



WALLA WALLA COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

District Manager: Renee M. Hadley Board Chair: Ed Chvatal
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Legislative District: 16 Congressional District: 5

Other accomplishments:



Helped remove burned forest buffers, maintain water quality, and prevent soil erosion through work funded by Fire Recovery grants from the Washington State Conservation Commission. Photo by Joanna Cowles



Facilitated the Walla Walla Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP). The group nearly completed the draft local VSP plan in fiscal year (FY) 2017, and is on-track to complete it in FY 2018.



Assisted the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency with 36 Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program re-enrollment contracts, which totaled 520 acres and will help with 16 contracts in 2018. Photo by Joanna Cowles

2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

FISH SCREEN SAVES LIVES OF SALMON



Fish screen with 6.4 cubic feet per second flow capacity will save lives of salmon. Photo by Lisa Stearns

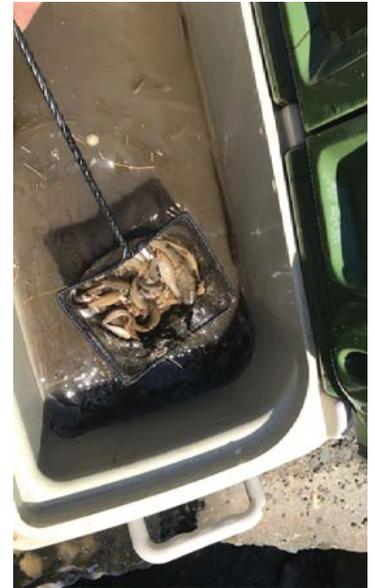
Resource challenge

Fish and salmon presence within the Walla Walla Basin is common. Also common within the basin is diversion of surface water to irrigate crops. Frequently, fish are sucked into pumping systems or impinged on the surface of screens with the wrong mesh size. An irrigation diversion off of Cottonwood Creek was trapping fish that had to be rescued annually. The stream dynamics and geometry of the irrigation system required outside-the-box thinking.

Project summary and results

Walla Walla County Conservation District worked with the landowner and the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) to create a plan. Nature has a way of laughing at plans. High flows in the spring changed the stream channel. These changes forced us to rethink and alter the design. The revised approach resulted in a large fish screen, a fish bypass, and instream habitat. These components will allow fish to live and migrate farther upstream. Nearly 200 salmonids and over 300 freshwater fish were rescued during construction. Just think, how many fish will be saved over the next few years? We are grateful funds were available to install this project.

Key partners: WDFW biologists and Yakima Screen Shop; Byerley Farms



Nearly 200 salmonids and over 300 freshwater fish were salvaged during construction. Photo by Sean Taylor

MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Construct instream restoration projects throughout the Walla Walla Basin, and develop a strategy to tackle stream erosion, increase flood resilience, and reduce sediment in streams.
- ▶ Begin implementation of the Voluntary Stewardship Program local work plan to protect critical areas and maintain farming and ranching.
- ▶ Continue spreading the word about how the conservation district can help farms, ranches, and schools.