



# JEFFERSON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

District Manager: Al Cairns Board Chair: Glen Huntingford  
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Legislative District: 24 Congressional District: 6

## Other accomplishments:



State Conservation Commission (SCC) cost-share funds helped a cattle farmer install fencing, a livestock crossing, and in-stream fish habitat.



SCC cost-share funds helped a farmer install off-channel drinking troughs fed by development of a spring to protect water quality.



SCC cost-share funds helped a horse owner install fence, heavy use areas, and rain gardens to protect water quality for shellfish.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### LIVING WITH BEAVER ON AGRICULTURAL LANDS



Conservation district staff install a fence and pipe flow device to address flooding from a beaver dam while leaving the dam in place.

#### Resource challenge

In the early 1900s, the local beaver population declined in the Chimacum Watershed due to habitat loss from stream channelization. Around 2000, Washington passed a law banning body-gripping traps, and beaver pelt prices dropped.

Likely a result of these factors, local beaver populations have grown over the past decade. Beaver activity in reaches of

Chimacum Creek that flow through farmland have caused flooding that has killed streamside trees and reduced acreage of productive farmland.

#### Project summary and results

Jefferson County Conservation District partnered with local conservation organizations to develop and share strategies for addressing beaver issues on farmland and living “with” beaver. The project resulted in a beaver management plan, a workshop attended by 40 local land managers, and a volunteer program to assist with monitoring. The workshop taught land managers how to identify undesirable beaver impacts, potential strategies to address impacts, and about available assistance in Jefferson County. The project has started a conversation around collaborative beaver management in the community. It is all about building bridges, not dams.



Beaver activity along a streamside planting. Beaver rely on woody vegetation along streams for food and habitat.

**Key partners:** North Olympic Salmon Coalition; Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife; WSU Jefferson County Extension; Jefferson Land Trust

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Assist Jefferson County in developing a Critical Areas Ordinance Update as it relates to agriculture that focuses on adaptive management and voluntary stewardship.
- ▶ With local conservation partners, coordinate priority watershed-scale restoration and protection projects on farm and forest lands.
- ▶ Develop an On-site Septic System Repair Cost-Share Program to assist more landowners with natural resource protection.