

# Jefferson County Conservation District

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State Legislative District #24  
Congressional District #6

## 2016 Feature Accomplishment

### Chimacum Creek watershed protection and restoration plan



Chimacum Creek summer flooding from invasive reed canarygrass clogging the waterway.

#### RESOURCE CHALLENGE

Most Chimacum Valley soils are prime agricultural soils. In order to keep them viable for agriculture, it is essential to maintain drainage. Riparian restoration projects can have negative impacts on the drainage of ag lands. For example, while wooded riparian buffers improve fish habitat and, in time, mitigate negative impacts of invasive reed canarygrass, they create beaver habitat that often results in dams and flooding of adjacent agricultural lands.

#### PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

This planning project will enhance ongoing protection and restoration efforts in the Chimacum by allowing conservation planners to understand the barriers or motivators of landowners in order to garner increased support for and participation in those efforts. Project elements include: A hydrologic assessment to prioritize protection and restoration efforts; adaptive riparian and beaver management plans that act as tools to assist landowners in making land management decisions; and, a social marketing strategy to engage landowners to participate in those efforts.



Local agricultural producer shares the complex challenges of pasture management on land that floods from beaver activity and invasive aquatic weeds.

**KEY PARTNERS:** North Olympic Salmon Coalition; Jefferson Land Trust; WSU Jefferson County Extension; Jefferson County Noxious Weed Control Board. Funding for this project is provided by the National Estuaries Program, through a grant administered by the Washington State Department of Ecology.

#### Other Accomplishments

- Completed planning, design, and some implementation of water quality and salmon habitat improvement projects including: gutters and downspouts for barns, rainwater catchment systems, stream channel enhancements, off-channel watering facilities, livestock exclusion fencing, and native buffer plantings.
- Conducted water quality monitoring on 31 stations along Chimacum Creek in partnership with Jefferson County Environmental Health and stream temperature monitoring in Chimacum, Salmon, and Snow Creeks.
- Assisted more than 70 landowners with soil fertility testing and amendment recommendations.

#### More work to do!

- Conduct a watershed-scale livestock risk assessment to prioritize resource protection efforts and continue long-term water quality monitoring program in the Chimacum Watershed.
- Facilitate a streamlined process for landowners to manage the Chimacum Creek drainage, including permitting, adaptive beaver management, and watershed-scale management of invasive reed canarygrass.
- Integrate farm planning into local Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) update.