

# Whidbey Island Conservation District

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Board Chair: Wendi Hilborn



State Legislative District #10  
Congressional District #2

## 2016 Feature Accomplishment

### User-friendly forest plan format for landowners

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Whidbey Island Conservation District (WICD) has limited staff time and resources to maintain productive forestlands on Whidbey Island. To address this issue, while continuing to assist in forest conservation planning, WICD developed a user-friendly, expedited plan format for landowners to write their own forest conservation plans with minimal coaching. It has proven to effectively meet deadlines for completed plans, foster ownership in the planning process and plan, and educate landowners in the basic silviculture (growing and cultivation) of their forests.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** In 2016, the Gartley family purchased several large forest parcels and quickly needed updated forest plans to retain designated forest land status. Laurie Gartley contacted WICD, and using the expedited forest plan format and limited coaching, Laurie was able to write the initial draft of the plan, which WICD later edited for final submission.



Members of the Gartley family involved in the inventory of one of the parcels.

During the forest inventory, the family assisted with stand descriptions, stated their objectives, and made management decisions. WICD was able to provide efficient, timely assistance while meeting the landowner's expectations and sparking their continued interest in forest education.

**KEY PARTNERS:** The Gartley family and neighboring landowners; Island County Commissioners; Island County Assessor



97 percent of Whidbey's private forestland is estimated at risk of conversion. WICD's new plan format is a valuable tool to maintain productive forest land.

## Other Accomplishments



Following his WICD forest management plan, a forest landowner reforested his clear-cut acreage with fir trees purchased from the WICD's plant sale.



WICD worked with a 170-head registered Angus beef operation to provide conservation planning, design, and cost-share for a waste storage facility.



WICD staff provided watershed model education to Coupeville Elementary fifth grade students at their Cornet Bay environmental learning camp.

## More work to do!

- Collaborate with the Central Whidbey Fire and Rescue District and Department of Natural Resources to launch a FY17 Firewise program targeting communities on the dry, windward bluff areas of Whidbey Island with urban/wildland interface.
- Partner for a United States Department of Agriculture Beginning Farmer and Rancher grant project, providing linkage between new farmers and retiring farmers.
- Continue conservation planning and implementation for forest, farm, and urban residents.