



SPOKANE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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Legislative District: 3, 4, 6, 7, 9 Congressional District: 5

Other accomplishments:



Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) in Spokane County: The VSP Work Group meets with landowners to discuss and plan for critical areas.



Completed three fish barrier correction projects this year. Since 2006, 23 projects have opened 106 miles of stream habitat.



Education for adults continues to be successful with the Backyard Conservation Stewardship Program and a new Rain Barrel Program.

2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

MULTI-PRACTICE APPROACH FOR EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION



In its first year, the commodity buffer program enrolled 92 acres of buffer on 27 miles of stream.

Resource challenge

Planting strips of vegetation along streams, called buffers, is one way to protect water quality in agricultural areas. Wide buffers often are thought to be better. But, this decreases producers' productive ground and profits and ignores contributing upland practices. The Spokane Conservation District (SCD) is promoting a combination of practices that address upland tillage and variable-width buffers along streams. Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation modeling indicates this combination of practices is far more effective than just a buffer.

Project summary and results

Through the Spokane Greater Watershed Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), \$15.4 million will be invested in various conservation programs over the next five years. This primarily will promote reduced tillage practices and install appropriately sized buffers on agricultural land to protect waterways, while fairly compensating producers for the lost acres of production. To date, the program has contracts for over 30,000 acres of conservation tillage and 27 miles of commodity buffer. SCD will use edge-of-field monitoring stations and drone technology to collect data and evaluate effects.



The Washington State Conservation Commission has invested \$241,000 to date in no-till and buffers in 27 projects.

Key partners: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Washington State Conservation Commission; Recreation and Conservation Office; Idaho Dept. of Lands; Coeur d'Alene Tribe; Inland NW Land Conservancy; Spokane Tribe of Indians; Pacific NW Direct Seed Association; Pine Creek, Kootenai-Shoshone, and Benewah Soil and Water Conservation Districts; Washington Department of Transportation; Spokane Falls Chapter: Trout Unlimited; Spokane River Forum; The Lands Council; Department of Ecology; DNR; Spokane County

MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ SCD acquired property that includes 50 acres of land and a 7,000-square-foot office building. It will be developed as a "conservation campus" with conservation resources and demonstration areas.
- ▶ SCD is a driving force in the Vets on the Farm (VOTF) program. This fall the VOTF Learning Farm will take on an incubator concept, giving farm interns independence within a mini-plot. Education, networking, and partnership development continue to grow.