



Walla Walla County Conservation District

District Manager: Renee M. Hadley Board Chair: Pat McConnell
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Legislative District: 16 Congressional District: 5

Other Accomplishments



Through the Voluntary Stewardship Program, the District verified protection of land, habitat, and water on 10 percent of farms and ranches in Walla Walla County.



Helped landowners install four fish screens to protect endangered species (salmon and bull trout).



Helped landowners understand stream function and address erosion.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Voluntary Stewardship in Action

Resource Challenge

Walla Walla farmers and ranchers are committed to protecting critical areas through voluntary efforts. Farmers face pressure from regulation and a lack of public understanding about working lands. The Jensen Ranch is a small farm with about 20 cows near Dry Creek. Before, the cows had free access to Dry Creek for water. But the creek is on the list of polluted streams in our state. The Department of Ecology and the property owner reached out to the Walla Walla County Conservation District for help protecting water.

Project Summary and Results

The landowner, with help from the District, decided to install a new well to supply water troughs and to replant the land next to Dry Creek (the riparian buffer area). The land is in a steep valley, so meeting the buffer widths requested by Ecology was a challenge. Over 250 trees and shrubs and nearly an acre of grass were planted. The grasses and plants filter pollutants before they enter the stream. New fences protect the buffer area from the cattle. Farmers and ranchers like the Jensons show that voluntary projects are an effective way to protect water quality on working lands.

Key Partners

The landowner voluntarily contributed hundreds of hours and several thousand dollars. Additional funds came from the Dept. of Ecology, Washington State Conservation Commission and Walla Walla County Conservation District.



Livestock exclusion fencing to protect the new streamside buffer. Photo by Joanna Cowles Cleveland



Water trough allows cows to drink and protects water quality in Dry Creek. Photo by Joanna Cowles Cleveland

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Continue helping landowners to restore streams and address impacts of erosion. Two projects will be constructed in the next year, and three more are in the design phase.
- ▶ Continue funding the Voluntary Stewardship Program to protect land, habitat, and water on 20 percent of Walla Walla County.
- ▶ Continue educating the community about the health of our soils and streams.