

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

2016 Feature Accomplishment

Irrigation Water Management Education grant

RESOURCE CHALLENGE

Irrigation efficiencies have been addressed in other areas of the state but not in the Chehalis River Basin. Summer low flows and high temperatures are problems that correspond with the primary irrigation season. The Lewis County Conservation District received grants from the Rose Foundation, Department of Ecology, and US Fish and Wildlife Service to hold educational meetings and complete irrigation plans.



Southwest Washington Fair booth
Photo: Kelly Verd

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Irrigation meetings covered how to put water rights into trust, protect water rights, irrigate in drought, use moisture meters, and use Agweather.net. Staff participated in the Southwest Washington Fair, and the Chehalis Watershed Festival to advertise the program. Three plexiglass boxes filled with flowering plants were used to show different irrigation scenarios: over watered, under watered, and correctly watered. Currently there are 19 farms that have irrigation plans and have been provided with moisture meters. Problems identified are old inefficient equipment and improper fish screens.



This farmer wants to replace old leaky pipe with an underground mainline.

KEY PARTNERS: State Conservation Commission staff, Jon Culp and Jack Myrick, are a major reason for the success of this project. Jon wrote a letter of support for the grant applications and helped with the presentations. Jack provided training for staff and was a presenter at two educational events. Troy Peters Ph.D., an associate professor at WSU, has provided technical assistance and was a workshop presenter. As a direct result of this educational effort, US Fish and Wildlife and the Rose Foundation has provided funding for a K-Line irrigation demonstration project and fish screens.

Other Accomplishments



Fish passage barrier removal project on South Fork Olequa Creek



Fish passage correction restored 5.2 miles of stream for spawning and rearing of salmon



Installation of underground mainline for better distribution of dairy liquid manure

Photo: Nikki Atkins

More work to do!

- Water quality and quantity: Install a K-line irrigation demonstration project and continue with irrigation water management education.
- Flood damage reduction: Planning to construct more livestock/equipment pads for flood protection on farms.
- Salmon recovery: Continue removing fish passage barriers. We also plan to install fish screens on irrigation intakes.