



5-Year Plan: Summary (2016 to 2020) Walla Walla County Conservation District

For More Information Contact:

Renee M. Hadley, Assistant District Manager

(509) 522-6340 ext. 110 renee.hadley@wwccd.net



Priority Actions – March 2016 to December 2019 (summary of following 10 pages)

Below is a list of priority actions to be carried out by the WWCCD. Staff will provide written updates to the District Manager and Board of Supervisors prior to regularly scheduled board meetings. An annual progress report will summarize actions, accomplishment and open forum to discuss upcoming goals.

Projects: Volunteer Stewardship Program: develop a stewardship plan for agricultural land owners

- Blalock Irrigation District-air blast system needs repair
- Lowden 2/ Mud Creek 7/ Garden City ditch to pipe conversion system- needs landowner facilitation
- GFID#13 upper canal 11 mile ditch to pipe conversion- needs funding
- McCaw Phase 2 (seeking funding)
- Probert piping (funded)
- Fish Screens/ Meters on diversion points/fish barriers (Gailey Bridge over Touchet River) (continuous, funded)
- CREP/CRP/buffers (Warnock, Farrens Mill Creek, West, M. Grant, Meliah, and Terry Bergevin)
- Geomorphic assessments of Lower Walla Walla River
- High Sediment input areas to waterways (farm roads, ditches, severely unstable stream banks ...)
- Hofer Dam sedimentation accumulation repair (seek funding)

Create Database of:

- Formal & Informal irrigation delivery systems with contact names
- TMDL, pH, fecal coliform, dissolved oxygen, turbidity/high suspended sediment areas of concern
- Buffer and/or bank stabilization and/or wetland mitigation needs
- CREP eligible areas with land owner contact information
- Fish passage barriers (work with WDFW to determine priority)
- Fish Screen, potential projects
- Unmetered wells/ diversion points
- High Erosion cropland (not currently using no till/direct seed)
- Small Acreage Landowners (livestock and/or hobby farms)

Areas to pursue:

- Relationships with WW County Commissioners, CTUIR, municipalities, SRB, WWBWC, WWWMP, BMLT
- West County (Burbank to Touchet) outreach/determine what their needs are and how we can help
- Dryland Farming
- Fire Recovery/Ecology projects and/or Fire Prevention and awareness (FireWISE)
- Training/ needs/requests of staff
- Retention of prime agricultural land/ maintain viability of agriculture (VSP)
- Urban encroachment
- Habitat Restoration/Bank Stabilization on Lower Walla Walla River (identified in geomorphic assessment)/ Touchet River

Outreach, Discussions, and Trainings (WWCCD Annual Meeting, Farmer to Farmer Mini-sessions, and/or Newsletter)

Promote the following:

- Water Quantity irrigation efficiency
- Stream Health/ TMDL implementation
- Direct seeding/no till practices/ Cover crop use
- GPS technology/ no till equipment for farming operations (low-interest loan programs through Spokane CD)
- Buffer programs, Riparian zones, CREP, CURB, CRP
- Best Management Practices (BMP's) of roads, ROW (ditches), farm access roads regarding erosion
- Invasive species awareness and eradication (with WSU Extension, other partners)
- Pasture/ weed management/ water quality for small acreage landowners (with WSU extension, livestock association)
- Stormwater management/ problems with concentrated flows (with municipalities)
- Energy Savings Opportunities on farms and rural areas
- Alternatives to field burning
- Conservation awareness to public youth (FFA, 4H, community service volunteers, etc.)
- Self -guided tour of applied conservation projects
- Fish passage issues (removal of barriers, maintenance of culverts, farm/forest roads)
- Create/Identify demonstration plots focusing of sediment control techniques
- Fish screen/ meter program (outreach needed to solicit area candidates' involvement in program)
- Pesticide Credit Training
- Update website



5-Year Plan (2015 to 2020) Walla Walla County Conservation District

For More Information Contact:

Renee M. Hadley, Assistant District Manager

(509) 522-6340 ext. 110 renee.hadley@wwccd.net



Organization of the Walla Walla County Conservation District

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

- The Walla Walla County Conservation District (**WWCCD**) is a consolidation of two previously organized conservation districts – the Walla Walla and South Walla Walla conservation districts. Consolidation was on December 18, 1961. Earliest organization dates back to April 22, 1941 for the Walla Walla Soil Conservation District and February 13, 1947 for the South Walla Walla Soil Conservation District. The District consists of 762,151 acres of privately owned land and approximately 45,000 acres of publicly managed lands totaling 807,315 acres. These lands drain into the Walla Walla, Snake, and Columbia Rivers, all of which host populations of T&E listed bull trout and steelhead. The population of 55-60,000 people lives mostly in the cities and towns of Walla Walla, College Place, Waitsburg, Prescott, Touchet, Burbank and adjacent areas. The majority of the acreage of the District is cropland with approximately 490,000 acres of non-irrigated land and over 110,000 acres under irrigation. Native forest and rangelands make up the balance of the district. Tourism has been on the increase with the growth of the Walla Walla Valley wine industry that now boasts well over 100 wineries.

Function of the Walla Walla County Conservation District

- The WWCCD works with local land managers and the conservation partnership to coordinate technical, financial and educational resources needed for the conservation of soil, water and related natural resources.

Who We Serve

- All Walla Walla County Citizens within district boundaries
- Walla Walla County Rural Community (farmers and ranchers)
- Partner organizations
- Units of Government

Mission of the Walla Walla County Conservation District

- WWCCD is dedicated to the conservation and restoration of the natural resources of Walla Walla County, facilitated by working on a voluntary basis with landowners to identify opportunities and create solutions, while consistently providing education, information, and assistance whenever possible.

Vision of the Walla Walla County Conservation District

- WWCCD believes that many complex environmental problems can be solved through voluntary cooperation rather than by regulatory mandates. We will do this by creating and then implementing proactive programs that respect both the needs of the landowners and the natural resources of the County.

Values of the Walla Walla County Conservation District – We believe . . .

- In the retention and viability of prime agricultural land for agricultural purposes.
- In promoting that good management practices and adequate conservation measures are implemented at the earliest stages of irrigation improvements.
- In planning and implementation of point and non-point pollution abatement measures.
- In assistance to land users for voluntary compliance with local, State and Federal mandates for natural resource treatment.
- In assessment of working lands based on their agricultural use rather than their speculative value for commercial or residential development.
- In promotion of teaching stewardship of the environment in all its ramifications as an integral part of school curricula K through 12.
- The fundamental nature of resource problems demand more effective coordination of resource programs, more realistic financing, and positive leadership.
- In the retention and preservation of natural scenic areas, historical and archeological sites.
- There is a need for more, not less, attention to soil and water conservation, forestry, energy, public land management, sediment control, and related resource efforts upon which the future health and well-being of our District depends.
- In public involvement in all resource conservation activities affecting Walla Walla County.
- In the necessity of public education and awareness of all natural resource issues.

Water Quantity Challenge and Goals:

The State of Washington water laws require all shallow aquifer wells and pumping stations on streams and/or canals to be metered. Flow meters will allow WA-DOE to monitor compliance with irrigation laws but will also allow the irrigator to document water use and protect water rights from relinquishment. There are an estimated 550 to 580 irrigation diversions needing meters including un-metered wells. However, more unmetered diversions are brought to our attention annually.

In late 2007, the Water Resources Inventory Area (WRIA) 32 Walla Walla River Basin Instream Flows Rule was officially adopted. The purpose of this rule was to establish minimum levels of stream flow needed to preserve wildlife, fish, scenic, aesthetic and other environmental and navigational values.

By June 2020, work with conservation partners to implement the Walla Walla County Instream Flows Rule. Included in this effort will be:

- Piping of inefficient irrigation delivery systems to maintain higher stream flows for fish and to eliminate sediment from eroding ditches/canals including:
 - Garden City delivery system,
 - Lowden 2 delivery system,
 - Mud Creek 7 delivery system,
 - GFID #13 Main (Upper) Canal piping.
- Installation of meters on 550 to 580 shallow aquifer well and surface stream irrigation withdrawal pumping sites in compliance with RCW 90.44.450, RCW 90.03.360, and WAC 173-173-100.
- Where needed and feasible, incorporate aquifer recharge into piping designs.

Strategies: Work with irrigation districts and other irrigation groups to identify inefficient irrigation water delivery systems and to improve on farm application efficiencies. Further, as funding allows, work with water users to design and install meters for irrigation withdrawals as required by law.

Actions:

1. Participate in the Water Resource Panel of the Walla Walla Watershed Management Partnership.
2. Continue to hold outreach meetings with irrigators.
3. Actively seek out and apply for funding assistance to finance irrigation efficiency and metering projects. (Metering projects funded through Dec. 31, 2016)
4. Continue to meet with users of open ditch delivery systems and explore opportunities for improvement.
5. Develop a list (database) of formal and informal irrigation water delivery systems and contact names.
6. Actively participate in local forums promoting improved stream flows and seek input from stakeholders as to the direction WWCCD should take in regards to other water saving projects.

Water Quality Challenge and Goals:

Major Walla Walla County streams are on the Washington Department of Ecology (WA-DOE) 303d list of impaired water bodies. By law, Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) must be developed to address and correct impairments to water quality on listed streams. Impairments are:

1. PCBs and Chlorinated Pesticides (the surrogate is sediment).
2. Temperature.
3. Fecal Coliform.
4. Dissolved Oxygen (DO) and pH.

A Water Quality Improvement Report has been developed and TMDLs set for each of these impairments by WA-DOE and the local Water Quality Subcommittee and approved by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The TMDL Implementation Plan has also been developed and approved.

By June 2020, work with the conservation partnership for the removal of Walla Walla County streams from the 303d list by emphasizing programs that meet water quality standards. This effort will include:

- A continuous monitoring system on major tributaries.
- An increase in the adoption of direct seeding to 65% of private cropland under cultivation.
- An increase in the adoption of GPS technology to 30% of the cropland base through precision agriculture technology.
- Runoff control systems installed on a long term target of 75% of livestock operations with water quality impacts.
- Development of a program to treat runoff and sedimentation from farm, county and state road rights-of-way.
- Continued emphasis on buffer installations.

Strategies: The key to being successful in meeting this goal will be outreach. Stakeholders need to be aware of the implications of TMDLs and what it will take to meet TMDL targets. The WWCCD staff will continue to work with landowners to install buffers, to promote moving livestock off of streams, and to implement upland conservation practices to reduce sedimentation.

Actions (ongoing):

1. Discuss TMDL implementation at winter mini-sessions.
 2. Promote the adoption of direct seeding in upland crop production (promoted in WWCCD newsletter & mini-sessions).
 3. Promote the adoption of Geographic Positioning System (GPS) technology for farming operations.
 4. Support activities that promote adoption of Best Management Practices (BMPs) on design, construction and management of road rights-of-way and field roads.
 5. Assess buffer needs on local streams and encourage buffer installation through various assistance programs.
 6. Actively participate in local forums including the Snake River Salmon Recovery Board (SR-SRB), the Snake River Local Work Group (SR-LWG), the Walla Walla Watershed Management Partnership (WWWMP), Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), and other county initiatives that promote TMDL implementation.
 7. Monitor levels of transport of sediment, fecal coliform, dissolved oxygen and increased pH. Then, identify areas of concern followed by adoption of conservation practices and technology to reduce those levels.
-

Water Quality--Riparian Restoration Challenge and Goals:

All the major perennial streams in Walla Walla County are home to Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed Mid-Columbia Steelhead. ESA protected bull trout also are found in the upper reaches of Mill Creek and the Touchet and Walla Walla Rivers. Hundreds of miles of streams have been impacted by activities such as farming, livestock use, urban development, and/or natural events. Woody vegetation was almost non-existent on many stream reaches until buffer restoration projects that were initiated in 1998 and now account for over 28% of the States riparian forest buffers enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). An additional challenge is the fact that there are numerous areas along the stream corridors which are unstable and therefore ineligible for financial assistance programs until they have been stabilized. And finally, there are significant amount of CREP eligible acreage that cannot be enrolled in CREP due to farm bill payment limitations. These areas need a separate source of incentive funding for enrollment into a CREP-like buffer program.

By June 2020, the WWCCD will continue to actively support an aggressive buffer program with the objective of installing Riparian Forest Buffers on a long term target of 85% of the eligible streambanks in Walla Walla County. Stream banks that are determined to be ineligible will be considered for bank stabilization efforts.

Strategies: Continue to work with the conservation partnership in identifying eligible sites needing riparian forest buffers. In addition, work with land users and partners to identify unstable sites needing stabilization and restoration.

Actions (ongoing):

1. Create a database of and contact all remaining (not currently enrolled) CREP eligible land owners regarding possible enrollment by the end of 2020.
 2. Include riparian area management, buffer needs, and stream restoration in all district outreach meetings including the Annual Meeting and farmer hosted winter mini-sessions.
 3. Coordinate with WDFW to identify needed CREP type work in high priority riparian areas.
 4. Coordinate with WDFW, SR-SRB, WA-DOE and other entities and land users to identify and develop design solutions and financial assistance for restoration of unstable stream reaches.
 5. Promote project support through active participation with the SR-SRB, Regional Technical Team (RTT), and Lead Entity Committee.
 6. Continue to work closely with core partners NRCS and Farm Services Agency (FSA) to promote a strong buffer program in the District.
 7. Seek out additional buffer funding sources other than CREP (done through WA-DOE 2012).
 8. Participate in invasive species eradication efforts.
 9. Monitor CREP replant and weed control needs within the District funded 5-year maintenance window.
-

Fisheries Challenge and Goals:

Walla Walla County is blessed by numerous streams issuing from the Blue Mountain foothills in the southeastern portion of the county. Most of these perennial streams including the Walla Walla and Touchet Rivers, Mill Creek, Dry Creek, Blue Creek, Cottonwood Creek (and others) are home to ESA listed mid-Columbia steelhead and bull trout as well as resident species. The Walla Walla and Mill Creek systems are also home to reintroduced Chinook salmon due to efforts by our partner, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR).

WWCCD has two programs that are key to meeting challenges associated with ESA listed fish – the screen program and the passage barrier removal program.

The WWCCD fish screen program is the centerpiece of the Cooperative Compliance Review Program which is a partnership between WDFW, the District and other agencies intended to help local irrigators voluntarily install approved fish screens and provide protection from actions by regulatory agencies. An estimated 50-75 screens remain to be installed. However, more screens are being identified about as frequently as previous projects are completed.

Throughout the Walla Walla Basin, there have been numerous man-made barriers to fish passage created primarily from efforts to divert irrigation water. Barriers are perhaps the most harmful impact to migrating fish of all factors affecting their survival.

Fish passage barrier removal is among the highest priorities for WWCCD because of the obvious impacts to salmonid migration. The WWCCD has partnered with WDFW, USFWS, CTUIR and others to obtain funding and permits to remediate barriers.

Strategies: Work with partner agencies to assess and prioritize remaining barriers requiring remediation; continue to assess needs and pursue funding for screening and barrier removal; support projects of partner agencies and organizations that improve fish passage. Identify priority areas of concern through the VSP.

Actions:

1. Acquire additional funding for fish screen projects (funded through March 31, 2017, additional 2-yr grant application in progress).
2. Support WDFW & Tri-State Steelheaders efforts to improve passage through the Mill Creek Flood Control Project.
3. Work with CTUIR to facilitate removal of known barriers on Pine Creek and Russell Creek.
4. Secure funding for and monitor construction of the McCaw (Sites B) In-Stream project. Design completed.

Soil Erosion & Quality Challenge and Goals:

Of the approximately 600,000 acres of cropland in Walla Walla County, over 80% is classified as Highly Erodible Land (HEL). With approximately 25% of the cropland base enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), there remains a daunting challenge of reducing and maintaining erosion rates to acceptable levels on the remaining acres.

By June 2020, soil erosion and soil quality will be improved on a majority of farmed private cropland, soil erosion rates will be within the soil loss tolerance (T) as assessed by the Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation (RUSLE), and the application of direct seeding will be increased to a long term target of 65% of the private cropland.

Strategies: Seek funding for direct seeding in addition to the established Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funding that encourages long term implementation. Continue to promote direct seed adoption through WWCCD educational efforts. Promote utilization of low-interest loan programs to purchase needed no till equipment upgrades in coordination with the Spokane Conservation District.

Actions (ongoing):

1. Encourage continued support of direct seed systems through the Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).
2. Include direct seed I&E in WWCCD mini-sessions, workshops, and at the annual meeting.
3. Encourage plantings of critical areas e.g. shallow soils, problem concentrated flow areas, etc. to adapted perennial cover for erosion/sedimentation control through use of the Continuous CRP practices. (Done in mini-sessions)
4. Continue to explore opportunities for direct seed funding through WA-DOE, EPA and United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

Range and Pasture Challenge and Goals:

Native grassland used for the production of forage is located mainly on the sandy river terraces and lake bottoms along the lower parts of the Snake and Walla Walla Rivers; on the steep breaks of the Snake and Columbia Rivers; on the steep upland slopes and foothills of the Blue Mountains and scattered within the dry cropland area. It is estimated that there are 180,000 acres of rangeland in the District. Treatment is adequate on less than 50% of these acres and much of the native rangeland suffers from the invasion of Rush skeletonweed and yellow starthistle.

By June 2020, develop a small acreage landowner education program targeting the small acreage land owners.

Strategies: Develop and hold a workshop on pasture health and weed control working with WSU Extension; support the Snake River Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA).

Actions:

1. Design and hold small acreage landowner pasture workshops with WSU Extension and/or Livestock board.
2. Create database of small acreage landowners (livestock).

Suburban and Urban Challenge and Goals:

Lands devoted to manufacturing and industry, commercial activities, high density residential, and medium to low density residential development represents a land use of major importance to the District. It is estimated that there are approximately 25,000 acres in Walla Walla County devoted to these uses. Approximately 45-50% of these acres are in transportation infrastructure.

By June 2020, work with landowners to developed urban buffers on 50 properties in the Walla Walla and/or College Place urban areas utilizing the Creating Urban Riparian Buffers (CURB) program; work towards the protection of anadromous fish bearing streams within the urban areas; participate in the development of the Critical Area Ordinance update in the jurisdictions where it applies (city/county) (VSP). Since energy conservation is becoming a more important issue as energy becomes more

expensive for users, work with partners to develop funding sources to help consumers implement energy conservation practices and use outreach tools to inform WWCCD clientele as to the availability of energy saving initiatives.

Strategies: Work with the County and cities to reduce the impact suburban and urban development has on natural resources; promote and maintain the viability of prime agricultural land for agricultural purposes; consider the development of a reimbursable agreement with the County and/or cities; hold informational meetings with land owners to promote CURB program.

Actions:

1. Renew WWCCD involvement in the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) review process.
2. Meet with County Commissioners and city councils to discuss options to promote implementation of practices that promote resource protection (VSP).
3. Develop a strategy for WWCCD review and input into proposed growth boundary changes.
4. Develop and hold outreach meetings to promote protection of urban/suburban streams. (in cooperation with TSS and the CURB program)
5. Coordinated outreach activities featuring storm water management with the City of Walla Walla Storm Water Management Coordinator.
6. Work with partners to develop and take advantage of programs that promote energy savings; use the WWCCD quarterly newsletter for outreach of energy saving opportunities.

Wetland Resources Challenge and Goals:

Wetland habitat critical for the survival of many species of birds and amphibians is rapidly disappearing from the Walla Walla County landscape due to urban expansion and improvements to transportation infrastructure. While both national and state policy states "no net loss" of wetlands, the cost of mitigation efforts often is inefficient and burdensome to the taxpaying public.

Strategies: Work through the conservation partnership to identify wetland mitigation opportunities; work with the conservation partnership to develop a method of banking wetland restoration projects that can be used for future mitigation needs.

Actions:

1. Locate and target important wetland habitat for needed restoration and protection using VSP.
2. Encourage landowner participation in the new CREP practice for wetlands. (Done at mini-sessions and through the WWCCD newsletter).
3. Look for opportunities to expand the mitigation program into other areas of need e.g. upland shrub-steppe habitat (VSP).

Air Quality Challenge and Goals:

In Western Walla Walla County, there are approximately 45,000 acres in major soil associations with low annual precipitation and a high hazard to wind erosion. This zone is characterized by intensively cropped irrigated land and by dry cropland typically farmed in a winter wheat – summer fallow cropping pattern. This area of the county has been subject to exceeding the 10 pm level of particulate matter. The dangers faced by landusers of working lands due to wind include damage such as blowouts, abrasion damage to crops, and deposition damage, therefore extreme care is needed in terms of maintaining cover for soil protection.

In the wind erosion hazard zone as well as the rest of Walla Walla County where water erosion is the main hazard, agricultural field burning has been traditionally used to remove high crop residue loads for a number of reasons such as weed control, disease control, implement performance and ease of seeding. The WWCCD has been actively working with WA-DOE on the agricultural burning monitoring program.

By 2020, continue to promote alternatives to field burning of grain residue prior to recropping; continue to promote the use of the under-cutter in wind erosion prone crop areas; promote the use of cover crops following low-residue crops on irrigated fields in the wind erosion prone areas of the county.

Strategies: Work with conservation partners to promote implementation of projects and practices that improve air quality.

Actions:

1. Photo-document successful planting efforts into high residue levels noting type/class of residue, amount of residue, pre-plant treatment of residue, type and spacing of grain drill used, date of planting, and subsequent yield.
2. Use photo-documentation as basis for an outreach effort to promote alternatives to field burning.
3. Promote the adoption of the two-pass under cutter system for dry cropland seedbed preparation in the wind erosion hazard area.
4. Promote the use of Continuous CRP practices to maintain fragile lands in protective perennial grass cover whenever possible. (Done at mini-sessions)

Information – Education Challenge and Goals:

The Walla Walla County Conservation District recognizes the importance of educating decision-makers in achieving the mission

of the district.

By 2020, carry out an aggressive and effective outreach (Information & Education) program including annually four newsletter issues, one CD annual meeting, six farmer-hosted mini-sessions, two timely workshops featuring CURB and/or small landowner pasture management, and four project tours for agency contacts/legislators/policy makers.

Strategies: Continue to carry out outreach program.

Actions:

1. Maintain and update the "District Story"/"District Highlights" as an informational handout used at educational meetings.
2. Coordinate a series of farmer-hosted neighborhood meetings or "mini-sessions" to extend program information to decision-makers. (Scheduled each January).
3. Conduct the WWCCD Annual Meeting and supervisor election annually.
4. Develop and maintain a "self-guided tour" for visitors to Walla Walla County interested in applied conservation.
5. Publish a quarterly newsletter.

Forest Health Challenge and Goals:

According to the literature, there are about 21,000 acres of private commercial forest in the District. There is an additional 1,000 acres deemed to be of non-commercial value. Less than 10 percent of the District is forested. There are obvious opportunities to increase production of wood products through early stand thinning, pre-commercial thinning, and properly timed harvest. However, due to the nature of forest soils in the District, protection of the base resource, the soil, is paramount. Cut-over areas, skid trails, logging roads, and landings must be properly planned and treated to prevent accelerated erosion and sediment damage to nearby streams that are home to ESA listed fish species.

Strategies: Continue to promote forestry emphasis in EQIP through participation in the SR-LWG.

Actions:

1. Promote remedial action to correct culvert issues that impact fish passage associated with forest roads through participation with SR-LWG.
2. Promote fire prevention and recovery awareness.

District Operations Challenges and Goals:

The Walla Walla County Conservation District operates with a staff of 7 in house permanent and part-time employees and 1 off site contract engineer to carry out the mission of the District. Student interns assist with irrigation projects. Employees require technical training needed for them to carry out the responsibilities of their positions. Each employee must have a working knowledge of each program offered in order to direct clients to the correct program contact. Timely supervision and oversight is required.

By 2020, complete effective and efficient operations including personnel management, accounting, grant administration, supervisor elections and appointments, personnel training and development, annual planning and reporting of accomplishments.

Strategies: Ascertain employee training needs and provide for the opportunity for training; provide timely supervision as needed and conduct individual annual performance appraisals.

Actions:

1. Assure each employee's job description is current.
2. Conduct annual appraisals in a timely manner.
3. Assess employee training needs.
4. Provide opportunity for needed training and personal development needed to carry out the mission of the District.
5. Administer grants in accordance with approved guidelines.
6. Carry out supervisor elections & appointments according to policy guidelines.
7. Update the strategic plan annually and use as the basis for the CD annual workplan.
8. Report accomplishments annually as required.

Trends Impacting Conservation in the Walla Walla County Conservation District

Positive Trends

- Funding agencies have been supportive of District efforts.
- There are increases of steelhead numbers in area streams.
- No-till/direct seeding acres are increasing.
- Most land users continue to be proactive in solving conservation problems.
- The use of GPS technology is increasing on both irrigated and dry cropland operations.
- There is increasing protection of riparian zones along streams.
- There is increasing cooperation within the conservation partnership.
- Stream flows are increasing due to the implementation of conservation measures.
- EPA, USACOE, and WA-DOE are beginning to see the benefit of upland erosion control practices.

- Farm Bill provisions continue to be favorable towards conservation programs.
- The number of acres benefitting from conservation programs has increased.

Negative Trends

- Funding has reduced and many partner agencies have been forced to reduce support.
- Increased weeds throughout the county.
- Increased chemical resistance in weeds.
- The use of chemicals is increasing due to economic and programmatic requirements.
- There is greater dependence on federal and state agency funding.
- There are still agricultural lands being developed with little regard to impacts on natural resources.
- Increasing impact of tourism on natural resources.
- Increasing pressure to convert prime agricultural lands away from production agriculture.
- The costs of agricultural production are soaring – especially fuel, fertilizer and agro-chemicals.
- WWCCD overhead costs are increasing.
- Increasing parochialism between neighboring counties.
- Increased amount of red-tape involved with some grant sources.

Strategies to Address Trends

- Urban/suburban impacts due to encroachment – develop programs to help rural land owners keep land in production e.g. through the promotion of conservation easements.
- Assist with the update of the County Critical Area Ordinance to protect steams and wetlands from the impacts of development.
- Continue to promote the good work of the conservation partnership with state and federal agency representatives, legislators, and policy makers through individual and group communication, project tours, and participation in workshops.
- Continue to participate in local forums that work towards addressing local natural resource issues.

Critical Geographic Areas

- Intermediate Precipitation Zone (14 to 18 inches annually) – highest potential water erosion hazard.
- High Precipitation Zone (greater than 18 inches annually) – intermediate potential water erosion hazard.
- Low Precipitation Zone (less than 14 inches annually) – lowest potential water erosion hazard.
- Wind Erosion Prone Zone (less than 12 inches annually) – highest hazard wind erosion.
- Streams on the WA-DOE 303d list of impaired water bodies.
- Streams with ESA listed species utilization for passage, rearing and/or spawning.
- State and local and private road rights-of-way with sediment impacts on streams.
- Bridges and culverts on federal, state and private lands that impede upstream passage of salmonids.
- Isolated wetlands and wetlands found in association with streams.

Staffing Needs

- The WWCCD currently has six full time, one part time, one intern, and one on call staff members to implement the 5-year strategic plan of the District. Staffing is based on grant funds available. The current make-up of the WWCCD staff is:
 - Rick Jones, District Manager
 - Renee M. Hadley, Assistant District Manager
 - Audrey Ahmann, Grants Administrator
 - Greg Kinsinger, Restoration Project Coordinator, Screens & Meters
 - Kay Mead, Irrigation Efficiency Coordinator
 - Jeff Klundt, Restoration Project Coordinator, CREP Maintenance Technician, Burn Permit Technician
 - Lisa Stearns, Civil Engineering Technician
 - Joanna Cowles, Riparian Biologist, Water Quality Technician, CREP Project Coordinator
 - Travis Morrison, Civil Engineering Technician CAD Intern
 - Lance Horning, Engineer

Key Decision Makers/Conservation Partners

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue Mountain Land Trust • Bonneville Power Administration • Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation • Inland Empire Action Coalition • Kooskooskia Commons • National Marine Fisheries Service • Snake River – Salmon Recovery Board • Tri-State Steelheaders • USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service • USDA – Farm Services Agency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service • U. S. National Park Service • Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council • Walla Walla Community College • Walla Walla County Commissioners • Walla Walla University • Walla Walla Watershed Management Partnership • Washington Department of Agriculture • Washington Department of Ecology • Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife • Washington Department of Transportation |
|--|---|

- Washington Recreation & Conservation Office
- Washington Salmon Recovery Funding Board
- Washington State Conservation Commission

- Whitman College
- WSU Cooperative Extension

Washington Conservation Districts assisting land managers with their conservation choices



This working draft has been reviewed and approved to serve as the basis for WWCCD operations. It is understood that this is 5-year strategic plan is a work in progress and subject to revision and modification as the District continues to carry out efforts to update the WWCCD Long Range Plan.

Signed: _____

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'C. M. ...', written over a horizontal line.

Date: March 28, 2016