that make it easier and more affordable for Washington landowners to implement conservation practices on their property.

## About the Conservation Commission

The SCC was created by the legislature in 1939 (RCW 89.08.070) to implement incentive-based stewardship programs and support conservation districts by funding, coordinating, and promoting district activities and services and providing operational oversight. The agency also encourages cooperative natural resource policies and solutions for our state by convening diverse stakeholder forums. 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.



*We believe that those who live and work on the land are uniquely qualified to develop solutions for sustainable natural resource management.*

# About conservation districts

Conservation districts help people take care of everything they can see outside their windows — from farms, to forests, to urban yards, to lakes and streams. They're non-regulatory entities that don't enforce compliance, but instead offer recommendations, funding assistance, and boots-on-the-ground help.



## CONSERVATION DISTRICTS OF WASHINGTON STATE

*your window to healthy lands*

They're staffed by local people who have deep, first-hand knowledge of the issues and challenges faced by landowners. Many staff have undergraduate and graduate degree knowledge in fields such as forestry, livestock management, engineering, fisheries, ecology, and more. This combination of local knowledge and technical expertise helps conservation districts deliver locally feasible and effective conservation solutions.

Each district is governed 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.

Each county is represented by at least one conservation district. Find yours today!



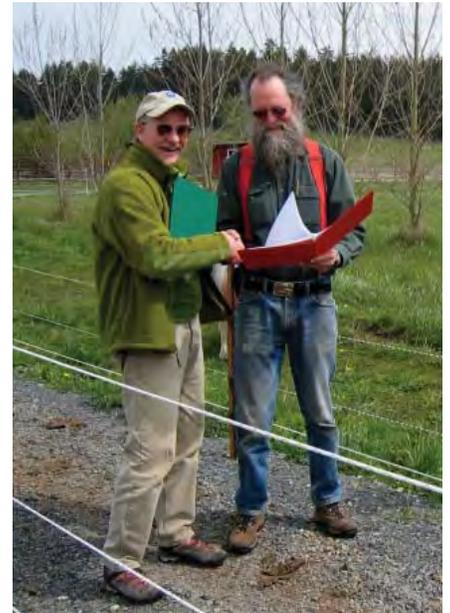
Visit the Washington State Conservation Commission website ([www.scc.wa.gov](http://www.scc.wa.gov)) for more information about conservation districts and a district directory.



## Voluntary, incentive-based conservation

As non-regulatory entities, the SCC and conservation districts provide services at the request of and in collaboration with those that receive the benefits: Washington landowners.

At the local-level, conservation districts offer a range of voluntary services tailored to the needs of their communities. Their services are free or low-cost. Districts also offer funding assistance and cost-sharing, which means they cover a portion of project costs. This incentivizes conservation and helps landowners overcome financial barriers.

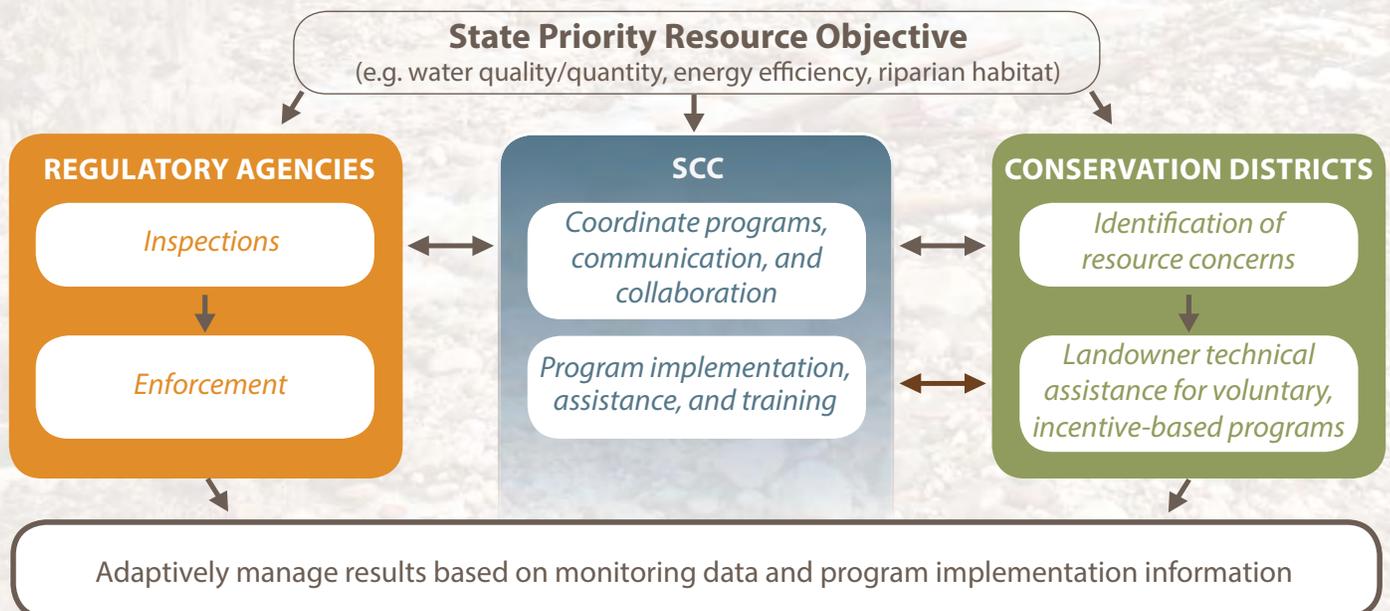


Their voluntary status allows conservation districts the privilege of forming strong, trusting relationships with landowners. Landowners share feedback on local natural resources and agricultural issues with conservation districts, and conservation districts ensure landowners' voices are heard by communicating their needs to the SCC. This gives the SCC the unique responsibility of bringing on-the-ground feedback into state-level discussions about natural resource management and land use policies.

*“ Voluntary action, supported by district expertise and sometimes encouraged by incentives, is often the ONLY way to get damaged lands restored, new wildlife habitat established, and management practices adopted that actually upgrade current environmental performance. Providing environmental lift is something at which our conservation districts excel. ”*

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

## Washington's approach to natural resource conservation:





# PROGRESS REPORT

The Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) and conservation districts worked hard in 2015 to provide help to landowners, strategically address natural resources concerns, and adjust our service delivery to better serve Washington citizens in an ever-changing environmental landscape. This section highlights our accomplishments and on-going work in the last year.



## A look back at 2015...

This was a challenging year for conservation in Washington. The drought severely impacted agriculture, salmon recovery, recreation — and it also contributed to the largest wildfire in state history. In addition to these challenges, our state population topped 7 million. As more people enjoy and use our state's natural resources, the demand for conservation increases. And, the success of conservation efforts increasingly depends on resource stewardship by private landowners.

---

*We strive to support and implement land use practices that are both feasible for landowners and effective for resource conservation.*

## Strengthening capacity and services

Each of Washington's 39 counties is served by at least one conservation district. When you walk into a conservation district office, you find passionate, well-trained staff who respond to landowners' needs and offer hands-on expertise and problem-solving skills. Landowners and natural resource partners depend on conservation districts for this outstanding service, and conservation districts depend on **Implementation Grants** from the SCC to help them build and maintain the capacity to deliver.

Implementation Grants are flexible, enabling districts to use the funds where they are needed, including hiring quality personnel, maintaining office space, conducting outreach, and providing cost-share assistance. Many also use the funds as match to secure other grants. For example, Pierce Conservation District leveraged their Implementation Grant with great success in 2015 — for every \$1 of implementation funds they received, they secured \$2.61 in additional grants and contracts. And, Central Klickitat Conservation District used their Implementation Grant to leverage eight other grants.

### Highlights...

In addition to administering Implementation Grants, the SCC worked to further strengthen the services and capabilities of our agency and conservation districts:

- In 2015, **all conservation districts offered engineering services thanks to the Professional Engineering Grant** administered by the SCC. With these funds, conservation districts share the services of 12 engineers who work in regions across the state. Engineers help landowners stabilize stream banks, construct culverts and bridges for fish passage, install efficient irrigation systems, employ livestock management practices, manage stormwater, and more.
- Conservation district staff **helped Washington's farmers, ranchers, and growers understand and employ Farm Bill programs** as part of the Technical Service Providers (TSP) team. The SCC worked with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and conservation districts to facilitate the TSP agreement, which builds capacity for district staff to design and review Farm Bill practices and plans (e.g. developing a nutrient management plan for a livestock facility).

*"Cascadia relies on the Implementation Grant funds to provide vital technical assistance to landowners. Without it, we would be unable to provide even basic assistance outside of specific grant activities."*

- Cascadia Conservation District

*"Implementation dollars provide for the basic function of the district and staff to provide assistance to the landowners we serve. These dollars allow us to assist landowners that approach the district for assistance and address their resource concerns."*

- Cowlitz Conservation District



## Supporting stewardship of our water

It's impossible to think about Washington and not think of water. Our water resources shape our culture, traditions, economy, hobbies, and food supply.

The SCC and conservation districts are committed to clean water. We offer programs to help landowners do their part to protect water quality, and our staff use their on-the-ground knowledge to advance feasible, effective management policies.

### Protecting water quality and salmon habitat

The SCC distributes a portion of **grant funding specifically for projects that protect or improve water quality**. Many of these projects also benefit salmonid species, including Coho, Chinook, Chum, and steelhead. Examples of projects include installing livestock exclusion fencing, upgrading inefficient irrigation systems, and improving or restoring stream habitat.

The SCC and conservation districts also administer Washington's **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)**. CREP is a voluntary program that compensates farmers for growing a different crop in riparian (streamside) areas of their property — that crop is salmon habitat. Working with their local conservation district and USDA Farm Service Agency, farmers plant native trees and shrubs to form a “buffer” between farmland and the stream, and receive rental payments for the acreage they restore. In areas with high participation, these practices have resulted in increased salmon returns, cooler water temperatures, and greater stream access for juvenile salmon.

SCC staff contribute to several boards and initiatives aimed at streamlining salmon recovery efforts. This includes serving on the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB). Conservation districts have used the Family Forest Fish Passage Program (a grant program offered through the SRFB) to help landowners reconnect hundreds of miles of fish habitat. And, in light of new research illuminating the threat non-point urban runoff poses to Pacific salmon, this year our agency expanded efforts to help conservation districts play a bigger role in helping landowners manage stormwater.

*“CREP has allowed us to leverage other funds and multiple partners to fully restore salmon habitat in a purely voluntary fashion. CREP has not only helped cool the river, it has also improved water quality parameters.”*

Steve Martin, Snake River Salmon Recovery Board, on the impacts made by CREP projects completed in the Tucannon River with help from the Columbia Conservation District and several private landowners.





### Improving conditions for shellfish

Shellfish are an important part of our culture and economy, but they're vulnerable to the impacts of ocean acidification and poor water quality. Both of these issues can be improved by reducing nutrient inputs into marine waters. Sources of nutrient inputs may include urban runoff, excessive fertilizer use, failing septic systems, and manure from livestock operations.

During the 2013-15 biennium, the SCC and conservation districts intensified our efforts to help landowners reduce potential nutrient inputs into shellfish growing areas. The SCC began administering **Shellfish Grants** to conservation districts to fund agricultural best management practices that reduce polluted runoff. Examples of practices include restoring stream channels, building fencing to prevent livestock from accessing natural waterways, installing downspouts and gutters, and constructing manure management facilities. A portion of the grants also funded projects that addressed onsite septic system issues.

### Highlights...

- As of 2015, conservation districts have helped landowners install riparian buffers on over **630 miles of salmon-bearing streams**, including planting over **5.3 million trees**, through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.
- During the 2013-15 biennium, conservation districts used SCC grant funding to implement **380 best management practices** that benefit shellfish growing areas, improving over **5,200 acres of land/habitat**.
- Using water quality grant funds from the SCC, conservation districts helped install over **142,000 feet of fencing** (livestock exclusion, stream, and buffer), pipelines, and irrigation improvements to protect water quality.
- The Department of Health upgraded over **680 acres of shellfish harvest area** in Dungeness Bay from “conditionally approved” to “approved”; and another **40 acres** from prohibited to conditionally approved following several years of on-the-ground work and a Pollution Identification and Correction Plan completed by Clallam Conservation District.
- Using water quality grant funds from the SCC, Kittitas County Conservation District helped landowners upgrade to more water-efficient irrigation systems covering **950 acres of land**.



## Preserving our farmland

The Office of Farmland Preservation (OFP) was established within the SCC to support the retention of farmland and sustain the viability of agriculture for future generations. We employ a variety of tools, including agricultural conservation easements, farm succession planning, and grant and incentive programs. We also monitor state farmland data and trends, agricultural tax policies, land use, and regulatory issues.

### Economic viability

For farmers to stay on the land, it must be economically viable to continue their operations. That's why we work on issues related to farmer access to farmers markets, local food availability, and value-added opportunities, such as mobile slaughter units. Maintaining the infrastructure of agriculture will help farming remain a viable economic opportunity for new and beginning farmers, as well as those who have worked the land for generations.

### Highlights:

- Received funding for **four agricultural conservation easements**: two with Eastern Klickitat Conservation District (**18,044 acres**), one with North Yakima Conservation District (**358 acres**), and one with North Olympic Land Trust (**60 acres**).
- Hosted **eight estate planning workshops** for farmers designed to help agricultural families understand the personal and legal decisions needed to plan the future of their farm (funded by USDA grant). Five of the eight workshops were hosted in partnership with the Center for Latino Farmers in Yakima. As part of this effort, we developed **1,500 farm estate planning workbooks** available in English and Spanish. We also partnered with the Washington State Bar Association to host a 6 credit Continuing Legal Education event for estate planning attorneys called *Planning the Future of the Farm*.
- Released the second **Farmland Preservation Indicators Report** for Washington state (available by contacting the SCC). OFP also continued active participation in the Washington State Food Systems Roundtable, the Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group, and the Washington State Farmland Roundtable (co-coordinated by OFP).



Center for Latino Farmers staff review the Office of Farmland Preservation's estate planning workbook with one of their cooperators

To stay connected to farmland preservation issues, sign up for the monthly *Washington State Farmland Preservation Newsletter* at [ofp.scc.wa.gov/preservation-news](http://ofp.scc.wa.gov/preservation-news).

## Maximizing on-the-ground impacts

The SCC is committed to implementing a strategic approach to conservation that gets the biggest “bang for the buck” for the dollars we spend. This year and in the years to come, we’re placing more emphasis on **precision conservation**.

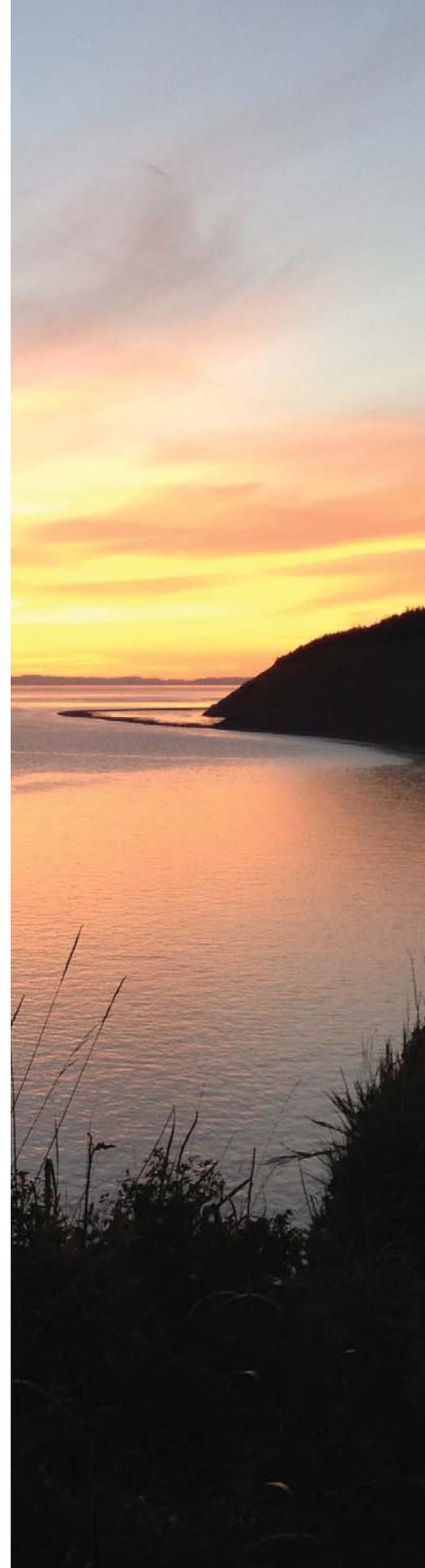
Precision conservation refers to an approach that integrates spatial data, natural resource assessments, and land use maps to inform where conservation districts should be conducting targeted outreach to landowners and what best management practices we should incentivize.

### Highlights:

- The SCC is the lead partner in charge of managing the *Precision Conservation for Salmon and Water Quality in the Puget Sound* project that received a **\$9 million grant** from the USDA Regional Conservation Partnership Program in 2015. Using voluntary incentives and other capacity-building resources, the multi-partner project aims to engage private landowners with collaborative restoration and protection efforts in targeted areas around Puget Sound, including the Samish, Snohomish, and Skykomish Rivers.
- In 2015, the legislature appropriated funds to the SCC to administer the new **Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP)**. VSP represents a voluntary, incentive-based approach that offers counties an alternative for meeting Growth Management Act requirements related to protecting critical areas and agricultural lands. Twenty-eight of Washington’s 39 counties opted-in to VSP. Over the next two years, the SCC will work with counties, conservation districts, and other stakeholders to develop local, watershed-specific work plans that allow for strategic outreach and implementation of targeted best management practices.

*“ In Washington state, we know how critical it is to protect our natural resources, not only for the environment, but also for our economy. This funding from the Regional Conservation Partnership Program will support local farmers and build on the great work being done to restore the Puget Sound region, grow the economy, and create jobs.”*

US Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), about the federal funding award for the *Precision Conservation for Salmon and Water Quality in the Puget Sound* multi-partner project led by the SCC.





BAER team working on the Carlton Complex fire. Photo: Andrew Phay

## Supporting natural disaster preparedness and response

### Managing wildfire risk and recovery

Landowners and local, state, and federal partners recognize conservation districts as “go-to” entities for wildfire preparedness. Using **Firewise** funds from the Department of Natural Resources, conservation districts provide free home fire risk assessments, tree thinning and pruning, wood chipper rentals to reduce fuels (e.g. piles of limbs and brush), community-planning, and much more.

The SCC intensified our wildfire recovery efforts this year. This includes securing funds for the often-overlooked service of helping farmers recover their livelihoods by rebuilding infrastructure and replanting crops. These services are crucial for Okanogan Conservation District, who is on the front lines helping landowners recover from the Carlton Complex (2014) and Okanogan Complex (2015) fires. During the Carlton Complex fire, the SCC helped the district coordinate a first-of-its-kind Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) team (modeled on the US Forest Service’s BAER teams for federal lands) to assess the severity of soil burns on state and local lands. We repeated this effort after the 2015 fires. Okanogan Conservation District continues to serve as a clearinghouse of information and on-site assistance for the community. The SCC provides integral state support by sponsoring FEMA grants, serving in the state Emergency Operations Center, coordinating stakeholder meetings, and more.

### Drought response and water conservation

The SCC worked with conservation districts and other agencies to ensure a coordinated drought response. SCC staff participated on the state Executive Water Emergency Committee, Water Supply Availability Committee, and formed an internal Drought Team. Conservation districts offered services tailored to the impacts of drought in their region. Moving forward, the SCC will participate in the Drought Plan Task Force, which will update the state Drought Contingency Plan between December 2015 and May 2017. And, the SCC will convene a conservation district drought forum to better leverage state and local resources.

The SCC continues to co-administer the **Irrigation Efficiencies Program (IEP)**. IEP provides incentives to individual irrigators and water purveyors to install efficient irrigation systems. The water saved is converted to instream flows in tributaries where Endangered Species Act-listed salmonids will benefit. State funding is passed through the Department of Ecology Water Resources Program from the legislature. SCC staff provide program planning, technical coordination and design, and issue grants for conservation district technicians to implement the program at the local level. The SCC also offers trainings on basic water rights, irrigation system efficiency and design, and irrigation water management at conferences and directly to landowners, technicians, and other agency staff upon request.

### Mitigating flood damage

During the 2007 Chehalis Basin flood — one of seven major floods in the area since 1970 — \$5 million in farm equipment was lost and over 1,600 livestock drowned. The SCC is working with Lewis County Conservation District, Grays Harbor Conservation District, and the Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority to prevent such catastrophic losses from occurring again. The SCC issues state funds to the conservation districts, who help farmers construct evacuation routes and farm pads — man-made, raised-earth plateaus that provide refuge for livestock and equipment during floods. As of 2015, 17 farm pads and evacuation routes have been constructed.

*“ If it rains really hard, we’re not as nervous as we once were. We’ll be able to get all of our cows up on the [farm] pad... It’s a real sense of security knowing we have a safe place for the animals to go. ”*

Gary Howell, Twin Oaks Creamery, Chehalis

## Highlights:

- Okanogan Conservation District provided critical post-wildfire disaster assistance to **300 landowners** and used SCC state funds to help landowners install **49,053 feet of fence** that had been damaged or destroyed in the Carlton Complex Fire and resulting floods and mudslides.
- As of the fall of 2015, the Irrigation Efficiencies Program has completed a total of 62 projects, saving **15,951 acre feet of water** and **66 cubic feet per second** of flow back into 23 tributaries.
- To date, farm pads and evacuation routes constructed in the Chehalis Basin will yield an estimated **14:1 return on investment**. The SCC issued \$645,000 to Lewis County Conservation District to construct these structures, and they have the capacity to **protect over \$9 million in equipment and livestock** during the next big flood.

## Engaging the public

From inside classrooms to working with community stakeholders, the SCC and conservation districts use facilitation, education, and outreach to foster natural resource stewardship and cooperative land use solutions.

### Coordinated Resource Management

The SCC is proud to be part of the interagency committee that coordinates the Coordinated Resource Management (CRM) program. CRM coaches and facilitators help local stakeholders form coalitions that resolve land use and natural resource issues using a consensus decision-making process. The process has helped coalitions address several contentious issues, such as balancing wildlife and grazing interests, using “range riders” to prevent wolf depredations on livestock, and improving water quality and quantity in watersheds that support fish and agriculture.

### Natural resources education and outreach

Conservation districts offer programs that connect students and teachers to the natural world. This includes popular programs such as *Wheat Week* (offered statewide) and *Water on Wheels* (eastern Washington) administered by Franklin Conservation District. Through these programs, educators provide hands-on lessons to elementary students that explore water cycles, habitats, soil, stormwater, and more. The SCC and conservation districts also support and host annual *Envirothon* competitions that challenge high school youth to demonstrate their knowledge of aquatic ecology, forestry, soils, and wildlife. Conservation districts also offer numerous community learning events, including rain barrel workshops, backyard stewardship series, native plant sales, and volunteer opportunities.



Students complete the aquatics test during the Envirothon competition.

Photo: Kristen Reichardt

## Highlights:

- There are a total of **48 active CRM coalitions**, including 3 new groups started in 2015, that are resolving local land use and natural resource issues across the state.
- During the 2014-15 school year, the *Wheat Week* education program **reached 19,859 students**, and *Water on Wheels* reached **19,898 students**.
- **Fifty-six students** representing **10 counties** competed in the *2015 Washington State Envirothon*, which was hosted by Clark Conservation District and supported by the SCC and several conservation districts.



# OPERATIONS OVERVIEW

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 state funds and help landowners maximize their personal investment in conservation practices. Conservation districts also use some of their funding from the SCC as match to secure grants from other partners. In fact, every dollar the SCC invests in conservation is leveraged an average of four times!



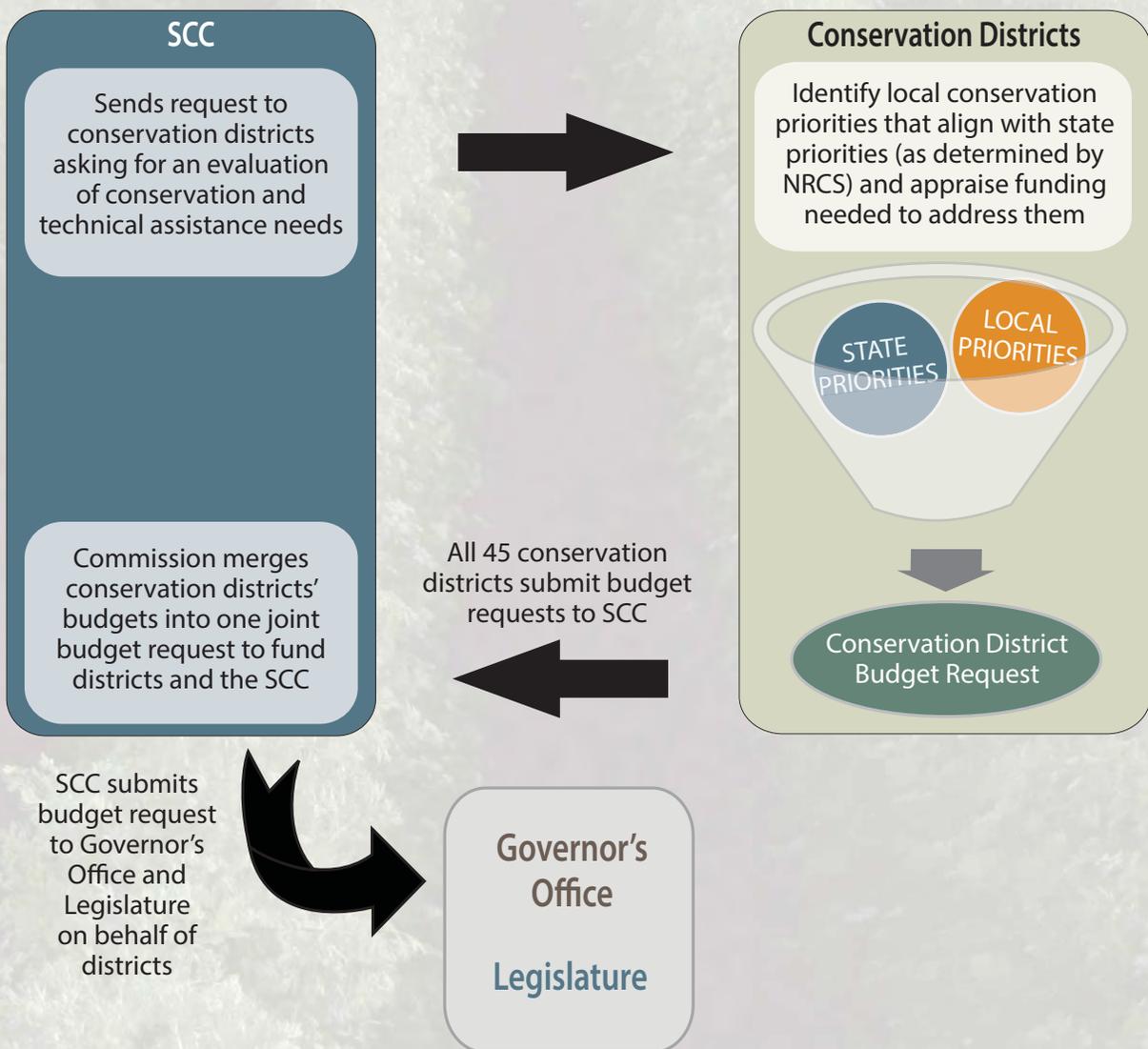
## Our role in project planning and implementation

SCC staff help conservation districts conduct annual- and long-range plans that outline the priority natural resource concerns in their area. Then, as landowners request assistance or agree to complete projects on their property that address those resources concerns, conservation districts enter project information and associated funding needs into our agency's database. This data helps us identify projects that meet both local and state priorities and informs our state budget requests. After state funds are appropriated to the SCC, we administer grants to all 45 conservation districts to finance approved projects and activities. Conservation districts continue to provide data to the SCC on funded projects, allowing us to monitor progress.

---

*Conservation districts deliver cost-effective solutions by finding state and federal match dollars for local funds.*

## How we build our budget:

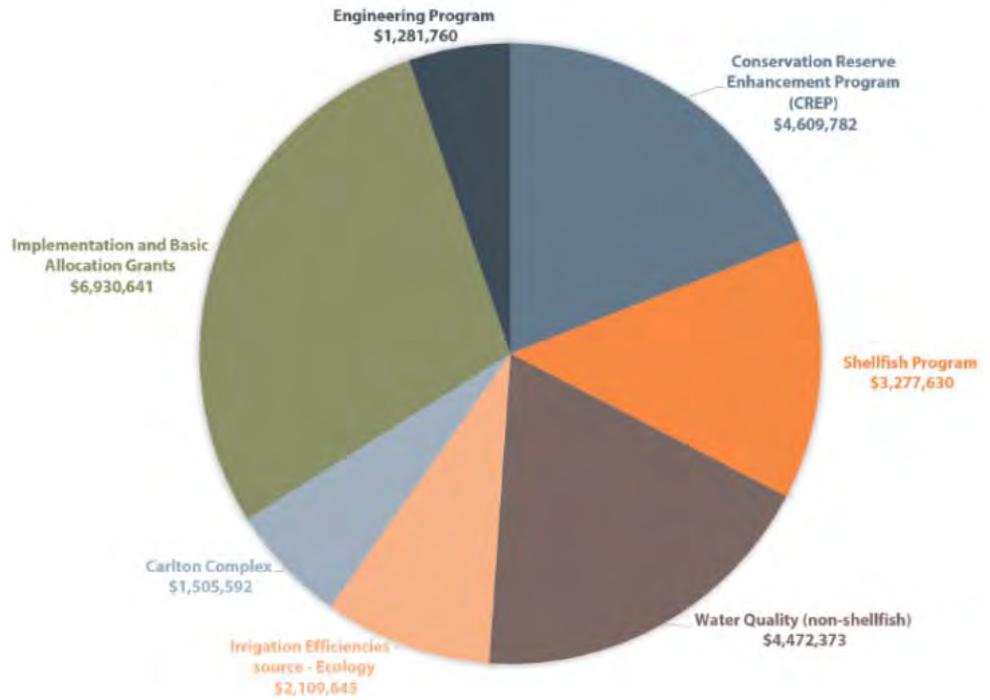


# Financial Report

## 13-15 Biennium: Major Grant Program Distributions

As a state agency, the SCC is committed to facilitating good stewardship of public funds. That means maximizing the public funds entrusted to us by delivering cost-effective, high-value services.

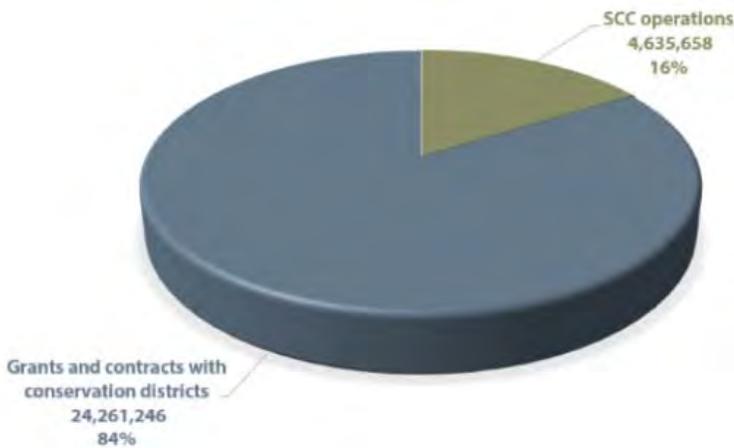
Our objective is to get quality work done on the ground. That work is done at the conservation district-level. During the 13-15 biennium, 84 percent of our agency budget went to districts for conservation work. Around half of our overall agency budget directly funded on-the-ground projects.



## Agency Budget and Expenditures

	ACTUAL Expenditures			Budgeted
	09-11 Biennium	11-13 Biennium	13-15 Biennium	15-17 Biennium
<b>SCC Average Annual FTEs</b>	19.3	17.5	18.9	18.6
<b>Objects of Expenditures:</b>				
SCC Employee Salaries	2,420,000	2,217,000	2,485,047	2,616,000
SCC Employee Benefits	695,000	692,000	747,172	889,000
SCC Professional Service Contracts	236,000	225,000	274,673	467,000
SCC Goods and Services	937,000	1,008,000	735,655	674,000
SCC Travel	381,000	279,000	377,785	365,000
SCC Capital Outlays	3,000	37,000	15,326	4,000
District Grants and Contracts	17,907,000	22,810,000	27,133,828	79,192,000
Interagency Contract Reimbursements	(3,139,000)	(2,264,000)	(2,872,582)	(648,000)
<b>Total Expenditures by Object</b>	<b>19,341,000</b>	<b>24,974,000</b>	<b>28,896,904</b>	<b>83,559,000*</b>
<b>Source of Funds:</b>				
General Fund-State (001-01)	14,031,000	13,209,000	12,898,943	13,585,000
State Building Construction Account - State (057-01)	2,044,000	8,293,000	12,852,044	29,923,000
State Taxable Bldg Constr Account - State (355-1)	1,220,000	1,780,000		5,000,000
Carlton Complex Fire (14B)			1,091,297	
Carlton Complex Federal (001-2)			414,295	
State Toxics Control Account - State (173-1)			1,050,000	1,000,000
General Funds - Federal (001-2)	1,084,000	1,616,000	571,673	26,301,000
Water Quality Capital Account - State (11W-1)	667,000			
Conservation Assist Revolving Account - State (552-1)	266,000	75,000	14,282	150,000
Industrial Insurance Premium Refund (03K-6)			4,370	
Public Works Assistance Account (058)				7,600,000
Other Funds	30,000			
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>19,341,000</b>	<b>24,974,000</b>	<b>28,896,904</b>	<b>83,559,000*</b>

## 15-17 SCC Funding Distribution



## SCC Processing of Conservation District Payment Requests\*

	Vouchers Processed	Verification Time (avg)	Processing Days (avg)
FY15	1,960	2.90	1.89
FY14	2,090	3.26	1.65
FY13	2,154	2.42	2.52
FY12	1,677	1.89	2.15

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

## Administrative Functions

The SCC performs additional core functions designed to help our agency and conservation districts maintain efficient and accountable operations. Several responsibilities of the SCC are outlined in RCW 89.07.070. This includes, but is not limited to, the following duties that we perform for conservation districts:

- Build state budget requests and authorize grants of state funds to finance activities
- Establish adequate and reasonably uniform accounting and auditing procedures
- Oversee elections and appointments of the governing board of supervisors
- Encourage cooperation and collaboration with other partners
- Provide advice concerning conformance with applicable laws and regulations
- Offer conferences and trainings

### Performance evaluation

The SCC implements a “Good Governance” evaluation each year. Good Governance consists of a checklist of activities that all conservation districts should be performing to ensure they are meeting legal requirements and maintaining their value as a public entity. Through Good Governance, we evaluate conservation districts’ performance with financial reporting and vouchering, on-the-ground project implementation, supervisor elections and appointments, internal audits, governance, annual and long-range planning, partnerships, and more. The Good Governance checklist of activities is vetted annually with Washington’s conservation districts and approved by the SCC board. If a conservation district is found deficient in one or more of these activities, this leads to 1) SCC staff working closely with the district to make improvements, and/or 2) a negative impact on the budget allocation for that district in the next fiscal year, subject to the decision of the SCC Board of Commissioners. In 2015, 27 conservation districts met or exceeded all Good Governance elements. SCC staff are working with 18 districts on opportunities for improvement, and no conservation districts had deficiencies that warranted a reduction in budget allocation.

### Efficient service

The SCC only funds capital projects that are “shovel-ready.” Conservation districts are expected to start on-the-ground work within four months of receiving funding from our agency.

With cost-share projects, typically landowners cover all project costs up-front, and then the district reimburses a portion of the cost. That financial outlay can be a challenge for some landowners, so our agency strives to process conservation district payment requests as quickly as possible. In fiscal year 2015, our staff processed nearly 2,000 payments.



# CONSERVATION DISTRICT FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This section showcases key projects that each conservation district accomplished in 2015. Projects were completed in cooperation with Washington landowners, illustrating the incredible work that can be achieved when people are empowered to care for natural resources through their own land management decisions. Conservation district pages are listed alphabetically and include a feature project summary, a brief overview of additional work, and their contact information.

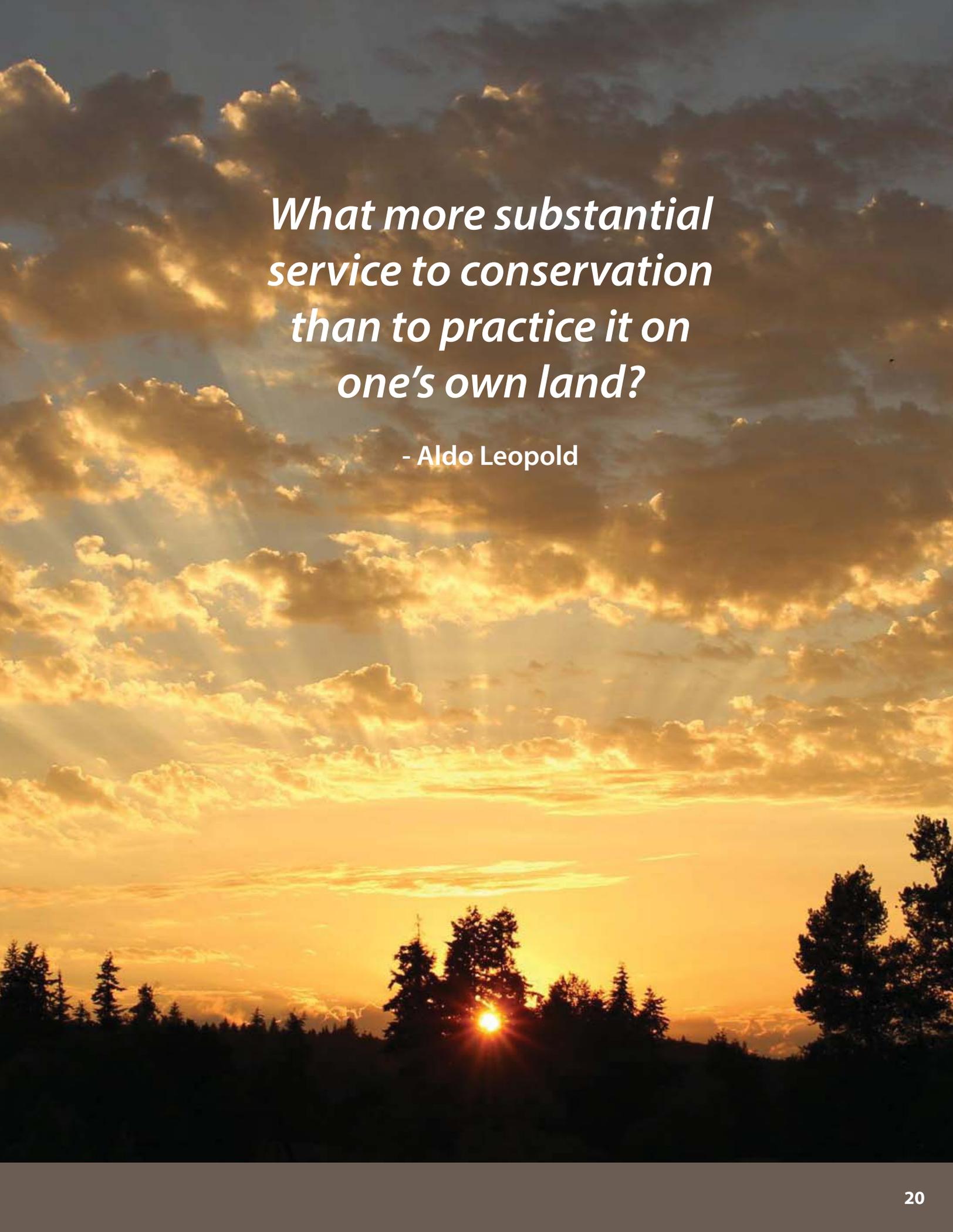


## Fine-tuned solutions for every resource need

When examples of work from all 45 conservation districts are displayed side-by-side, it's remarkable to see the diversity of natural resource issues they help landowners address. Whether it's coordinating recovery efforts following the worst wildfire in state history or installing rain gardens that protect Puget Sound from polluted stormwater, conservation districts are working across the state to help landowners achieve their land use and stewardship goals.

Despite all the projects that are described, this report does not fully capture all the services and capabilities the Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) and conservation districts have to offer. Learn more on the SCC website ([www.scc.wa.gov](http://www.scc.wa.gov)) and by visiting your local conservation district office or website.

*The people who work for conservation districts do so because of their passion for maintaining Washington's natural resources.*



*What more substantial  
service to conservation  
than to practice it on  
one's own land?*

- Aldo Leopold



State Legislative District #9  
Congressional District #4

# Adams Conservation District

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

## Other Accomplishments



Local 5th graders joined us at the WSU Lind Research Station to learn about soil, weeds, wildlife, fungi, weather monitoring, and more.



The top three students in our 6th grade essay contest read their papers on the benefits of rotation grazing to the operators at our annual meeting.



Over 230 FFA students from 18 schools participated in our local soil judging competition.

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Livestock watering facilities support rangeland health

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Healthy rangeland provides habitat and food for wildlife and domestic livestock. A diverse mixture of grasses, forbs, and shrubs provide shelter and nutrients. The sagebrush-steppe areas in Adams Conservation District provide rangeland for many producers. If rangeland is overgrazed, desirable native vegetation may be replaced by invasive species. Weedy invasive species often out-compete natives, which results in decreased plant diversity and less forage opportunity for livestock and wildlife.

### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

In order to expand livestock grazing capabilities, Adams Conservation District provided assistance to install two watering facilities in rangeland pastures. The watering facilities were solar powered and included panels, pumps, and troughs. Water availability now allows the operator to include those pastures in his grazing rotation, which reduces grazing pressure on the rest of his property. Moving livestock frequently and between multiple pastures ensures native plants aren't overgrazed, reduces the risk of weedy invasion, and supports plant diversity and habitat.



It's a family effort installing the watering facilities.

Credit: Ron Hennings



**KEY PARTNERS:** Washington State Conservation Commission

Livestock watering facility on rangeland west of Ritzville.

## More Work to Do!

- Multi-landowner riparian and wetland restoration on Cow Creek, which is a tributary to the Palouse River.
- Installation of wells and watering facilities on rangeland to improve livestock management.
- Promote and provide assistance for no-till farming and field buffers in order to minimize erosion and improve soil quality and quantity.

# Asotin County Conservation District

Megan Stewart, Grant Coordinator  
720 6th Street, Suite B Clarkston, WA 99403-2012  
(509) 758-8012 x100 | asotincd@cableone.net | www.asotincd.net  
Board Chair: Keith Ausman



State Legislative District #9  
Congressional District #5

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Livestock manure management projects



Before construction of feed pads and waste storage, facility manure was piled in feeding areas with no way to properly prepare it for field application.

Credit: Megan Stewart

possible, relocating feeding areas will reduce livestock impacts on the streams and water quality conditions.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** Asotin County Conservation District worked with six landowners to install feeding pads and waste storage facilities during the 2014-15 biennium. Concrete feed pads allow manure to be collected in waste storage facilities until it's applied to agriculture fields for fertilizer. This reduces manure concentration near streams while improving soil conditions in fields. Each feeding operation has a Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan (CNMP) that provides a guide for operation and maintenance for the landowner. To date there are 19 CNMPs completed, and 14 landowners are on a waiting list for cost-share to implement manure management projects.

**KEY PARTNERS:** USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Bonneville Power Administration; Washington State Department of Ecology; Private landowners

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** There are multiple livestock operations in Asotin County that winter animals adjacent to streams. Fencing off riparian (stream-side) areas and excluding livestock access to the stream protects the stream banks and reduces in-stream sedimentation levels. However, the concentration of manure in close proximity to the riparian zone still impacts fecal coliform levels in streams. Improving and, when



Construction of the feed pads and waste storage facilities are complete and manure is collected and stored for future field application.

Credit: Megan Stewart

## Other Accomplishments



Prior to the removal of a fish barrier and installation of a bottomless arch culvert.

Credit: Casey Scott



Bottomless arch culvert installed allowing Endangered Species Act-listed fish access to approximately four stream miles of habitat.

Credit: Casey Scott



Providing alternative water developments are essential to the success of riparian exclusion projects and increased pasture utilization. Credit: Courtney Smith, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

## More Work to Do!

- Headgate Dam on Asotin Creek is listed as a fish barrier and will be modified so it is no longer a barrier.
- Pipe culvert on Rattlesnake Creek at Highway 129 was identified as fish barrier. Asotin County Conservation District and the Washington State Department of Transportation have secured funds to remove the barrier to increase fish passage.
- A watershed and geomorphic assessment will be conducted during the next two years to identify critical areas and future projects to address resource concerns.



State Legislative District #8, 16  
Congressional District #4

# Benton Conservation District

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

## Other Accomplishments



A diver retrieves temperature probes from the bottom of the Yakima River as part of monitoring for a potential fish habitat improvement project.



Yakima Basin Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board presented Benton Conservation District with the 2015 "Project of the Year" award in recognition of the district's Salmon Summit.



With funding from the Department of Ecology, and in partnership with the Benton-Franklin Master Gardeners, Benton Conservation District completed a Heritage Garden demonstration.

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Yakima River shoreline stabilization project, Prosser



Motorists on Prosser Bridge can see the native shrubs and trees planted along the Yakima River shoreline to reduce erosion on private land.

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Bank erosion is a common problem along the Yakima River and can contribute to poor water quality by allowing soil into the river. Landowners become alarmed as the river seems to eat away at their valuable property. One of these landowners was aware of Benton Conservation District's agricultural programs and asked if the district could also help with residential property. A previous riparian planting at this site was partially washed out during a highly unusual flood event, so bank erosion continued.

## PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Benton Conservation District worked with landowners to design 500 feet of shoreline stabilization that included planting over 1,200 native shrubs and trees while preserving river views from the houses. Other components included stabilizing an upland slope with native bunch grasses and converting lawn into native plantings that will require less irrigation water and attract wildlife. This project has great demonstration value as it is visible from the bridge into the county seat. Landowner Mrs. Martinez looks forward to giving tours of the project. She said with enthusiasm, "I'll tell everybody Benton Conservation District is great to work with!"



Blocks of native plants were installed to convert lawn into wildlife habitat. This property will serve as a demonstration site to other landowners.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Nancy Martinez; Brad Klingele; Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group

## More Work to Do!

- The district is building a program designed to help operators of small farms plan and implement conservation practices. The program will also include a new lecture series.
- The drought has caused massive growth of water stargrass, an aquatic weed, in the Yakima River. Benton Conservation District will be submitting a funding request to the Department of Ecology to look at potential management actions.

# Cascadia Conservation District

Peggy Entzel, District Administrator  
14 N Mission Street Wenatchee, WA 98801  
(509) 436-1601 | info@cascadiacd.org | www.cascadiacd.org  
Board Chair: Josh Koempel



State Legislative District #12  
Congressional District #8

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Sunitsch Canyon — wildfire fuels reduction



Top: Dense stands; a high ratio of species susceptible to insects, disease, and fire; abundant ladder fuels; and steep slopes equal high fire risk. Bottom: Open spacing, trimmed limbs, fire-tolerant Ponderosa pine, and low ground fuels reduce burn intensity and the chance of a high-risk tree crown fire.

which will be followed by 13 more acres next year. “We appreciated working with Cascadia,” said manager Andrew Holm, “because of the comprehensive nature of the prescription for overall fire resilience and forest health.”

**KEY PARTNERS:** Sunitsch Canyon, LLC and manager Andrew Holm - Forest Plan and landowner match; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service - Cultural Resources investigation and matching funds through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Wildfire has been an increasing concern in our area for a number of years. Cascadia Conservation District has been working to help landowners and communities improve the overall health of forested areas and create defensible space around homes and outbuildings. Public forest management practices, lack of low-intensity fires, differing views on vegetation management, and limited funding have hindered significant progress. The result is evident in the recent fires, and there is much more still at risk.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** Trimming ladder fuels, thinning trees, and removing fire risks around homes are effective ways to help decrease the intensity and extent of a wildfire. Cascadia Conservation District’s cooperators are preparing to be survivors, rather than victims, of this natural process in our region. The 306-acre Sunitsch property is located near expanses of at-risk public forest in the Cascade foothills. They recently completed an 18-acre fuels reduction cost share project through Cascadia on this site,

## Other Accomplishments

- Stream bank restoration and planting along Colockum Creek following fire-related flooding.
- In-stream habitat restoration with large wood structures and floodplain reconnection in two locations on the lower Entiat River.
- FireWise risk assessments and technical assistance for landowners.
- Wildfire fuels reduction cost share projects and community chipping events for homeowner fuels removal.
- Education and outreach through Kids in the Creek, Water on Wheels, Native Planting 101, a photo contest and stewardship calendar, fire awareness workshops, and multiple community events.

## More Work to Do!

- In-stream habitat projects with multiple large woody structures, channel re-connection, and floodplain restoration in the middle Entiat River.
- Continued forest health, fuels reduction, wildfire risk assessments, and education/outreach activities.
- Riparian plantings in multiple watersheds.
- Managing the Entiat Intensively Monitored Watershed program and Entiat Planning Unit.
- Ongoing monitoring, education, and outreach programs.



State Legislative District #14  
Congressional District #3

# Central Klickitat Conservation District

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

## Other Accomplishments

- We held landowner meetings to discuss the district's involvement in holding agricultural conservation easements. In cooperation with Washington State Conservation Commission's Office of Farmland Preservation, we gave information to landowners about the pros and cons of selling their development rights.
- A second livestock EQIP project was identified, and we're seeking funding to assist the landowner with his share of the project costs.
- Work continues on preliminary designs for three stream bank improvement projects on the Little Klickitat River for construction in 2016.

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Kayser livestock Environmental Quality Incentives Program project

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** This very large livestock operation on a tributary to Swale Creek was potentially adding sediment and fecal coliform to the creek. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) helped the rancher move his feed barn and winter feeding area off the creek. Even with the federal funding, the landowner's share of a large project such as this is substantial. Central Klickitat Conservation District helped cover a portion of the landowner's share of eligible best management practices using Department of Ecology funding.



The old feed barn and feeding area with the creek (dry at the moment) flowing through it.



The new barn and feeding area still under construction with new troughs.

## PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

This large project had several components, including a hardened feed area, roof runoff structure, waste storage facility, windbreaks, diversion, shelterbelt, fencing, conservation cover, and more. The district's involvement was to provide cost share assistance for eligible practices for the landowner's share of the EQIP project. Nearly all of the practices except the waste storage facility and all of its components were eligible best management practices under Department of Ecology funding guidelines. The landowner received 75 percent of his out-of-pocket expenses and equipment costs above what the EQIP contract paid him based on total project costs.

**KEY PARTNERS:** USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Landowner contributions; Department of Ecology

## More Work to Do!

- We are working on three in-stream projects, bank repair, and riparian enhancements on the Little Klickitat River. Construction will be fall of 2016.
- We are working with Eastern Klickitat Conservation District and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to purchase fee simple and easements on 22,000 acres of forestland from Western Pacific Timber.
- Our Board of Supervisors has approved holding of conservation easements, which has generated a lot of interest.

# Clallam Conservation District

Joe Holtrop, Executive Director  
228 W First Street, Suite H Port Angeles, WA 98362  
(360) 775-3747 | info@clallamcd.org | www.clallamcd.org  
Board Chair: Joe Murray



State Legislative District #24  
Congressional District #6

2015 Feature Accomplishment:

## Conservation district efforts lead to Dungeness Bay upgrades



Typical irrigation ditch before piping

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Dungeness Bay was slapped with shellfish harvest downgrades due to high levels of fecal coliform bacteria beginning in 2000. By 2003, the total downgraded area in the bay had reached 1,700 acres, making commercial shellfish production almost nonexistent. Classic nonpoint source pollution, including failing onsite septic systems, poor livestock keeping practices, and pet and wildlife waste was the cause. Clallam Conservation District took action to correct the problem.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** In 2000, Clallam Conservation District identified sources of bacterial contamination to Dungeness Bay originating from irrigation ditches. And, from 2001 to 2015, contamination from over 21 miles of irrigation ditches was eliminated by piping. We also worked with farmers to improve their agricultural practices. In 2014 we developed and implemented a landmark cost-share program resulting in the repair of four failing septic systems along Dungeness Bay. Our efforts led to 500 acres of bay shellfish harvest upgrades in 2011, and 700 more acres in 2015. We also developed a Pollution Identification and Correction plan in 2014 to further identify and correct sources of water pollution.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Dungeness River Water Users Association; State Conservation Commission; Department of Ecology; State Department of Health; Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe; Clallam County departments of Community Development and Environmental Health; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Bureau of Reclamation



Typical irrigation ditch after piping

## Other Accomplishments

- Completed the Sequim Dungeness Clean Water District Pollution Identification and Correction Plan.
- Provided cost-share assistance for repair of six failing onsite septic systems.
- Provided technical and financial assistance to pipe over one mile of irrigation ditch, saving half a cubic foot per second of water.
- Taught 212 residents about sustainable landscaping.
- Provided technical assistance to 58 farm operators.

## More Work to Do!

- Implement shallow aquifer recharge projects.
- Play a key role in the design and construction of a large off-channel reservoir.
- Complete next phases of Dungeness Irrigation District ditch piping.
- Continue providing financial assistance to repair failing septic systems.



# Clark Conservation District

Denise Smee, District Manager  
11104 NE 149 Street, Bldg C-400 Brush Prairie, WA 98606  
(360) 883-1987 | [staff@clarkcd.org](mailto:staff@clarkcd.org) | [www.clarkcd.org](http://www.clarkcd.org)  
Board Chair: Dean Longrie, Ph.D.

State Legislative District #14, 17, 18, 20, 49  
Congressional District #3

## Other Accomplishments



Replacement of a fish passage blocking culvert with a fish-friendly bridge and riparian area planting.



Small farm livestock exclusion fencing and riparian planting.



Heavy use area for the workhorses on an organic farm.

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: School stormwater projects

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Stormwater runoff from buildings, parking lots, and other hard surfaces picks up pollutants and takes them downstream to creeks and rivers. Schools with large buildings and expansive parking lots and walkways can contribute substantial amounts of water and contaminants to area wetlands and waterways. Stormwater projects, such as rain gardens that absorb, store, and filter stormwater on school campuses, are an important contribution to clean water and an educational opportunity for the community.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** The district helped complete student stormwater projects at five different school campuses. Students from each school assisted in developing, designing, and implementing the projects, including installing five rain gardens, a riparian buffer, and planting more than 800 native trees and shrubs. Students in grades 4-12 implemented these projects with help from over 70 volunteers, teachers, and school officials that encouraged and supported the students and activities. This allowed students to engage in a hands-on project from start to finish and take pride and ownership in their results.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Water Resources Education Center; Washington State Department of Ecology; Battle Ground School District; and Vancouver School District



Students work on a rain garden and rain barrel system for their classroom roof stormwater.



Students construct multiple rain gardens for stormwater from a building on campus.

## More Work to Do!

- Restoration of off-channel rearing habitat, spawning gravel placement, and riparian area planting on a salmon and steelhead creek.
- Manure storage and heavy use area for small cattle operation.
- Riparian area planting and streambank stabilization on a neighborhood creek.
- Stormwater workshops and rain garden activities with city homeowners.
- District long term planning and partnership building.

# Columbia Conservation District

Terry Bruegman, District Manager  
202 S 2nd Street Dayton, WA 99328  
(509) 382-4773 x5 | tb-ccd@columbiainet.com  
Board Chair: Clay Hutchens

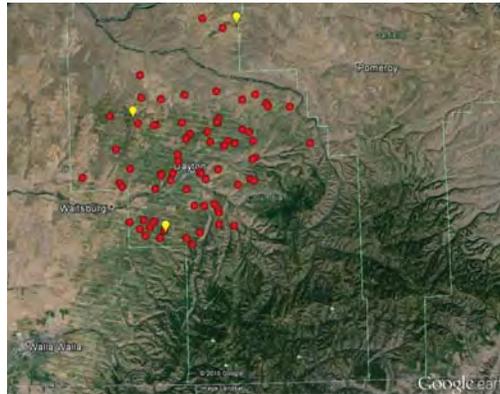


State Legislative District #16  
Congressional District #5

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Managing low pH for sustainable agriculture

### RESOURCE CHALLENGE

Inland Pacific Northwest soils have been considered some of the richest soils of the world. Recently soil quality concerns have developed with reports of severely reduced soil pH levels (< 4.0 pH) in the uppermost 12” of the soil profile, which can be detrimental to plants. Columbia Conservation District worked with partners to initiate a two-year soil-sampling project identifying 76 production and native sites, covering more than 150,000 acres. Results from intense and precision soil sampling in Columbia County indicate the problem is more widespread than previously thought.



Program sample sites; yellow indicate native sites. Credit: Paul Carter, WSU Extension



Applying calcium carbonate.  
Credit: Gary Wegner, Columbia River Carbonates

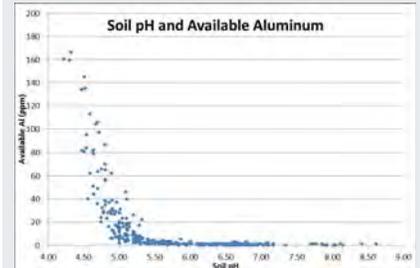
at variable rates, 50/100/200 gal/acre, on 44 sites. 2016 samples will be collected from all application plots, and findings will be presented to the cooperators.

**KEY PARTNERS:** WA State Conservation Commission; Private landowners/co-operators; Paul Carter, WSU/Columbia County Extension Agent; Gary Wegner, Columbia River Carbonates; Ben Moehrle, Ag Applicators; Dayton High School FFA/Ag class

### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Samples were collected at stratified levels (0-3, 3-6, 6-12, and 12-24 inch layers). Each sample layer was analyzed for soil pH, available nutrients, and aluminum. Results indicate 97 percent of sampled production fields have < 6.0 soil pH, and 89 percent of those fields have < 5.2 pH in the top 6 inches of soil profile. A 2015 initial corrective effort applied calcium carbonate

### Other Accomplishments



Soil sampling results: the lower the pH (more acidic) the greater the aluminum. High aluminum reduces soil health and is toxic to cereal grains. Credit: Paul Carter, WSU Extension



Dayton High School FFA students collecting soil samples.  
Credit: Kristina Knebel, FFA Advisor



Completed four Tucannon River salmon habitat projects.  
Credit: Terry Bruegman, Columbia Conservation District Manager

### More Work to Do!

- Provide technical assistance for 41 Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) contracts eligible for renewal.
- Collect soil samples and yield data at 44 sites.
- Continue implementation of salmon habitat recovery project.



# 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

State Legislative District #19, 20  
Congressional District #3

## Other Accomplishments

- Coweeman community watershed knotweed treatment project: Managing knotweed on entire watershed.
- Received funding for an additional project in the Abernathy Creek community watershed.
- Received funding for two additional projects in the Arkansas Creek community watershed.

2015 Feature Accomplishment:

## Community watershed approach to address resource concerns

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Cowlitz Conservation District (CCD) attempts to address resource concerns as a comprehensive community watershed approach. This allows the district to address all natural resource concerns within a watershed, resulting in enough implementation to realize a measurable difference. Resource concerns include salmon recovery, water quality, invasive weeds, flooding, farm viability, and many others. A farm at a time is simply not an effective, efficient method to exact change in a resource concern.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** CCD implemented a project in the Coweeman River community watershed and one in the Arkansas Creek community watershed. The district maintains an effort to implement two to three projects, plan two to three new projects, fund two to three planned projects, design two to three funded projects, and permit two to three designed projects each year. These activities require people on the ground working with watershed community members to make this happen. While it's challenging to find funding to implement this approach, it's very effective at addressing resource concerns.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Wahkiakum Conservation District; Cowlitz Noxious Weed Board; Cowlitz County; Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife; Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board; Recreation and Conservation Office



Small debris jam installed on Turner Creek enhances fish habitat diversity, reduces sediment delivery, and protects private property.



Porous debris jam regulates flow to maintain side channel habitat.  
Photos: Cowlitz Conservation District

## More Work to Do!

- Implement two projects in the Arkansas Creek community watershed.
- Treat knotweed for the third year in the Coweeman River community watershed.
- Implement one project in the Abernathy Creek community watershed.
- Design two projects in the Germany Creek community watershed.
- Work with Cowlitz County on a draft in-lieu fee project proposal.
- Assist Cowlitz County with the development of a Voluntary Stewardship Program.

# Eastern Klickitat Conservation District

Jim E. Hill, District Manager  
1107 S Columbus Avenue Goldendale, WA 98620  
(509) 773-5823 x5 | [cdoffice@gorge.net](mailto:cdoffice@gorge.net) | [www.ekcd.org](http://www.ekcd.org)  
Board Chair: Rhon Raschko



State Legislative District #14, 15  
Congressional District #3, 4

2015 Feature Accomplishment:

## Integrated Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan for Rock Creek



Close-up view of Eurasian watermilfoil in Rock Creek

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** The mouth of Rock Creek where it enters the Columbia River has nearly one mile of slack water because of the John Day pool and covers 68 acres. Eurasian watermilfoil, an invasive freshwater plant, has moved into the area and is creating issues for boating, fishing, and swimming. The biggest problem is it provides habitat for species that prey on salmonids. Rock Creek provides the only

steelhead and salmon habitat in eastern Klickitat County and has been designated as critical habitat for Mid-Columbia steelhead.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** Eastern Klickitat Conservation District received funding from the Department of Ecology to produce a plan to control or eliminate the Eurasian watermilfoil. This Integrated Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan will provide options for control of the invasive weed. Formulated over two years, the plan is being developed by district staff with input from program partners. The plan will focus on selecting methods to control the milfoil and other invasive species that are detrimental to water quality and provide habitat for bass and other species that prey on steelhead and salmon. Program participants all agreed that invasive aquatic weeds are a threat.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Central Klickitat Conservation District; Klickitat County Noxious Weed Coordinator; Department of Ecology; US Army Corps of Engineers; Yakama Nation Fisheries; WA Department of Fish and Wildlife; Local citizens and landowners



Slack water of Rock Creek clogged with Eurasian watermilfoil

## Other Accomplishments



Purchase of conservation easements in Rock Creek will protect livestock grazing in the watershed.



Extinguishing development rights will guarantee the views will not change.



The district installed and monitors a permanent gauging station on Squaw Creek.

## More Work to Do!

- Several spring developments have been identified in the Rock Creek watershed. Spring developments on Rock Creek itself should add flow to the creek.
- Completion of the two ongoing easement purchases that were funded through the Washington State Conservation Commission's Office of Farmland Preservation.
- Working with the state Department of Fish and Wildlife to purchase fee simple and easements on 22,000 acres from Western Pacific Timber in the Rock Creek watershed.



State Legislative District #7  
Congressional District #5

# Ferry Conservation District

Lloyd Odell, District Manager  
84 E Delaware Avenue PO Box 1045 Republic, WA 99166  
(509) 775-3473 x5 | lloyd.odell@conserveva.net | www.ferrycd.org  
Board Chair: Dave Konz

## Other Accomplishments

- Assisted three landowners with pasture cross-fencing to help with forage management for their livestock.
- Continued working with the Colville Confederated Tribes Range Management Department to protect the Sanpoil River Riparian corridor on the Colville Reservation.
- Helped three other landowners plan and obtain permits for riparian restoration projects on the Kettle River.
- Reached 300 elementary-aged students with conservation education programs.

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: O'Brien Creek riparian restoration project — part of the plan



Sloughing banks were dumping tons of excess sediments into O'Brien Creek. This raises water temperatures and degrades fish habitat.

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** O'Brien Creek is a tributary of the Sanpoil River. One of the Sanpoil watershed's major concerns is high water temperatures, and a major contributor to high temperatures is excessive sedimentation. In 2013 a landowner along O'Brien Creek contacted Ferry Conservation District to request help with erosion control along a quarter-mile reach of O'Brien Creek. The project fit the district's goals perfectly. Water quality in the Sanpoil is one of our major focuses, and we have been part of the Sanpoil Watershed Action Team since 2008.

### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

The district worked with the Department of Fish and Wildlife to design the project, and they also helped with the cultural resources review. The landowner provided the timber needed to construct in-stream barbs and log jams, which shifted the stream's current back into the center of the channel. This lessened the erosive force on the stream banks. The project area was fenced to control livestock pressure on the project area. The next step is to complete a riparian planting this fall and coming spring. Participating agencies and the landowners are all pleased with the project.



Our wooden barbs and man-made log jams gently re-direct the current away from the banks and back into the middle of the creek.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; Washington Department of Ecology; Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation; Washington State Conservation Commission

## More Work to Do!

- The biggest challenge we will face in the coming year, and for many years to come, is reclamation and recovery after catastrophic wildfires. Nothing will be more critical, or more resource-consuming, than wildfire recovery. We probably have a decade's worth of work ahead of us now.
- We have to find a way to prevent or mitigate fire's effects in the years to come.

# Foster Creek Conservation District

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



State Legislative District #12  
Congressional District #4

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Biological weed control



Dalmatian Toadflax

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** “Noxious weed” is the traditional, legal term for invasive plants that are so aggressive they harm our ecosystems or disrupt agricultural production. These plants crowd out the native species that fish and wildlife depend on. They also cost farmers millions of dollars in control efforts and lost production. The term “noxious weed” includes non-native invasive plants, shrubs, and trees that grow both on land and in wetlands, lakes, shorelines, and streams.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** Partnering with WSU Extension, Foster Creek Conservation District (FCCD) staff identifies the major invasive weeds within Douglas County in order to determine which bioagents will help control their populations.

Biological weed control is the “act of bringing back together the weed and its natural enemies”. Only the bioagents — which have run the gauntlet of the USDA test and demonstrated that they will starve rather than eat anything but their host — are released. The use of bioagents is a long-term method for weed management. FCCD provides insects for Dalmatian toadflax, Canada thistle, Diffuse knapweed, and Common mullein.

**KEY PARTNERS:** WSU Extension; State Conservation Commission; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service



Douglas County land managers release bioagents for Dalmatian toadflax

## Other Accomplishments



Finalized the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for Douglas County. Species covered include sage grouse, pygmy rabbit, Washington ground squirrel, and sharp-tail grouse. Credit: Sharon Davis



Greater sage-grouse  
Credit: Sharon Davis



Douglas County informational HCP meeting

## More Work to Do!

- Signing of the Douglas County Habitat Conservation Plan with US Fish and Wildlife Service; 30 Section 10 Permits will be processed.
- Continue implementation to control invasive weeds on approximately 30 properties in Douglas County.
- Implement direct seed practice with 12 land managers.
- Implement stream restoration efforts with three land managers.



State Legislative District #9  
Congressional District #4

# Franklin Conservation District

Mark Nielson, District Manager  
1724 E Superior Street Pasco, WA 99301  
(509) 416-0440 | mark-nielson@conserveva.net | www.franklincd.org  
Board Chair: Chris Herron

## Other Accomplishments



Implemented irrigation water management on 72 irrigated fields and 34 orchard sites, treating 22,225 acres.



Worked with 13 growers to treat noxious weeds on 4,479 acres.



Finalized construction of Franklin Conservation District's new, district-owned office in Pasco.

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Installing cover crops to protect water quality



Before - cover crop installation.  
Credit: Lenwood Farms

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Franklin County has been a member of the Columbia Basin Ground Water Management Area (CBGWMA) since 1998. The CBGWMA was originally formed to address nitrate contamination in drinking water in Franklin, Grant, Adams, and a portion of Lincoln County. Since its inception, agricultural producers have looked for innovative ways to ensure that nitrogen in the soil profile is put to beneficial use and is not leached out into the groundwater.

## PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

One best management practice used to capture excess nitrogen in the soil profile is cover crops. Cover crops refer to herbaceous vegetation planted after a farmer's primary crop is harvested. With funding from the Washington State Conservation Commission, the Franklin Conservation District was able to offer cost-share assistance to eight producers to implement cover crops on 3,353 acres during the 2014 growing season. In addition to recycling excess nitrogen in the soil profile, cover crops have the added benefit of reducing soil erosion from wind and water, increasing soil organic matter, and minimizing and reducing soil compaction.



After - established cover crop.  
Credit: Lenwood Farms

**KEY PARTNERS:** Washington State Conservation Commission; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Providence Farms LLC; Lenwood Farms; Middleton Six Farms; T & R Farms; Roundy Farms; Riley Farms; Mullen Farms; and Sagebrush Farms

## More Work to Do!

- Implement \$350,000 appropriated by the State Legislature to bring a deep furrow conservation drill to the manufacturing level.
- Utilize water quality funding from the Washington State Conservation Commission to convert inefficient irrigation systems to efficient ones.
- Wheat Week educational program expansion continues with eight educators serving the west side of the state, four serving central Washington, and four providing services to eastern Washington.

# Grant County Conservation District

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



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

2015 Feature Accomplishment:

## Youngren dairy waste management system

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** The Youngren project was the number one resource concern for Grant County Conservation District (GCCD). After the dairy was purchased, we soon realized the lagoon used to store liquid manure would be too small for the projected herd size. A lagoon without adequate capacity fills up too fast, forcing applications or even overtopping during the non-growing season. There didn't appear to be any engineering oversight during original construction, and the district felt the lagoon could contaminate groundwater because it was built on porous soils without a liner.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** The GCCD worked with the dairy, engineers, liner providers, and construction companies to ensure this project was completed per required specifications and procedures. The dairy contributed a lot of money to complete the waste management system, which cost much more than the lagoon and liner. Joe Youngren has handed over operation of the dairy to his children who have strong conservation goals and visions. With safe liquids storage, separation, and composting in place, the dairy was able to sign agreements with a local farmer who plans to apply the nutrients for several years.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Washington State Conservation Commission; Orange Dairy Service; Torrence Engineering; NW Linings Inc.



"Before" picture showing the area where the lagoon would go. A leaky transfer hose and muddy conditions were normal before the project. Credit: Lyle Stoltman



Installation completed. Not pictured is all the concrete, pumps, and other appurtenances that were essential to make the system work properly. Credit: Lyle Stoltman

## Other Accomplishments

- Irrigated windbreak with pollinator plants at large composting facility
- Waste transfer structure at organic dairy
- Waste transfer and storage improvements at goat dairy
- Rotational grazing improvements at beef ranch
- Lined lagoon and waste system improvements at hog farm
- Buried mainline and sprinkler improvements at seed farm
- Waste storage slab at large egg facility
- Erosion control plan and tree planting on Smyrna Bench
- Irrigation water system improvements at feedlot
- Heavy use concrete slab at dairy
- Manure separation improvements at dairy
- Manure utilization improvements at five dairies
- Drip irrigation and cover crop at small farm

## More Work to Do!

- Moses Lake shoreline protection project
- Lined lagoon at dairy
- Rotational grazing fencing at four farms
- Pivot to drip irrigation conversion at vineyard
- Orchard erosion control project
- Polyacrylamide (PAM) applications on irrigated farm
- Facilitate annual Sustainability Conference
- Develop and update nutrient management plans for dairies and feedlots
- Plan and coordinate annual Othello Sandhill Crane Festival



# Grays Harbor Conservation District

Mike Nordin, District Manager  
330 W Pioneer Avenue Montesano, WA 98586  
(360) 249-8532 | plutroll@willapabay.org | graysharborcd.wordpress.com  
Board Chair: Carl Waara

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

## Other Accomplishments



This Mitigation Report shows excessive sedimentation on Grays Harbor oyster beds.



Cranberry producer assistance: Installed eight chemigation units and 1,075 feet of crib and covers.



Two Chehalis flood plain farm pads constructed

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Forest Stewardship Program: Keeping forests healthy and productive



GHCD small forest landowners map

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Without a good forest management plan, a timber crop will decrease in overall forest health and production. Essentially, a forest management plan is a road map that will help guide your management decisions to reach your goals while protecting the health of your forest. Forest management plan activities might include timber harvesting, wildlife habitat development, and invasive species, road management, and erosion control.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** The Grays Harbor Conservation District (GHCD) service forester completed five forest stewardship plans totaling 639.2 acres. In addition, he certified two new tree farms into the American Tree Farm System totaling 574.6 acres, and renewed seven more certifications totaling 697 acres. GHCD provided forestry technical assistance for a total of 2075 acres. The GHCD service forester was named consultant for the Western Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education project testing efficacy of different modes of western red cedar seedling protection. The research site consists of approximately seven acres located in Grays Harbor County. He also hosted the Spring Forestry Workshop at Grays Harbor College.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Grays Harbor College; Washington Farm Forestry Association; American Tree Farm System; WA Department of Fish and Wildlife; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; and the Department of Natural Resources Small Landowner Office



Grays Harbor College forest field day

## More Work to Do!

- Water resources: Continue to remove identified fish passage barriers and to work with cranberry producers on installation of approved water quality best management practices.
- Forestland: Continue to provide forest management plans, technical assistance, and educational opportunities to non-industrial private forest landowners.
- Cropland: Work with agricultural producers on conservation plans and ensure shellfish production continues.

# Jefferson County Conservation District

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



State Legislative District #24  
Congressional District #6

2015 Feature Accomplishment:

## Chimacum Watershed water quality and fish: A comprehensive review

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Chimacum Watershed is located in East Jefferson County on the Olympic Peninsula. Agriculture has been the dominant land use activity since the turn of the 20th century. Coho, Chum, Steelhead, and Cutthroat Trout inhabit the watershed, and the creek empties into a shellfish producing bay. Since the '80s, best management practices including livestock exclusion fencing and buffered plantings have been implemented, but no long-term studies have measured the impacts or been used to guide land management decisions.



Students from Chimacum School collect data by fish trapping along Chimacum Creek. Credit: B. Marston



Fishery Biologist, Glenn Gately, collecting water quality samples. Credit: JCCD

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** Jefferson County Conservation District completed a 2015 Chimacum Watershed Comprehensive Report that synthesizes water quality and fish data that has been collected since the early '70s and consistently by the district since 1996. This report establishes a baseline for future studies and shows water quality trends over time. Trends include: decreasing fecal coliform concentrations, decreasing water temperature, increasing trends of juvenile Coho and Chum in restoration sites, and a greater frequency of human-source fecal coli-

form than ruminant. Findings will be used to guide future best management practices and land management recommendations in this watershed.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Jefferson County Environmental Health Department; US Environmental Protection Agency; North Olympic Salmon Coalition; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; Chimacum School Pie Program; Washington Conservation Corps; Jefferson Land Trust; WSU Extension; Washington Department of Ecology

## Other Accomplishments

- Constructed three solar power off-channel watering facilities and associated fencing for a livestock cooperator that resulted in getting cattle out of a salmon-bearing stream.
- Completed a Pollution Identification and Correction Plan and an associated best management practices prioritized list in collaboration with Jefferson County Environmental Health.
- Established an At-cost Soil Testing Program that resulted in over 40 soil tests and led to a number of farm and pasture plans.
- Completed a stream remainder project that included installation of large woody debris, raptor poles, and a forested buffer in order to improve the quality of salmon habitat.

## More Work to Do!

- Conduct a two-year (2015-2017) water quality monitoring study in the Hood Canal Priority Basin in collaboration with Jefferson County Environmental Health.
- Assist in leading a six-week Upland Watershed Steward Training Program.
- Complete two shellfish projects that will improve the quality of water flowing into Port Townsend Bay.
- Initiate three new Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program forested buffers totaling 26.2 acres.



# King Conservation District

Brandy Reed, Interagency Director of Conservation Projects  
1107 SW Grady Way, Suite 130 Renton, WA 98057  
(425) 282-1900 | info@kingcd.org | www.kingcd.org  
Board Chair: Dick Ryon

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

## Other Accomplishments



In November, the Metropolitan King County Council unanimously passed the five-year work plan and budget that King Conservation District had built with its stakeholders.



King Conservation District showcased 15 environmental stewardship projects it supported through partner organizations on local National Public Radio station KUOW.



King Conservation District provided Landowner Incentive Program funds for an innovative self-composter to this cooperator that works with differently-able kids and teens.

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Agricultural Drainage Assistance Program revives farmland



Reed canarygrass chokes the drainage ditch before the project begins.  
Photo: Mark Musick

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** King County has an estimated 1,837 farms on 46,717 acres, with annual sales of \$121 million. Over the past few decades much of the county’s best farmland has become impacted by poor field drainage, and the threat has been compounded by rapid urbanization, which promotes increased stormwater runoff. This spring 120 land-owners responded to a preliminary King Conservation District survey, reporting drainage problems impacting an estimated 3,434 acres of land in the county.

### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

In 2015, the King Conservation District partnered with King County to significantly expand the Agricultural Drainage Assistance Program, with a goal of bringing land considered “too wet to farm” back into production. In the program’s first year we assisted five land-owners with clearing a total of 11,300 linear feet of clogged drainage ditches, returning an estimated 165 acres to full production. Snoqualmie Valley cattle rancher Bobbi Lindemulder said, “Drainage problems have been building on our land for more than twenty years, and we’re thrilled to finally get the work done.”



Water quality is monitored regularly during the drainage project to check for turbidity. Photo: Mark Musick

**KEY PARTNERS:** King County Flood Control District; King County Water and Land Resources Division; Snoqualmie Valley Preservation Alliance

## More Work to Do!

- Launching a Regional Food System Grant Program to address gaps in the production, distribution, and access of local produce and protein!
- Working with cities to implement urban forestry programs that will improve canopy cover and other green infrastructure on public and private lands across the district!
- Bringing shoreline restoration to urban environments through new and enhanced partnerships with our member cities!

# Kitsap Conservation District

Joy Garitone, District Coordinator  
10332 Central Valley Road Poulso, WA 98370  
(360) 204-5529 | kcd@conserveva.net | www.kitsapcd.org  
Board Chair: Albert Allpress



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

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Kitsap County Fairgrounds low impact development retrofit



Before stormwater treatment best management practices

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** In 2010, the Kitsap Public Health District monitoring data indicated Barker Creek did not meet Part 2 of the Washington State Fecal Coliform Standard. Additionally, the mouth of Barker Creek at Dyes Inlet was classified as prohibited by the Washington State Department of Health for gathering shellfish due to pollution from Barker Creek. Manure, sediment, and runoff of stormwater from the Kitsap County Fairgrounds was a major contributor to these issues.

### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Low impact development retrofits and farm best management practices were installed at the Kitsap County Fairgrounds to reduce stormwater runoff volume and sediments and prevent bacteria and nutrients from contaminating Barker Creek and Dyes Inlet shellfish beds. Project accomplishments include: 106,252 square feet of roof area infiltrated; 11,500 square feet of pervious asphalt road installed; and 10,000 square feet of asphalt areas diverted into infiltration systems for a total of 127,752 square feet of hard surfaces infiltrated. Three waste storage structures were constructed; one storm pond redesigned and enlarged to infiltrate instead of impound; and six tours were given.



Pervious pavement application to infiltrate stormwater

**KEY PARTNERS:** Kitsap County Public Works - Clean Water Kitsap; State Conservation Commission; Kitsap Public Health District; Kitsap County Parks & Recreation; Department of Ecology; WSU Extension

### Other Accomplishments



Infiltration for Kitsap County Fairgrounds



Photo taken with our GoPro camera during a salmon run



Culvert replacement project to enhance fish passage

### More Work to Do!

- Several very large floodplain native plantings scheduled for 2016. This will utilize 64,000+ plants from the Plant Materials Center.
- Stormwater pond retrofits that naturalize detention ponds to provide habitat and lower county maintenance costs.



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 | a-lael@conservewa.net | www.kccd.net  
Board Chair: Mark Moore

## Other Accomplishments



A pump station and fish screen was installed on Cherry Creek as part of the Irrigation Efficiencies Program (IEP). This is one of two IEP projects in FY15.



In cooperation with Kittitas County Fire District No. 7, offered a roving chipper to landowners as they work to reduce wildland fire risk.



Worked with the Wagon Wheel Community to replace a culvert with a 40' x 14' steel bridge through the Family Forest Fish Passage Program.

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Protecting water quality and quantity with sprinkler conversion projects



Installing the irrigation water mainline for the sprinkler system.

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Water quantity and water quality are the highest priority resource concerns identified by the Kittitas County Conservation District (KCCD) Board of Supervisors. KCCD is working toward meeting the 2016 goals of the Upper Yakima River Suspended Sediment TMDL (water clean-up plan) and reducing demand for irrigation water. Croplands have been primarily irrigated with rill irrigation systems. Rill irrigation is less efficient than sprinklers and result in tailwater that can transport sediment and nutrients, impacting water quality.

### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

KCCD assembled a list of landowners interested in converting to sprinkler systems. The list included dozens of landowners and thousands of acres. Using water quality funding from the Washington State Conservation Commission, KCCD completed seven projects in FY14 and another seven in FY15, involving a total of 950 acres. This impact was significant, particularly given the drought emergency in 2015. The list of landowners and potential projects remains high, and KCCD continues to search for additional funding sources to work toward the 2016 TMDL goals and to assist landowners effected by the drought conditions.



The completed center pivot sprinkler system.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Washington State Conservation Commission

## More Work to Do!

- Convert irrigation systems to more efficient sprinkler systems on 110 acres using water quality funds from the Washington State Conservation Commission.
- Implement Irrigation Efficiencies Program projects on 100 acres, resulting in 300 acre-feet in the Trust Water Rights program.
- Construct a fish passage and fish screen project with Ellensburg Water Company on Coleman Creek to correct two fish passage barriers and screen 15 cubic feet of water per second.
- Complete wildfire fuels reduction projects with 10 landowners.

# Lewis County Conservation District

Bob Amrine, District Manager

1554 Bishop Road, Suite 100 Chehalis, WA 98532

(360) 748-0083 | bob.amrine@wa.usda.gov | lewiscountycd.wordpress.com

Board Chair: Dave Fenn



State Legislative District #19, 20  
Congressional District #3

2015 Feature Accomplishment:

## Conservation Commission funding goes out to cooperators

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** The Lewis County Conservation District (LCCD) has numerous landowners with approved conservation plans waiting to get cost share to implement practices. We also had several landowners concerned with protecting their livestock from future flooding who requested funding for livestock/equipment pads or evacuation routes. The practices vary in type and cost, but all lead to the protection of natural resources or animals. Our main priority is protecting water quality for future generations.



Dry stack facility.  
Photo: Lewis County CD



Livestock/Equipment pad.  
Photo: Lewis County CD

### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Lewis County Conservation District provided cost share to 23 cooperators, completing an evacuation route, eight livestock pads, and three equipment pads. We also implemented 13 best management practices, including a separator, agitator, underground mainlines, walkways and trails, heavy use area, cover crop, four fish

habitat projects, and four dry stack facilities. The district was able to provide 75 or 100 percent cost share to the landowners for these projects. Total expenditures were \$753,632 with \$629,766 provided as cost share. Livestock owner John Brunoff stated, "I have a sense of security knowing that if we ever have a flood event I can run my cows right up the critter pad and they will be safe."

**KEY PARTNERS:** The Washington State Conservation Commission was our main partner in constructing these projects, providing technical assistance and travel funds in addition to the cost share dollars to ensure the money is put on the ground as planned. Lewis County was instrumental in helping with permitting. The City of Centralia permitted one of the livestock pads. We also worked with the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife to permit the fish habitat project, and local tribes were notified during the permit process for the pads.

## Other Accomplishments



Constructing dry stack  
Photo: Lewis County CD



Livestock/Equipment pad  
Photo: Lewis County CD



Compost Facility  
Photo: Lewis County CD

## More Work to Do!

- Additional cost share projects - two dry stacks currently going through cultural resource review.
- Fish passage projects.
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program plantings.
- Irrigation Water Management education and plans.



State Legislative District #13  
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](mailto:ebowen@wadistrict.net) | [www.lincolncd.com](http://www.lincolncd.com)  
Board Chair: Mike Carstensen

## Other Accomplishments



Mike Finch (Dept. of Fish and Wildlife) helps the district install bird species signs at Reardan's Audubon Lake through our Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account grant.



Field border display board set up in our office as part of the Verle Kaiser Conservation Endowment.



District staff with City of Davenport staff on the day we cooperatively planted 200 trees as part of a windbreak for the city.

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Ken Korn's wildlife habitat tree planting and windbreak



District manager Elsa Bowen demonstrates the proper technique of planting bare root stock trees to Reardan Middle School eighth grade students.

### RESOURCE CHALLENGE

Lincoln County resident Ken Korn's had a goal of establishing a tree planting that could act as a windbreak and a wildlife shelter. The trees would help control wind erosion on the hillside and provide valuable habitat to a variety of animals, including small mammals, owls, and other birds of prey. This was a great opportunity for Lincoln County Conservation District (LCCD) to coordinate with multiple partners and help Ken realize his project goal.

### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

LCCD relied on the cooperation of several partners to successfully complete this project. A local school's eighth grade class volunteered their time to help plant the trees, including 200 blue spruce and 200 Austrian pine trees. The landowner pre-dug hundreds of holes and lined them with landscaping fabric to boost the survivability of the trees. Drip irrigation was also installed to each of the trees. The district used grant funding from the Washington State Conservation Commission to cost-share 50 percent of the trees, materials, and labor. Over the coming years, the district will work with the landowner to monitor tree survival.



Lincoln County Conservation District employees helping to plant the trees despite a cold March rain.

**KEY PARTNERS:** State Conservation Commission; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; Reardan School District; landowner Ken Korn's

## More Work to Do!

- Dept. of Fish and Wildlife Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account grant to install bird identification signs on the north trail of Reardan's Audubon Lake.
- Fort Spokane Fuels Reduction grant (Firewise).
- Sage-grouse roadside fuel breaks grant.
- Verle Kaiser Conservation Endowment 4th grade soil education field trip and tour.

# Mason Conservation District

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



State Legislative District #35  
Congressional District #6, 10

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Riparian restoration initiative

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Over the past century, riparian (streamside) habitat has been severely degraded by human-induced impacts. These habitats are the foundation and fundamental building blocks for protecting aquatic ecosystems and the species that depend on them. Riparian vegetated buffers provide a multitude of benefits including filtration of contaminants and excess nutrients, stabilization of stream banks and shorelines, shade to regulate water temperatures, a foundation for the aquatic food web, and a supply of wood.



Knotweed infestation  
Photo: Evan Bauder



Treated and restored riparian planting.  
Photo: Evan Bauder

## PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Invasive vegetation rapidly displaces native vegetation and takes over riparian habitats. Effective control begins at the upstream extent. Native plant establishment promotes naturally functioning riparian plant communities. Mason Conservation District is leading a riparian restoration initiative and received grant funding in 2009, 2013, and 2014. The district used computer based assessment of conditions to prioritize responses.

Infestation in one watershed is now considered under control. Considerable progress has been made by treating approximately 50 percent of the Skokomish watershed, and planting well over 400 acres of habitat. Leveraging multiple funding sources achieved considerable progress, but continued funding is needed.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Hood Canal Coordinating Council; Mason County Noxious Weed Control Board; Recreation and Conservation Office; Washington Department of Ecology; Skokomish Indian Tribe; Squaxin Island Indian Tribe; Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group; Forterra; Laird Norton Family Foundation

## Other Accomplishments



The district implemented the fifth phase of over 600 acres of restoration activities at the Skokomish River estuary in Hood Canal.

Photo: Rich Geiger



Continued collaboration with the Mason County Public Utility District 3 to install large wood log jams in John's Creek, a salmon bearing stream.

Photo: Gavin Glone

## More Work to Do!

The district continues to lead efforts to create a diversified economy, while protecting the natural resource heritage of the community. Population growth continues to pressure natural resources and wildlife. Water quality in wetlands, rivers, lakes, and marine waters continue to be impacted by increasing pollution in stormwater. Agricultural lands are being converted to other uses, threatening the availability of food.



# North Yakima Conservation District

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

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

## Other Accomplishments



NYCD's chipper and Washington Conservation Corp (WCC) crew performing fuels reduction and "Firewise" planning as part of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan for citizens of the Highway 410 and 12 corridors (with financial assistance from DNR).



NYCD's WCC crew removing Black Hawthorn as part of the "NYCD Apple Maggot Host Reduction Project" funded by the WSDA in cooperation with Yakima Co PCB.



Master Gardeners Foundation of Yakima Co's Annual Plant Sale held each spring in cooperation through a Memorandum of Agreement with NYCD.

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Jack Field riparian enhancement project - Ahtanum Creek

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Ahtanum Creek is impacted by grazing, erosion, high temperatures, bacteria, lack of shade, and a multitude of other issues. North Yakima Conservation District (NYCD) approached land operator Jack Field with a progressive farm plan to address all of the issues on his property, which borders the creek. Together, we decided the first steps in correcting the natural resource issues were to fence and manage the riparian areas and to provide an alternative off-stream watering system that would enhance the operator's grazing management needs.



District Engineer Loren Meagher and landowner Jack Field construct one of eight livestock watering facilities.



NYCD Natural Resource Specialist Brian Schmidt with solar panel / pump and well head for livestock watering facility.

## PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

A well with solar pump and eight livestock watering troughs were constructed to protect the creek from livestock access. In addition, 20 acres of managed riparian pasture and six rotational upland pastures were established with fencing. The first steps of this progressive farm plan have been very successful and led to the next phase of implementation. Working with adjacent landowners at a reach scale

(7200') with all associated riparian floodplain acres, NYCD will design and implement a stream restoration project in partnership with the Yakama Nation to address the natural resource issues impacting Ahtanum Creek.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation; Washington State Conservation Commission

## More Work to Do!

- Continue to implement and expand our successful Firewise Program to other areas.
- Develop stream restoration and floodplain connection projects in high priority watersheds.
- Implement our Farmland Preservation Program and partner with the Washington State Conservation Commission's Office of Farmland Preservation.

# Okanogan Conservation District

Craig Nelson, District Manager  
1251 2nd Avenue S, Rm 102 Okanogan, WA 98840  
(509) 422-0855 x110 | ocd@okanogancd.org | www.okanogancd.org  
Board Chair: Ivan Oberg



State Legislative District #7, 12  
Congressional District #4

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Carlton Complex Fire Recovery



Interagency Burned Area Recovery Team training for evaluating burn severity of the Carlton Complex Fire.

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** The 2014 Carlton Complex Fire burned 256,000 acres of private, state, federal, and tribal lands in Okanogan County. In addition to consuming hundreds of homes and other outbuildings, the fire damaged or destroyed hundreds of miles of agricultural fence, irrigation systems and crops, and livestock water facilities. Post-fire flooding caused additional extensive erosion

and debris flow damage. The Okanogan Conservation District is the lead for the agricultural and natural resource recovery effort on private lands.

### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

In 2015, the district provided critical post-wildfire disaster technical assistance to 300 landowners on over 44,000 acres. We also coordinated a multi-agency Burned Area Emergency Response evaluation of damaged area. To address post-fire risks and landslide hazards, we coordinated installation of emergency rain gauges, installed protection structures (under the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Emergency Watershed Protection program), partnered with the Okanogan County Noxious Weed Control Board on 2,223 acres of noxious weed control, coordinated outreach and education on post-fire damage and risks to landowners, and much more.



Constructed rock dike that will help protect home from post-wildfire flash flooding.

**KEY PARTNERS:** State Conservation Commission; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Kittitas, Thurston, Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom, Cascadia, Pacific, and Underwood Conservation Districts; Nat'l Weather Service; Office of Governor Jay Inslee; Departments of Ecology, Agriculture, Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife, and Emergency Management; Okanogan Co. Noxious Weed Control Board; Colville Confederated Tribes; Yakima Indian Nation; Methow Conservancy; Federal Emergency Management Agency; and many more

## Other Accomplishments



Home with good defensible space.  
Credit: Kristin Cook, Okanogan Conservation District



Staff and partners installing soil moisture equipment in cover crop demonstration area.



Installed fish screen that is compliant with current fish passage standards.  
Credit: Bob Clark, Okanogan Conservation District

## More Work to Do!

- Soil Cover Crops: Improve soil health and reduce erosion on dryland cropped fields using short duration cover crops.
- Firewise: Work with landowners to provide fire preparedness evaluations for homes and properties.
- Fire Recovery: Continue with post-fire recovery of the Carlton Complex, Okanogan Complex, and North Star Fires.
- Wildlife Conservation Planning: Working with landowners to improve wildlife habitat for targeted keystone species.



State Legislative District #19  
Congressional District #3

# Pacific Conservation District

Mike Nordin, District Manager  
904 W Robert Bush Drive South Bend, WA 98586  
(360) 875-6735 | [plutroll@willapabay.org](mailto:plutroll@willapabay.org) | [www.pacificcd.wordpress.com](http://www.pacificcd.wordpress.com)  
Board Chair: Mark Ashley

## Other Accomplishments



Financially assisted five shellfish farmers to treat for *Zostera japonica* on shellfish beds.



Financially assisted 19 cranberry producers with 47 chemigation check valve units.



Completed seven forest stewardship plans on 617.83 acres; consulted on additional 804 acres; and completed one new American Tree Farm Certification (70 acres).

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Removing fish barriers on Schopchiden and Barber creeks

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** There are many places in Washington where man-made structures prevent fish from accessing traditional habitat and spawning areas. In Pacific County, a fish barrier was located where Schopchiden Creek drains into Willapa Bay. Here, a dike was built with a tidegate to regulate flow in and out of the estuary and maintain water elevations on the upstream property, but the tidegate was a barrier to fish passage. At Barber Creek, a sub-tributary of the lower Willapa River, there was a two-foot diameter polyvinyl chloride (PVC) round culvert with an excessive slope that was undersized and often plugged with material that blocked fish passage in the small stream.



Top: Schopchiden Creek after dike removal. Bottom: Barber Creek Family Forest Fish Passage Program

### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Pacific Conservation District worked with landowners to remove the dike, tidegate, and culvert opening the stream channel for full restoration of estuarine functions. Removal of this dike provided access to 3.38 miles of habitat for Coho, Sea-run Cutthroat, and Steelhead, and juvenile Chum and Chinook. A bridge was replaced farther upstream of the dike to allow the landowners access to their property. Watch the full restoration in this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=os5Yow02ZVk>.

The Barber Creek culvert was replaced with a steel bridge 30-feet long by 14-feet wide allowing for fish passage. This correction improved access to 1.14 miles of habitat for Chum, Coho, Steelhead and Sea-run Cutthroat.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Recreation and Conservation Office; Family Forest Fish Passage Program; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; Department of Natural Resources

## More Work to Do!

- Continue to plan and implement Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) projects.
- Implement Phase 2 of the Naselle River Salmon Restoration Project.
- Work to ensure shellfish production and water quality in Willapa Bay.
- Work with small forest landowners to ensure management plans are received and up to date.

# Palouse Conservation District

Jennifer Boie, Director  
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

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Livestock facility relocation and improvements

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Palouse River Watershed residents are working together to address local water quality concerns. Local landowners are redesigning livestock facilities to improve their operations, remove livestock direct access to the river, and reestablish trees and shrubs along the river to improve water quality and provide wildlife habitat. These projects improve water quality by reducing runoff from surrounding land uses, stabilizing eroding stream banks, and providing shade to reduce water temperatures.



Off-stream heavy use area includes fencing, off-stream water, shelter, access road, and waste storage facility.

Credit: Drew Schuldt



Riparian buffer including native trees and shrubs was established along South Fork Palouse River at the previous location of the livestock facility.

Credit: Drew Schuldt

### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Palouse Conservation District staff worked with landowners to understand their goals and then design and implement a project that would both improve water quality and maintain a profitable livestock operation. This was achieved by relocating the livestock facility area away from the South Fork Palouse River. The improved off-stream livestock facility includes a heavy use protection area with off-stream watering, livestock shelters, fencing, access road, and a waste storage

facility. Native trees, shrubs, and grass were established along the South Fork Palouse River providing a riparian buffer to improve water quality and habitat.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Local landowner with funding from the Washington State Conservation Commission

## Other Accomplishments



Ecology Conservation Crew, AmeriCorps, and community volunteers work together to restore riparian habitat on Union Flat Creek. Credit: Jennifer Boie



Expanded direct seed cost share program helps more producers reduce erosion and increase soil health. Credit: Terry Travis



Small acreage livestock improvements: 1 acre perimeter fence to exclude livestock from river, 425' off-stream water pipeline, and riparian restoration.

Credit: Drew Schuldt

## More Work to Do!

- Palouse Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Pilot to expand CREP eligibility in the Palouse River Watershed.
- Palouse River Watershed Implementation Partnership (funded through NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program) to increase producer options and incentives for conservation tillage, riparian buffer establishment, and agricultural conservation easements.
- Snake River Salmon Recovery funded projects to remove anadromous fish barriers and improve fish habitat.



State Legislative District #9  
Congressional District #5

# Palouse Rock Lake Conservation District

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

## Other Accomplishments



Soil Health Tour brings landowners together to learn how healthy soils improve sustainability and profits.



Specialized equipment can measure how improved soil health can increase water infiltration and improve moisture retention.



Landowner utilizing the Washington Conservation Corps to build fence along a riparian forest buffer project along Pine Creek.

Photos: James Schierman

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: High residue drill demonstration

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Soil erosion is the highest resource concern in the Palouse Rock Lake Conservation District. The loss of productive soil decreases farm income, negatively impacts water quality, and decreases wildlife habitat. Higher levels of residue (plant stubble) on land reduce impacts from water and wind that create erosion. Seeding crops into high levels of residue requires specialized equipment, called direct-seed drills. This project used five different drills to seed into high residue areas and allowed farmers to compare results.



Cooperators observing the Shelborne Reynolds Stripper header in operation

Credit: James Schierman



Direct seed drill owners describing their equipment. Credit: James Schierman

## PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

The demonstration on the Tracy Eriksen Farm was designed to show how five direct-seed drills would seed into high amounts of winter wheat stubble harvested with the stripper header. The header only harvests the kernels of grain off the plant, leaving all the straw for future use. The purpose of using this type of combine header is to increase residue, which will improve moisture conditions at seeding. Each of the drills used, either

disc or hoe, were able to seed into the residue dependent on how a cooperator would manage the residue after harvest. By increasing residue, the low rainfall area can now utilize direct seeding.

**KEY PARTNERS:** USDA Agriculture Research Service Pullman; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Lenskov Farms; Pacific Northwest Direct Seed Association; LM Farms; Kile Farms; Willada Farms; Westfield Property

## More Work to Do!

- Install 25 miles of Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) work along streams and rivers.
- Complete six miles of work through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)-Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).
- Implement 5,000 acres of direct seed through the RCPP Kamiak Creek EQIP Project.
- Complete 40 “Farmed Smart Certifications” with the Pacific Northwest Direct Seed Association.

# Pend Oreille Conservation District

David Marcell, District Manager  
121 N Washington Avenue Newport, WA 99156  
(509) 447-1155 | davidm@pocd.org | www.pocd.org  
Board Chair: George Stuiwenga



State Legislative District #7  
Congressional District #5

2015 Feature Accomplishment:

## Livestock exclusion fencing and off-site watering in Pend Oreille



One of two newly installed off-site watering facilities. Credit: Mark Simpson, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Historic resource extraction, agricultural clearing, poor land management practices, and development pressures have resulted in significant impacts to water resources and water quality in Pend Oreille County. Sections of the Little Spokane River and its tributaries do not meet Washington state water quality standards for fecal coliform, temperature, and turbidity due to issues such as riparian vegetation losses, stream bank erosion, and forestry and agricultural practices.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** To address these water quality concerns, Pend Oreille Conservation District (POCD) installed two miles of exclusion fencing and two off-site watering facilities on a small livestock operation in Pend Oreille County. By excluding livestock surface water access, the potential for fecal coliform contamination will be reduced. Additionally, the offsite watering facilities will attract livestock away from high traffic areas while improving herd health with consistent, cleaner water. To prevent further water contamination, POCD intends to write and implement a nutrient management plan for the same landowner.

**KEY PARTNERS:** USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Exclusion fencing will keep livestock and manure away from the slough below.

Credit: Mark Simpson, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service



## Other Accomplishments

- After a temporary closure this past spring, POCD is now operating and assisting landowners again after the hire of new District Manager, David Marcell.
- POCD partnered with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to develop plans for a riparian buffer project that will eliminate three acres of invasive reed canarygrass and establish over 5,500 native riparian plants.
- POCD continued to establish riparian plantings at the Verbrugge Environmental Center. This project will serve as a demonstration education site for Whitworth College students interested in natural resource restoration and conservation.

## More Work to Do!

- Increase partner outreach and continued planning with Kalispel Indian Tribe to establish a local, native plant nursery.
- Develop a Small Farm Program focusing on nutrient management and irrigation efficiencies.
- Increase education and outreach efforts, targeting landowners that have not yet utilized conservation district programs.



# Pierce Conservation District

Ryan Mello, Executive Director  
5430 66th Avenue E Puyallup, WA 98371  
(253) 845-9770 | info@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



McKinley business district depave (Tacoma): over 8,000 square feet of pavement removed and replaced with 34 trees and 2,600 shrubs. Photo: Brian Dalbalcon



Through volunteer gleanings and other community food projects, Harvest Pierce County donated over 100,000 pounds of fresh food to local food banks. Photo: Allan Warren



Reise Farm restoration: invasive species were removed and replaced with nearly 800 native plants to restore the riparian habitat of Ball Creek. Photo: Brian Dalbalcon

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Large horse boarding facility improvement project



Before and after rain gutter installation: 567,000 gallons of rainwater are now annually infiltrated into the ground  
Photo: Sofia Gidlund

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** A large horse boarding facility located within 200 feet of a sensitive shellfish growing marine environment was experiencing serious mud conditions on wet and steeply sloped land. Water quality sampling below the site confirmed high levels of bacteria in runoff from the facility. The water quality close to this boarding facility has seen deteriorating results for several years, and areas previously safe for shellfish harvesting are now being downgraded.

### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

With State Conservation Commission and Department of Health Pollution Identification and Correction funding, Pierce Conservation District worked with landowners to construct exclusion fencing and plant approximately 500 native plants to absorb and filter water in a buffer area along a gully. We also built a waste storage structure on a 40-foot by 18-foot concrete slab with a roof to eliminate an uncovered manure pile located near the gully. To remedy muddy pasture conditions, we installed approximately 10,000 square feet of winter paddocks. New gutters were installed to reduce wet conditions around the barn, and about 567,000 gallons (annually) of rainwater is routed into underground ditches away from heavily used areas. The driveway was also re-engineered.



Exclusion fencing and a replanted slope leading into the gully prevent runoff pollution  
Photo: Sofia Gidlund

**KEY PARTNERS:** Washington Department of Ecology; Department of Health; State Conservation Commission; Tacoma Pierce County Health Department; Pierce County Surface Water Management

## More Work to Do!

- Meeker Creek restoration project - Partnership project with the City of Puyallup to restore Meeker Creek.
- Dropstone Farm stream restoration - 2,500 foot planting adjacent to previously installed cross-fencing.
- Japanese knotweed eradication and riparian habitat enhancement throughout the Nisqually and Puyallup watersheds.
- Providing technical and resource support to 75 community gardens and over 2,500 community gardeners.

# 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

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Cooperative effort launches pilot riparian project

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** During the 1930s-50s, most of the trees and shrubs along Pine Creek were removed and the grass plowed up because the land was so productive for dryland crop farming in the Palouse region. This led to minimal stream shading, streambank erosion, and rapid entry of field soil erosion into the creek during storm events. Consequently, water leaving Pine Creek and entering the Snake and Columbia River system is often high in temperature and loaded with sediments and possibly pesticides.



Planting trees along Pine Creek with school kids.



A few areas along Pine Creek remain in near native condition.

### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

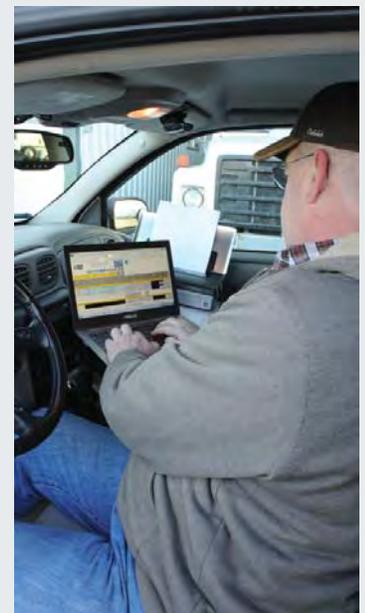
Pine Creek Conservation District worked with the Palouse and Palouse Rock Lake Conservation Districts to create a pilot Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) project to restore riparian areas along targeted streams in the Palouse Basin, such as Pine Creek. Through CREP, landowners in this area will have the opportunity to receive financial incentives for restoring riparian areas on their property. The goal of this pilot project is to see if we can provide a measurable reduction in sediment and temperature of the water eventually entering salmon bearing streams. This project was approved recently, and we are working on our first CREP project along Pine Creek.

**KEY PARTNERS:** USDA Farm Service Agency; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Washington State Conservation Commission; Palouse Rock Lake Conservation District; Palouse Conservation District

### Other Accomplishments



Conversion to direct seed systems is a high priority for the district.



Manager completing an on-site field inventory.

### More Work to Do!

- Continue promotion and implementation of direct seed systems.
- Implement the federal Regional Conservation Partnership Program to get more conservation projects on the ground.
- Continue and expand the district's assistance with implementing precision agriculture and variable rate technology adoption by producers.
- Continue to build partnerships with other entities.



State Legislative District #9  
Congressional District #5

# Pomeroy Conservation District

Duane Bartels, District Manager

910 Main St PO Box 468 Pomeroy, WA 99347

(509) 843-5008 | pcdistrict@qwestoffice.net | www.pomeroycd.com

Board Chair: Kyle Pearson

## Other Accomplishments



Rainfall Simulator after demonstration showing the big difference between soil that is projected with residue where water is allowed to infiltrate.

Credit: Duane Bartels



Trailer used to store and transport Rainfall Simulator.

Credit: Duane Bartels

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Using Beaver Dam Analogs in Pataha Creek



Ecological crew installing one of eight BDAs on lower Pataha Creek

Credit: Duane Bartels

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Pomeroy Conservation District began using artificial beaver dams, known as Beaver Dam Analogs (BDAs), to improve stream habitat for salmon and steelhead in Pataha Creek. Areas adjacent to the BDA structures are showing an increased water table in subsurface zones beneath and alongside the river, leading to a greater success of natural riparian restoration. This may show that a simple, economical, and effective practice can help heal some of the damage done over the years.

## PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

The district applied for and received funding from the Snake River Salmon Recovery Board to complete BDA projects. While it's still early in project implementation, results from similar projects have indicated that BDAs help improve riparian habitat in a natural and economical way. This year, the district completed a demonstration, testing, and data gathering period. Over the next two years, over 200 BDAs will be installed throughout the Pataha Watershed in partnership with numerous landowners. The data gathered this year will inform where to place additional structures and how they affect different areas.



Aerial photo of completed artificial beaver dam on lower Pataha Creek

Credit: Duane Bartels

**KEY PARTNERS:** Ecological Services Inc.; Recreation and Conservation Office; Snake River Salmon Recovery Board; State Conservation Commission; Archer Farms; Ray DeRuwe; Robert Cox

## More Work to Do!

- Continue to offer cost share to farmers and ranchers to help them implement the best and most effective conservation practices available to reduce erosion.
- Continue to work in partnership with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency to enroll more riparian areas into the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) on those streams that are eligible; Work to encourage re-enrollment in the program.
- Assist County Commissioners in starting the Voluntary Stewardship Program.

# San Juan Islands Conservation District

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



State Legislative District #40  
Congressional District #2

2015 Feature Accomplishment:

## Partners in conservation: Old Sundstrom Farm

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Old Sundstrom Farm is a 200-acre farm located on the upper east fork of False Bay Creek, a historic salmon bearing creek. The owners of the farm wanted to address habitat concerns by implementing practices to improve and protect soil health and water quality. Lack of riparian buffers along False Bay Creek resulted in soil degradation, reduced vegetative cover, and poor water quality. Testing confirmed high bacteria loads above state standards resulting from livestock access to the creek.



Before photo: cows in creek  
Photo: Bruce Gregory



Planning meeting  
Photo: Linda Lyshall

tion Trust and a descendant of an old island farming family who is committed to conservation and sustainable agriculture. In summary, her words to us: “Thank you, thank you, thank you!”

**KEY PARTNERS:** Betsy Dues-Sundstrom, property owner; San Juan Preservation Trust, property owner; San Juan County, project funder; Washington State Department of Health, project funder; Scott Meyers, sustainable agriculture consultant; Tom Lawson, livestock owner

## PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Working with our partners, we installed fencing and livestock watering facilities to keep the cattle out of the creek. We also implemented best management farming practices to improve livestock health, restore habitat, and create a working model for neighboring farmers. Water quality testing completed after the project showed marked improvement, well within state standards. The land is owned jointly by the San Juan Preservation

## Other Accomplishments



As a founding member of Islands Climate Resilience we are actively working on climate resiliency planning in collaboration with local partners. Photo: Doug McCutchen



A view from the top. Annual meeting of the San Juan Islands Terrestrial Managers Work Group, coordinated by the conservation district.

Photo: Linda Lyshall



Soil Carbon Challenge workshop. Setting up a research plot to measure carbon sequestration.

Photo: Linda Lyshall

## More Work to Do!

- Participate in our Voluntary Stewardship Program to enhance sustainable agriculture and protect critical areas.
- Streamline our farm and forest management planning processes to increase efficiency and meet a growing demand.
- Contribute to the San Juan Islands Climate Action Plan.
- Restore the False Bay Watershed through collaborative partnerships.



# 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



Installation of a heavy use area protection project in the Samish Watershed.



A volunteer in the Cascade River Park community takes a soil moisture reading at the community fire weather station.



Family Forest Fish Passage Program project that replaced a ford in Mannser Creek with a prefab concrete bridge, giving fish access to over a mile of stream.

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Clean Samish Initiative 90-day Blitz



Samish Bay and Samish Island with oyster beds in the foreground. The Samish River is visible to the left of the oyster beds.

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** The Clean Samish Initiative has been striving to improve the health of the Samish Watershed since 2010. With coordination provided by the Governor’s Shellfish Office, the Skagit Conservation District and Skagit County were co-sponsors of an intensive 90-day effort to identify and reduce sources of fecal coliform in the Samish Watershed and Samish Bay, which highlighted successes and on-going challenges. Although fecal bacteria is still trending to lower levels, these levels do not meet state water quality standards.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** The collaborative project identified the need for increased septic system inspections and maintenance, increased mud and manure management by livestock owners, continued focused water quality monitoring, strengthened partnerships between residents and agencies and increased landowner access to available resources to assist in fixing problems on their properties. Since 2010, fecal contamination has dropped roughly 80 percent, and the number of days that the shellfish beds are closed due to pollution has dropped significantly. (Summary excerpted from the June 18, 2015 Skagit County Public Works press release.)

**KEY PARTNERS:** Skagit County Public Works and Health Department; Washington Departments of Ecology, Health, and Agriculture; Samish Bay Shellfish Growers; Samish Indian Nation; Washington State Conservation Commission



Skagit Conservation District attended the 2015 Taylor Shellfish-tival and used the watershed model to teach people about shellfish and clean water.

## More Work to Do!

- Continue work with the Samish Focus Group to increase program participation and accelerate implementation of best management practices in the Samish Watershed.
- Increase Firewise awareness in Skagit County.
- Continue work with landowners to protect and/or enhance natural resources through the development of farm plans and implementation of best management practices.
- Increase the number of Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) participants through continued outreach.

# Snohomish Conservation District

Monte Marti, District Manager  
528 91st Ave NE, Suite A Lake Stevens, WA 98258-2538  
(425) 335-5634 x4 | staff@snohomishcd.org | www.snohomishcd.org  
Board Chair: Mark Craven



State Legislative District #1,10,21,32,38,39,44  
Congressional District #1, 2, 7

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Ocean acidification curriculum fills science education need

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Ocean acidification is recognized by Washington State as a serious threat to our \$270 million shellfish industry and the Puget Sound ecosystem. District educators recognized this as an impending threat and began looking into curriculum to address it with our youth and the public. Adding an ocean acidification lesson strengthens our education program and gives us the opportunity to teach a lesson on a topic that is critical to the economic and environmental health of our region and to the overall health of the ocean ecosystem.



Students at Jackson High School learn about pH in the ocean acidification lab exercise.

Photo: Roger Kelly



Students from the Ocean Research College Academy in Everett take samples from Port Gardner to monitor pH while being filmed for a video.

Photo: Richard McAdams

## PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Snohomish Conservation District offers an ocean acidification class to high school students providing an overview of impacts to Puget Sound's marine life. The class is based on a lesson developed by the University of Hawaii and modified to reflect Washington State's concerns on the serious impacts that this condition is having on Washington's shellfish industry and the 3,000 people working in the industry. District educators have reached 1,425 high school students and ten schools. The district received Conservation Commission funding to produce a video that will be shared with other Puget Sound districts and high schools around the state.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Center for Microbial Oceanography: Research and Education at the University of Hawaii; Tulalip Tribes; Ocean Research College Academy, Everett

## Other Accomplishments



State Conservation Commission shellfish funds helped two dairies implement waste transfer systems and two dairies with bedding recovery systems this summer. Photo: Brett de Vries



Installed an 81-foot long, 14-foot diameter bottomless culvert to replace one that blocked fish from getting to the Snohomish River. Photo: Ryan Williams



Developed a working buffer display to promote use by landowners to generate income from land taken out of production for buffers. Photo: Lois Ruskell

## More Work to Do!

- Puget Sound Conservation District work.
- Continue growth of two websites and social media.
- Partnerships with cities on stormwater and pollution.
- Continue promotion of healthy soils.
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program implementation.
- Partnerships with the agriculture community, Tribes, and Sustainable Lands Strategy group.



State Legislative District #12  
Congressional District #4

# South Douglas Conservation District

Carol Cowling, Coordinator  
206 N Chelan Ave, Waterville, WA 98858  
(509) 745-9160 | carol.cowling@gmail.com | www.southdouglascd.org  
Board Chair: Jeff Rock

## Other Accomplishments



Wildlife pond - cost share project



Dryland terrace - cost share project



Pasture fencing - cost share project

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Wildfire fuels reduction

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Drought and overcrowded forest conditions threaten the safety of people and property if a fire erupts. A small forest on Badger Mountain is one of the few forested areas in South Douglas Conservation District. As more residents move into the rural areas, projects that protect not only the environment but also personal property are needed. South Douglas Conservation District encourages fire prevention through education and cost share projects.

### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

The district provided cost share dollars to three different landowners. The cooperators were able to actively evaluate and reduce fire danger through thinning trees, limbing (removing branches), and reducing the undergrowth. The resulting slash piles will be chipped in the fall and spread on the forest floor.

The next step will be to involve more landowners through education and projects. “Firewise” assessments of landowners’ properties will isolate problems to be addressed. The district also has planned field days to promote fire prevention and reduce potential fuels.

**KEY PARTNERS:** USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Washington Department of Natural Resources; Bureau of Land Management; Private foresters



Forest property before (top) and after thinning (bottom)

## More Work to Do!

- Develop Firewise program in Douglas County.
- Complete cost share projects to prevent soil and wind erosion.
- Administer education program to promote all conservation in South Douglas Conservation District.

# South Yakima Conservation District

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



State Legislative District #14, 15  
Congressional District #4

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Small cost-share incentives = big results

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** The Lower Yakima Valley Groundwater Management Area was established in June 2012 due to high nitrates found in private wells. One potential source of nitrates in the groundwater is irrigated agriculture. Soil and water loss from surface irrigated agriculture results in the loss of precious top soil, and it takes numerous beneficial nutrients necessary for crop growth along with it. Unfortunately, these lost nutrients can have an impact on surface and groundwater quality.



Before: A 65 acre field of rill irrigated hops prior to conversion to drip irrigation.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** South Yakima Conservation District provided \$10,000 in cost-share assistance to convert 65 acres of hops from rill irrigation to drip irrigation. Converting rill irrigation to drip or sprinkler irrigation not only saves soil and water, it also prevents degradation to surface and groundwater quality. An estimated 10 tons per acre of soil erosion was eliminated, and 15 acre inches of water per acre were saved. Millions of gallons of water no longer leave the field. This large project had a total cost of well over \$200,000.



Mr. Ramos, manager of Segal Ranches, said, "Whatever cost-share you can help me with will go a long way to help with the cost."

After: Conversion to drip irrigation.

## Other Accomplishments



Our partners, Benton and Franklin Conservation Districts, provided 1,500 students with hands-on activities for the educational programs Salmon in the Classroom, Wheat Week, and Water on Wheels.

Credit: Benton Conservation District



Field soil sampling technical lead determining soil types for Lower Yakima Valley Ground Water Management Area Deep Soil Sampling Plan.



The district offers a no-till drill for rent that helped many growers preserve the little bit of moisture that was left in their soils due to this year's drought. It was used on 1,000 acres.

## More Work to Do!

- Continue to gather baseline data for potential nitrate leaching to groundwater through the Deep Soil Sampling Plan within the Lower Yakima Valley Ground Water Management Area.
- Conduct educational workshops for dairies and local growers focusing on nutrient and irrigation water management.
- Conduct six irrigation trials with soil moisture sensors and telemetry to automatically measure soil moisture in different soil types.



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



SCD completed nearly 200 Firewise Assessments in 2015. This is a 230 percent increase over 2014 in making forested properties more resistant to wildfire.

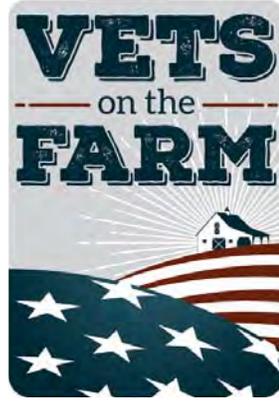


SCD completed three Family Forest Fish Passage Projects (FFPPP), which unlocked 15 miles of fish habitat that was previously blocked by culverts.



Since 2004, SCD has opened a total of 102 miles of trout rearing and spawning habitat. A finished FFPPP bridge is pictured.

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Vets on the Farm



**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** In the 2012 Agricultural Census, Washington State posted negative growth in the number of new farmers entering agriculture. The average age of the principle operator was 58 years old. At the same time, the post-9/11 veteran unemployment rate is higher than the national average, and vets are coming home in need of a new mission. At Spokane Conservation District (SCD), we see an opportunity to serve those who have served us by helping our returning military veterans get an education and internships in agriculture and conservation-related careers.

## PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

SCD launched *Operation New Mission: Vets on the Farm* with immediate and overwhelming community support. Most notably, a local farmer provided a two-acre parcel of land to be used as a demonstration and learning farm for the program. We continue to seek farmers and agriculture-related business owners to host veteran interns. These positions may be subsidized by the *Vets on the Farm* program. Veterans who are interested in the educational, mentoring, and internship opportunities of *Vets on the Farm* will have their skills and experience matched to opportunities as they arise. All SCD events feature a discount or full scholarship for veterans.



Randy Emtman drives the *Vets on the Farm* tractor through a local parade to raise awareness about the program.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Northwest Farm Credit Services; Upper Columbia Resource Conservation & Development; Emtman Brothers Farms; WSU Spokane County Extension; Spokane Community College; Spokane County Farm Bureau; USDA Risk Management Agency; USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service - Plant Pests and Diseases; USDA Farm Service Agency; and many more

## More Work to Do!

- Protect water quality with our On-Site Septic System Financial Assistance Program. In 2015, SCD provided loans and grants that resulted in 70 connections to municipal sewer and one drain field replacement.
- Re-align 1200' of existing Bear Creek channel (tributary to the Little Spokane River) to its historic channel; includes restoring wetlands and habitat through plantings.
- Prevent soil erosion with new Direct Seed Operations Loans.

# Stevens County Conservation District

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



State Legislative District #7  
Congressional District #5

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Empowering youth through natural resources education

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Southern Stevens County is becoming more suburban with rapid development. There's a need to educate new and long-time residents about water quality issues in Lake Spokane, where phosphorous levels and algal blooms are becoming a concern, but the sources are not easily identifiable. Stevens County Conservation District hosted a couple of workshops on best management practices to protect water quality (including composting and management of pet wastes), but — due to low public attendance — the district recognized we needed to try a different strategy to reach local residents and empower them to help protect and improve water quality.



Jennifer Hickenbottom of the Colville National Forest uses a stream table to explain channel forming processes during a sophomore field day.



Lakeside High School 6th and 7th graders learn that pollution can cause a river to burn while the beavers look on.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** Our district water quality coordinator worked with teacher Terri Sardinia and her Advanced Biology class at Lakeside High School to promote natural resource education in the community. The students received instruction from various agency and environmental group professionals. In turn, they used the information they learned to develop lesson plans and activities that they presented to lower grades. This information also likely reached parents and filtered into the community. Topics included forestry, aquatic insects, groundwater, nonpoint source pollution, streamside vegetation, and beavers' role in water storage.

**KEY PARTNERS:** USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Colville National Forest; Washington Department of Ecology; Lands Council; Washington Department of Natural Resources; North East Tri-County Health

## Other Accomplishments



Co-sponsored 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Big Tree Contest, where youth learn about and raise seedling trees. Event included the Biggest and Best Auction, which raises funds for youth organizations.



Hosted the Washington State Forestry Contest – 1<sup>st</sup> place team Mount Baker High School pictured above with 7<sup>th</sup> District Representative Shelley Short and County Commissioner Don Dashiell.



Landowner tour after 2015 fires to help identify salvage logging needs for partially burnt trees.

## More Work to Do!

- Use a Department of Ecology grant to partner with the USGS for further study and identification of sources of phosphorous in Lake Spokane.
- Assist landowners in the restoration of natural resources and productive ground after 2015 wildfires and wind storm.
- Continue support and development of the Upper Columbia Children's Forest Youth Natural Resources Education and Outreach Program in an effort to get kids outdoors.



# Thurston Conservation District

Kathleen Whalen, Executive Director  
2918 Ferguson Street SW, Ste A Tumwater, WA 98512  
(360) 754-3588 x114 | tcd@thurstoncd.com | www.thurstoncd.com  
Board Chair: David Hall

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

## Other Accomplishments

- 1,940 students, representing 33 local schools were engaged in water quality monitoring in the fall and spring.
- Four manure storage structures constructed, 2,140 acres in pasture management, and 1,466 acres of forage harvest management implemented.
- 7,286 native plants sold at our annual plant sale, with a 23 percent profit! (These funds are used to help fund education and outreach programs.)

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Budd Inlet wetland restoration and service learning project



Pre-restoration, this wetland lacked an adequate riparian buffer.  
Credit: Stephanie Bishop, TCD staff

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Budd Inlet is home to some of Puget Sound’s most iconic wildlife: harbor seals, a heron rookery, and transient pods of orca whales. Like many Olympia residents, Gordon and Tamara Suting wanted to do the right thing on their property. When they realized the wet area between two horse pastures where the chorus frogs laid eggs each spring was actually a seasonal stream, they contacted Thurston Conservation District (TCD) for advice on how to manage it for wildlife and water quality.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** TCD collaborated with the Sutings on a planting plan and timeline for the wetland restoration. At the same time, students involved in TCD’s South Sound

Global Rivers Environmental Education Network (GREEN) had just completed water quality studies on the Budd-Deschutes Watershed. They knew water quality conditions here were not ideal, and wanted to take action to improve the watershed.

With the Suting’s blessing, over 55 Olympia Regional Learning Academy students — armed with buckets of plants, water, and compost — planted the 15,000 square foot wetland with more than 200 plants in less than three hours!



With volunteer help, the site was enhanced to include more native shrub and tree species to benefit water quality and wildlife habitat.

Credit: Annie McElroy, TCD staff (AmeriCorps)

**KEY PARTNERS:** Olympia Regional Learning Academy Montessori Program; Washington Service Corps/ AmeriCorps

## More Work to Do!

- Continue active participation in the Voluntary Stewardship Program planning work, and secure funding for implementation, as the selected technical service provider.
- Expand the number of Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program participants to gain improved water quality and fish and wildlife habitat.
- Continue to provide technical and financial assistance to landowners.

# Underwood Conservation District

Tova Tillinghast, District Manager  
Park Center Building, 170 NW Lincoln Street White Salmon, WA 98672  
(509) 493-1936 | info@ucdwa.org | www.ucdwa.org  
Board Chair: Jacob Anderson



State Legislative District #14  
Congressional District #3

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Little Wind River habitat enhancement – Phase 3



One of the recently constructed log jams and pools, providing habitat to salmon and steelhead in the Little Wind River.

Credit: Dan Richardson, UCD Technician

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Underwood Conservation District (UCD) has been working with the Gundersen family for several years 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 this instream habitat enhancement project in 2012 and Phase 2 in 2013.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** UCD teamed up with renowned restoration designers to plan and implement this exciting project. Work was primarily directed by Loren Meagher, P.E. of UCD, and secondarily by contractor Brian Bair, principal of Bair LLC. In Phase 3, UCD's contractor — Aquatic Contracting of Portland, Oregon — constructed temporary access trails, performed worksite dewatering, placed a total of 35 logs (including two engineered log jams and additional habitat features and floodplain roughness elements), excavated two pools and an off-channel refuge feature, opened up two side channels, and constructed two riffles and two spawning glides.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Bonneville Power Administration Fish and Wildlife Division; Clark-Skamania Flyfishers; Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area; Gundersen Family; South Central Area Engineering Cluster; Salmon River Engineering; Bair LLC; and Aquatic Contracting



A spawned out salmon in a recently-constructed side channel on the Little Wind River.

Credit: Dan Richardson, UCD Technician

## Other Accomplishments



A road culvert being assessed for fish passage by UCD technicians.

Credit: Jan Mehaffy, UCD Technician



UCD provided cost share to help pay for a micro-irrigation system for an Underwood vineyard.

Credit: Carly McNeil, UCD Technician

## More Work to Do!

- Secure long-term, district-wide funding for the Firewise and Forest Health Program.
- Continue to assist public and private road owners with restoring fish passage at barrier stream crossings.
- Plan and implement livestock water quality improvements in the White Salmon River watershed.
- Secure funding for the construction of Buck Creek irrigation system improvements.



State Legislative District #19  
Congressional District #3

# Wahkiakum Conservation District

Darin Houpt, District Manager  
957 Steamboat Slough Road Skamokawa, WA 98647  
(360) 795-8240 | ccdadmin@teamelect.com  
Board Chair: Joe Florek

## Other Accomplishments

- Implementing knotweed management project on entire Skamokawa Creek Watershed.
- Expanding community watershed approach into Elochoman River Watershed.
- Utilizing Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program with individual landowners to ensure community watershed projects are truly comprehensive.
- Assisting all customers that walk through our doors.

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Continuing to use a “Community Watershed Approach” to address natural resource challenges



Wood-based roughness structure - immediately addresses sediment delivery; rearing habitat; and protects establishment of a Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program riparian buffer.

Credit: Wahkiakum Conservation District

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Wahkiakum Conservation District uses a comprehensive community watershed approach to address our local resource challenges. Salmon recovery, water quality issues, invasive weeds, flooding, and farm viability can be addressed on an individual farm basis, but treating a single farm does not necessarily make a measurable change in the resource concern. Instead, our district conducts outreach and projects with several farms within a targeted watershed. It’s challenging to obtain funding to implement this approach, but it’s very effective at addressing resource concerns.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** Wahkiakum Conservation District continues to devote our available capacity and funding to implement this targeted approach in the Skamokawa Creek Watershed Community, and we’re attempting to generate community interest and support in the Elochoman River watershed as well. Each year, the district maintains an effort to implement 2-3 projects, plan 2-3 new projects, fund 2-3 planned projects, design 2-3 funded projects, and permit 2-3 designed projects. These activities require people on the ground working with watershed community members to make this happen.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Cowlitz Conservation District; Pacific Conservation District; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; Wahkiakum County; Diking District 5; Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board; Recreation and Conservation Office; US Department of Fish and Wildlife



Same roughness structure during higher flow.

Credit: Wahkiakum Conservation District

## More Work to Do!

- Continue Skamokawa Creek and Elochoman River community watershed efforts.
- Attempt to convince everyone outside our community watersheds that the “community watershed approach” is a very effective strategy for addressing all natural resource concerns.
- Continue to try and build district capacity in order to do more.

# Walla Walla County Conservation District

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



State Legislative District #16  
Congressional District #5

2015 Feature Accomplishment:

## Smith sediment reduction demonstration project

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Erosion from farm field roads impairs water quality and fish habitat. Wheat farmer Glen Smith came to the conservation district for help addressing erosion from a field-access road that was delivering sediment to the Coppei Creek, an important spawning and rearing stream for threatened Mid-Columbia River steelhead. Water from upland fields ran directly to the farm road. This resulted in concentrated flow erosion of the road, which was a maintenance problem for the farmer as well as a detriment to fish.



**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** The Smith project was a chance to demonstrate erosion control measures on one of many farm-access roads near fish-bearing streams. Our conservation district engineer drew up plans, and staff submitted project proposals to funding agencies. With funds from the Washington State Conservation Commission and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the district helped Smith install an inlet structure and piping to direct run-off water to a nearby field, where the fish-smothering sediment settles out and clean water filters into the Coppei.



The project keeps an estimated 30 to 50 tons of sediment from the creek, resulting in cleaner water for fish and a stable road for the farmer.

**KEY PARTNERS:** National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; Washington State Conservation Commission; Bonneville Power Administration

Top: Site before project — erosion from farm-access road delivered sediment directly to Coppei Creek, a fish bearing stream. Bottom: Project installation — run-off water is captured and piped to a grassed area where sediment settles out and clean water filters to the creek.

## Other Accomplishments



Pump station before — no water meter and out of compliance.



The landowner became compliant with state metering laws when he updated his pump station to the 21st century and added a magnetic flow meter.



This 500 gallon-per-minute passive fish screen protects endangered fish species during the irrigation season and is ready for launch.

## More Work to Do!

- Titus Creek screening: Protecting endangered fish by screening part of Titus Creek and restoring a two-mile stretch of a Mill Creek side channel.
- Gailey Bridge: Helping a landowner install a bridge so he doesn't have to drive through the river with farm equipment, a practice that erodes river banks and disrupts the river ecology.
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program: Helping landowners install over 100 acres of riparian forest buffers.



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

# Whatcom Conservation District

George Boggs, Executive Director  
6975 Hannegan Road Lynden, WA 98264  
(360) 526-2381 | wcd@whatcomcd.org | www.whatcomcd.org  
Board Chair: Larry Davis

## Other Accomplishments



Community Engagement

Healthy water, healthy people!  
Over 250 community members joined WCD for the 2nd Annual Run with the Chums 5k Run/Walk to celebrate clean water.



Installed 21 Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program projects, improving 48,428 feet of stream bank with 54,325 native plants, while maintaining 126 existing projects.



\$103,296 in state cost-share was matched with \$54,818 from five producers to install manure storage and application systems to improve water quality.

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Taking action: Birch Bay watershed stewardship project

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** In 2008, Birch Bay closed to shellfish harvesting around the mouth to Terrell Creek due to fecal coliform contamination. Birch Bay is also a “shoreline of statewide significance,” the only marine shoreline in Whatcom County with that designation due to the rapidly growing shoreline urbanization and vital natural resources. Local, state, and federal agencies collaborated to create a comprehensive strategy adapting to population growth and reducing bacterial pollution in the upper watershed.



Citizen Action

“We learned so much from WCD. We found simple solutions to mud management, healthier animals, and greener pastures.”  
– Scott and Kristi McAllister

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** In 2010, Whatcom Conservation District (WCD) began a process of inspiring residents to adopt good stewardship practices, install low impact development and agricultural best management practices, and participate in riparian, wetland, and stream restoration projects. A comprehensive social marketing plan was developed using a local resident as the “watershed steward” to connect individuals with agencies and practices while nurturing relationships for sustained impact. After five years, 87 homeowners have taken action to improve watershed health, 27 riparian restoration projects were completed protecting 73 acres of stream, and 34 farm best management practices were installed to eliminate discharges of pathogens or nutrients.



Habitat Restoration

48,420 feet of riparian habitat was improved, with over 20,000 native plants established by 1,200 volunteers, landowners and community groups.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association; Birch Bay Watershed and Aquatic Resource Management District; Environmental Protection Agency; Birch Bay State Park; Whatcom County Public Works; Birch Bay Shellfish Protection District; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; BP, Alcoa, and Birch Bay Water and Sewer Districts

## More Work to Do!

- Shellfish - Provide technical assistance and cost-share for implementation of best management practices for commercial and non-commercial livestock owners, including partnering with Whatcom County through the Pollution Identification and Correction process.
- Habitat - Plan and install riparian restoration and habitat projects through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, Environmental Quality Incentives Program, and other sources.
- Stormwater - Partner with city stormwater divisions.

# 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

2015 Feature Accomplishment:

## Farmers build manure storage facilities to protect water quality



Cattle on the Kramer Farm, with Lone Lake in the background. WICD's conservation plan includes many practices to protect water quality.

Photo: Rob Hallbauer

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** The Whidbey Island Conservation District (WICD) assists farmers in operating profitable businesses, while protecting natural resources. WICD uses the farm conservation planning process that encompasses local, state, and federal rules to achieve these goals. The planning process identifies resource concerns and suggests best management practices the landowner can select to protect natural resources, particularly where farms are in close proximity to surface waters and other sensitive natural resources.

## PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Since 1886, Kramer family members have produced high quality hay and beef along Lone Lake, which drains into Puget Sound at Useless Bay. WICD worked with the owners to produce a farm conservation plan to assist them in managing the farm efficiently while maintaining the high productivity of their hay/pasture fields and protecting natural resources. WICD designed a covered waste storage facility to safely store and compost manure, for eventual application to the fields, improving soil quality and productivity. The owners constructed the facility in 2015 with cost-share assistance from WICD through the State Conservation Commission (SCC) cost-share program.



The newly constructed covered waste storage structure designed by WICD and funded with help from the SCC cost share program. Photo: Rob Hallbauer

**KEY PARTNERS:** Washington State Conservation Commission; Kramer family

## Other Accomplishments



Connor McDanniel planned, designed, and installed a rain garden at the Waldorf School. Connor was honored as WICD's Conservation Student of the Year.

Photo: Rob Hallbauer



In the Ebey's watershed, filter strip practices are implemented to clean field runoff before it enters a tight line system discharging into Puget Sound.



Ruth Richards installed a water conservation system, catching and reusing water on her residential property with design assistance from WICD.

Photo: Rob Hallbauer

## More Work to Do!

- In April of 2015, WICD conducted a survey to assess the needs of farmers and equestrian owners. The diverse group of farmers as food producers indicated their top issue is farm profitability. Equestrian owners need help with pasture and manure management. WICD will address these landowner needs in fiscal year 16.
- WICD will expand the Native Plant Palette workshops to include information on native plants as pollinator habitat.



State Legislative District #9  
Congressional District #5

# Whitman Conservation District

Nancy Hoobler, District Manager  
601 N Main, Suite A Colfax, WA 99111  
(509) 288-4644 | nancywhitmancd@gmail.com | www.whitmancd.org  
Board Chair: Cory Aeschliman

## Other Accomplishments

- Partnered with WA Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and LaCrosse Library to educate children about “natural heroes” — the benefits of local pollinators.
- Became an active participant with the Snake River Salmon Recovery Board and sponsored a grant proposal.
- District staff completed and submitted a plan and was issued a certificate of accomplishment to be a certified Basic Conservation Planner.
- Worked on cultural resource inventories with WDFW and the state Department of Transportation.

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Alkali Flat Creek producer-sponsored monitoring program



Looking upstream into shrub/grassland steppe from the first monitoring station close to the Snake River.

Credit: Nancy Hoobler

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Water quality is an important natural resource issue in the Alkali Flat Creek watershed because of the potential to pollute by agriculture activities. Correcting sources of water quality impairment is an expense that can mean lost revenue for agricultural operators. They need certainty that the source exists and help implementing specific actions to correct it. Whitman Conservation District coordinated with 40 watershed landowners and operators to implement a watershed monitoring program and provided technical assistance and cost share.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** Landowners helped define the placement of monitoring sites and collected water samples for fecal bacteria at the bottom of each property line. They also recorded air and weather temperatures, stream bank condition, sediment levels, photo points, and site and weather conditions. Sampling occurred over a two month period and will resume in the fall of 2015. Monitoring data is being incorporated into land management plans and decisions. Participants are learning the benefits of monitoring and real-time site conditions, and they’re continuing to take soil samples and discuss alternative practices and vegetation changes.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Forty landowners and operators paid for the monitoring program; the cities of Colfax and Hay; a producer who volunteered her time to help monitor



Close to the headwaters of the stream; pasture is actively grazed by livestock.

Credit: Nancy Hoobler

## More Work to Do!

- Partnering with biologists from the Washington Departments of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and Transportation to research alternatives to reduce human and wildlife mortality on Hwy 26.
- Partnering with landowner and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to implement an intensive grazing plan.
- Working with WDFW to research and install alternative watering systems for wildlife.
- Working with private landowners/producers to ensure the success of two Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program plantings.

# *Thank you to our partners!*

AgForestry Leadership Program

American Farmland Trust

Center for Latino Farmers

Colville Confederated Tribes

Cowlitz Indian Tribe

Environmental Protection Agency

Envirothon

Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe

Kalispel Tribe

Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe

Makah Tribe

National Association of Conservation Districts

National Association of State Conservation Agencies

National Conservation District Employees Association

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Northwest Agriculture Business Center

Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission

Pacific Education Institute

Puget Sound Partnership

Samish Nation

Skokomish Tribe

Snake River Salmon Recovery Board

Snoqualmie Tribe

Squaxin Island Tribe

Suquamish Tribe

The Nature Conservancy

Tulalip Tribes

USDA – Agricultural Research Service

USDA - Farm Service Agency

USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service

Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Washington Association of Counties

Washington Association of District Employees

Washington Association of Wheat Growers

Washington Grain Commission

Washington Cattlemen's Association

Washington Dairy Federation

Washington Farmers and Ranchers / Washington Grown

Washington Grain Commission

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

Washington State Department of Natural Resources

Washington State Department of Transportation

Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office

Washington State University – Extension

Yakima Nation

...and many more!

# WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION



## **Clinton O'Keefe, 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.



## **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 the Washington State Soil Health Committee.



## **Lynn Brown, Vice-Chair**

Commissioner Lynn Brown serves as the Conservation District Central Representative on the Commission. Commissioner Brown also serves on the Kittitas County Conservation District Board. 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.



## **Perry Beale**

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



## **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.



## **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.



## **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.



## **Daryl Williams**

Governor Jay Inslee appointed Daryl Williams to serve on the Commission in 2015. Commissioner Williams is the Environmental Liaison for the Tulalip Tribes.

# 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. He and his wife also own and operate Bush Prairie Farms in Tumwater.

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



**Debbie Becker**  
Director of Budget,  
Accounting, and  
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. Debbie managed the \$30 million Financial Division of the Commission until the fall of 2015.

*Position currently vacant at time of print.*



**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 Asotin County, Palouse, Palouse Rock Lake, Pine Creek, Pomeroy, and Whitman Conservation Districts along with managing the Regional Manager staff.

Email: [rlledgerwood@scc.wa.gov](mailto:rlledgerwood@scc.wa.gov)  
Phone: (208) 301-4728



**Ron Shultz**  
Director of Policy and  
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.

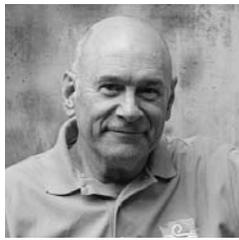
Email: [rshultz@scc.wa.gov](mailto:rshultz@scc.wa.gov)  
Phone: (360) 407-7507

# OUR STAFF



**Mike Baden**

NC / NE Regional  
Manager



**Larry Brewer**

Special Projects  
Manager



**Brian Cochran**

Coordinator, Habitat  
and Monitoring



**Jon Culp**

Water Resources  
Program Manager



**Bill Eller**

SC / SE Regional  
Manager



**Jillian Fishburn**

Fiscal Specialist



**Josh Giuntoli**

Office of Farmland  
Preservation Coordinator



**Lori Gonzalez**

Executive Assistant



**Sarah Groth**

Fiscal Analyst



**Karla Heinitz**

Program Specialist



**Alicia Johnson**

Administrative  
Assistant



**Laura Johnson**

Communication  
Coordinator



**Shana Joy**

Puget Sound Regional  
Manager / Policy Assistant



**Jack Myrick**

Irrigation Efficiencies  
Technical Coordinator



**Stu Trefry**

SW Regional Manager /  
Development and Capacity  
Coordinator



**Melissa Vander Linden**

Fiscal Analyst



**Courtney Woods**

Program Specialist

# Acronyms

**BMP** Best Management Practice

**BPA** Bonneville Power Administration

**CD** Conservation district

**CREP** Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

**CRM** Coordinated Resource Management

**CNMP** Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan

**DNR** Washington Department of Natural Resources

**DOE** Washington Department of Ecology

**EQIP** Environmental Quality Incentives Program

**EPA** US Environmental Protection Agency

**ESA** Endangered Species Act

**FFFPP** Family Forest Fish Passage Program

**FSA** USDA Farm Services Agency

**LID** Low Impact Development

**IEP** Irrigation Efficiencies Program

**IWM** Irrigation Water Management

**NFWF** National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

**NRCS** USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

**OFFP** Office of Farmland Preservation

**PIC** Pollution Identification and Correction

**RCO** Recreation and Conservation Office

**RCPP** Regional Conservation Partnership Program

**RCW** Revised Code of Washington

**SCC** State Conservation Commission

**SRFB** Salmon Recovery Funding Board

**TMDL** Total Maximum Daily Load

**TSP** Technical Service Providers

**USDA** US Department of Agriculture

**USFS** US Forest Service

**USFW** US Fish and Wildlife

**USGS** US Geological Services

**VSP** Voluntary Stewardship Program

**WACD** Washington Association of Conservation Districts

**WADE** Washington Association of District Employees

**WCC** Washington Conservation Corp

**WDFW** Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

**WSU** Washington State University

**WRIA** Water Resource Inventory Area



Washington State Conservation Commission

PO Box 47721  
Olympia, WA 98504  
(360) 407-6200  
[www.scc.wa.gov](http://www.scc.wa.gov)

***Follow us on Facebook!***

[www.facebook.com/WashingtonStateConservationCommission](http://www.facebook.com/WashingtonStateConservationCommission)



**CONSERVATION DISTRICTS  
OF WASHINGTON STATE**  
*your window to healthy lands*