



Thurston Conservation District

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Legislative District: 2, 20, 22, 35 Congressional District: 3, 10

Other Accomplishments



Thurston Conservation District (CD) helped Little Big Farm enroll in South Sound FarmLink and secure 3-5 acres of UGA farmland from development! Photo by Nora White



Thurston CD and TC Food Bank support school gardens with high rates of free and reduced lunch with technical assistance, workshops, and volunteers! Photo by Nora White



Thurston CD helps local farms convert to renewable energy! This solar pump was installed on a south Thurston cattle ranch. Photo by Kevin Jensen, Riverbend Ranch

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Building Community with Camas

Resource Challenge

The Steamboat Island community was once, like much of Thurston County, covered by native prairies. Today only about three percent of this habitat remains. Camas is a culturally important First Food cultivated by indigenous people of the area. According to Squaxin Island Tribal members and local historians, this section of prairie hadn't been traditionally managed for over 200 years. Since then, Camas and other native prairie plants drastically declined, while invasive species thrived.



South Sound GREEN students explore the prairie to learn about the cultural and ecological significance of prairies! Photo by Stephanie Bishop

Project Summary and Results

Volunteers removed the encroaching Douglas fir seedlings, cut down non-native black locust trees, pulled Scotch broom, and whacked back 10' high Himalayan blackberry! Through the South Sound GREEN program, nearly 200 4th grade students from Griffin Elementary School cleared brush. Tribal members, community volunteers, neighbors, and families planted 1,000 Camas bulbs, restoring this native prairie.



"The camas restoration site was so impactful for all who came." ~Aleta Poste, Squaxin Island Tribal Garden Coordinator. Photo by Stephanie Bishop

Michael Crowder, second vice-president of the National Association of Conservation Districts said of the project, "Tribes and [conservation districts] have a lot in common, including many common goals like restoration of important habitats, and this project typifies what successful cooperation can look like."

Key Partners

Squaxin Island Tribe; Steamboat Conservation Partnership; South Sound GREEN; US Fish and Wildlife's Connecting People with Nature Program; WA Native Plant Society; Griffin School District; WA Dept. of Transportation

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Secure local funding through rates and charges system to serve over 30 landowners waiting for technical assistance and conservation planning!
- ▶ Implement the Voluntary Stewardship Program. Nine landowners currently are waiting for individual stewardship plan development!
- ▶ Increase farmland preservation by reducing land conversion through South Sound FarmLink and working lands easements!