



5-Year Plan (2019 to 2024) Cascadia Conservation District

For More Information, Contact:

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Organization of the Cascadia Conservation District

A political subdivision of the State of Washington – authorities, powers and structure contained in RCW 89.08.

- *The Chelan County Conservation District was formed on October 15, 1973 when the Wenatchee-Entiat Soil Conservation District (formed on March 24, 1948) and the Lake Chelan Soil Conservation District (formed on March 30, 1948) combined. The name was changed to Cascadia Conservation District in June 2007. The current district boundaries include all of Chelan County.*
- *The District is governed by five supervisors; three are elected and two are appointed by the Washington State Conservation Commission.*

Function of the Cascadia Conservation District

To make available technical, financial and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land manager with conservation of soil, water and related natural resources.

We Serve & Why

- *We serve all those who have a connection to Chelan County resources by working with Chelan County landowners.*
- *We are enthusiastic about conservation and people, and work to reach cooperative solutions that create the greatest good for the greatest number of people.*

Mission of the Cascadia Conservation District

To encourage wise stewardship and conservation of all natural resources for current and future residents in Chelan County by:

- *Being an active advocate for wise land use and water management decisions.*
- *Promoting a reasonable approach to environmental problems.*
- *Providing locally-led, voluntary, non-regulatory solutions to local environmental problems.*
- *Educating both adults and youth about natural resources stewardship.*
- *Monitoring and responding to future trends that affect the environment.*

Vision of the Cascadia Conservation District

- *To have all private landowners in the county aware of the District, what it does, and how it can help them.*
- *To encourage landowners to actively participate in conservation actions, personally and collectively.*
- *To have enough available water for all beneficial uses including domestic, agricultural, and fish and wildlife by developing water storage, implementing water conservation practices, and leveraging any available funding sources for these activities.*
- *To drastically reduce the need for regulatory agency intervention by working collaboratively with landowners and these agencies to address issues before regulation becomes necessary.*
- *To implement strong conservation programs that address the quality and quantity of water resources in the county, and balance competing demands on those resources.*
- *To improve the ability to get financial and technical assistance to the appropriate and most beneficial projects.*
- *To improve efficiency and reduce duplication of effort in the various basins.*

Values of the Cascadia Conservation District

- *Trustworthy, honest and transparent*
- *Local solutions to local issues*
- *Customer service to landowners, partners, vendors and funding sources that is friendly, personable, respectful and responsive*
- *Help landowners with voluntary and non-regulatory stewardship on the ground*
- *Fiscally responsible, committed, efficient, results-oriented, quality work*
- *Partnership approach to projects*

Natural Resource Data & Information:

Chelan County is located in the north-central part of Washington State, between the crest of the Cascade Mountains to the west and the Columbia River to the east. Chelan County is the third largest county in Washington at about 2,994 square miles (1,916,160 acres), of which 73 square miles is surface water. The county is drained by three primary watersheds (Chelan, Entiat and Wenatchee) and several small drainages that flow directly into the Columbia River (*Chelan County Fire Plan*, 2009). Only 15% of Chelan County, or 287,424 acres, is privately owned. Characterized by rolling foothills and highly incised river valleys, many individual properties have a mix of resource concerns. There are about 890 farms, making up 75,820 acres, and including roughly 10,008 acres classified as woodland (2012 Census of Agriculture). More than two-thirds of these farms are less than 50 acres.

Over 1.5 million acres of forest in the county, both public and private, are at high risk for catastrophic fire activity due to dry climate, drought, insects, overcrowding from historic fire suppression, abundant understory fuels, and a rapidly growing wildland-urban interface. Therefore, **forestry** is the highest priority natural resource concern at this time, with **water** being the second most critical resource in this semi-arid climate. In addition to residential and recreational uses, nearly all of the non-forest agriculture in the county depends on irrigation. Lake Chelan contains 33,280 acres of the total surface water, and the remaining 13,440 acres include several smaller lakes along with hundreds of miles of navigable or salmon-bearing creeks and rivers. Although water quality is generally good in the county, pressure from concentrated suburban and rural residential non-point pollution, legacy chemicals from historic use, and disturbances ranging from visiting recreationists to construction and stormwater add to water quality concerns for the future. This resource's continued availability and efficient use is in the best interest of all residents, as well as fish and wildlife. Additionally, ongoing education is important to encourage good stewardship for water resources.

Both in-stream and upland **habitat enhancement** are a part of Cascadia's programs to implement watershed and salmon recovery plans, as well as individual farm plans and habitat projects. Tools such as cost share project funding and water rights management are important to the goal of assisting both **agriculture** and other landowners with reasonable, practical, long-term land use stewardship options. The focus of **urban conservation** includes not only backyard habitat using native plants, but also increasing access to fresh, healthy food through community gardens and small-scale conservation practices. Farmers and residents also face negative impacts from **noxious weeds, invasive species and pests**. Helping to control and prevent the invasion of these threats will assist with both economic health and habitat protection. Population growth and a highly mobile society result in the ongoing need for **education and outreach**, both to inform the population about the unique characteristics and resource concerns of this area, and to enlist voluntary cooperation in best management and personal stewardship activities.

Criteria for Selecting Conservation Priorities:

Conservation priorities are established based on input from local residents and landowners, current natural resource conditions, and local, state and federal partner agency priorities.

Priority Natural Resource Conservation Needs & Geographic Areas, Measures of Success and Goals:

Forestry

Goal(s): Create a more fire resilient landscape and improve forest health in Chelan County.

Reduce potential impacts from wildfires by supporting implementation of the county's Community Wildfire Protection Plans and partnering with other agencies to seek funding and project opportunities. Assist landowners to prepare for and recover from wildfire impacts through education and technical and financial assistance. Due to the vast amount of heavily fueled public forest land and adjacent private land in the region, this is expected to be an ongoing need.

Measures of Success: Assess and/or reduce wildfire fuels on 100 acres of private land each year; assist 5 communities with forest health practices; and assist, develop or implement 3 community workgroups. Develop and implement an urban forestry program.

Water

Goal(s): Conserve, maintain and improve the quantity and quality of water resources to support communities, agriculture and the natural environment.

Implement conservation practices that will help maintain and improve the quantity and quality of the water supply in Chelan County. Due to the abundance of shoreline and diverse land uses in the region, this is expected to be an ongoing need. Watershed plans contain detailed implementation targets developed and approved by local landowners in cooperation with local, state and federal agencies and multiple stakeholders. Regional Salmon Recovery Plans also provide guidance and goals for related work. Most of the District's work fits within the framework of these plans and meets multiple planning objectives.

Measures of Success: Water quality will be improved and protected through voluntary implementation of best management practices and source water outreach campaigns. Water quantity will be protected by improving water conveyance and application efficiency on at least 3 systems and multiple residential properties. Annually, 1000 landowners will be contacted with information about water quality improvement opportunities and 50 will be provided with planning and/or technical assistance for natural resource concerns.

Habitat Enhancement

Goal(s): Improve instream, riparian and upland wildlife habitat in all watersheds with willing landowners. Monitor project implementation and maintain sites as needed.

Measures of Success: Plan, secure funding and implement 2 middle Entiat projects in 2019 and 2020. Install at least 4 additional instream, riparian or upland projects.

Agriculture & Urban Conservation

Goal(s): Promote viable agriculture, engage urban communities in small-scale agricultural opportunities, and encourage cooperation among stakeholders. Build strong connections between agricultural producers and the community, and continue serving as liaison between farmers and regulatory agencies.

Measures of Success: Assist at least 5 landowners per year with site evaluation, BMP information, and/or project implementation. Conduct urban conservation program including technical assistance, water conservation and community gardens. Participate in VSP implementation.

Noxious Weeds, Invasive Species, & Pests

Goal(s): Protect native species from noxious and invasive species and pests.

Measures of Success: Annually, include weed and pest control practices in at least 3 plans or projects; contact 30 landowners regarding weed and pest control options; evaluate 5 sites and provide BMP information. Coordinate with partner agencies to develop a regional weed control plan.

Information – Education & District Operations Priorities, Measures of Success, and Goals:

Information - Education

Goal(s): Promote awareness of, and encourage participation in Cascadia's voluntary natural resource programs. Secure sufficient staff and funding for a coordinated, comprehensive, organized outreach program.

Measures of Success: Annually conduct Information-Education Program, including the following:

- Produce and distribute quarterly newsletters (4) and annual report (1).
- Utilize 3 electronic media outlets as well as multiple radio and print outlets to announce opportunities as well as inform and educate landowners and residents about resource concerns and District programs.
 - Host or participate in at least 10 public events.
 - Conduct 5 outreach and education programs.

District Operations Priorities

Goal(s): Maintain effective and efficient operations including accounting, grant vouchering, personnel management, Supervisor elections & appointments, training & development, annual planning, budgeting, and reporting and have enough staff, office space and equipment to support all goals.

- Keep informed and work proactively on policies affecting voluntary implementation of conservation practices.
- Continue to monitor natural resource-related policy development at local, regional and state level.
- Be available to the citizens of Chelan County as a liaison and technical resource for local environmental solutions.
- Seek creative and cost-effective solutions to funding and operations challenges.

Measures of Success: Meet Conservation Commission and state agency requirements for operations, policies and procedures; maintain good business practices and internal controls; be available to meet the needs of landowners and partners.

Land Manager Needs

- *Technical assistance and cost share: design, planning, permit applications, compliance information.*
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Milestones, Timeline & Actions

See our Annual Plan for short-term goals, milestones, staffing and budget projections.

Washington Conservation Districts assisting land managers with their conservation choices

