

2018 Annual Report



CONSERVATION DISTRICTS
OF WASHINGTON STATE

your window to healthy lands

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Message from Our Leaders

Dear Friends,

We're pleased to present this celebration of accomplishments made by landowners and communities who voluntarily partner with conservation districts and the Washington State Conservation Commission to achieve healthy water, air, land, and habitat.

The theme of our 2018 Annual Report — *Conservation “Custom Made” for Washington* — highlights the key to our success, which is the ability to design and deliver conservation solutions that fit the diverse needs of our people and landscapes.

When you grow up in Washington or have lived here a while, it's easy to forget how exceptional it is to have such varied landscapes, natural resources, and agriculture.

Washington has everything from rain forests to arid shrub-steppe regions. We share the landscape with everything from orcas to sage-grouse. We grow everything from red raspberries to hops, and we're one of the top 10 dairy-producing states in the nation.

When it comes to conserving our resources, we must design solutions that reflect just how diverse our state is. There's no better way to do that than by working at the community-level to learn about local natural resource and land use issues. That's what conservation districts and the Commission do. We design and deliver “custom made” conservation solutions that fit the needs of our communities and advance state efforts to ensure that future generations enjoy our unique resources, too.

You'll find examples of these custom made solutions — and the successes we've celebrated with participating landowners and partners — in the pages of this report.

On behalf of the Washington State Conservation Commission, we sincerely thank all the conservation districts, landowners, and other partners who make this work possible. We remain committed to working with you to create a better Washington for today and for the future.

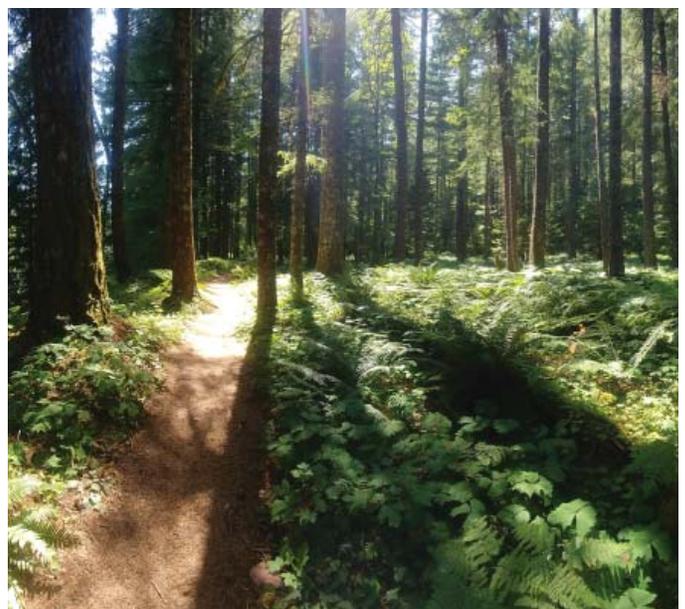
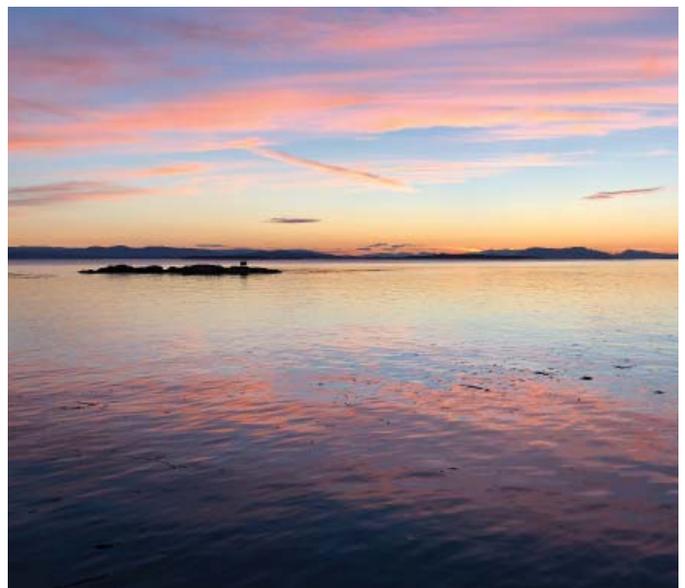


Jim Kropf, Chair



Mark Clark, Executive Director

“When it comes to conserving our resources, we must design solutions that reflect just how diverse our state is.”



Who We Are

Delivering custom made conservation for Washington communities.

There's no "one-size-fits-all" solution for conserving our state's diverse natural resources. Washington landscapes and land users vary dramatically from one region to the next.

The Washington State Conservation Commission and our state's conservation districts work together to deliver voluntary solutions that can be tailored to meet the most pressing, site-specific natural resource needs.

Meet the Washington State Conservation Commission

The Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) coordinates and administers voluntary, incentive-based conservation programs and solutions for our state.

How we do this:

- ▶ Provide financial and operational support to our state's 45 conservation districts.
- ▶ Design policy and program structures that can be customized to address site-specific natural resource conditions and landowner needs.
- ▶ Facilitate collaborative solutions that meet state natural resource priorities and work on the ground.



Meet the Conservation Districts

Conservation districts are trusted, non-regulatory partners who assist landowners with conserving natural resources at the local level.

There are 45 conservation districts in Washington. Each one is governed by a volunteer board of community members. Their staff offer natural resource expertise, first-hand knowledge of the local landscape, and unparalleled relationship-building skills.

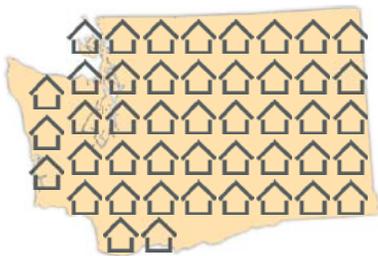
Conservation districts provide:

- ▶ Voluntary services that are tailored to meet the needs of local natural resources and communities.
- ▶ Financial incentives and free or low-cost services that make practicing conservation more affordable for landowners.
- ▶ Expertise and assistance with planning and installing conservation projects.

Some examples of conservation district areas of service include:

- ▶ Habitat restoration and enhancement.
- ▶ Livestock and nutrient management.
- ▶ Soil, forest, and rangeland health.
- ▶ Natural disaster preparedness and recovery.
- ▶ Water quality and quantity improvements.
- ▶ Stormwater management.

Structure of SCC and Conservation District Relationship



45 Conservation Districts

- ▶ Assess local natural resource needs.
- ▶ Develop relationships with local landowners.
- ▶ Deliver voluntary conservation programs and engage landowners.



20 SCC Agency Staff

- ▶ Design and allocate funds for voluntary conservation programs.
- ▶ Coordinate and promote conservation district services; provide operational oversight.
- ▶ Encourage state conservation policies that are informed by local conditions.

Two governor-appointed (tribal and environmental stakeholders)



Four state partners (Ecology, Agriculture, DNR, and WSU)



Three elected by conservation districts



WA Assn. of Conservation Districts President



10-Member SCC Board of Commissioners

- ▶ Govern the SCC and provide direction to staff.
- ▶ Enact collaborative solutions to meet state and local natural resource and land use needs.

Looking Back at FY 2018...



Video crew from the program "Washington Grown" (wagrown.com) interview Spokane Conservation District director Vicki Carter about the Vets on the Farm (VOTF) program (sccd.org/votf). Through VOTF, veterans are connected with the resources they need to transition from the military into a career in agriculture.



Republic High School students show Commission members the compost bins they made as part of their Lunches to Lunches program in partnership with Ferry Conservation District. Students collect food waste from the cafeteria, compost it, and use that compost to grow vegetables that become part of the school menu.

How We Work

The SCC and conservation districts use a voluntary, incentive-based approach to engage landowners with conservation.

Incentives spark eager landowner participation, rather than triggering disputes or conflict.

Conservation district staff work with landowners to design projects that address site-specific natural resource issues and property management goals.



Tools for Success

State funding from the SCC supports vital tools that conservation districts and landowners need to complete conservation projects.

Two tools that are critical for success are:

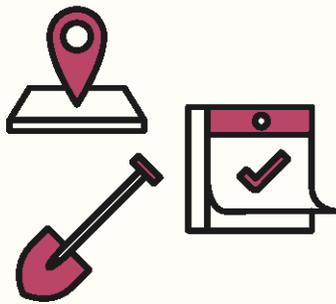
- ▶ **Cost share:** A landowner pays a portion of a conservation project's total cost. The remaining portion is paid by a project sponsor (e.g. conservation district). This serves as an incentive for landowners to construct eligible projects.
- ▶ **Conservation plans:** A road map for landowners that outlines how and where to maintain and enhance natural resources on their property. Plans are developed at no cost to the landowner. (See page 7.)





CONSERVATION PLANS

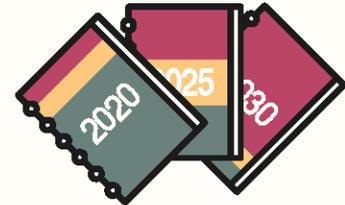
Conservation plans are road maps for landowners to maintain and enhance natural resources on their property. They are initiated in many ways: **from voluntary-based agreements, to regulatory referrals, to everything in between (opt-in).**



Conservation plans are site-specific. They identify what kind of conservation efforts are needed on the property, where that effort is needed, and when projects will be done.



Conservation plans help bring together local, state, and federal funding sources to share the cost of conservation projects.



Conservation plans are living documents. Because they are site-specific they are able to respond to changes on the property over time.



Conservation plans across Washington State provide benefits for farmers, land managers, communities, and the environment. Together, these plans help impact change on a landscape scale.

Accountability and Expertise

The SCC and conservation districts are committed to accountability and delivering results for the people of Washington.

We took more steps this year to ensure that we're using public funds responsibly, employing transparent performance measures, and providing reliable and timely service.



Center for Technical Development

The Center for Technical Development (CTD) is the technical arm of the SCC. Its purpose is to ensure that conservation district staff have the expertise to plan and implement conservation projects that deliver results.

In 2018, the CTD took steps toward fulfilling this purpose, including:

- ▶ In coordination with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, hosted trainings on conservation planning, advanced GIS and mapping, pasture and range forage identification, and comprehensive nutrient management planning. Over 60 conservation district employees attended these trainings.
- ▶ Launched certification programs in dairy nutrient management, farm planning, and riparian management.

See page 9 for more information about the CTD Planner Certification Program.



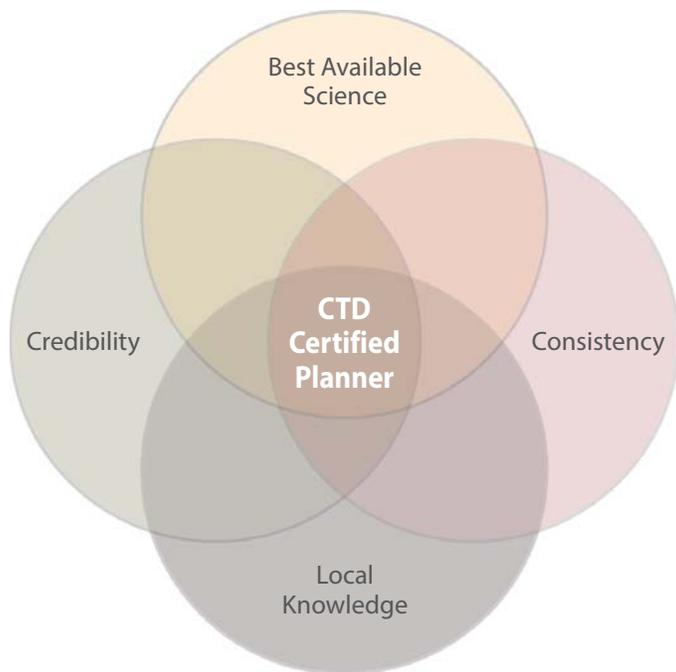
Conservation Practice Data System

Our ability to track spending and the impacts of our investments is vital for financial accountability.

This fiscal year we completed a major upgrade to our Conservation Practice Data System (CPDS). CPDS is the tool we use to administer funding to conservation district projects that are ready to go and that will address critical natural resource issues.

The new system upgrade will allow us to track more comprehensive data about the projects we fund.

CTD Certified Planner Certification Program



- ▶ The CTD Planner Certification Program authenticates that staff have the necessary skill and ability to write conservation plans that meet all state and local requirements.
- ▶ CTD-certified planners represent a rigor of review, training, and knowledge-base to ensure they execute a consistent, high-level of planning.
- ▶ The program provides a path for new and advancing planners to achieve the knowledge and mentor support needed to advance from beginning to expert planner through continuing education.

Learn more about the SCC Center for Technical Development: wactd.org

Looking Back at FY 2018...

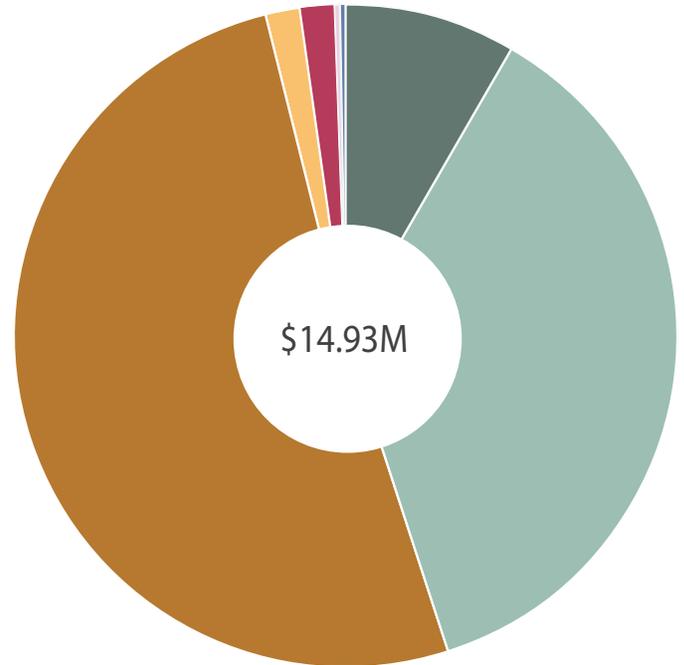


Participants from the 2018 Comprehensive Nutrient Management Training hosted by CTD in coordination with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service tour a dairy facility.

Budget and Expenditures

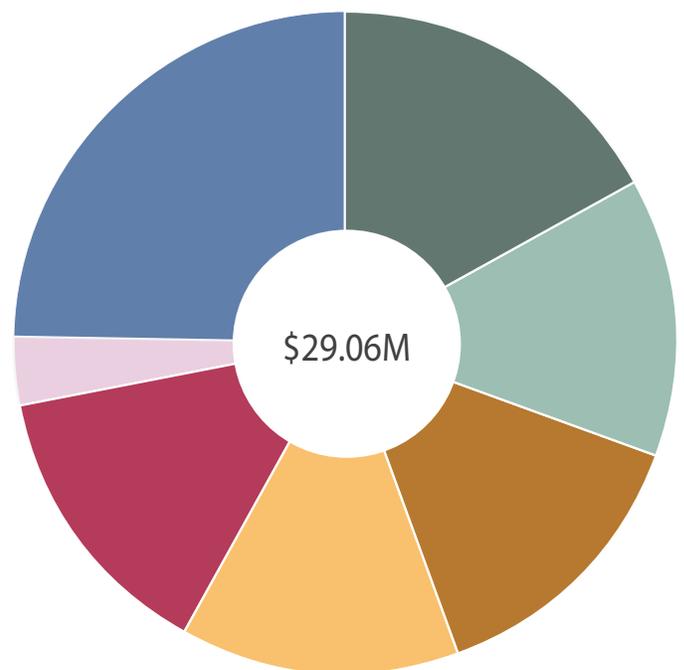
2017-19 Operating Budget

- SCC Administration - \$1,279,811
- Conservation District Operations - \$5,469,189
- Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP), statewide program administration - \$7,602,000
- Pension Funding Stabilization Acct Salaries and Expenses - \$254,000
- CD Grants and Technical Assistance - \$250,000
- Food Policy Forum - \$50,000
- Water Quality Improvements - \$25,000

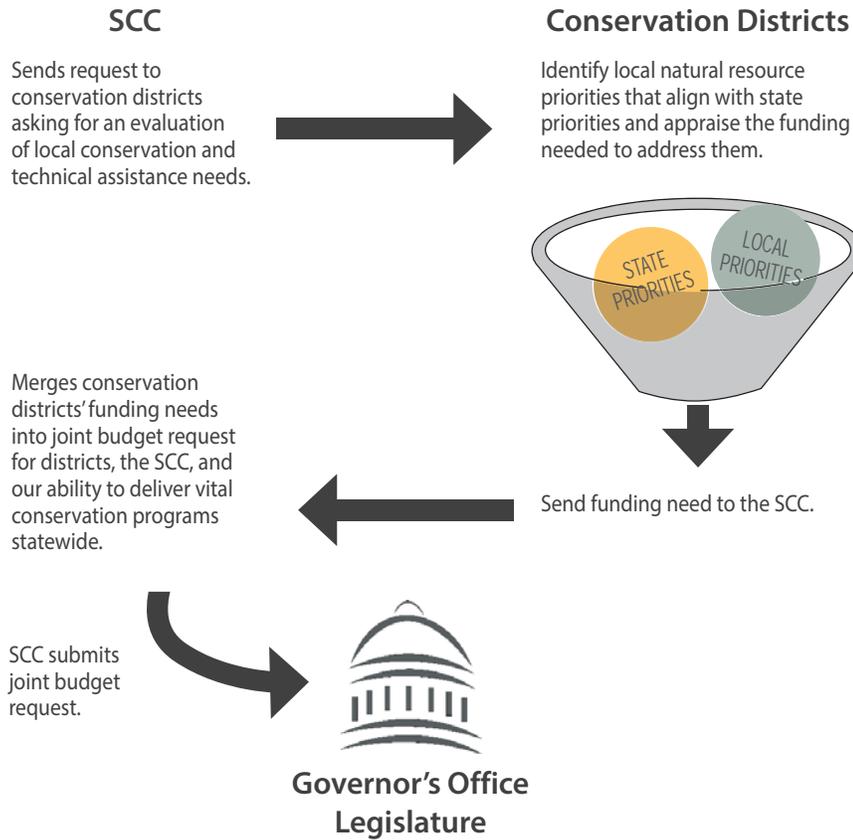


2017-19 Capital Budget

- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program - \$4,900,000
- Natural Resource Investments - \$4,000,000
- Shellfish Program - \$4,000,000
- Dairy Distillation Grants - \$4,000,000
- Match for Fed. Regional Conservation Partnership Program - \$4,000,000
- State Toxics Control Account - \$1,000,000
- Agricultural Conservation Easements - \$7,110,000



How We Build Our Budget



Maintaining Efficient Payments

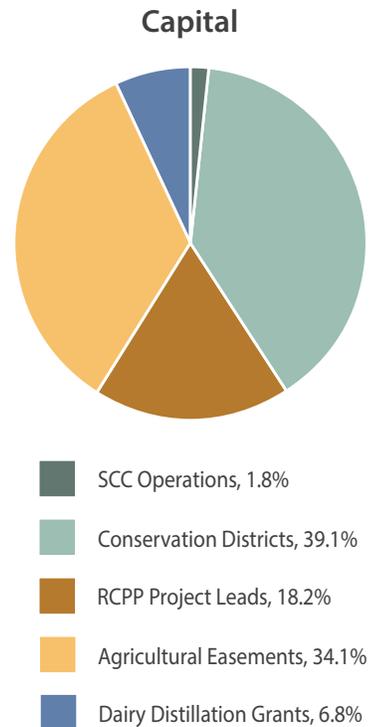
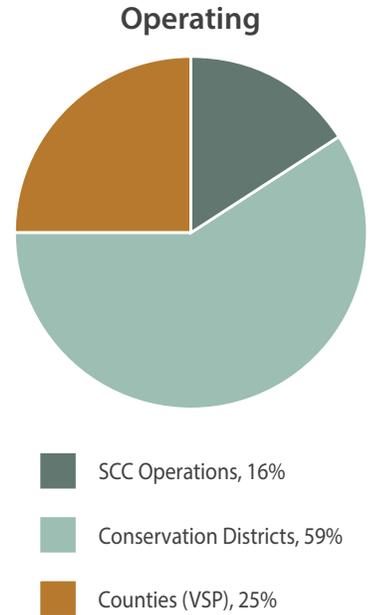
The SCC takes pride in issuing prompt payments. We always look for ways to improve our efficiency and invite feedback from conservation districts and other partners who receive our funding.



In FY 2018, our financial staff:

- ▶ Processed 1,639 vouchers.
- ▶ Maintained an average payment processing time of 3.4 days.
- ▶ Managed 135 active contracts.

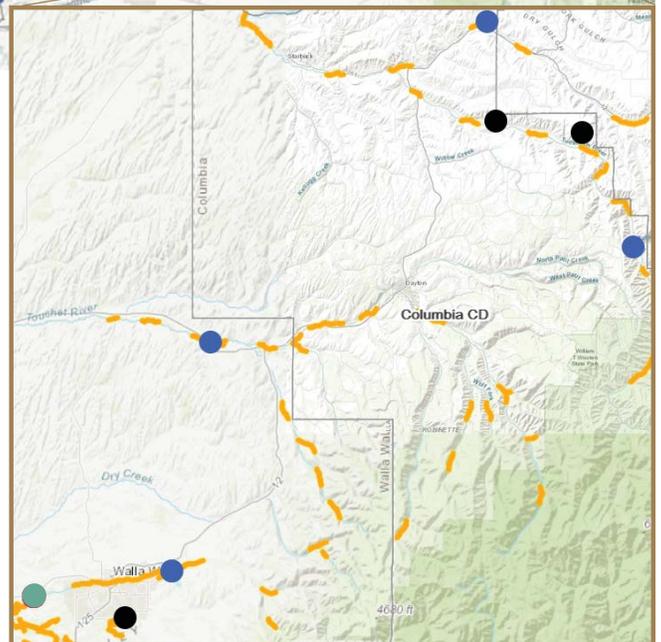
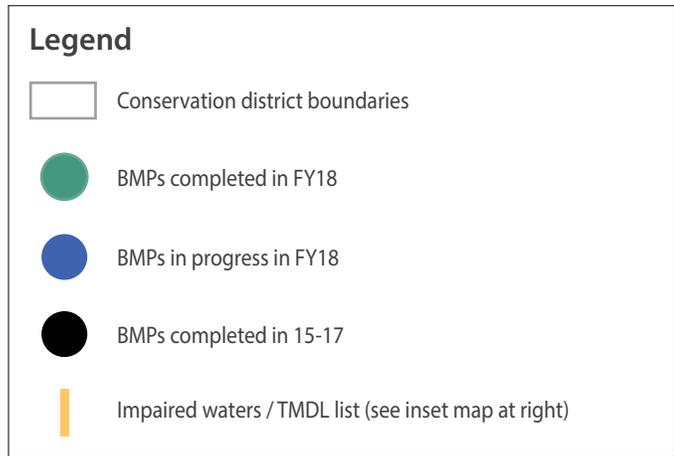
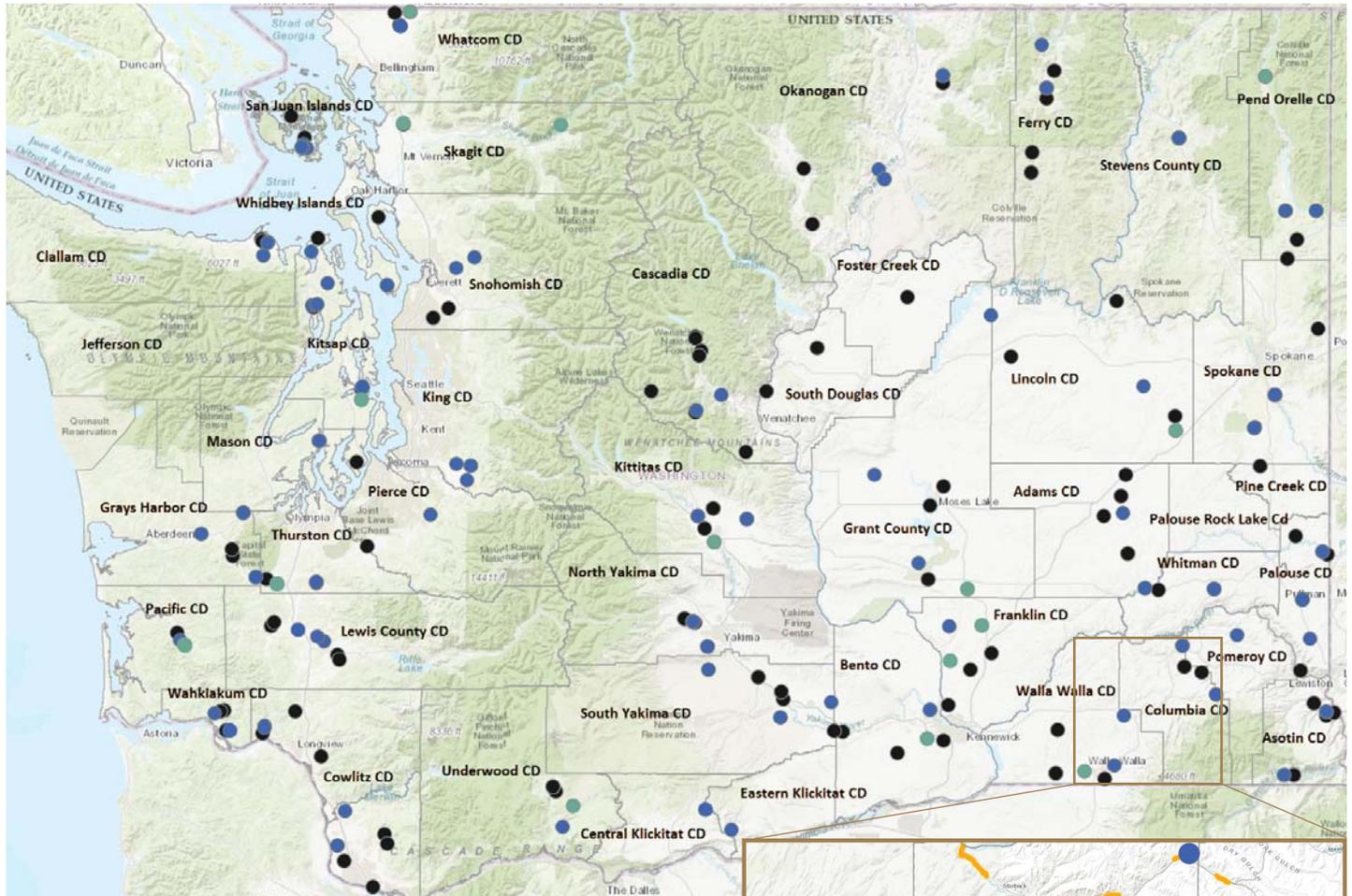
FY 2018 Funding Distribution



Natural Resource Investments (NRI)

2017-19 Funding: \$4,000,000

Conservation districts use NRI funding to offer local cost share programs as an incentive for landowners to install best management practices (BMPs). BMPs advance progress toward natural resource objectives, such as improved water quality and habitat, and are farm-friendly.



NRI projects are strategically located to address resource concerns. For example, many water quality projects are located along water bodies where pollutants exceed the Total Maximum Daily Load (see inset map).

Examples of BMPs eligible for NRI funding



Fencing and livestock exclusion: This helps prevent animals from accessing streams and other critical areas and can improve pasture quality.



Livestock feeding pads and heavy use areas: Installing stable, non-eroding surfaces in areas frequently used by animals prevents erosion and aids in manure collection. This helps protect water and air quality.



Instream and streambank stabilization structures: Benefits include erosion control and enhanced fish habitat.

FY 2018 Highlights

Examples of what will be accomplished through projects funded by NRI dollars this year:



195

best management practices installed



16,559

trees and shrubs planted



9,390

feet of fencing constructed



1,449

feet of riparian forest planted

Learn more about NRI:
scc.wa.gov/nri

Examples of BMPs eligible for Shellfish funding



Waste storage facilities: Storing manure in a covered structure on a non-erodible surface reduces the potential of polluting surface and groundwater.



On-site septic system repair or replacement: Failing septic systems have proven to be a significant source of water pollution in some shellfish growing areas.



Chemigation units: This upgrades irrigation systems to allow for more efficient application of chemicals to cranberry bogs and reduces runoff to shellfish growing areas.

FY 2018 Highlights

Examples of what will be accomplished through projects funded by Shellfish dollars this year:



128

best management practices installed



271

acres planted and/or treated for weed control



11,651

feet of fencing constructed



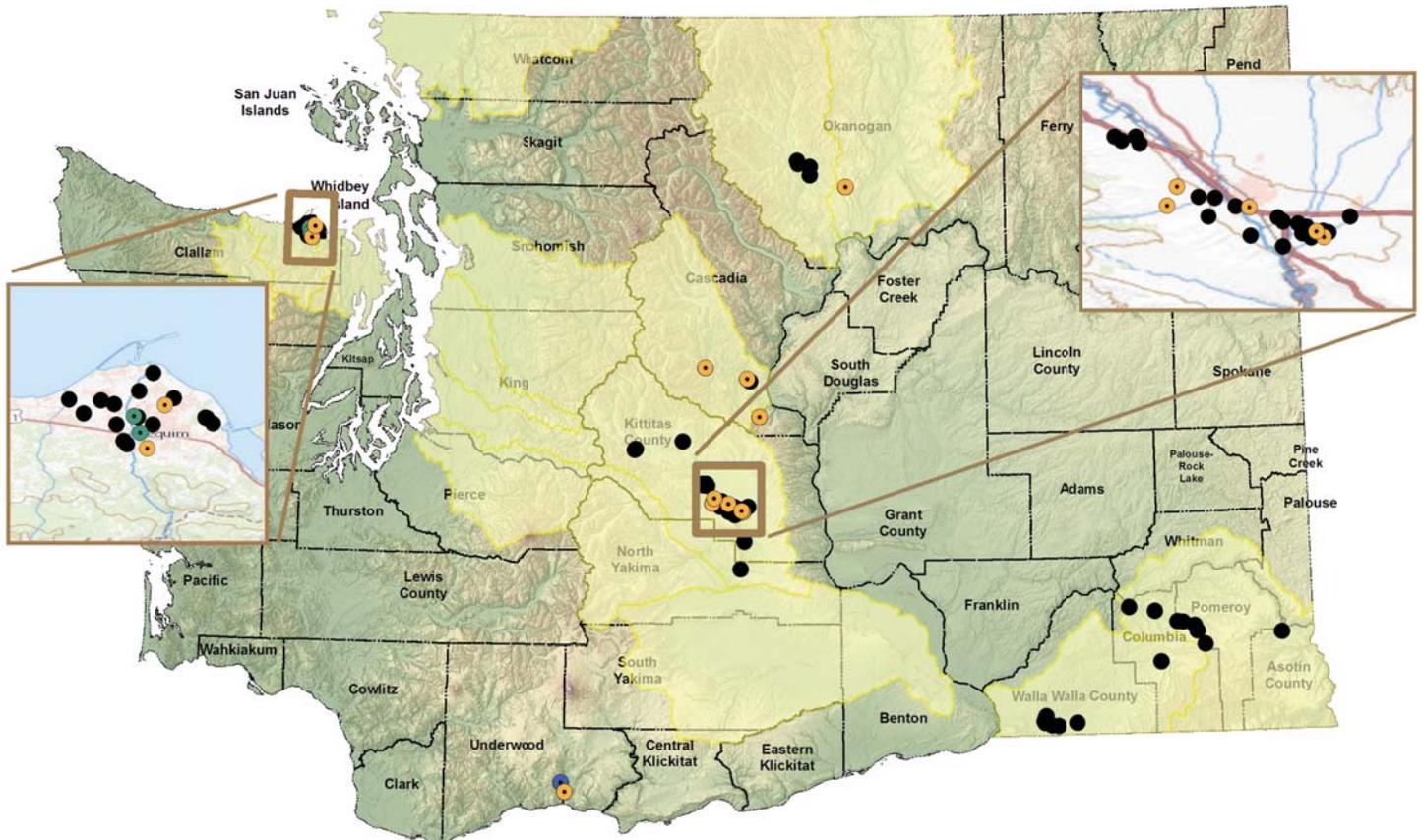
Conservation districts have used Shellfish Program funding for projects that were part of efforts that resulted in the upgrade of thousands of acres of shellfish growing areas in Dungeness Bay, Birch Bay, and Drayton Harbor.

Learn more about the Shellfish Program:
scc.wa.gov/shellfish

Irrigation Efficiencies Grant Program (IEGP)

2017-19 Funding: \$4,000,000
(through Department of Ecology)

Provides incentive-based solutions to reduce the water resource conflict between irrigated agriculture and salmon. Water right holders receive financial assistance for upgrading to more efficient irrigation systems. Saved water is returned to drought-prone streams that are home to ESA-listed salmonid fish species without risk of relinquishing irrigators' water rights.



Legend

-  Conservation district boundaries
-  16 critical basins with shortage of water for fish
-  Projects in progress (17-18)
-  Planned projects (19-20)
-  Completed projects (FY18)
-  Completed projects (02-17)

IEGP Accomplishments to Date:

Since its inception in 2001, IEGP has:

- ▶ Completed **69 projects**.
- ▶ Saved **17,847 acre feet of water** per year.
- ▶ Saved **71.2 cubic feet of water per second** per year.
- ▶ Enhanced streamflow in **24 tributaries** critical for salmonids.

Examples of BMPs eligible for IEGP funding



Fish screens: These are required on IEGP projects. They protect juvenile fish from water diversions, such as irrigation pump intakes.



Center pivot systems: These are one of the most efficient and effective irrigation system types. They offer multiple benefits including saving water, energy, and time.



Soil moisture data collection: This is an important part of each on-farm efficiencies project.

It helps the farmer know how much water to apply and when.

FY 2018 Highlights

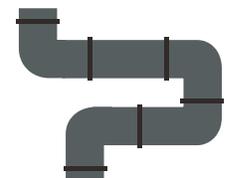
Examples of what was accomplished through the IEGP this fiscal year:



Completed two ditch-to-pipe projects that saved 2.2 cubic feet per second of water and returned 620 acre feet of water per year to the Dungeness River.



Participated on Drought Contingency Planning Taskforce, which included completing the final phase of rewriting the state's drought contingency plan.



Helped the Union Gap Irrigation District begin construction on a mitigation project to address impacts to an irrigation pipe that carries water through the Rattlesnake Ridge landslide area.

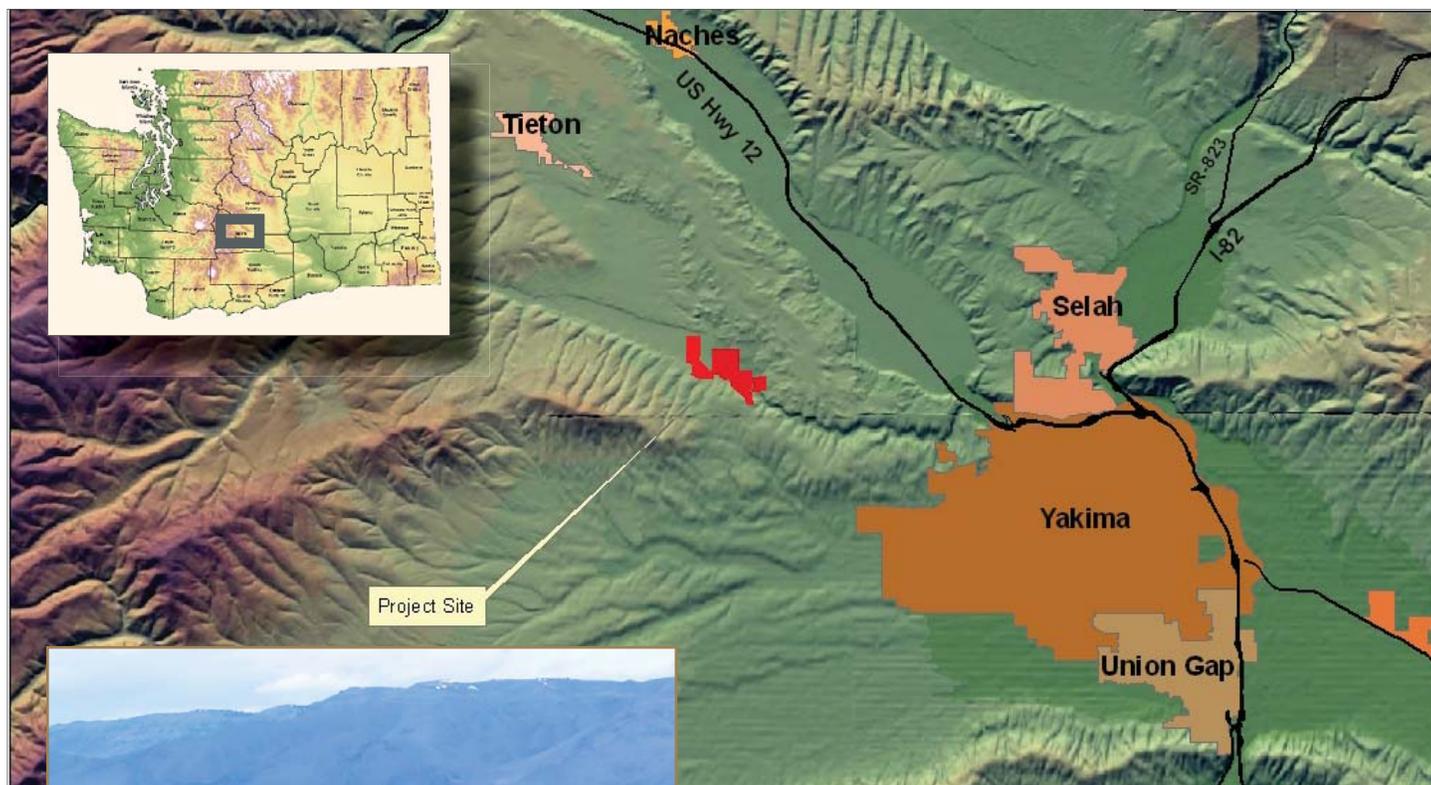
Learn more about IEGP:
scc.wa.gov/iegp

Office of Farmland Preservation (OFP)

OFP assists farmers, conservation districts, and policy-makers with promoting and retaining agricultural lands. The program offers several tools to achieve this goal, including assistance with farm transition planning workshops, agricultural easements, and tracking data on trends that impact farmland loss.

Lust Family Farm and Ranch Preservation

In 2018, OFP funded **North Yakima Conservation District (NYCD)** to acquire development rights and secure four agricultural conservation easements to permanently protect 283 acres of irrigated farmland in the Cowiche Basin.



This project was years in the making. Leading up to the easements, NYCD worked with the landowners and other partners to restore and enhance habitat for resident fish, including steelhead, spring Chinook, and coho.

By following this work with agricultural conservation easements, all the agricultural and ecological values of this property will be permanently preserved.

? What's an Agricultural Conservation Easement?

It's a voluntary agreement that gives landowners the option to sell their right to develop their agricultural property to an entity (e.g. conservation district). The agreement adds a permanent restriction on development and subdivision to the property title, and it provides a plan to protect the conservation values of the land. Landowners are paid the portion of the property value that the development rights represent and retain all other property rights.

Examples of property enhancements that are preserved through the agricultural conservation easements:



NYCD worked with landowners to address water quality issues caused by streams flowing through livestock area into a wetland complex and riparian areas. Troughs were constructed to supply permitted livestock water away from the wetlands and riparian areas.



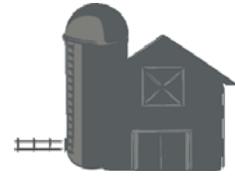
NYCD installed fencing to exclude livestock from wetland and riparian areas, and then planted native vegetation and trees to further protect water quality.



NYCD worked with the landowner, Cowiche Creek Water Users Association, Yakima Tieton Irrigation District, and other partners to increase streamflow in Cowiche Creek for steelhead while still protecting irrigators' water rights. NYCD removed two shared points of diversion on Cowiche Creek and constructed an improved pressurized system that allows irrigators to draw water from the Tieton River instead. Pictured: Landowner Jim Lust opens the valve on his new irrigation line.

FY 2018 Highlights

Examples of what was accomplished through the OFP this fiscal year:



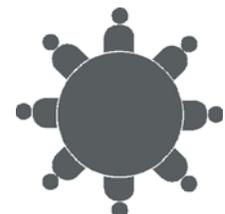
283

acres of irrigated farmland permanently protected in the Cowiche Basin by four agricultural conservation easements in partnership with North Yakima Conservation District.



12

issues published of the Farmland Preservation Newsletter, which covers land use, grants, food policy, legislative updates, research, and more.



4

meetings of the Farmland Roundtable coordinated by OFP in partnership with Whatcom and King Counties. This network of stakeholders meets quarterly to discuss topics relevant to farmland preservation.

Learn more about OFP:
scc.wa.gov/ofp

Other Highlights from FY 2018...



Food Policy Forum

The SCC convened monthly meetings of the Washington State Food Policy Forum, in collaboration with our Office of Farmland Preservation and the Washington State Department of Agriculture. The group represents a venue for safe collaboration among diverse members who are working to develop recommendations for a strong, resilient food system in Washington. Learn more: scc.wa.gov/food-policy



Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

The SCC is leading the Precision Conservation for Salmon and Water Quality in Puget Sound RCPP, which supports incentive projects on private land that improve water quality and habitat for at-risk fish species. We issued requests for proposals for conservation projects in priority areas around Puget Sound. We also coordinated the state match for six other RCPP efforts that address other state natural resource priorities, including forest health and farmland preservation. Learn more: scc.wa.gov/rcpp-in-wa



Technical Service Provider Task Orders

Work continued this fiscal year under a statewide agreement between the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the SCC that provides for conservation district staff to work on delivering Farm Bill conservation programs to Washington landowners. FY18 saw an all-time high in participation. Forty-seven task orders were awarded for a total of \$1,136,000 involving 19 conservation districts.



Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP)

Administered statewide by the SCC, VSP gives counties the option to use voluntary, incentive-based tools to engage landowners with farm-friendly actions that protect critical areas on agricultural land and meet growth management requirements. Community stakeholders develop work plans, set benchmarks, and report results. In FY18, the program was on-track for all 27 participating counties to have state-approved work plans by the end of the calendar year. Counties with approved plans began working with local landowners to meet benchmarks. Learn more about VSP: scc.wa.gov/vsp

Conservation District Accomplishments

The following pages showcase feature accomplishments from each of Washington's 45 conservation districts during fiscal year 2018. All this work was completed voluntarily and in collaboration with countless private landowners and partners.

Nothing better illustrates the theme of this year's report — *Conservation "Custom Made" for Washington* — than the effective and collaborative solutions you'll find as you flip through these pages.



Pictured: Snohomish Conservation District project that restored fish habitat through log placement and plantings in Arlington. Photo by Kari Quaas



Adams Conservation District

District Manager: Cara Hulce Board Chair: Curtis Hennings
118 E Main Avenue Ritzville, WA 99169
(509) 659-1553 | chadamscd@hotmail.com | www.adamscd.com
Legislative District: 9 Congressional District: 4

Other Accomplishments



Hosted North Central Area Meeting.



Our fair booth displayed common conservation practices and their benefits, such as rangeland livestock watering facilities.



Provided funding for operator to convert to reduced tillage through the WRIA 34 Regional Conservation Partnership Program.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Cow Creek Wetlands Water Monitoring Project



Retention structure on Cow Creek above water monitoring locations.

Resource Challenge

Water availability is a resource challenge on Cow Creek. There are places on the creek where water is limited or nonexistent during low precipitation years, which limits landowner water right usage. Lack of water also disconnects floodplains from the stream, reducing wetland wildlife habitat and sub-irrigation. Landowners are looking for ways to improve water availability and habitat, so they contacted our district and Ducks Unlimited for assistance.

Project Summary and Results

All partners believe using retention structures along the creek to capture water during high flow and then strategically releasing it could potentially, 1) increase surface and groundwater availability, 2) increase stream side, wetland and grassland habitat, and 3) improve water quality. A pilot project was implemented to monitor water levels and temperature in the stream and floodplain below an active retention structure. Visual assessment of habitat development and wildlife presence will also be monitored to help determine if the strategic use of retention structures improves water availability.



One of several floodplain areas that could be inundated during high flow to create waterfowl habitat.

Key Partners

Washington State Conservation Commission

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Provide operators with assistance to implement reduced tillage practices and install livestock and wildlife watering facilities.
- ▶ Work with partners to find funding to help landowners improve streamside and wetland habitat.
- ▶ Expand outreach efforts to educate and support our community and operators' needs.



Asotin County Conservation District

District Programs Coordinator: Megan Stewart Board Chair: Keith Ausman
 720 6th Street, Suite B Clarkston, WA 99403-2012
 (509) 552-8117 | asotincd@cableone.net | www.asotincd.org
 Legislative District: 9 Congressional District: 5

Other Accomplishments



Largest Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program contract enrolled in Asotin County: Asotin Creek - 135.88 acres and 33,500 feet of stream. Photo shows pipe bridge being installed.



ASOTIN COUNTY
 Voluntary Stewardship Program
 Asotin County Voluntary Stewardship Plan was approved.



Completed planting to establish a larger corridor of riparian vegetation. This will promote healthy riparian and stream processes.

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Develop Agricultural Stewardship Plans that identify land uses, resources, resource concerns, and conservation practices needed to protect and enhance natural resources.
- ▶ Utilize conceptual restoration plans to develop designs, secure funding, and implement habitat improvement projects.
- ▶ Promote conservation activities on hobby farms - provide outreach, technical assistance, and cost share funds.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Watershed Habitat Assessment and Conceptual Planning

Resource Challenge

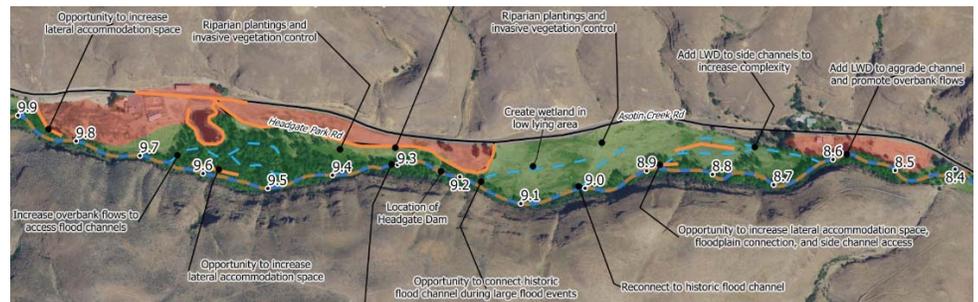
Restoration efforts are often in reaction to flood damage or due to a request for assistance from a landowner. While they have resulted in habitat improvements throughout the watersheds, it does not always result in high impact actions in high priority locations. The completion of a Geomorphic and Watershed Assessment and Conceptual Restoration Plan will guide restoration dollars toward high priority projects and restoring ecosystem function in Asotin, George, Tenmile, Couse, and Alpowa Creeks.

Project Summary and Results

With guidance from the regional technical team and collaboration with local landowners, the Assessment was completed and Conceptual Restoration Plans were developed. In field surveys, monitoring/assessment results and modeling data were utilized to determine priority reaches for each stream. A unique conceptual plan was developed for each stream reach based on current and potential conditions. These plans will provide the initial information needed for the Asotin County Conservation District to engage landowners in developing complete designs and implementing habitat improvement projects.

Key Partners

Bonneville Power Administration; Recreation and Conservation Office; Salmon Recovery Funding Board



Example of conceptual restoration plan developed for each stream reach.



Benton Conservation District

District Manager: Mark Nielson Board Chair: Jack Clark
10121 W Clearwater Avenue, Suite 101 Kennewick, WA 99336
(509) 736-6000 | mark-nielson@conservewa.net | www.bentoncd.org
Legislative District: 8, 16 Congressional District: 4

Other Accomplishments



21 acres were converted from wheel line irrigation to a center pivot system using State Conservation Commission Natural Resource Investment funds. Photo by Melissa Pierce



BCD partnered with the City of Kennewick to design and oversee the implementation of a 20,000 sqft Heritage Garden at Hansen Park. Photo by Donald Weiber, City of Kennewick



BCD Small Farms Program helped landowners to restore over 11 acres of native habitat. Photo by Melissa Pierce

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

What's in the Well? Protecting Health and Water Quality

Resource Challenge

Nitrate is a form of nitrogen that can dissolve in water, move through soil, and contaminate underground water supplies. Many agricultural and residential activities over time can lead to nitrate contamination in groundwater. Nitrate is colorless and odorless, yet in high concentrations, it can violate federal standards for safe drinking water. Groundwater is the sole source of drinking water for many local residents. The concentrations of nitrate in local groundwater are largely unknown.

Project Summary and Results

Benton Conservation District (BCD) led an effort to map nitrate concentrations in groundwater with funding from Department of Ecology. BCD offered free nitrate testing to owners of drinking water wells to help provide data and provide public health education. Additional data was collected voluntarily from irrigation wells. The map was used by a stakeholder group to help prioritize geographic areas for future action to reduce nitrate contamination. Stakeholders were recruited from the farming and ranching community, cities, irrigation districts, the health district, Ecology, and Benton County.



BCD resource conservationist collects water sample from a private drinking well for free nitrate testing. Photo by Rachel Little

Key Partners

Washington Department of Ecology; Benton-Franklin Health District; Benton County

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Continue working with landowners to develop conservation plans and best management practices for the Voluntary Stewardship Program.
- ▶ Analyze results from the use of the Weedit Spray System in the Horse Heaven Hills.
- ▶ Conduct a groundwater recharge pilot study this winter to investigate enhancing thermal refuge potential in the Yakima River.



Cascadia Conservation District

District Administrator: Peggy Entzel Board Chair: Josh Koempel
14 N Mission Street Wenatchee, WA 98801
(509) 436-1601 | info@cascadiacd.org | www.cascadiacd.org
Legislative District: 12 Congressional District: 8

Other Accomplishments



Under-tree irrigation to save water while protecting tree health and crop yield.



Forest ecology, wildfire, and management in a changing climate with the Kids in the Forest education program.



Chipping as part of a countywide wildfire fuels reduction program, emphasizing defensible space and Firewise landscape management.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Urban Agriculture

Resource Challenge

What is a food desert? It's an area where residents do not have consistent, convenient access to fresh, healthy food. Even in a largely agricultural region, the workers who support the agriculture industry often live in urban or suburban settings with little access to fresh produce, grocery stores, or transportation. Cascadia Conservation District is helping people gain food independence as well as teaching adults and students about soil health, insects, and water conservation for both food and landscape plants.

Project Summary and Results

Cascadia's Urban Agriculture program includes developing community and school gardens; organizing after-school programs, workshops, and food events; and offering individual advice at farmers' markets and in backyards around the area. Information about soils, plants, and water is woven into hands-on activities and art projects that cover planting seeds, caring for the garden, and enjoying the harvest. With the help of multiple partners, the program has blossomed. The kids even made kale pesto and arugula pasta salad with recipes from local nutritionists. The results are in - success is tasty!

Key Partners

National Association of Conservation Districts; City of Wenatchee; Stemilt Growers; Rent Me Storage; ProBuild; Cashmere Valley Bank; Lowe's; WA State University Master Gardeners; Wenatchee Valley College; Team Naturaleza



Tending the crops at Lewis and Clark Elementary School Garden.



Growing food is fun!

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Provide cost share to dozens of landowners currently seeking assistance for irrigation upgrades, forest health and upland habitat projects.
- ▶ Assist irrigation groups and other landowners in priority salmon habitat areas with water conservation and irrigation upgrade projects.
- ▶ Fund a K-12 Educator to develop and implement education and outreach programs.



Central Klickitat Conservation District

District Manager: Loren Meagher Board Chair: Steve Cunningham
1107 S Columbus Avenue Goldendale, WA 98620
(509) 773-5823 x5 | cdoffice@ckcd.org | www.ckcd.org
Legislative District: 14 Congressional District: 3

Other Accomplishments

- ▶ Participated in the development of a county wide community wildfire protection plan.
- ▶ Partnered with Eastern Klickitat Conservation District, Washington State Conservation Commission, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife, and Klickitat County to develop several projects that will steward the management of local agricultural and timber lands with significant cultural and natural resource values.
- ▶ Developed a design to increase and improve 1,300 feet of instream habitat in Swale Creek watershed in 2015. The design was successfully funded in 2018 for implementation to improve salmonid habitat.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Projects Aim to Lower Water Temperature in Little Klickitat River



Beaver dam analogue operating under early winter flow conditions.

Resource Challenge

Fourteen segments of the Little Klickitat River exceed state standards for water temperature. Low effective shade, low in-stream flows, and increased sediment loads are cited as potential sources for elevated water temperatures. The Birney Project, located on the Little Klickitat River, lacked vegetation necessary to prevent heavy erosion along 460 feet of streambank. During high flow events, the 10-foot high stream banks rapidly slough off and deposit sediment into the Little Klickitat River.

Project Summary and Results

This project improves instream temperature, riparian shade, and rapid erosion of stream. The project implemented Post Assisted Wood Structures (PAWS) and a Beaver Dam Analogue (BDA). The PAWS and BDAs are process-based restoration strategies intended to mimic beaver activity, introduce structural diversity, and drive change over time. These structures are constructed using small logs, willow cuttings, broken tree branches, and other natural materials that are woven in with driven wooden posts. Native trees and shrubs were also planted to increase shade, stabilize the banks, and improve habitat.



Post assisted wood structure with willow plantings along the streambank and enclosed native trees and shrubs planted above.

Key Partners

Washington Department of Ecology

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Provide assistance to 30 landowners currently on a waitlist for Firewise assessments, fuel reduction projects and water quality improvement projects.
- ▶ Sustain a source of base funding to support district operations and pursue grant funding in order to improve community outreach and involvement with natural resources in Central Klickitat County.



Clallam Conservation District

Executive Director: Joe Holtrop Board Chair: Joe Murray
228 W First Street, Suite H Port Angeles, WA 98362
(360) 775-3747 | info@clallamcd.org | www.clallamcd.org
Legislative District: 24 Congressional District: 6

Other Accomplishments



214 people participated in sustainable landscaping workshops and classes this past year.



Financial assistance was provided for repair of two failing onsite septic systems near Dungeness Bay.



Over 29,000 native trees and shrubs were sold during the 2018 plant sale - the most we've ever sold.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Shallow Aquifer Recharge

Resource Challenge

A proliferation of wells in the Dungeness watershed in recent decades has impacted the shallow aquifer and small streams. The 2013 Dungeness Water Rule requires all new wells mitigate their impacts. The most common method of mitigation is shallow aquifer recharge (SAR). Not only does SAR mitigate well impacts, it is another form of water storage. Clallam Conservation District has taken the lead to develop and implement SAR projects in the watershed.

Project Summary and Results

Clallam Conservation District has partnered with irrigation districts and companies to develop and implement four SAR projects. Three more projects are in the design phase. Irrigation infrastructure is utilized to divert water from the Dungeness River during the late spring/early summer high-flow snow melt period and deliver it to strategically located SAR sites throughout the watershed. The sites use both open trench and perforated pipe systems to infiltrate the water. To date, all Dungeness Water Rule mitigation requirements have been satisfied.

Key Partners

Washington State Conservation Commission; Washington State Department of Ecology



Aquifer recharge flow measurement flume.



Inlet structure for aquifer recharge trench.

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Continue planning and fundraising for a 1,500 acre-foot irrigation reservoir.
- ▶ Implement additional irrigation ditch piping projects.
- ▶ Continue providing financial assistance for repair of failing onsite septic systems.



Clark Conservation District

District Manager: Zorah Oppenheimer Board Chair: Dean Longrie, Ph.D.
813 W Main Street, Suite 106 Battle Ground, WA 98604
(360) 859-4780 | staff@clarkcd.org | www.clarkcd.org
Legislative District: 14, 17, 18, 20, 49 Congressional District: 3

Other Accomplishments



Replaced a previous fish passage barrier with a fish-friendly bridge. Photo by Doug Fenwick



Removed an undersized culvert and restored the natural open stream channel. Photo by Doug Fenwick



Installed new high tunnel on a Salmon-Safe farm. Photo by Zorah Oppenheimer

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Bringing Salmon-Safe to Clark County



A new Salmon-Safe certified farmer shakes hands with a Salmon-Safe evaluator. Photo by Zorah Oppenheimer

Resource Challenge

Clark County is located just minutes from the Portland, Oregon metropolitan area, making it one of the fastest-growing communities in the Pacific Northwest. The rapid population growth puts development pressures on farms. Land becomes fragmented, and agricultural support systems disappear. In an effort to conserve and protect agricultural soils, Clark Conservation District provides technical and financial assistance for these smaller, nontraditional urban farming operations.

Project Summary and Results

Clark Conservation District is assisting Clark County farmers in becoming Salmon-Safe certified. Salmon-Safe certification identifies those farms committed to ecologically sustainable agricultural practices that protect water quality and fish and wildlife habitat. Farms certified as Salmon-Safe are promoted with the Salmon-Safe label and can gain competitive advantage in the marketplace. Clark Conservation District has certified five farms and is installing best management practices on several farms.



Salmon-Safe certified baby vegetables. Photo by Zorah Oppenheimer

Key Partners

Washington State Conservation Commission; Clark County Clean Water Restoration Fund; Salmon-Safe; Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Secure a long-term, stable funding source of rates and charges.
- ▶ Assist in the development of a county-wide agricultural preservation program.
- ▶ Provide stormwater management assistance to homeowners and neighborhoods.



Columbia Conservation District

District Manager: Terry Bruegman Board Chair: Cody Chapman
202 South 2nd Street Dayton, WA 99328
(509) 382-4273 | tb-ccd@daytonwa.net
Legislative District: 16 Congressional District: 5

Other Accomplishments



1st place team, Garfield/Pomeroy for local FFA Land Evaluation contest hosted by CCD. Photo by Debra Nordheim



Half of the group of students heading to their assigned soil pit for evaluation. Photo by Justin Pearson



CCD staff getting ready to measure pH in 1" increments on 1' soil samples. This is year six of soil health studies in the county. Photo by Adrienne Rosamond

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Tucannon River Habitat Restoration for Fish and Farms

Resource Challenge

The Tucannon River lacks critical habitat features, floodplain connectivity, large woody debris, habitat complexity/diversity, and habitat for juvenile salmonids for salmon recovery. About 70 percent of the river is on private lands, and habitat restoration projects can be a challenge. Columbia Conservation District (CCD) was able to enhance habitat conditions for ESA-listed species, while addressing landowner concerns about flooding impacts to agricultural production grounds. This type of cooperation with landowners is not uncommon in the watershed.

Project Summary and Results

Salmon habitat restoration in the Tucannon River has been a focus of Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and CCD since the mid-1990s. Enhanced BPA funding, supported with Salmon Recovery Funding Board funds and development of the Snake River Salmon Recovery Plan, have expedited habitat restoration efforts. Phase 2 of 3 was completed in 2017, which constructed 40 large wood structures and installed 45 single rootwad trees on two miles of river. These efforts have enhanced floodplain connectivity, instream complexity, and side channel development while maintaining agricultural viability.

Key Partners

Bonneville Power Administration; Salmon Recovery Funding Board and Recreation Conservation Office; Snake River Salmon Recovery Board; Washington State Conservation Commission



Before picture of site placement for channel spanning structures for salmon habitat project. Photo by Justin Pearson



After photo of channel spanning structures. Photo by Justin Pearson

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Serve as the technical lead for Columbia County Voluntary Stewardship Program implementation.
- ▶ Facilitate Tucannon River Conceptual Restoration Plan Update.
- ▶ Implement Tucannon River salmon habitat recovery projects.



Cowlitz Conservation District

District Manager: Darin Houpt Board Chair: Jim Scott
2125 8th Avenue Longview, WA 98632
(360) 425-1880 | ccddmgr@teamelect.com | www.cowlitzcd.wordpress.com
Legislative District: 19, 20 Congressional District: 3

Other Accomplishments

- ▶ Designed two projects in the Germany Creek Watershed. Got funding for a third project site with five landowners.
- ▶ Collectively addressed resource concerns on 25 percent of non-industrial private ownership in the lower watershed.
- ▶ Assisted two landowners with project planning, permitting, and implementation in the Kalama River watershed (one of the highest priority watersheds for salmon recovery in Cowlitz County).
- ▶ Initiated planning with two additional landowners in the Kalama River watershed and submitted project proposals through the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Watershed Management Continuing on a Budget



Debris jams on Delameter Creek.

Resource Challenge

Southwest Washington faces several resource concerns. Two major ones include salmon recovery and water quality. Equally important are wildlife habitat, soil health, invasive weeds, and farm viability. Making a measurable difference typically requires implementing projects on a broader scale than a single farm. That's the focus of Cowlitz Conservation District. We have watershed-scale projects initiated

within the Arkansas Creek, Coweeman River, Abernathy Creek, and Germany Creek Watersheds.

Project Summary and Results

The District is working with landowners within a watershed context to plan, design, and implement projects addressing resource concerns. Our activities are curtailed by availability and success applying for grant funds from several sources. Immediate results are observed as fish use in-stream habitat for rearing and spawning. Sediment delivery is immediately reduced as vegetative cover establishes and wood structures direct erosive streamflow away from streambanks. Most resource concerns are addressed over time as streamside woody vegetation establishes and improved pasture management takes hold.



Riparian restoration along Delameter Creek.

Key Partners

Landowner coordination and planning is primarily funded by the Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC). Project funding comes from the SCC, Salmon Recovery Funding Board, Department of Ecology, and several programs including CREP and EQIP.

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Obtain SCC capital project funding to address resource concerns with three cooperators.
- ▶ Continue soliciting project funds to assist local landowners with their resource concerns.
- ▶ Continue working with legislators in attempt to secure funding needed to more adequately work with landowners within a watershed context.



Eastern Klickitat Conservation District

District Manager: Loren Meagher Board Chair: Ron Juris
1107 S Columbus Avenue Goldendale, WA 98620
(509) 773-5823 x5 | cdoffice@ckcd.org | www.ekcd.org
Legislative District: 14, 15 Congressional District: 3, 4

Other Accomplishments

- ▶ Obtained a grant from the Department of Ecology to treat Eurasian Watermilfoil in the mouth of Rock Creek. The watermilfoil is an invasive weed that harbors predators of juvenile salmonids, clogs boat motors, and spreads easily to other waterbodies through fragmentation.
- ▶ Provided cost share to a landowner to improve water quality Rock Creek. A spring was enhanced to reduce runoff and pipe clean water directly to the stream.
- ▶ Designed three projects to improve water quality in the headwaters of Rock Creek and provide water to livestock and wildlife.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Partnerships for Healthy Forests

Resource Challenge

The prevalence and intensity of wildfires in Klickitat County is steadily increasing. Not only are homes threatened, but valuable timber, wildlife habitat, and grazing lands are being destroyed. The annual precipitation in Eastern Klickitat Conservation District (EKCD) in the Simcoe Mountain Range is between 12- 20 inches. When these valuable resources are destroyed, it takes decades for this area to recover from a high intensity fire.

Project Summary and Results

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has purchased several thousand acres in the Simcoe Mountain Range east of Highway 97. As co-managing partners, EKCD has been working with WDFW, local ranchers, and other entities to develop a project management plan for the land to maintain healthy, fire-resilient forests that support wildlife and grazing through a Coordinated Resource Management (CRM) process. WDFW and EKCD hosted the annual CRM Executive Committee Meeting and tour to discuss the CRM process in the Simcoe Unit. The meeting was well attended by CRM groups all over the state.

Key Partners

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; Washington State Conservation Commission



The Simcoe Unit is a unique transition zone from ponderosa pine to oak savannah habitat.



Burn scar of the Mile Marker 28 Fire in 2012 on the upper end of the Simcoe Unit.

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Thousands of acres of rangeland rehabilitation in EKCD to create more fire-resilient ecosystems.
- ▶ Watershed assessments in Pine Creek and Alder Creek to determine water storage projects, instream habitat enhancement projects, and fish passage projects.
- ▶ Sustain a source of base funding to support district operations and pursue grant funding.



Ferry Conservation District

District Manager: Lloyd Odell Board Chair: Eric Bracken
84 E Delaware Avenue PO Box 1045 Republic, WA 99166
(509) 775-3473 x5 | candy.lammon@conservewa.net | www.ferrycd.org
Legislative District: 7 Congressional District: 5

Other Accomplishments



This Firewise project on the edge of Republic helps to protect this neighborhood from wildfire.



This greenhouse is the first phase of a model farm. FCD is partnering with Curlew and Republic School Districts.



In September 2017, FCD hosted the State Conservation Commission for their September meeting. Here we are at a stop on our field trip.

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Spring 2018 brought record flood levels to the Kettle River Valley. More than half of the District's farmland was affected.
- ▶ In late June, micro-burst wind storms devastated wide-spread areas in our private forest lands.
- ▶ August brought another round of wild fires. We have not yet been able to assess the damage to our land owners.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Kettle River Riparian Stabilization

Resource Challenge

Over the past 75+ years, the riparian area along this reach of the Kettle River has suffered serious degradation. Crumbling high banks contribute to increased sediment loads. The river banks are stripped of vegetation. This contributes to high water temperatures. A poorly defined stream channel made the property prone to spring flooding. The landowners requested our assistance, and, using funds from a Washington Department of Ecology water quality grant, Ferry Conservation District (FCD) stepped in to help restore the riparian buffer.



The steep, highly-erodible bank prior to construction.



Final stages of the project. Banks are stabilized, woody debris is placed, and buffer is planted.

Project Summary and Results

We convened our area management team to brainstorm the project area's needs. Then we hired an engineering firm to design a project that could stabilize the river bank, reestablish the riparian buffer, and still allow the landowners' access for recreation. We installed large woody debris to diffuse the force of the river's current. The bank was re-sloped to a more gentle, less erodible 3/1 pitch. The biggest challenge was reestablishing the riparian buffer.

Key Partners

Washington Department of Ecology; Washington State Conservation Commission; Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



Foster Creek Conservation District

District Manager: Amanda Ward Board Chair: John McLean
203 S Rainier Street PO Box 398 Waterville, WA 98858
(509) 888-6372 | info@fostercreekcd.org | www.fostercreekcd.org
Legislative District: 12 Congressional District: 4

Other Accomplishments



The District opened its 3rd Department of Ecology grant for reducing erosion by providing cost share to producers for converting to direct seed systems.



Implementation of the Multiple Species General Conservation Plan is progressing, with the site plan format in final draft.



The District is leading the formation of A Cooperative Weed Management Area for Douglas County.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Voluntary Stewardship Program Work Plan Approved

Resource Challenge

Douglas County contracted with Foster Creek Conservation District to lead the coordination and planning of the Douglas County Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) Work Plan. VSP provides a non-regulatory, incentive-based method of critical area protection on lands that intersect agricultural activities. It's an alternative to the more traditional methods to protect critical areas, which is to enforce regulations adopted under Critical Area Ordinances of the Growth Management Act.

Project Summary and Results

On April 30, 2018, Douglas County's VSP plan was approved by the State of Washington. This was the culmination of 18 months of planning undertaken by local farmers, ranchers, orchardists, state and federal agencies, and agricultural and environmental groups. The hard work of those who donated their time to participate in the local work group ensures that this plan will be feasible for the agricultural community and provide protection for critical areas. Now underway with VSP implementation, FCCD is currently completing site plans for local farmers to help implement conservation activities.

Key Partners

Washington State Conservation Commission



Wheat field, Douglas County. Photo by Amanda Ward



Volunteers help implement the VSP plan by planting riparian vegetation along West Foster Creek. Photo by Aaron Rosenblum

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Secure funding to provide cost share for 30+ operators who annually purchase biological weed control agents.
- ▶ Enroll an additional 6-8 operators into our Direct Seed Program.
- ▶ Expand provision of technical assistance to over 300 tree fruit growers.
- ▶ Secure funds to assist with fire recovery on over 77,500 acres in Northern Douglas County.



Franklin Conservation District

District Manager: Mark Nielson Board Chair: R. Scott Moore
1724 E Superior Street Pasco, WA 99301
(509) 416-0440 | mark-nielson@conservewa.net | www.franklincd.org
Legislative District: 9, 16 Congressional District: 4

Other Accomplishments



Drain Rangers and JR. Drain Rangers are new stormwater education programs, tailored to eastern Washington by the FCD. Photo by Kara Kaelber



FCD staff are overseeing the implementation of 24 irrigation water management plans covering 3,171.4 acres. Photo by Mark Nielson



FCD completed two irrigation conversions on 102 acres, with Conservation Commission funding, allowing for 70 ac-ft of water to be saved annually. Photo by Heather Wendt

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Conduct status reviews of 25 USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Conservation Stewardship Program contracts.
- ▶ Continue implementation and data collection for Franklin County's Voluntary Stewardship Program.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Technology Aids Critical Area Tracking and Protection

Resource Challenge

Under Washington State's Growth Management Act, critical areas that intersect agricultural lands are to be protected while also maintaining agricultural viability through the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP). Franklin County's VSP work plan was approved in February 2018. The work plan outlines the course of action and benchmarks that Franklin Conservation District (FCD) needs to reach for VSP to be successful. The primary challenge is how to effectively track changes to critical areas.

Project Summary and Results

FCD is monitoring the success of VSP by utilizing Geographic Information System (GIS) data. Utilizing Esri's ArcGIS software, FCD can track critical area or agriculture changes that have occurred. When new aerial imagery and critical area data is provided, FCD can use ArcGIS to measure these changes for meaningful tracking of critical area and agricultural viability protection. Additionally, the District can use ArcGIS apps to collect data from agricultural producers about conservation practices being implemented, adding to the measurement of success of VSP.

Key Partners

Washington State Conservation Commission



Conservation Technician Shaina Zollman and Conservation Dog Angus map a wildlife habitat planting for VSP.

Photo by Mark Nielson



Grant County Conservation District

District Manager: Marie Lotz Board Chair: Dave Stadelman
1107 S Juniper Drive Moses Lake, WA 98837
(509) 765-9618 | marie-lotz@conserveva.net | columbiabasincds.org
Legislative District: 9, 12, 13 Congressional District: 4

Other Accomplishments



Installation of a new variable frequency drive controller. This new technology conserves water and energy.



Students wait to release trout fingerlings they raised from eggs. More than 900 kids from 13 schools released 2,500 trout.



Department of Ecology water quality staff touring new farm technology that improves soil and water quality while making agriculture more efficient.

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Prepare 70 Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) conservation plans.
- ▶ Coordinate 10 educational events and tours.
- ▶ Provide planning and technical assistance for 12 dairies and six feedlots.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Urban Agriculture for Seniors



The GCCD relied on volunteers to help with the project. Here three volunteers fill one of the raised beds with donated compost.

gardens at eight senior retirement facilities using compost from three of the dairies and feedlots located within the District's boundaries.

Project Summary and Results

The objective of the grant was to set up gardens at eight senior facilities in the District. In actuality, nine gardens were started. Several extra yards of compost was available, and the GCCD was able to supply two additional community gardens in Othello and Moses Lake with compost for local gardeners. Every senior facility was eager to participate with the project. The livestock operations were happy to help out too. Volunteers helped assemble the gardens and fill them with compost. District staff did most of the planting and replanting as needed. Results exceeded expectations.

Resource Challenge

Although Grant County is in one of the most productive farming areas of Washington, it's designated as a "food desert" according to USDA definitions. A food desert is defined as an area with low-income residents who have limited access to affordable, nutritious food. Mainly fresh proteins, fruits and vegetables. Grant County Conservation District (GCCD) was awarded a grant from the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) to purchase and setup



Garden structures and tools were supplied to each site. Participants watch as GCCD staff installs a drip irrigation system.

Key Partners

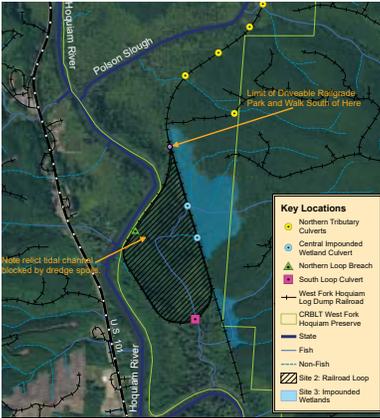
National Association of Conservation Districts; Washington State Conservation Commission



Grays Harbor Conservation District

District Manager: Mike Nordin Board Chair: Carl Waara
 330 W Pioneer Avenue Montesano, WA 98586
 (360) 249-8532 | plutroll@willapabay.org | graysharborcd.wordpress.com
 Legislative District: 19, 24, 35 Congressional District: 6

Other Accomplishments



Middle Fork Hoquiam Tidal Restoration Design Project. ETA for implementation is summer 2019.



Still helping Cranberry Producers and cattle producers. Photo by Jim Getchman



Jim Getchman soil sampling. Just another service the CD provides.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Forestry Technical Assistance Program

Resource Challenge

Working forests in southwest Washington are important to regional and state economies and provide many functions, including fish and wildlife habitat, water quality protection, flood reduction, recreational opportunities, and carbon sequestration to help combat climate change. These lands play a major role in priority actions identified in salmon recovery plans for the region. Forest Practices Rules have disproportionately impacted small forest landowners (SFLO).

Project Summary and Results

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is a USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service program. Program funding will provide landscape-scale conservation benefits by partnering with other groups and forestry producers. The Southwest Washington Non-Industrial Private Forest Lands Conservation Partnership provides RCPP funding to conserve forests in a way that engages small forest landowners voluntarily, improving forest and watershed health to benefit people, fish, and wildlife. It is critical to provide incentives for SFLO so these forest lands remain on the landscape.

Key Partners

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; Department of Natural Resources; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Pacific, Mason, Thurston, Lewis, Wahkiakum, Cowlitz, and Clark Conservation Districts



Dave Houk, Grays Harbor Conservation District Forester, oversees some ground.

Staff members Jim Getchman and Dave are the cornerstone to our program.

Photo by Jim Getchman

Priorities for 2019...

- The Grays Harbor Conservation District has long needed a water quality program. We need a program with monitoring to find point source pollution so we can go and address the problem.



Jefferson County Conservation District

District Manager: Al Cairns Board Chair: Al Latham
205 W Patison Street Port Hadlock, WA 98339
(360) 385-4105 | info@jeffersoncd.org | www.jeffersoncd.org
Legislative District: 24 Congressional District: 6

Other Accomplishments



Livestock fencing, manure storage and rain garden under construction.



Downspout drains being installed to divert stormwater from livestock pasture and prevent manure from entering Discovery Bay.



Spring development for downslope cattle watering facility.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Donovan and Rice Creek Fish Passage Barrier Removal

Resource Challenge

During the winter months, Donovan and Rice Creek would overflow the culverts and driveway of elderly property owners, causing the owners to be stranded and salmon habitat to be degraded. Downstream, shellfish beds were impacted by livestock accessing the creeks.

Project Summary and Results

Two bridges were installed to replace the culverts, the driveway was raised, and gravel for salmon spawning was installed in the new stream beds. Native trees and shrubs were also planted along the streams, and cattle fencing was installed to exclude cattle.

The property owners reported excellent salmon returns based on decades of observation, and a neighbor thanked the District for making sure first responders could reach the elderly property owners.

Key Partners

Recreation and Conservation Office;
Washington State Conservation Commission



Photos: (Top) Property owner sharing photos of the previous year's flooding of his driveway. (Bottom) One of two new bridges installed.

Photos by Jerry Clarke

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Secure funding to implement the District's Adaptive Beaver Management Plan.
- ▶ Provide livestock technical assistance to under-served Hood Canal watershed residents.
- ▶ Launch a local Vets on the Farm Program.



King Conservation District

Executive Director: Bea Covington Board Chair: Dick Ryon

800 SW 39th Street, Suite 105 Renton, WA 98057

(425) 282-1900 | info@kingcd.org | www.kingcd.org

Legislative District: 1, 5, 11, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 39, 41, 43, 45, 46, 47, 48 Congressional District: 1, 7, 8, 9

Other Accomplishments



Farmers from south King County sell produce at the new Rainier Beach Farm Stand, supported by KCD and staffed by local youth.



KCD's support helped volunteers to restore two acres of previous parking lot in Seattle's Discovery Park.



KCD helped launch the Snoqualmie Valley Farmers Cooperative and in 2017 supported its growth to 20 farmers.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Bothell Side Channel

Resource Challenge

The Sammamish River historically was deepened and widened to reduce flooding and to dewater agricultural lands. As stated in the Sammamish River Corridor Action Plan (2002), "Natural off-channel habitat has essentially been eliminated." This project addressed several key limiting factors identified by the WRIA 8 Chinook Conservation Plan (2005), including reduced habitat capacity and riparian areas, large wood recruitment, and off-channel habitats. The Sammamish River Corridor Action Plan (2002) identified this project as a priority.

Project Summary and Results

The Bothell Side Channel Project restores 1,100 feet of an old channel and floodplain of the Sammamish River. It increases Chinook salmon habitat in a critical stretch of the Sammamish River. It restores plant diversity on 6.5 acres, restores connectivity and function, and develops opportunities for education. King Conservation District (KCD) supported two new concrete box culverts. These culverts connect the Sammamish River to the channel, allowing continual flow to occur between the two bodies. This assures accessibility of the side channel by salmon and prevents the stranding of juvenile salmonids during lower flows.

Key Partners

City of Bothell; Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 8



The Bothell Side Channel reconnects approximately 1,100 feet of habitat for salmon.

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Continue building on our collaboration with community stakeholders to develop our next five-year Program of Work.
- ▶ Finish tree canopy assessments for south King County cities.
- ▶ Develop robust pathways for regional institutions to purchase locally-produced food.



Kitsap Conservation District

District Coordinator: Joy Garitone Board Chair: Albert Allpress
 10332 Central Valley Road NE Poulsbo, WA 98370
 (360) 204-5529 | kcd@kitsapcd.org | www.kitsapcd.org
 Legislative District: 23, 26, 35 Congressional District: 6

Other Accomplishments



Start of pumpkins for fall food bank consumption.



Demonstration of high tunnels for small-scale farms.



New rain gardens aid condominium owners with their stormwater. KCD continues to build about 60 stormwater projects each year.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Gardening for Restoration and Conservation Education

Resource Challenge

Hunger is real in Kitsap County. There are urban areas of the county with limited access to fresh and healthy food. Limited access refers to land pinched by development where traditional farming is under threat. The community needs access to food sources, education on how to grow and prepare food in an urbanizing culture, and farmland preservation. As growth continues in Kitsap County, the problem of lost farmland and food access is magnified and a multi-faceted solution is needed.

Project Summary and Results

In July 2017, Kitsap Conservation District (KCD) was awarded a \$50,000 grant from the National Association of Conservation Districts to grow technical assistance capacity for urban agriculture conservation projects. From this start-up funding, the GRACE Project was born as a KCD garden that demonstrates best practices for urban agriculture and provides fresh produce to Kitsap food banks. The labor component of the garden completes the grant's element of restorative justice and is staffed by inmates from Mission Creek Corrections Center for Women. The inmates learn about horticulture, food preparation, and giving back.

Key Partners

National Association of Conservation Districts; Washington State Conservation Commission



Installing multiple 10,000 gallon cisterns to water the growing land of the GRACE Project. KCD has 50,000 gallons currently. Photo by KCD staff



The growing ground is located on KCD land. Our signage prompts many questions about the project from the community. Photo by KCD staff

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ KCD has several large fish barrier removal projects in design that will be constructed in 2019.
- ▶ Continuing interlocal agreements with Kitsap cities that encourage more partnerships for stream restoration and stormwater control.
- ▶ Using our office property as a demonstration site has made best management practices (BMPs) accessible to most landowners.
- ▶ Cost share for agricultural projects is a priority.



Kittitas County Conservation District

District Manager: Anna Lael Board Chair: Mark Moore
 2211 W Dolarway Road, Ste 4 Ellensburg, WA 98926
 (509) 925-3352 | a-lael@conservewa.net | www.kccd.net
 Legislative District: 13 Congressional District: 8

Other Accomplishments



Published on YouTube a short video titled "Kittitas County: A Fire Environment" to educate landowners about fire risks. Photo by Kittitas Fire Adapted Communities Coalition



Completed the Voluntary Stewardship Program work plan for Kittitas County with the Watershed Group.



Completed a 12-inch diameter buried pipeline that is 1,960 feet long and serves six landowners in the Manastash area.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Regional Conservation Partnership Program



First of 23 producers to sign up for the RCPP Environmental Quality Incentives Program cost share funding in October 2017.

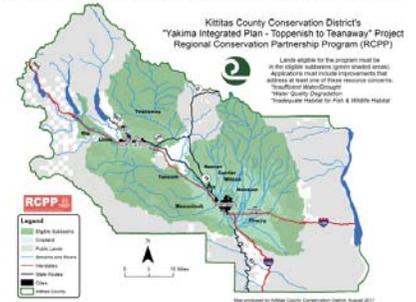
Resource Challenge

Water conservation, drought resiliency, water quality degradation, and inadequate habitat for Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed fish species are major resource challenges in the upper Yakima River watershed. Kittitas County Conservation District (KCCD) is continually working to assist a list of producers with 4,000 acres of rill irrigated lands who want to convert to the more efficient sprinkler irrigation systems, as well as landowners needing fish screens, fish passage, and fish habitat assistance.

Project Summary and Results

In partnership with the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, KCCD applied for Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) funds for a five-year project called "Yakima Integrated Plan - Toppenish to Teanaway." The project was awarded \$7.5 million, of which \$6 million is designated for Kittitas County for both financial and technical assistance to producers. The agreements were signed in September 2017. Twenty-three applications were received in the first sign-up. Eight were funded, providing \$770,000 in financial assistance. Annual sign-ups will continue through 2020.

New Cost Share Funding for On-Farm Improvements 2017-2021



Areas of Kittitas County eligible for funding for irrigation upgrades, fish habitat improvements, and conservation easements.

Key Partners

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Washington State Conservation Commission; Washington State Department of Ecology; Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife; Washington State Department of Natural Resources; Kittitas County; Trout Unlimited; Forterra

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Complete an instructional video about defensible space and another about preparing for and evacuating in response to a wildfire.
- ▶ Provide cost share to 10-15 landowners to convert to more efficient sprinkler irrigation systems on 700-800 acres.
- ▶ Remove three fish passage barriers that will open two miles of habitat, and install fish screens on four irrigation diversions.



Lewis Conservation District

District Manager: Bob Amrine Board Chair: Dave Fenn
1554 Bishop Road, Suite 100 Chehalis, WA 98532
(360) 748-0083 | bob.amrine@wa.usda.gov | lewisconservation.wordpress.com
Legislative District: 19, 20 Congressional District: 3

Other Accomplishments



Installation of a new fish screen on a local farmer's property. Photo by Marguerite Abplanalp

- ▶ Completed one fish passage project.

- ▶ Completed 11 irrigation plans and 11 farm plans.

- ▶ Installed three livestock pads.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT Irrigation Fish Screening Project

Resource Challenge

Since 2015, the Lewis Conservation District (LCD) has worked with over 40 irrigators to develop management plans. The majority of the water users had homemade fish screens on diversion intakes that were not compliant with state standards. When the farmers were informed of this, most of them were interested in installing compliant fish screens. Some irrigators get their water from wells but the greater number get it from the Chehalis River and tributaries where fish can be abundant.

Project Summary and Results

The District was able to install 13 fish screens in the past two years. Jack Myrick, Irrigation Efficiencies Specialist with the Washington State Conservation Commission, assisted with designing and ordering screens. He worked alongside the farmers and LCD staff to wrangle the screens into place. The farmers were initially worried that the water spray bars that helped clean the screens would steal water from the system. They were pleasantly surprised that the pumps actually worked more efficiently in addition to not trapping fish. The district is applying for a grant to install 15 more screens.

Key Partners

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Rose Foundation



Fish screens waiting to be delivered to various farms.



Self-cleaning fish screen installation in the Chehalis River.

Photos by Kelly Verd

Priorities for 2019...

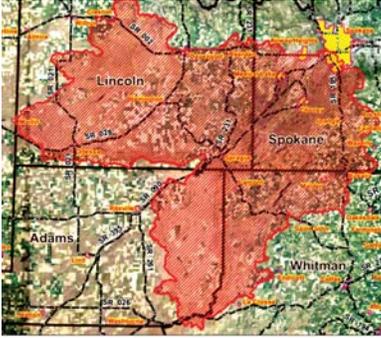
- ▶ Continue to install fish screens as needed, if funding is received.
- ▶ Complete four fish passage projects.
- ▶ Construct a livestock pad.
- ▶ Construct two dry stacks and fencing for over 3,000 feet of stream protection from livestock access.



Lincoln County Conservation District

District Manager: Elsa Bowen Board Chair: Mike Carstensen
 1310 Morgan Street PO Box 46 Davenport, WA 99122
 (509) 725-4181 x3 | ebowen@wadistrict.net | www.lincolncd.com
 Legislative District: 13 Congressional District: 5

Other Accomplishments



Provided financial incentives to assist landowners within the Channeled Scablands Cooperative Weed Management Area (see map) with noxious weed control and prevention.



Planted over 870 native plants with the City of Davenport along state highway 25. Photo by Val Vissia



Lincoln County Voluntary Stewardship Plan (VSP) was approved in April. LCCD is the lead for VSP in Lincoln County. Photo by Marlena Falk

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Sage-Grouse and Fire: Unique Wildfire Reduction Program

Resource Challenge

Lightning, recreation, and equipment ignite around seven wildfires per year in Lincoln County. To mitigate wildfire risk, Lincoln County Conservation District (LCCD) launched an effort to assist landowners with creating fuel breaks (strips of land where flammable vegetation is removed or reduced). Fuel breaks could help protect landowners' property, protect sage-grouse habitat in the 22,000 acre Swanson Lake Wildlife Area, and improve access for firefighters. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) agreed to cover 100 percent of project costs, but more outreach was needed to engage landowners. Meanwhile, the fires kept coming.

Project Summary and Results

When LCCD engaged the first landowner to create several miles of fuel break, the project served as a catalyst for more participation. Other landowners saw that not only is sage-grouse habitat being protected, but having large amounts of sagebrush removed along roads and fence lines makes it easier to maintain fences, provide more grazing for cattle, and create defensible space for their property. As of June 2018, LCCD has successfully created eight miles of fuel breaks and is waiting for funding to complete three more miles. The BLM now plans to fund 17 more miles in this area.

Key Partners

BLM; private landowners; agricultural producers; Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife; Lincoln County Road Department; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; volunteer fire departments



Before (left) and after (right) removal of sagebrush, which created a roadside fuel break.

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Secure fire resiliency funding needed for home assessments, project implementation, education and outreach, and administrative costs.
- ▶ Provide cost share for five landowners currently waiting for wildfire fuel reduction funding.



Mason Conservation District

District Manager: John Bolender Board Chair: Jason Ragan
450 W Business Park Road Shelton, WA 98584
(360) 427-9436 | jbolender@masoncd.org | www.masoncd.org
Legislative District: 35 Congressional District: 6, 10

Other Accomplishments



The MCD field crew focused on maintenance of previously planted sites in 2017, but still planted nearly 85 new acres.



MCD installed 18 engineered log jams composed of 1,200 trees as part of the South Fork Skokomish Restoration Project.



In June, the Voluntary Stewardship Program Work Plan was approved promoting agriculture and environment protection measures.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Shore Friendly Mason

Resource Challenge

Mason County marine shorelines are greatly modified to accommodate residential development. As shorelines develop, they are cleared for homes, panoramic views, and bulkheads. This creates serious unintended impacts. Manicured landscapes and treeless vistas weaken slope and bluff stability. Poor drainage practices and shoreline armor destroy nearshore habitat. Mason Conservation District (MCD) established the Shore Friendly Mason program to guide property owners towards better waterfront management.

Project Summary and Results

Shore Friendly Mason provides marine waterfront landowners with the technical support and resources to make informed, cost-effective, and ecologically grounded shoreline management decisions. The program reaches an average of 50 landowners a year. Focus areas include prevention and removal of shoreline armor (bulkheads), restoration of marine riparian vegetation, stormwater management, and waterfront stewardship. To support shoreline programs beyond Mason County borders, staff collaborates with conservation districts in Thurston, Pierce, and San Juan Island counties.

Key Partners

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife; Washington State Conservation Commission; conservation districts



Concrete bulkhead removal on Case Inlet in the Lower Puget Sound.



Marine shoreline workshop to promote native vegetation retention and natural shoreline management.

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Expand technical assistance in critical habitat areas through the Voluntary Stewardship Program.
- ▶ Restore riparian habitat and reduce the impacts of flooding.
- ▶ Coordinate priority watershed-scale restoration and protection projects on working lanes.



North Yakima Conservation District

District Manager: Michael Tobin Board Chair: Gail Thornton
1606 Perry Street, Suite C Yakima, WA 98902
(509) 454-5743 x5 | mike-tobin@conservewa.net | northyakimacd.wordpress.com
Legislative District: 13, 14, 15 Congressional District: 4

Other Accomplishments



Project development for fish screening and floodplain enhancement project on Ahtanum Creek. Photo by NYCD Air 1 - Pilot Justin Bader



NYCD's Washington Conservation Corps crew building livestock management fencing at Ahtanum Creek - Field's Project. Photo by Brian Schmidt



NYCD has begun working with landowners and partners on natural resource needs of the Wenat Watershed. Photo by NYCD Air 1 - Pilot Mike Tobin

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Cowiche Siphon Protection and Fish Passage Project



Exposed siphon creating fish passage barrier during low flow. Photo by Mike Tobin

Resource Challenge

The lower Cowiche Creek has been impacted by roads, development, and channelization by levee construction. This increased channel erosion during high flow, which in turn exposed the irrigation siphon. During the summer months, the exposed siphon created a drop of over one foot. This condition presented a barrier to juvenile Chinook and coho salmon, as well as federally listed steelhead. The exposed siphon also created a risk of failure of irrigation service to over 700 acres in the City of Yakima.

Project Summary and Results

Through the Yakima Tributary Access and Habitat Program, the North Yakima Conservation District (NYCD) was able to work with the Naches Cowiche Canal Association and other partners to design and construct a 120-foot, 48-inch diameter replacement siphon that was lowered four feet below the streambed. In addition, around 100 feet of the streambed was rebuilt through the project site to provide year-round passage for juvenile salmon and steelhead.



Finished project showing replaced siphon and reconstructed streambed. Photo by Justin Bader

These activities have provided much needed improvements to fish passage in Cowiche Creek and provided the Canal Association reliable irrigation infrastructure.

Key Partners

Naches-Cowiche Canal Association; City of Yakima; Bureau of Land Management; Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group; Salmon Recovery Funding Board; Bonneville Power Administration - Yakima Tributary Habitat and Access Program

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Seek funding to continue implementation of NYCD's successful Firewise/Fuels Reduction program throughout the Highway 12 and 410 corridors.
- ▶ Implement NYCD's Farmland Preservation Program and partner with the Washington State Conservation Commission's Office of Farmland Preservation.
- ▶ Partner with Yakima County to implement the Voluntary Stewardship Program.



Okanogan Conservation District

District Manager: Craig Nelson Board Chair: Ivan Oberg
1251 South 2nd Avenue, Rm 102 Okanogan, WA 98840
(509) 422-0855 x110 | ocd@okanogancd.org | www.okanogancd.org
Legislative District: 7, 12 Congressional District: 4

Other Accomplishments

- ▶ We provide conservation planning and cost share for the Working For Wildlife program. Our goals are to help landowners conserve critical habitat for sharp-tailed grouse, mule deer, and lynx in an important migratory corridor.
- ▶ We provided technical assistance and cost share to more than 50 property owners to improve their home and properties' fire resilience through Firewise-like programs.
- ▶ We continue to support the natural resource education of K-12 students through classroom and field-based learning, including the award-winning Ecology of the Okanogan program.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Cover Cropping in Dryland Winter Wheat

Resource Challenge

Producers in Washington are increasingly interested in cover crops and soil health to meet long-term production goals. A four-year study was initiated in 2015 at 16 direct-seeded sites to determine feasibility and effects of cover crops in large, on-farm trials in low-rainfall, wheat-fallow production systems. The main objectives were to determine water usage by cover crops, season and species mixtures, effect on winter wheat crop and soil properties, and educate producers on cover crops and soil health.

Project Summary and Results

The project demonstrated feasibility and impacts of cover crops during fallow and the possibility of diversification to wheat-fallow rotation. Producers have a better understanding of species and timing that work in the region and effects on moisture and yield. Through this project Okanogan Conservation District hosted seven field days and presented at 27 events on soil health. Approximately 2,000 producers and agricultural service providers were educated on soil health and cover crops. Additional funding was received to work with farmers with cover crops and grazing. Producers continue to express interest in cover crops.

Key Partners

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Meter Group; SoilTest Farm Consultants, Inc.; Washington State University



Cover crop providing soil erosion protection before termination to protect water availability for the cash crop. Photo by Leslie Michel



District staff, Rachel McClure and Chelsea Trout, take soil samples to measure soil biodiversity in project area. Photo by Leslie Michel

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Provide technical assistance to 10 livestock producers.
- ▶ Implement soil erosion practices on 10 landowner properties affected by flooding.
- ▶ Provide natural resource conservation education to 1,000 K-12 students.



Pacific Conservation District

District Manager: Mike Nordin Board Chair: Bob Falkner
 904 W Robert Bush Drive South Bend, WA 98586
 (360) 875-6735 | plutroll@willapabay.org | www.pacificcd.wordpress.com
 Legislative District: 19 Congressional District: 3

Other Accomplishments



Completed Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFFPP) project on a tributary of the South Fork Willapa River. Photo by Dave Caudill



North Cove Dynamic Revetment Phase 2 East Project to start construction Fall 2018 and be completed by spring 2019.



North Cove Dynamic Revetment Phase 2 West Project to start construction Fall 2018 and be completed by spring 2019.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

West Rue Creek Salmon Barrier Removal Project

Resource Challenge

In an area where West Fork Rue Creek runs underneath a county road in Pacific County, three concrete culverts installed side-by-side were causing increased velocities at higher flows and were plugged by debris. This led to poor fish passage, localized frequent flooding, and overtopping of the road. Beaver activity has created numerous upstream ponds where coho salmon rear. These undersized structures needed to be replaced with an appropriate-sized crossing.



Before construction

Project Summary and Results

The successful construction of the bridge at West Rue Creek opened 4.1 miles of upstream habitat for use by coho, steelhead and cutthroat trout. Increased design expenditures were necessary given the need to redesign the West Rue Creek site to a 50-foot bridge, rather than the expected large box culvert design. The fish barrier was ranked number three in priority for WRIA #24 to be replaced.



After construction completion. Photo by Tom Kollasch

Key Partners

Recreation and Conservation Office; Washington Coast Restoration and Resiliency Initiative (WCRRI); Pacific County

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Create an Education/Outreach program.
- ▶ Continue implementation of the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) in the county.



Palouse Conservation District

Director: Jennifer Boie Board Chair: Larry Cochran
1615 NE Eastgate Boulevard Suite H Pullman, WA 99163
(509) 332-4101 | pcd@palousecd.org | www.palousecd.org
Legislative District: 9 Congressional District: 5

Other Accomplishments



Volunteers document plant diversity and celebrate native Palouse prairie at the citizen science-style Steptoe Butte Botany Blitz. Photo by James Riser



New bridge and instream habitat improvement replaced a barrier culvert and allows passage for adult and juvenile Snake River steelhead. Photo by Lovina Englund



Cover crop and soil health conversations included farm tours and the Palouse Alternative Cropping Symposium, a grower-driven event. Photo by Jennifer Boie

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Pullman Community Gets Hands Dirty at Stream Cleanup

Resource Challenge

The South Fork of the Palouse River and tributaries run through the town of Pullman, but many residents and students are unaware of these waterways and the waste that accumulates along them. The Annual Stream Cleanup gives an opportunity for the community to beautify these areas while building a relationship with their river and streams. Palouse Conservation District and the City of Pullman have built a close partnership to implement this volunteer event, along with stormwater education programs.

Project Summary and Results

252 community members and university students participated in the 14th Annual Stream Cleanup, removing 640 pounds of trash that ranged from single-use plastics to dilapidated bikes. Over the past 13 years, participants removed more than 100 cubic yards of trash and recyclables. While the number of volunteers has increased every year, the amount of trash removed from the streams has decreased, illustrating successful cleanup efforts and positive community engagement. As one family noted, "We refer to them as our streams, so our kids have a sense of community and ownership to help maintain them."

Key Partners

City of Pullman Stormwater Services; local businesses



Palouse Conservation District staff and community volunteers. Photo by Anthony Hatcher



Generations of Pullman volunteers. Photo by Stephen Johnson

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Continue research and monitoring with landowners and producers to measure the effectiveness of conservation practices.
- ▶ Showcase the voluntary efforts of the agricultural community to protect critical areas through the Voluntary Stewardship Program.
- ▶ Install over 100 acres of streamside vegetation by compensating farmers based on adjacent crop and upland tillage practices.



Palouse-Rock Lake Conservation District

District Coordinator: James Schierman Board Chair: Clinton O'Keefe
3 N Park Street St. John, WA 99171
(509) 648-3680 | jschierman.prlcd@gmail.com | www.prlcd.org
Legislative District: 9 Congressional District: 5

Other Accomplishments

- ▶ Assisted the Washington Department of Ecology with electro-fishing in the Palouse River for the Freshwater Fish Contaminant Monitoring Program to test pesticide and chemical concentrations in fish fillets for a follow up study of a 2005 monitoring effort.
- ▶ Successful Washington State Conservation Commission tour of conservation projects utilizing best management practices to improve water quality and wildlife habitat in Whitman County.
- ▶ On-site meeting with the Washington State Departments of Transportation, Ecology, and Fish and Wildlife; Whitman County Department of Planning; and the Whitman County Road Department to eliminate flooding surrounding the town of Ewan and farmland adjacent to Kamiache Creek.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Enhancing Water Quality and Habitat on Cottonwood Creek



New native grass planted Spring 2018. Photo by James Schierman

Resource Challenge

Significant stream bank erosion has occurred on this three-quarter mile stretch of Cottonwood Creek since agriculture began in the area. This section of stream requires a full buffer of woody vegetation for streambank stabilization and erosion control. Cottonwood Creek is a fish-bearing stream that connects to Rock Creek below Rock Lake, which flows into the Palouse River. Erosion contributes to the sediment load of the Palouse River during high water events causing increased turbidity.

Project Summary and Results

This Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) project is in the implementation phase and began in spring of 2018 with the landowner seeding a successful grass stand. In spring of 2019, native trees and shrubs will be planted for streambank protection and stabilization. Four to six-foot willow poles and bundles of willow and dogwood whips will be driven into the toe of cut banks. This will reduce soil erosion entering Cottonwood Creek from both the streambank and adjacent cropland. This project will protect water quality while providing 33 acres of wildlife habitat and enhanced aquatic habitat for fish and invertebrates.



A three-quarter mile planned riparian forest buffer planted adjacent to Cottonwood Creek. Photo by James Schierman

Key Partners

USDA Farm Service Agency; Washington State Conservation Commission; Department of Ecology; Department of Fish and Wildlife

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Offer riparian commodity buffer cost share.
- ▶ Continue monitoring soil health and soil moisture content of cover crops with AquaSpy technology.
- ▶ Continue monitoring Kamiak Creek and Thorn Creek in paired watershed study.



Pend Oreille Conservation District

District Manager: David Marcell Board Chair: George Stuivenga
121 N Washington Avenue Newport, WA 99156
(509) 447-1155 | davidm@pocd.org | www.pocd.org
Legislative District: 7 Congressional District: 5

Other Accomplishments

- ▶ Signed a 5-year grant agreement with the Pend Oreille Public Utility District to provide landowners with cost share funds for cottonwood and other native vegetation establishment along the banks of the Pend Oreille River.
- ▶ Approved an intergovernmental agreement with Pend Oreille County for the implementation of the Pend Oreille County Voluntary Stewardship Plan.
- ▶ With just one full time employee, POCD assisted 50+ landowners, resulting in five cost share contracts for water quality improvement projects.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Engineered Bank Stabilization on the Pend Oreille River

Resource Challenge

Poor drainage practices combined with an abnormal spring run-off rate in 2017 resulted in complete bank failure for one landowner in Lone, WA, located on the Pend Oreille River. Characterized as a landslide, this event posed an extreme property and human safety concern with new developments that are now less than 100 feet from the bank's edge. In addition, large amounts of sediment were deposited in the reservoir river system below, along with old growth of native vegetation.

Project Summary and Results

Pend Oreille Conservation District (POCD) used grants provided by the Washington State Conservation Commission through the Natural Resource Investment Program and Professional Engineering Grant to develop a site-specific plan that included a redesigned french drainage system, grade stabilization structures, and the installation of hundreds of native trees and shrubs. The stabilization of the bank and installation of the drainage system restored the bank's structure, wildlife habitat, and peace of mind of the landowners.

"We are excited... [Pend Oreille Conservation District] is doing a great job and we cannot express our gratitude for [their] hard work!"

Key Partners

Washington State Conservation Commission



Mass bank failure in Lone, WA on the Pend Oreille River, Spring 2017. Photo: Landowner drone footage



Native cottonwood poles placed horizontally down the slope gather eroding sediment and provide areas for native vegetation. Photo by David Marcell, POCD manager.

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Fund the remaining six landowner bank stabilization projects along the Pend Oreille River through the State Conservation Commission and Pend Oreille Public Utility water quality funds.
- ▶ Build conservation district capacity to meet dozens of unmet technical and financial assistance requests.



Pierce Conservation District

Executive Director: Ryan Mello Board Chair: Jeanette Dorner
308 W Stewart Avenue Puyallup, WA 98371
(253) 845-9770 | info@pierced.org | www.pierced.org
Legislative District: 2, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31 Congressional District: 6, 8, 9, 10

Other Accomplishments



86 volunteers helped remove 10,000 square feet of pavement at Holy Rosary School in Tacoma as part of our Depave program. Photo by Camila Matamala-Ost



The Farm Foundations program is a partnership with Franklin Pierce Schools to train and inspire the next generation of farmers. Photo by Camila Matamala-Ost



We opened the doors to our new Conservation Center in Puyallup, which will be a demonstration site of our conservation practices. Photo by Allan Warren

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

No-Till Drill Cost Share Rental Program

Resource Challenge

No-till drills help reduce runoff from farms, improving both soil quality and water quality. By building soil structure over time, this practice helps with drainage in wet conditions, water retention when things are dry, and putting carbon into the soil to help with climate change. The District worked with the Puyallup Watershed Initiative to purchase the drill, then received a grant from the Department of Ecology's Centennial Clean Water Program to fund a three-year cost share program.

Project Summary and Results

Pierce Conservation District (PCD) will conduct a series of eight demonstration workshops hosted by local cooperators over the next three years. The first workshop was held in April 2018 and was attended by over 60 local producers. For those interested in implementing the practice, PCD will be able to offer \$28 dollars per acre in cost share. Farmers will be able to receive that incentive up to three times. The target is to implement the practices on 140 acres, but based on early landowner response, the district will most likely shoot past that. PCD staff will also develop outreach materials to help promote the practices throughout the state.

Key Partners

Washington State Department of Ecology; Puyallup Watershed Initiative; Washington State Conservation Commission; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.



Deke Adams, from Land Pride, came out in April 2018 to lead our No-Till Drill Training Workshop, which was attended by over 60 farmers.

Photo by CaravanLab

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Secure first agricultural easements under our Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP).
- ▶ Prioritize green stormwater infrastructure.
- ▶ Break ground on South Prairie Creek Preserve Floodplain Reconnection Project.



Pine Creek Conservation District

District Manager: Raymond Brown Board Chair: Tom Henning
401 South SR 27 Oakesdale, WA 99158
(509) 285-5122 | pinecreekcd@frontier.com
Legislative District: 9 Congressional District: 5

Other Accomplishments

- ▶ Assisted landowners with riparian restoration planning.
- ▶ Created detailed geographic information system (GIS) planning/inventory maps for 23 landowners.
- ▶ Setup a program to use a drone for aerial pictures and conservation planning.
- ▶ Participated with 11 other entities in implementing the Regional Conservation Partnership Program.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Direct Seed Cost Share and Education Program

Resource Challenge

Soil erosion is the highest priority resource concern at Pine Creek Conservation District (PCCD). Approximately 210,000 cropland acres are susceptible to water erosion within the District. Using direct seeding to fertilize and seed can reduce the soil loss to less than one ton per acre, per year, whereas conventional tillage and seeding can result in soil losses of 5 to 30 tons per acre, per year. Local landowners and operators asked the District to assist them with implementing direct seed on their properties.

Project Summary and Results

PCCD, along with the Palouse-Rock Lake and Lincoln County Conservation Districts, jointly applied and received a grant through the Washington Department of Ecology for a direct seed cost share and education/outreach program. All three districts are working together to promote the program, educate landowners about implementing direct seed, and provide cost share to help offset the costs of starting this minimal ground disturbance way of farming. Dramatic results can be seen in the reduction of soil erosion between a direct seeded field and a conventional field after a rain event.

Key Partners

Pine Creek District landowners; Palouse-Rock Lake Conservation District; Lincoln County Conservation District; Washington State Department of Ecology; Washington State Conservation Commission; USDA Farm Service Agency; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service



Direct seed operation.



Harvesting a direct-seeded field.

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Provide cost share to 8-10 landowners for purchase and installation of precision ag equipment.
- ▶ Complete a major riparian/drainage/flood prevention project near the town of Oakesdale.
- ▶ Assist the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service with implementing the Conservation Reserve Program.



Pomeroy Conservation District

District Manager: Duane Bartels Board Chair: Bryan McKiernan
910 Main St PO Box 468 Pomeroy, WA 99347
(509) 843-5008 | pcdistrict@qwestoffice.net | www.pomeroycd.com
Legislative District: 9 Congressional District: 5

Other Accomplishments

- ▶ Finished Garfield County Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) Work Plan. Submitted and presented the plan to the VSP state committee, and it was approved.
- ▶ Submitted two Natural Resources Investment projects to the Washington State Conservation Commission that were approved for funding. Projects include an open span culvert on Meadow Creek and an off-site livestock watering facility on Deadman Creek.
- ▶ Continued to build the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) by securing seven new enrollments and 13 re-enrollments to date.
- ▶ Provided cost share to landowners for four direct seed projects.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Restoring Riparian Habitat Using Beavers



Post-assisted log structures showing increased riparian growth from hyperic movement after one month after installation. Photo by Duane Bartels

Resource Challenge

For the last three years, the Pomeroy Conservation District has been working with Ecological Research Inc. in using beaver dam analogs (BDAs) and post-assisted log structures (PALS) to store water behind these manmade dams. This increases flow throughout the year by increasing groundwater and riparian habitat. One challenge is that in many cases, beavers naturally migrate to these structures and may cause immediate damage to adjoining willow and other tree colonies.

Project Summary and Results

The District addressed this by explaining the overall benefits of having these structures in place with or without beaver activities. We showed how the storage of runoff can improve ground storage during runoff periods and the benefits for riparian habitat and irrigation of releasing this water during the low flow periods of the year. Data collected at stream gauges have shown an increase in the instantaneous low flows on the Alpowa Creek over the last two years. The beaver management plan on the Tumulum should allow increased flow further down the stream that has went underground for several years.



First beaver dam analog installed in 2015. Since then, 100 have been installed on Lower Pataha Creek. Photo by Duane Bartels

Key Partners

Washington Department of Ecology; Washington Recreation and Conservation Office; Washington State Conservation Commission

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Provide cost share to six landowners for direct seed and livestock watering facilities with continuation of BDA and PAL implementation.
- ▶ Educate farmers on the importance of leaving straw on field during a portion of their wheat rotation program to improve soil organic matter and soil health.
- ▶ Implement the county Voluntary Stewardship Program work plan.



San Juan Islands Conservation District

Executive Director: Mike Ramsey Board Chair: Vicki Heater
 530 Guard Street Friday Harbor, WA 98250
 (360) 378-6621 | info@sjislandscd.org | www.sanjuanislandscd.org
 Legislative District: 40 Congressional District: 2

Other Accomplishments



Participated in Energy Fair. SJICD partners with the local power company to provide energy conservation outreach and education. Photo by Ryan Palmateer



Conducted water quality monitoring. SJICD provides monitoring data to inform local fresh water quality improvement efforts. Photo by Robert Walters



Completed heavy use area cost share project. Farm planning and cost share projects are effective fundamental programs within the SJICD. Photo by Ellen Jones

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

San Juan Islands Direct Seed Program

Resource Challenge

Agricultural soils in the San Juan Islands are highly erosive and water limited. The islands receive 20-29 inches of rainfall per year and have no large river systems. San Juan County also has over 400 miles of marine shoreline exceeding any other county in the contiguous United States. Because of the proximity of erosive farmlands to streams, lakes, wetlands, and marine waters, conventional tilling practices have a high potential to impact water quality, as well as fish and wildlife habitat.



Watch the SJICD no-till drill video now: www.sanjuanislandscd.org/news/2018/9/4/no-till-seed-drill-video (video by Ryan Palmateer).



Learning how the drill works in the field. Photo by Tashi Litch

Project Summary and Results

The goals of the San Juan Islands Conservation District (SJICD) Direct Seed Program are to increase soil health, agriculture production, and efficiency by demonstrating the benefits of transitioning from conventional tilling to low-disturbance direct seeding. The District rents a no-till drill to farmers and offers technical assistance on seeding one- to two-acre test plots. Farmers furnish their own seed, fertilizer, and tractor, while allowing data collection on the results.

The District anticipates that the program will increase plant growth and resiliency to seasonal summer

droughts while reducing soil loss and the use of herbicides and petroleum associated with tilling.

Key Partners

Department of Ecology; Washington State Soil Health Committee

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Complete riparian restoration projects collaboratively within six identified shellfish protection watersheds.
- ▶ Initiate a Forest Health and Wildfire Prevention Program throughout the San Juan Islands.
- ▶ Restore eelgrass beds. This is critical for herring spawning to generate prey for Chinook salmon, which are prey for our Southern Resident killer whales.



Skagit Conservation District

District Manager: Bill Blake Board Chair: Dean Wesen
 2021 E College Way, Suite 203 Mount Vernon, WA 98273
 (360) 428-4313 | skagitcd@skagitcd.org | www.skagitcd.org
 Legislative District: 10, 39, 40 Congressional District: 1, 2

Other Accomplishments



Constructed Bay View Methodist Church rain garden and compost sock terrace, and hosted volunteer planting.



Completed invasive Scotch broom removal, fuels reduction, and replanting.



Presented stormwater lessons at 35 classrooms and five events with over 1,500 participants.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Wildland Urban Interface Wildfire Preparedness



Resource Challenge

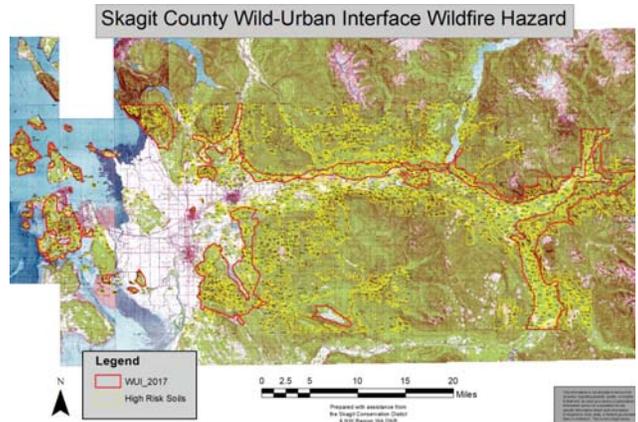
The challenge of preparing for wildfire prevention and response is not new. But there's limited capacity to address growing needs. The Skagit Conservation District (CD) used GIS to integrate geology, soil, topography, vegetation, land use, and population density to prioritize areas at highest risk. Then the challenge was to find a way to integrate this scientific approach for wildfire preparedness into the existing local emergency response planning and implementation network.

Project Summary and Results

The Skagit CD was successful with integrating the use of this prioritization tool. Staff worked diligently to engage partners and have the tool adopted as an element of the local Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan. The true success of the project is the use of the tool. The Skagit County Department of Emergency Management used the tool to prioritize the location of a county-wide wildfire emergency response drill. This opened the door for the neighboring fire districts and local government to recognize the CD as an entity using a scientific basis to prepare for and respond to future wildfire conditions.

Key Partners

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Washington Department of Natural Resources; Skagit County Department of Emergency Management; Skagit County Forest Advisory Board; Skagit County Commissioners; local fire districts; local Firewise Communities



Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Coordinate with Skagit County and Voluntary Stewardship Program Advisory Board to write implementation guidance for field staff.
- ▶ Seek funding to expand farm plans, best management practices, and education programs that address water pollution and improve shellfish bed classifications.
- ▶ Identify sub-basins where super gauge installation will give live web-based water availability to help manage water resources.



Snohomish Conservation District

District Manager: Monte Marti Board Chair: Mark Craven
528 91st Ave NE, Suite A Lake Stevens, WA 98258-2538
(425) 335-5634 | outreach@snohomishcd.org | www.snohomishcd.org
Legislative District: 1, 10, 21, 32, 38, 39, 44 Congressional District: 1, 2, 7

Other Accomplishments



Incorporated horse experts like farriers and veterinarians into Sound Horsekeeping workshops and spread best practices to Whatcom Conservation District. Photo by Kathryn Wells



Our Veteran Stormwater Crew installed 60+ rain gardens. Future awarded funds will cover a 'Regional Stormwater Action Team.' Photo by Derek Hann



Provided workshops with engineering curriculum tools and local stormwater research so K-12 teachers can confidently cover these topics. Photo by Lily Cason

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Adapt and improve our programs to address diversity, equity, and inclusion for those we serve.
- ▶ Encourage partners to establish multi-functional "working buffers" that increase and protect habitat and water quality while producing marketable crops.
- ▶ Provide climate science education and training to teachers that will focus on local impacts including resiliency planning and agriculture.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

From Lawns to Lettuce, and Farms to Food Banks

Resource Challenge

We had two concerns: negative impacts of lawns and serving diverse communities within food deserts. Our Lawns to Lettuce program encourages landowners to convert some of their lawn to grow edibles to provide food for themselves, while positively impacting soil health, reducing runoff, and conserving water. One in five Washingtonians rely on a food bank. Many people do not have access to or the ability to grow fresh produce. Our program aimed to raise awareness of the importance of local food.



Laurie collects some veggie starts to plant at home on her visit to the Lake Stevens Food Bank. Photo by Kari Quaas

Project Summary and Results

In partnership with Volunteers of America's Project Harvest, we encourage residents to plant a row of extra food for local food banks. Over 90 people pledged. Through Housing Hope, we installed or refurbished raised beds at apartment complexes and homes. Local farmers and a high school FFA club grew vegetable starts to share. We created a food bank mapping tool with locations and times when fresh produce is accepted. And, we built a Facebook community where generous gardeners share their harvests. "Isn't it an amazing feeling to give something to others which you have grown yourself?" said Colleen Schaffhauser, member of the Lawns to Lettuce / Project Harvest group.

Key Partners

National Association of Conservation Districts; Volunteers of America



Monroe High School FFA students load the veggie starts they planted from seeds for distribution at local food banks. Photo by Cameron Coronado



South Douglas Conservation District

Coordinator: Carol Cowling Board Chair: Jeff Rock
206 N Chelan Ave, Waterville, WA 98858
(509) 745-9160 | southdouglascd@conservewa.net | www.southdouglascd.org
Legislative District: 12 Congressional District: 4

Other Accomplishments



Rebuilt fencing at Trusting Spirit Horse Rescue, Orondo (cost share project).



Chipping event to reduce wildfire fuels, funded by Bureau of Land Management.



Wildfire fuels reduction project in East Wenatchee.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

On-site Water Improves Ranch Operation and Reduces Fire Risk

Resource Challenge

Lack of on-site water for cattle was presenting a challenge for a local rancher and limiting potential pasture use. The rancher pastures his cattle several miles from home, which required him to truck water to the location. Impacts of trucking across this dry ground increased the risk of sparking a wildfire. A permanent source of water at the pasture would ensure that water was available for the cattle at all times and reduce this potential wildfire risk.

Project Summary and Results

Using grant funding from the State Conservation Commission, South Douglas Conservation District provided cost share for the rancher to outfit an existing well with a new pump and lay pipe to connect it to a trough. By improving the facility, the rancher saves fuel and time by no longer hauling water, and the cattle have a consistent water source. The potential fire hazard of driving a truck over dry grass in late summer and fall also has been minimized.

Key Partners

Washington State Conservation Commission



Livestock water facility with concrete pad.

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Promote Firewise and fire prevention in Douglas County.
- ▶ Support rural and urban landowners by offering cost share projects and technical support.
- ▶ Provide conservation education and outreach programs for all citizens.



South Yakima Conservation District

District Manager: Laurie Crowe Board Chair: Dirk Van Slageren
 200 Cheyne Road PO Box 1766 Zillah, WA 98953
 (509) 829-9025 | lc@syacd.us | www.syacd.us
 Legislative District: 14, 15 Congressional District: 4

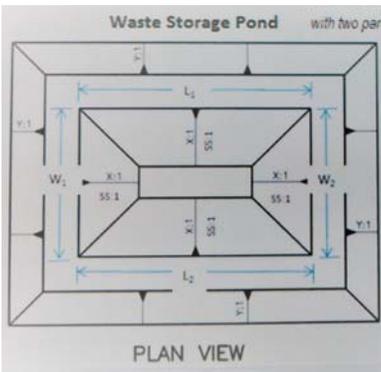
Other Accomplishments



Salmon in the Classroom, Water on Wheels, Wheat Week, and JR Drain Rangers K-12 programming reached 4,243 students from six schools for 2017-18. Photo by Rodney Heit



The Voluntary Stewardship Program for Yakima County was approved. We have started to implement the work plan within our boundaries.



SYCD is assisting the USDA Dairy Nutrient Management Program with entering information into their database using the NRCS Tech Note 23 pond assessment tool.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Piloting Methods to Test Potential Nitrate Seepage

Resource Challenge

Groundwater is the primary source of drinking water for most rural county residents. Once groundwater is contaminated, it's difficult and costly to clean up. There are many potential sources of nitrates, including onsite sewage systems, poor farming practices, waste storage ponds, natural causes, and legacy nitrates.

Project Summary and Results

South Yakima Conservation District (SYCD) worked with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to conduct testing on a dairy waste storage pond lined with a 40 mil HDPE liner using a Delta Probe Seepage Meter System to determine potential nitrate seepage. To get the best results, the pond needed to be as full as possible, have zero inflow and outflow for a period of eight hours, and be accessible by truck and trailer. After initial collection and evaluation of data, NRCS determined that more research is necessary for consistent application of the tool.

Key Partners

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service



Larry Johnson, NRCS State Engineer giving a final check of the Delta Probe Seepage Meter System to begin recording data.

Photo by Rodney Heit

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Continue to provide outreach and education to dairy operators and local growers on the importance of soil health testing, nutrient management, irrigation water management, soil moisture monitoring.
- ▶ Provide cost share to smaller acreage landowners interested in upgrading to more efficient irrigation systems.
- ▶ Once completed, implement Groundwater Management Area recommendations to reduce nitrates in the groundwater.



Spokane Conservation District

Director: Vicki Carter Board Chair: Jerry Scheele
 210 N Havana Street Spokane, WA 99202
 (509) 535-7274 | info@sccd.org | www.sccd.org
 Legislative District: 3, 4, 6, 7, 9 Congressional District: 5

Other Accomplishments



Spokane County Voluntary Stewardship Program Work Group is finalizing the plan for critical areas. Approval is expected in September 2018.



Greater Spokane River Watershed Regional Conservation Partnership Program included 40,000 acres of conservation tillage and 50 miles (211 acres) of commodity buffers.



Vets on the Farm offers a bustling Farm Stand that provides fresh produce to customers and employs four full-time employees.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Vision for Conservation Campus Becomes a Reality

Resource Challenge

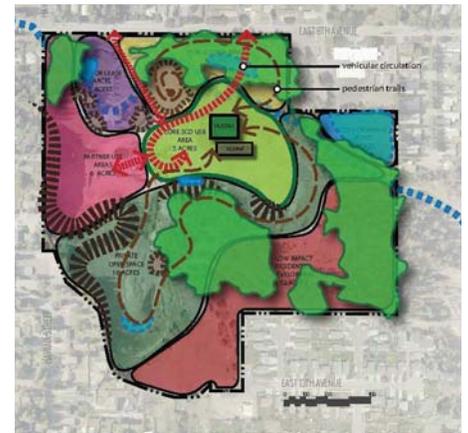
Neighbors watched anxiously as the Spokane Rock Products property went up for sale. It was a former quarry with 50 acres of varied wildland, including impressive basalt rock features, meadows, and ponderosa pines. They worried, "How many apartments would a developer squeeze in?" The parcel was being re-zoned, and 500 units could change everything. An unexpected buyer shifted the landscape's future. Instead of a new office, Spokane Conservation District extended their vision to create a Conservation Campus and purchased the property.

Project Summary and Results

Spokane Conservation District worked with a consulting firm to develop a five-phase plan to build a new office space and create demonstration spaces for Firewise, small acreage farming techniques, food forest plantings, and drought-tolerant landscaping. In the final phases of the plan, a conference building, outdoor auditorium, and low impact development are possibilities. The existing building is leased to a local technology company whose leadership passionately supports the mission of the Spokane Conservation District: to promote the sustainable use of natural resources from the ground up!

Key Partners

Oldcastle/Central Pre-Mix; Intrinium; AHBL; Integrus Architecture



Left: View of the property purchased by Spokane Conservation District and the future site of the "Conservation Campus." (City of Spokane Valley is in the distance.) Right: A conceptual design shows the diversity of the property's landscape.

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ The Commodity Buffer Program receives presentation requests for national conferences interested in protecting water quality while paying producers market value for the land. Other states may adopt the program due to this outreach.
- ▶ The Family Forest Fish Passage Program has opened 120 miles of stream habitat for Redband Trout and will open another 14 miles this coming year.



Stevens County Conservation District

District Administrator: Dean Hellie Board Chair: Andy Kroiss
232 Williams Lake Road Colville, WA 99114
(509) 684-7579 | SCCD@stevenscountywa.gov | www.co.stevens.wa.us/cons_district
Legislative District: 7 Congressional District: 5

Other Accomplishments



Hosted a pre-permit meeting for a landowner's flood control habitat enhancement project.



Sponsored "Big Tree" contest and auction where youth learn about forestry and raise money for their organization. Pictured Panorama 4 Paws 4H group with 3rd place tree purchased by Columbia Cedar.



Installed floating wetlands. The logs break waves, which reduces shoreline erosion. Plants will be harvested, removing phosphorus from Lake Spokane. Photo by Charlie Kessler

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Eastern Washington Forestry Internship Program

Resource Challenge

The local natural resource industry is struggling to find motivated, career-minded employees. At the same time, area youth ages 16-24 face barriers to employment. Stevens County Conservation District joined with partners to provide an opportunity for youth to explore the forestry industry through a Forestry Internship Program.

Project Summary and Results

The Forestry Internship Program combines STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) with career readiness training so that our youth are prepared to step into living-wage jobs in the forestry industry. Youth were offered 90-hour paid experiences working in the forestry and natural resource fields with local industry and agencies, such as the Stevens County Noxious Weed Board, Little Pend Oreille Wildlife Refuge, National Forest Service, Columbia Cedar, and Boise Cascade. In addition, they were paid 32 hours to conduct a FieldSTEM™ investigation supervised by Stevens County Conservation District. Youth presented research findings from this investigation to a group of local community members. This program is available in Stevens, Ferry, and Pend Oreille counties in 2018 and 2019.

Key Partners

Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (funding); Rural Resources; Workforce Development Council; Washington STEM; Colville National Forest; Boise Cascade; Colville School District



Left: Rick from Boise Cascade works with two interns to determine the age of a Douglas Fir tree. Right: Interns analyze the forest soil profile. Photos by Dana Bowers



Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Flood prevention and protection of farm ground and structures: Over 10 landowners have contacted the District to request assistance for stream channel maintenance and streambank stabilization to protect farm ground and structures. Assistance is needed for developing plans, funding, and working through the permit process.
- ▶ Forest health and forest fuels reduction.



Thurston Conservation District

Interim Executive Director: Sarah Moorehead Board Chair: Eric Johnson
2918 Ferguson Street SW, Ste A Tumwater, WA 98512
(360) 754-3588 x136 | tcdadmin@thurstoncd.com | www.thurstoncd.com
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!



Underwood Conservation District

District Manager: Tova Tillinghast Board Chair: Paul Newell
Park Center Building, 170 NW Lincoln Street White Salmon, WA 98672
(509) 493-1936 | info@ucdwa.org | www.ucdwa.org
Legislative District: 14 Congressional District: 3

Other Accomplishments

- ▶ Developing a plan for an irrigation efficiencies project with White Salmon Irrigation District along Buck Creek, a tributary to the White Salmon River, which will save over two cfs water instream, correct a fish passage barrier, and install a fish screen.
- ▶ Planning an instream habitat enhancement project along the Little Wind River by working with private landowners and the U.S. Forest Service Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.
- ▶ Assisted over 30 landowners with soil tests.
- ▶ Assisted over 50 landowners with wildfire fuels reduction work.
- ▶ Sold nearly 20,000 native seedlings in UCD's annual native plant sale.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Rattlesnake Creek Fish Habitat Enhancement

Resource Challenge

Rattlesnake Creek, a major tributary to the White Salmon River watershed, provides important fish habitat to salmon and steelhead recolonizing since the removal of Condit Dam in 2012. However, Rattlesnake Creek habitat is over-simplified and unfriendly to fish. It lacks complexity, large wood for capturing spawning gravel, pools for temperature refuge, and side channels for storm flow refuge and energy dissipation. Even the riparian area is over-simplified, often dominated by red alder.

Project Summary and Results

Underwood Conservation District (UCD) worked with a family ownership along the creek to plan and implement an exciting habitat enhancement project. Whole trees with rootwads were pushed over by an excavator in an upland forest stand nearby. Under the direction of a fish biologist with extensive experience in restoration design, UCD's contractor skillfully wove the downed trees among standing mature trees along the stream's edge, extending the rootwads into the water, but keeping most of the tree length on the bank as ballast. A total of six large woody debris jams were constructed in this way to enhance fish habitat.

Key Partners

Salmon Recovery Funding Board; Yakama Nation Fisheries Program – Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funding; Washington State Conservation Commission



Before and after photos at one of the large wood placement sites along Rattlesnake Creek, creating refuge habitat for fish. Photo by Dan Richardson

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Consistent, robust funding support for Firewise work, education, and fuels reduction in the wildland urban interface.
- ▶ Adequate funding support for a bacteria source tracking study in the White Salmon River watershed to discern the sources of fecal coliform.
- ▶ Sustainable and continuous funding support for conservation district programs and services, including conservation technical assistance and natural resources education for the general public and within the schools.



Wahkiakum Conservation District

District Manager: Darin Houpt Board Chair: Joe Florek, Jr.
957 Steamboat Slough Road Skamokawa, WA 98647
(360) 795-8240 | ccdadmin@teamelect.com | <https://cowlitzcd.wordpress.com>
Legislative District: 19 Congressional District: 3

Other Accomplishments

- ▶ Obtained funding and initiated a knotweed treatment and streamside vegetation project in the Elochoman Valley Watershed.
- ▶ Successfully obtained funding for three additional project sites in cooperation with landowners in the Elochoman River Community Watershed Project.
- ▶ Completed a 1.5 mile restoration project in East Valley Skamonawa Creek as part of the Skamokawa Creek Community Watershed Project.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Grays River Restoration - Satterlund Site

Resource Challenge

The Satterlund family requested assistance from Wahkiakum Conservation District (CD) with clearing invasive species from the river bank and establishing woody vegetation. Resource concerns included accelerated river bank erosion, invasive species, and loss of function due to the lack of woody vegetation along the river. The CD introduced the Satterlunds to the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), which met most of their needs and offered an opportunity to improve in-river habitat for salmon.

Project Summary and Results

The landowners enrolled the site in CREP. Wahkiakum CD planted native trees along the river and submitted a funding request to the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board for salmon recovery work, which was funded two years later. After completing the design and permitting process, instream work began. Then the Satterlunds acquired an adjoining parcel and asked to expand the project. The CD submitted a funding request to the Washington Coast Restoration Initiative and expects to complete the next phase of work on this site in fiscal year 2019.

Key Partners

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program; Salmon Recovery Funding Board; Washington Coast Restoration Initiative



Left: Property before project. Bank erosion was causing Grays River to divert from its channel and migrate toward adjacent open agricultural land. Right: Site after large woody debris jam was installed. This picture was taken after a 25-year flood event.

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Continue securing state capital project funding for up to five landowners working on river restoration projects that address salmon recovery and water quality resource concerns.
- ▶ Continue treating knotweed in the Elochoman Valley Watershed.
- ▶ Continue working with landowners to plan projects and apply for project funding.



Walla Walla County Conservation District

District Manager: Renee M. Hadley Board Chair: Pat McConnell
325 N 13th Avenue Walla Walla, WA 99362
(509) 956-3777 | information.cd@wwccd.net | www.wwccd.net
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.



Whatcom Conservation District

Executive Director: George Boggs Board Chair: Larry Davis
6975 Hannegan Road Lynden, WA 98264
(360) 526-2381 | wcd@whatcomcd.org | www.whatcomcd.org
Legislative District: 40, 42 Congressional District: 1, 2

Other Accomplishments



Five communities in Whatcom County received wildfire preparedness support and recognition from Whatcom CD.



Partnered with City of Bellingham and Whatcom County on the Lake Whatcom Homeowner Incentive Program for phosphorus reduction.



Over 100 farmers in Whatcom County received voluntary technical assistance from Whatcom CD following a robust outreach program.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Local Dairy Farm Becomes Fish Friendly

Resource Challenge

Clarkson Creek flowed under a levee through culverts and past floodgates that were a 100 percent barrier to fish passage. The floodgates, installed in the 1950s, were old, failing, and a priority fish barrier for removal. The failing culverts also didn't meet U.S. Army Corps of Engineers levee standards. Farm fields lacked adequate flood protection during the growing season. The solution demonstrates the commitment to farms, fish, and flood protection from a diverse group of partners.

Project Summary and Results

Whatcom Conservation District (CD) collaborated with partners to install new culverts and self-regulating floodgates, opening 2.2 miles of fish habitat upstream. The new floodgates are adjustable to protect fields in the growing season and better connect the river to its floodplain in the wet seasons. The gates typically are open, resulting in both fish passage and better drainage of the farm fields.

"I feel good for my family going forward that this part of the farm is secure. They won't be dealing with this again in their lifetime," said farm operator Rich Appel of the project.

Key Partners

Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District; Appel Farms; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Diking District #3; Washington State Conservation Commission; Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife



Left: Floodgates on Clarkson Creek prior to removal were fish barriers and threatened farm productivity. Right: Appel Farm is a leader in farm stewardship with new fish-friendly floodgates in the Nooksack floodplain.

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Certify 20 farms in the Whatcom Sound Horsekeeping Program, and launch manure spreader loan program thanks to a Rose Foundation Grant.
- ▶ Provide cost share to 10 farmers for water quality best management practices in partnership with the Whatcom County Pollution Identification and Correction Program.
- ▶ Plan and install 30 riparian restoration and habitat projects.
- ▶ New Research - Improve water pollution source characterization using whole genomic molecular source tracking (MST) techniques by building a local fecal reference catalog and validating with water samples.



Whidbey Island Conservation District

District Manager: Karen Bishop Board Chair: Edward Adams
1 NE 4th Street PO Box 490 Coupeville, WA 98239
(360) 678-4708 | wicd@whidbeycd.org | www.whidbeycd.org
Legislative District: 10 Congressional District: 2

Other Accomplishments



Sierra Country Club became a fully recognized Firewise™ Community with support from WICD, DNR, and North Whidbey Fire & Rescue.



WICD provides technical assistance to Maxwellton Creek Alliance, working on balancing watershed health and farm sustainability.



WICD's Matt Zupich presents Conservation Partner Award to Roy Zipp (National Park Service) for collaboration in a water quality stormwater conveyance project.

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ As summers becomes hotter and drier and the wildland/urban interface on Whidbey Island increases, so does wildfire risk. WICD needs designated funding to meet public demand for its Firewise™ services.
- ▶ A new strategy for WICD's alternative stormwater management program entails convening neighbors together to collaboratively resolve complex water-related challenges.

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Keeping Whidbey Forest Lands Firewise and Healthy

Resource Challenge

High value of land for residential use has Whidbey Island's landowners under pressure to convert their forest lands to development. Implementing forest management practices, such as thinning and logging, is a sustainable alternative to conversion, but it requires education. Whidbey Island Conservation District (WICD) helps forest landowners and the public to understand and accept active forest management and Firewise™ protocols to encourage continued healthy forest ownership, thereby maintaining the character of Whidbey Island.



Healthy forest stands enhance aquifer recharge, lessen and filter stormwater runoff, and sequester atmospheric carbon.



WICD staff recommended over 80 BMPs to Whidbey forest landowners for improved management of their forest stands.

received assistance. WICD also offers Firewise™ help to reduce wildfire risk. In fiscal year 2018, 59 landowners with 208 acres received Firewise™ assessments.

Project Summary and Results

WICD works with landowners to prepare forest management plans and assists them with implementing recommended best management practices. The state Department of Revenue Designated Forest Land (DFL) tax program provides a property tax incentive for forestland five acres or larger to produce forest products. To help offset forest management costs, WICD aids landowners to comply and utilize this DFL program. In FY18, 38 forest landowners with 689 acres received assistance. WICD also offers Firewise™ help to reduce wildfire risk. In fiscal year 2018, 59 landowners with 208 acres received Firewise™ assessments.

Key Partners

Washington State Conservation Commission; Island County; WSU Extension Forestry; Washington Department of Natural Resources; local fire districts



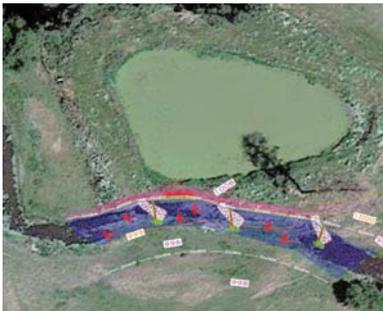
Whitman Conservation District

District Manager: Brian Bell Board Chair: Gary Luft
601 N Main, Suite A Colfax, WA 99111
(509) 288-4644 | brianwhitmancd@gmail.com | www.whitmancd.org
Legislative District: 9 Congressional District: 5

Other Accomplishments



Provided cost share for a tractor GPS navigation system so there's more precision and efficiency when seeding and applying chemicals.



Coordinated and developed plans for a project on Union Flat Creek that will stabilize the streambank and protect a fishing pond.



The first Department of Ecology-funded buffer in Whitman Conservation District has been underway and is near completion.

Photos by Brian Bell

2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

Grazing Cover Crop on Traditionally Fallowed Fields

Resource Challenge

Maintaining economically viable soil on fallow fields is a tricky business. As an alternative, grazing cover crops provides many opportunities to recoup costs by increasing the soil health capital due to the cover crop itself. It defers the grazing and feeding of livestock that would otherwise occur and provides an organic source of fertilizer. Incorporating cover crops and grazers into commodity farming systems is a viable path to simultaneously increase profits and soil health.

Project Summary and Results

The Whitman Conservation District has been working with a producer who planted two experimental 40-acre cover crops in his chemical fallow field. The cover crop was grazed upon maturity and then planted with a winter wheat crop in fall. The cover crop trial performed so well that the landowner requested more funding. The District submitted a successful grant proposal to the Washington State Soil Health Committee and was able to provide assistance to a new producer with an interest in cover crop trials. The ability to provide cost share to keep these trials going is vital to changing farming practices.

Key Partners

Washington State Conservation Commission; Soil Health Committee



Left: Cover crop mixture of clover, plantain, radish, brassica, and cabbage on a field that would have been fallowed. Right: Cover crop after rotationally grazing the livestock to increase utilization. Photos by Brian Bell

Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Provide cost share for soil electrical conductivity mapping so custom nutrient applications can be performed to reduce inputs and the potential of nonpoint source pollution.
- ▶ Continue cover crop trials and outreach among dryland wheat producers.
- ▶ Continue work under 34 contracts through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (WRIA 34).



Acronyms

BMP Best Management Practice

BPA Bonneville Power Administration

CD Conservation District

CNMP Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan

CREP Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

CRM Coordinated Resource Management

CTD Center for Technical Development

DNR Washington Department of Natural Resources

DOE Washington Department of Ecology

EPA US Environmental Protection Agency

EQIP Environmental Quality Incentives Program

ESA Endangered Species Act

FFFP Family Forest Fish Passage Program

FSA USDA Farm Services Agency

FY Fiscal Year

IEGP Irrigation Efficiencies Grant Program

IWM Irrigation Water Management

LID Low Impact Development

NFWF National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

NRCS USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

OFP Office of Farmland Preservation

PIC Pollution Identification and Correction

RCO Recreation and Conservation Office

RCPP Regional Conservation Partnership Program

RCW Revised Code of Washington

SCC State Conservation Commission

SRFB Salmon Recovery Funding Board

TMDL Total Maximum Daily Load

TSP Technical Service Providers

USDA US Department of Agriculture

USFS US Forest Service

USFW US Fish and Wildlife Service

USGS US Geological Services

VSP Voluntary Stewardship Program

WACD Washington Association of Conservation Districts

WADE Washington Association of District Employees

WCC Washington Conservation Corp

WDFW Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife

WRIA Water Resource Inventory Area

WSU Washington State University

Thank You to Our Partners

The SCC is proud to recognize the following partner agencies and organizations represented on our Board of Commissioners. Thank you for your leadership and collaboration!

Jefferson Land Trust

Tulip Tribes

Washington Association of Conservation Districts

Washington State Department of Agriculture

Washington State Department of Ecology

Washington State Department of Natural Resources

Washington State University – Extension

We also want to acknowledge the following agencies for serving in an advisory role at our Commission meetings. We value your contributions and partnership!

US Environmental Protection Agency

USDA Farm Service Agency

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife

The work of the SCC and conservation districts would not be possible without the help of many, many partners, including landowners, tribes, local government, state agencies, federal agencies, and non-governmental organizations.

Thank you for your support!



Leadership and Staff

SCC Board of Commissioners



Jim Kropf, Chair
WSU Extension



Dean Longrie
Western region representative (elected)



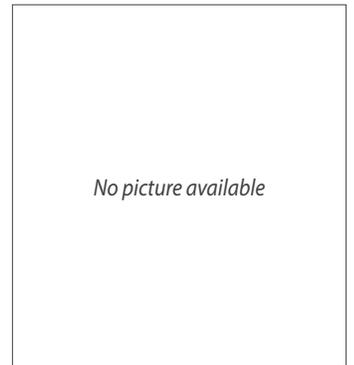
Perry Beale
Washington State
Department of Agriculture



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Eastern region representative
(elected)



Harold Crose
Central region representative
(elected)



Trevor McConchie
Washington State
Department of Natural Resources



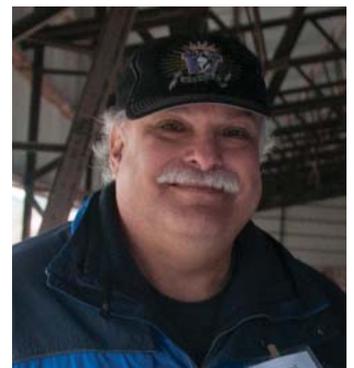
Thomas Miller
Washington Association of
Conservation Districts, President



Carol Smith
Washington State
Department of Ecology



Sarah Spaeth
Governor-appointed,
Jefferson Land Trust



Daryl Williams
Governor-appointed,
Tulalip Tribes

Agency Staff and Organizational Chart

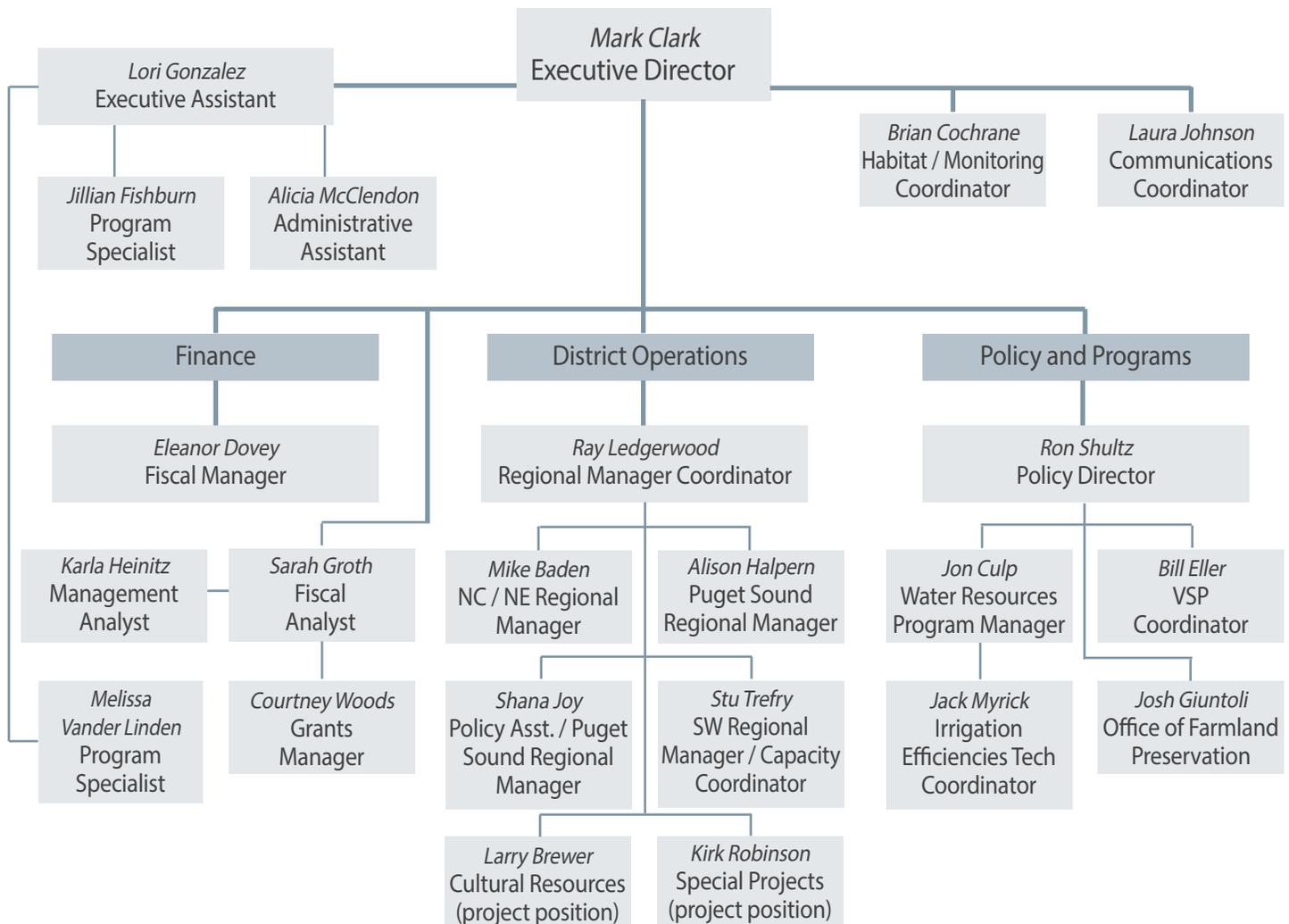
The work of the SCC is carried out by a small and efficient staff. The majority of our staff is based out of our headquarters office in Lacey, Washington. Some work in regional offices across the state.

Want to learn more about our Commission members and staff? Please visit our website:

- ▶ SCC Board of Commissioners: scc.wa.gov/commission-members
- ▶ SCC staff: scc.wa.gov/commission-staff



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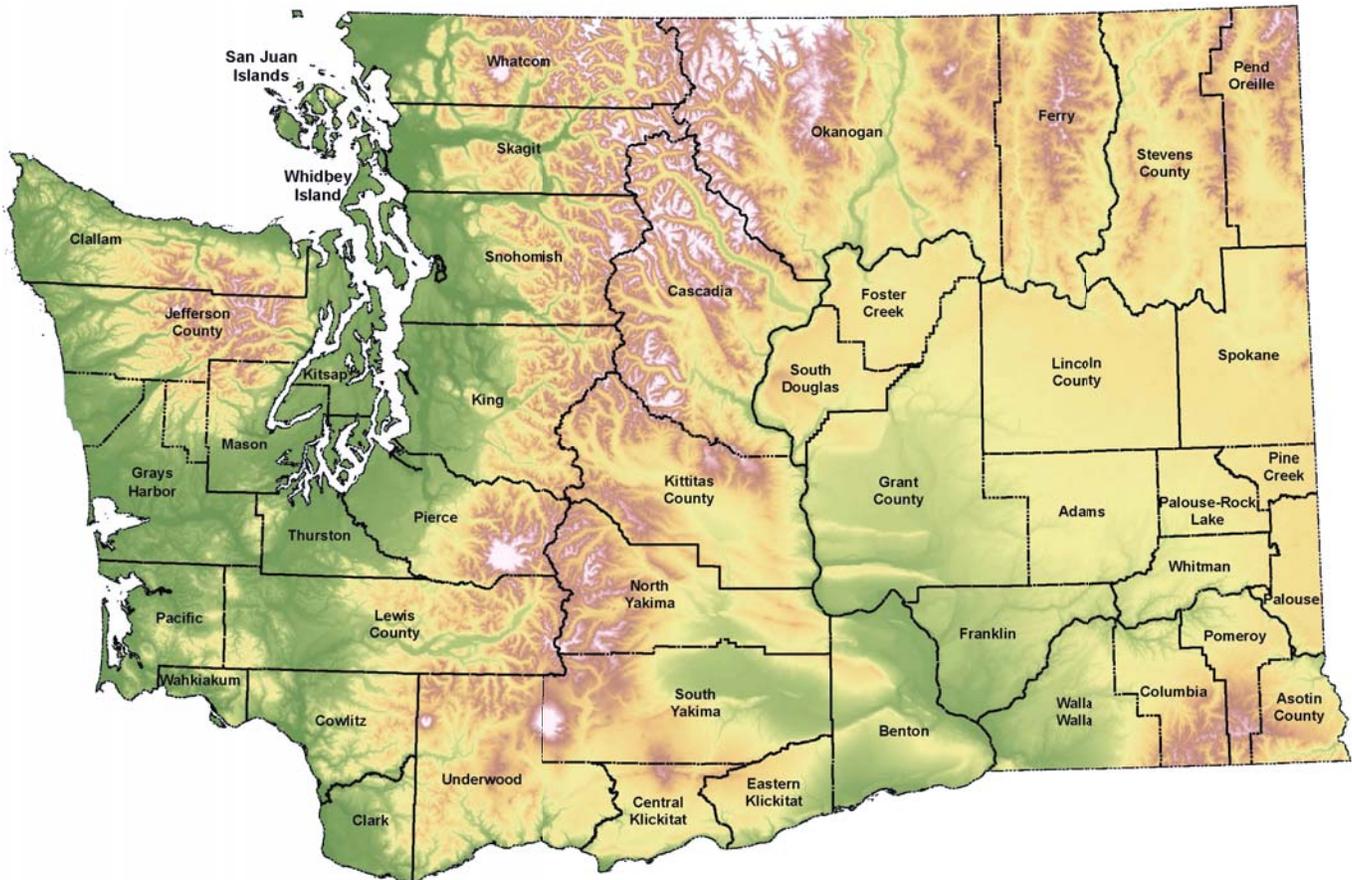
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Every county in Washington is served by at least one conservation district. Visit the SCC website for an interactive Conservation District Map and Directory that will help you find contact information for your local conservation district: scc.wa.gov/conservation-district-map.



Washington State



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