



# Washington State Conservation Commission

The Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) represents the voluntary side of conservation and is the coordinating agency for all conservation districts in our state. Together, the SCC and conservation districts provide voluntary, incentive-based programs that empower private landowners to practice natural resource stewardship on their property.

## About us:

- Non-regulatory state agency that **coordinates and assists all local conservation districts** in Washington State.
- Our incentive-based programs make it easier and more affordable for landowners to become **natural resource stewards**.
- We **find conservation solutions** that integrate local, state, tribal, and federal natural resource priorities.

## It's About Stewardship

Between the Columbia Gorge, Puget Sound, Pacific coast, Palouse hills, and all the landscapes in between, Washington State is rich in diverse natural resources. This wealth creates opportunity, exhibited by our thriving port cities, strong agriculture, and growing population. As more and 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.

## Who We Are

The Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) works with conservation districts and partners to achieve healthy, diverse landscapes that reflect sustainable use of natural resources.

The SCC was created by the legislature in 1939 (RCW 89.08.070) to facilitate, support, and assist local conservation districts. Conservation districts are local, boots-on-the-ground providers of natural resource

expertise and knowledge. Every one of Washington's 39 counties is represented by at least one conservation district.

For more than 75 years, the SCC and conservation districts have worked together to help landowners manage their land responsibly. We strive to match state natural resource priorities with local landowners willing to implement solutions on the ground.

Specific duties of the SCC include:

- Facilitate opportunities for conservation districts to help partners deliver conservation programs to their local community.
- Foster relationships between conservation districts and other state, federal, tribal, and local decision-makers, leading to more effective, feasible natural resource policies.
- Coordinate, fund, and assist conservation district programs, administrative procedures, and operations.

## Why Incentive-Based Conservation?

Sometimes the only thing standing in the way of landowners implementing conservation on their property is lack of information, funding, or people to help.

The SCC provides assistance, coordination, and funding to conservation districts, who then offer a range of voluntary conservation services tailored to the needs of local communities. SCC funding also enables districts to offer financial assistance and cost share programs, which help landowners reduce their financial outlay for conservation projects.

All of our programs are voluntary. Landowners request assistance from conservation districts; services are not required or forced upon them.

The SCC coordinates this incentive-based approach with other agricultural and environmental entities to make sure the system for conserving our state's resources best serves our people and the environment.

## Feature accomplishments of incentive programs in Washington State:

- **644 miles of riparian buffers installed** on salmon-bearing streams, including planting over **5.3 million trees**, through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.
- **62 projects completed**, resulting in **16,000 acre feet of water saved** and returned to 23 critical tributaries where ESA-listed species will benefit through the Irrigation Efficiencies Grant Program.
- **380 best management practices** implemented (since 2013) that address ocean acidification and improve water quality in shellfish harvest areas.



Above: Before and after pictures of an SCC-funded conservation district project. Asotin County Conservation District helped a landowner install a livestock bridge across Tenmile Creek. Prior to bridge installation, more than 300 cow-calf pairs would wade through the creek, perilously close to spawning steelhead.



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