



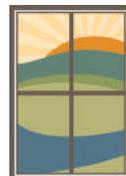
# 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

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*Participation is key to conservation*



Washington State  
Conservation  
Commission



**CONSERVATION DISTRICTS  
OF WASHINGTON STATE**

*your window to healthy lands*



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## OUR MISSION

*To conserve natural resources on all lands in Washington, in collaboration with conservation districts and other partners*

# MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERS

Dear Friends,

We've both spent the majority of our lives working in natural resources. And, it's never boring. There's always new data, new challenges, and new technology that sometimes alter our understanding and approach to natural resource management.

In this dynamic field, there's one concept that never wavers. It's arguably at the root of all natural resource success stories, which is one reason why we chose it as the theme for our 2017 Annual Report...

*Participation is key to conservation.*

It's a simple, yet often under-valued concept. We must engage people in order to make measurable natural resource improvements. Around 50 percent of land in Washington is privately owned, and more and more people move here every day. How can we expect to make progress without willing landowner participation?

When landowners participate in local conservation work, they feel ownership of the efforts and take pride in the results. That's so important.

It's for these reasons that the Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) and conservation districts integrate scientific data, technology, *and* effective strategies for engaging landowner participation into our natural resource solutions. You'll find examples of these community-based solutions — and the successes we've been able to celebrate with participating landowners and partners — in this annual report.

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



Lynn Brown, SCC Chair



Mark Clark, SCC Executive Director

# INTRODUCTION

## *Participation is key to conservation.*

Around 50 percent of land in Washington is privately owned, and our population is rising. We need landowners who are willing and able to work on projects and land management practices that conserve natural resources.

Voluntary, incentive-based solutions are a proven-effective way to engage landowner participation.



## 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 efficient policy and program structures that engage participation and deliver natural resource results.
- ▶ Facilitate collaborative solutions that meet state natural resource priorities and work on the ground.

Pictured left: SCC Executive Director Mark Clark and Regional Manager Coordinator Ray Ledgerwood hear from a Methow Valley rancher how post-wildfire floods impacted working lands and natural resources.

### IN THEIR OWN WORDS – EXPERIENCES WITH CONSERVATION DISTRICTS:

*“They know the landowners, they know the agricultural operations, and they can help guide landowners through what some would call a regulatory maze... The ability of the conservation district technician to talk with the landowner and help guide them is critical for the success of the community as we try to conserve our resources.”*

Fred Colvin (Colvin Ranch) on his experience working with Thurston Conservation District



# MEET THE CONSERVATION DISTRICTS



For more than 75 years, conservation districts have served as trusted, non-regulatory partners who engage landowners in conservation.

Each county is represented by at least one conservation district. Conservation district staff live where they work, giving them firsthand knowledge of the landscapes and people.

Conservation districts provide:

- ▶ Voluntary programs and services tailored to the local community.
- ▶ Financial incentives that make conservation work more affordable.
- ▶ Expertise and assistance with planning and installing projects.

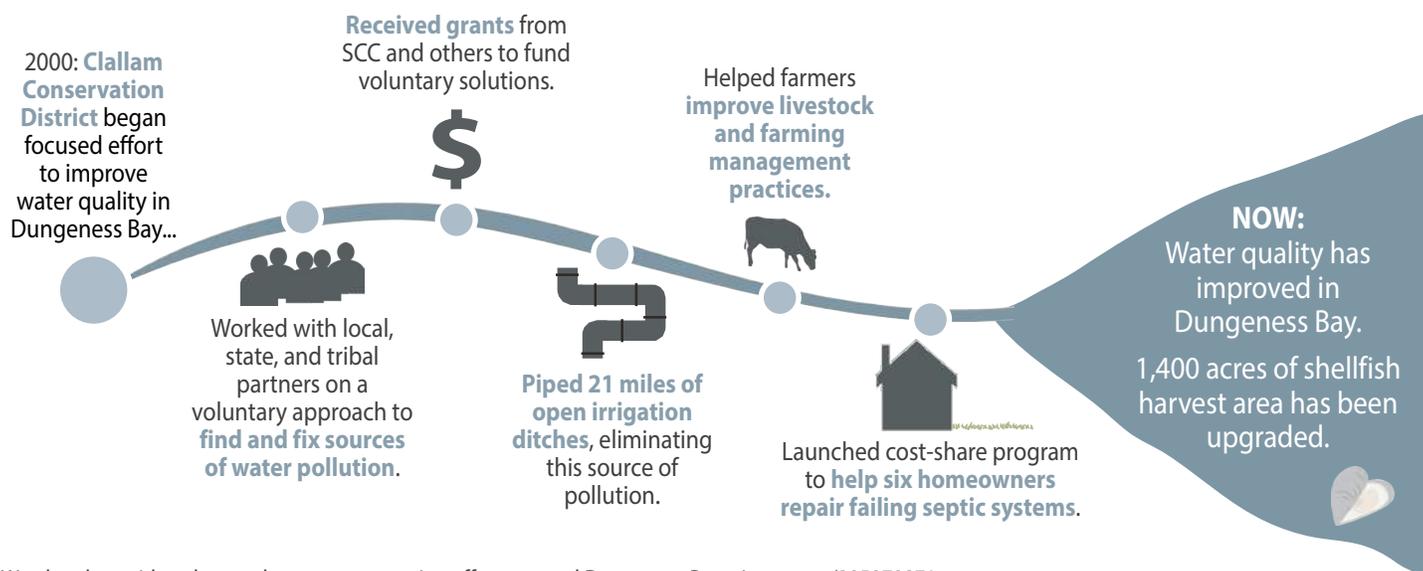
Examples of conservation district areas of service include:

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

PARTICIPATION IS KEY TO CONSERVATION - IMPACTS OVER TIME

## WATER QUALITY IMPROVES IN DUNGENESS BAY

**THEN:** Between 2000-03, over 1,700 acres of shellfish harvest area in Dungeness Bay were downgraded due to bacterial pollution. Commercial shellfish production became almost nonexistent.



Watch a short video about voluntary conservation efforts around Dungeness Bay: [vimeo.com/205970871](https://vimeo.com/205970871)

- ▶ About the Washington State Conservation Commission: [scc.wa.gov/about-the-commission](http://scc.wa.gov/about-the-commission)
- ▶ What are conservation districts: [scc.wa.gov/about\\_conservationdistricts](http://scc.wa.gov/about_conservationdistricts)

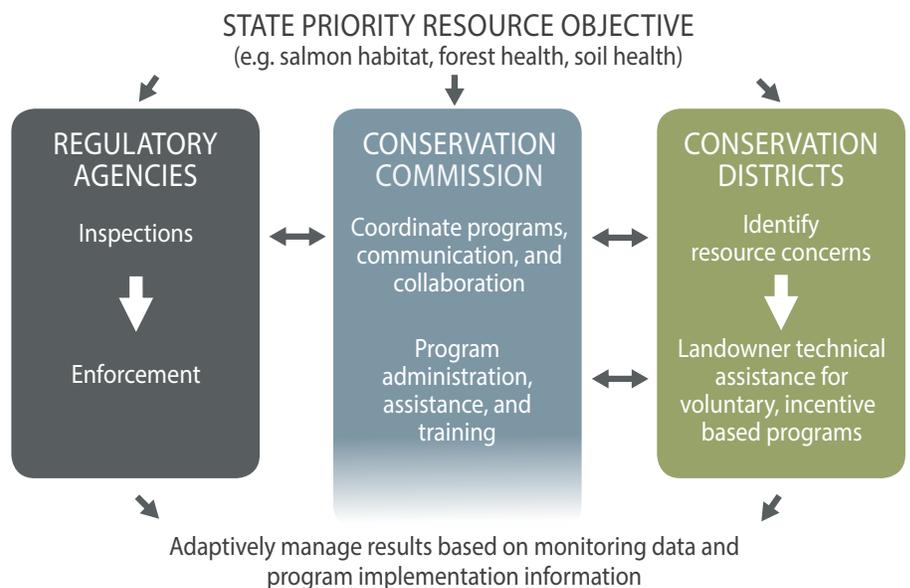
# STRUCTURE AND APPROACH

## *How do you engage landowners as partners in stewardship?*

The SCC and conservation districts use a voluntary, incentive-based approach to engage landowners. Incentives spark eager landowner participation, rather than triggering disputes or conflict. Landowners work with conservation district technicians to design voluntary projects, resulting in solutions that are based on scientific data and landowners' exclusive, detailed knowledge of the local landscape.



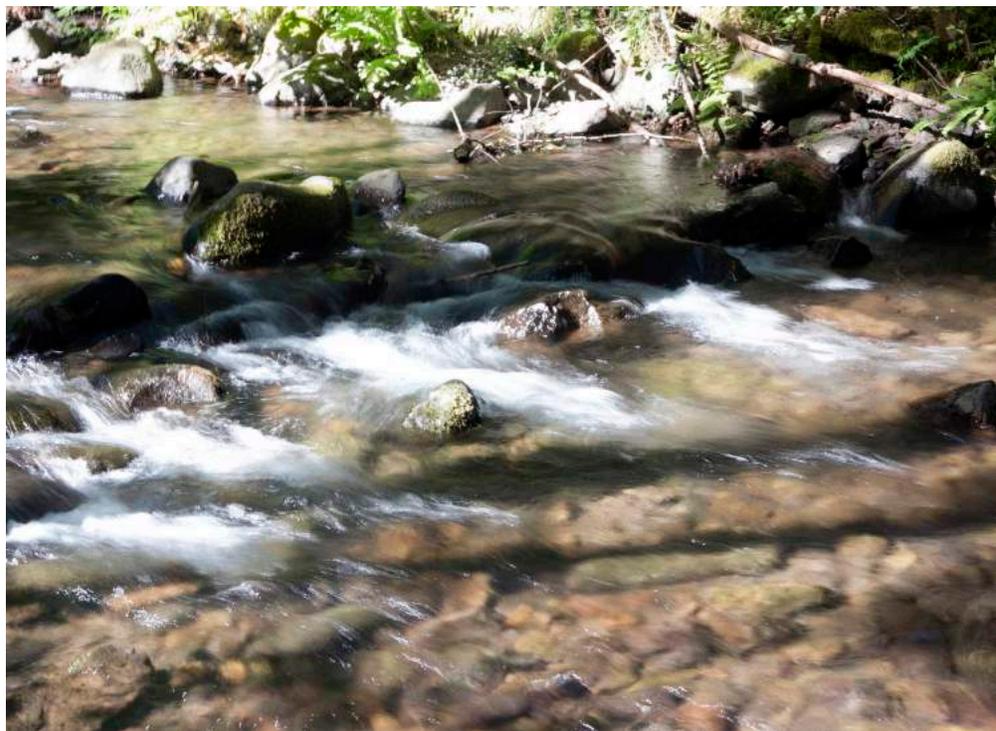
## WASHINGTON'S APPROACH TO NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION



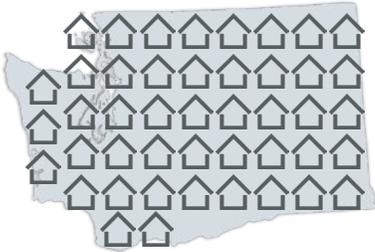
### IN THEIR OWN WORDS – EXPERIENCES WITH CONSERVATION DISTRICTS:

*“These folks are knowledgeable, proactive, and congenitally helpful. They are devoted to and focused on their mission. Because of them, my land is improving in health and tilth, and I am better able to contribute to my community.”*

Barbara Vaughan Bailey, White Salmon landowner on her experience working with Underwood Conservation District



# 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



Washington Association of Conservation Districts President

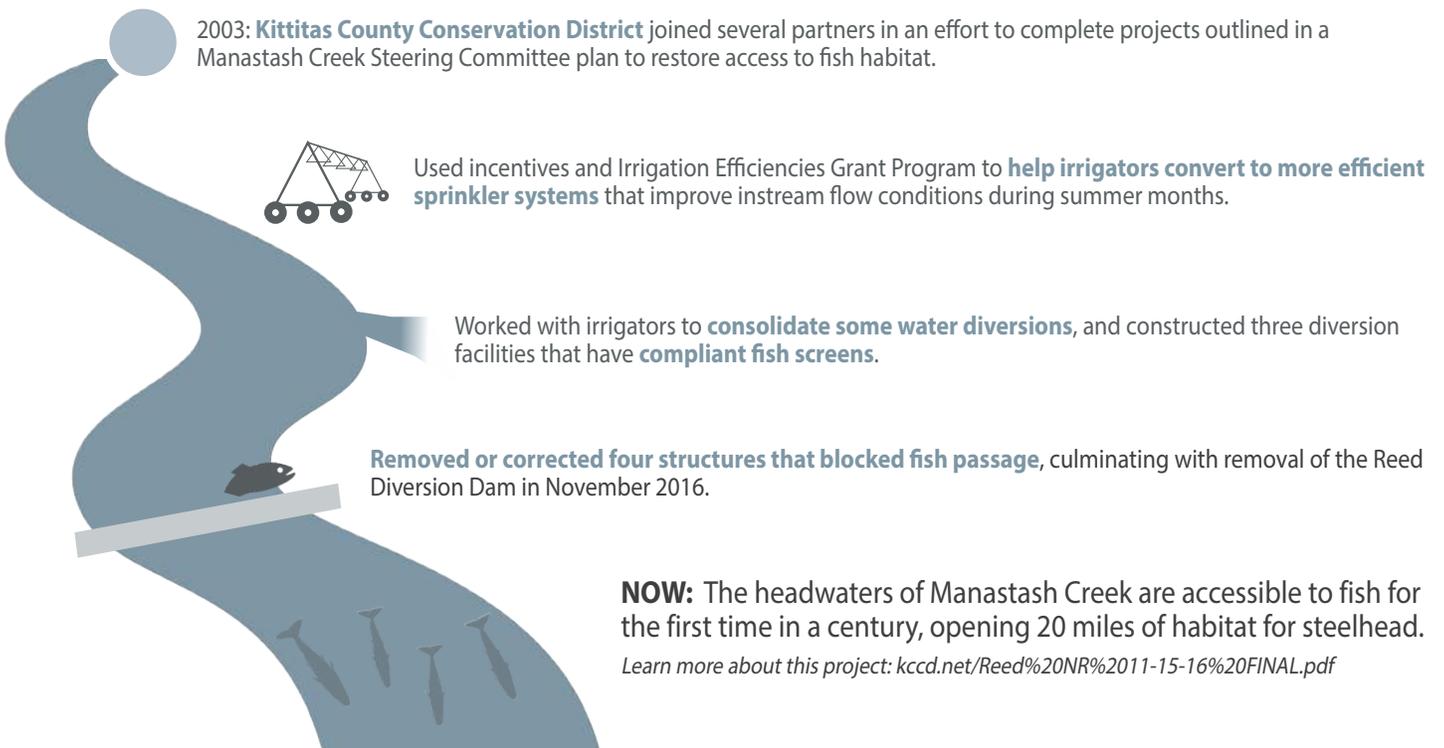
## 10-MEMBER SCC BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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

PARTICIPATION IS KEY TO CONSERVATION - IMPACTS OVER TIME

## ACCESS TO FISH HABITAT RESTORED IN MANASTASH CREEK

**THEN:** In 2001, a potential lawsuit called out 20 miles of quality habitat in Manastash Creek that was inaccessible to mid-Columbia Summer Steelhead (ESA-listed species). Fish passage barriers, unscreened irrigation diversions, and low stream flow were cited as the cause.



# TOOLS FOR SUCCESS

SCC funding supports necessary tools that conservation districts and landowners need to complete conservation projects. Two common tools — cost-share programs and conservation plans — are critical to success.



## CONSERVATION PLANS

Conservation plans are a road map for landowners to maintain and enhance natural resources on their property.

### HOW IT WORKS:

- ▶ Conservation district planners meet with landowner(s) to evaluate soil, water, air, plant, and animal resources on the property and hear land use goals.
- ▶ They write a plan detailing the “what, where, and when” for conservation efforts on the property:
  - *What* land management practices will help meet natural resource and land use goals.
  - *Where* conservation projects should be installed.
  - *When* projects should be installed and updated.

### CONSERVATION PLANS ARE:

- ▶ **Developed at no cost to the landowner.**
- ▶ **Specific to natural resource and land use needs.** (e.g. dairy nutrient management plans, farm plans, and riparian plans.)
- ▶ **Key to financial assistance.** Landowners must have an approved conservation plan to be eligible for financial assistance through the federal farm bill.

The SCC Center for Technical Development works to ensure conservation planners have the expertise to deliver high-quality service (details on p. 23).

## WHAT IS COST-SHARE?

Cost-share means a landowner only pays a portion of a project’s total cost — the remaining portion is paid by a project sponsor.

Using funds from the SCC, conservation districts offer cost-share as an incentive for landowners to install eligible conservation projects.



# SALMON RUNS INCREASE IN TUCANNON RIVER

**THEN:** During the 1990s, spring chinook salmon runs reached record lows in the Tucannon River, a tributary to the Columbia River. The total run-size in 1995 was just 54 fish.

Late 1990s: **Columbia Conservation District** and several partners began journey to improve salmon habitat in Tucannon River...

Completed **watershed assessment** that found threats to salmon, including lethally warm water, sometimes over 80° F.

Worked with landowners to find **voluntary solutions** that addressed landowner needs, resource concerns, and salmon habitat.



Installed **instream structures** to enhance habitat diversity and complexity.

Enrolled landowners in **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program** and other programs that incentivize streamside tree plantings, habitat restoration, and irrigation efficiency.



## NOW:



Trees have grown and shade the river.



Summer water temperatures dropped over 10 degrees F.



Young salmon use 20 miles of river that had been too warm.



Spring chinook runs are among the highest in 30 years.

The total run-size in 2015 was 1,777 fish.



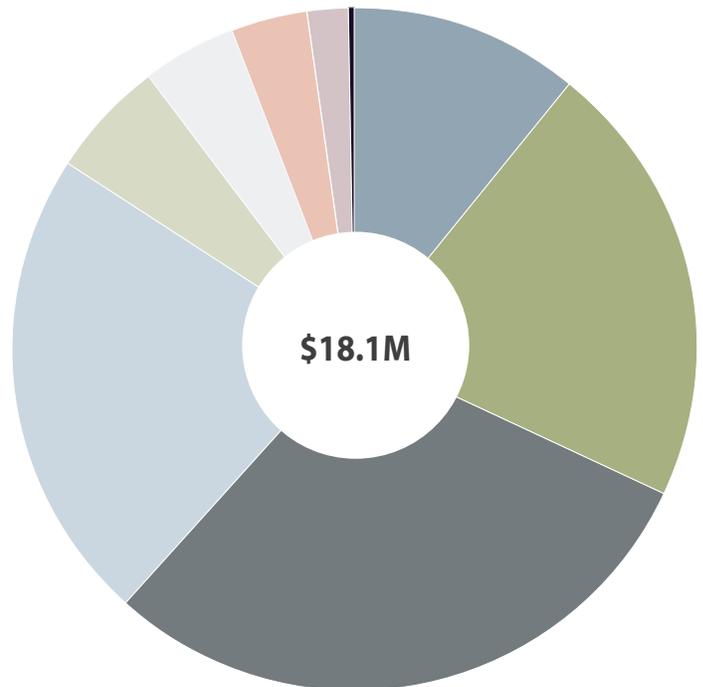
Several partners contributed to the success of voluntary efforts in the Tucannon River, including public and private landowners, Bonneville Power Administration, Snake River Salmon Recovery Office, Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Nez Perce Tribe, and the SCC. Read more details about this effort: [scc.wa.gov/tucannon](http://scc.wa.gov/tucannon).

# BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

The SCC takes pride in getting the most out of every dollar we spend. We invite feedback from conservation districts and other partners who receive our funding, and we always look for ways to improve our efficiency.

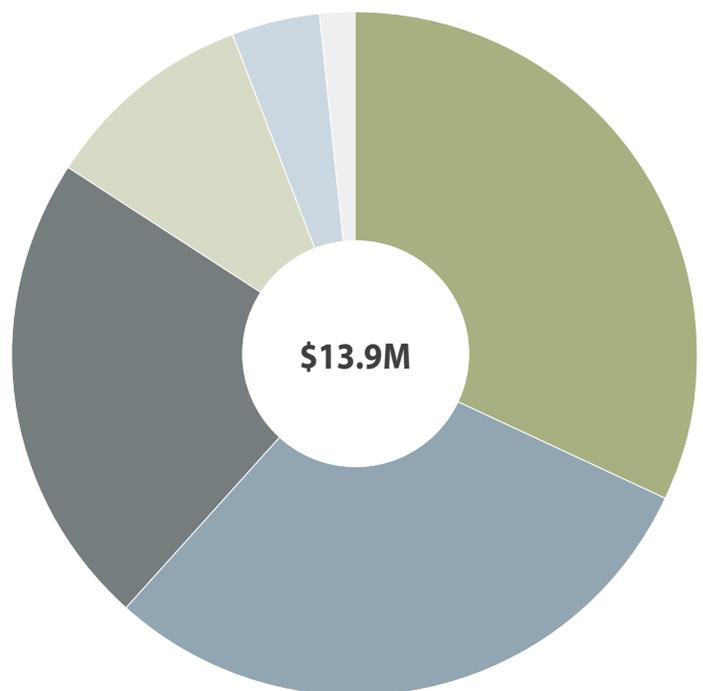
## FISCAL YEAR 2017 (FY17) OPERATING BUDGET

- SCC Administration - \$1,985,380
- Conservation District Operations - \$3,852,686
- Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP), statewide program administration - \$5,389,256 (see p. 20)
- Fire Recovery Program - \$4,078,428 (see p. 12-13)
- Firewise Program - \$991,243 (see p. 16-17)
- Toxics - \$840,669
- Engineering Grants - \$643,884
- NRCS Task Orders - \$316,266
- Food Policy Forum - \$49,935

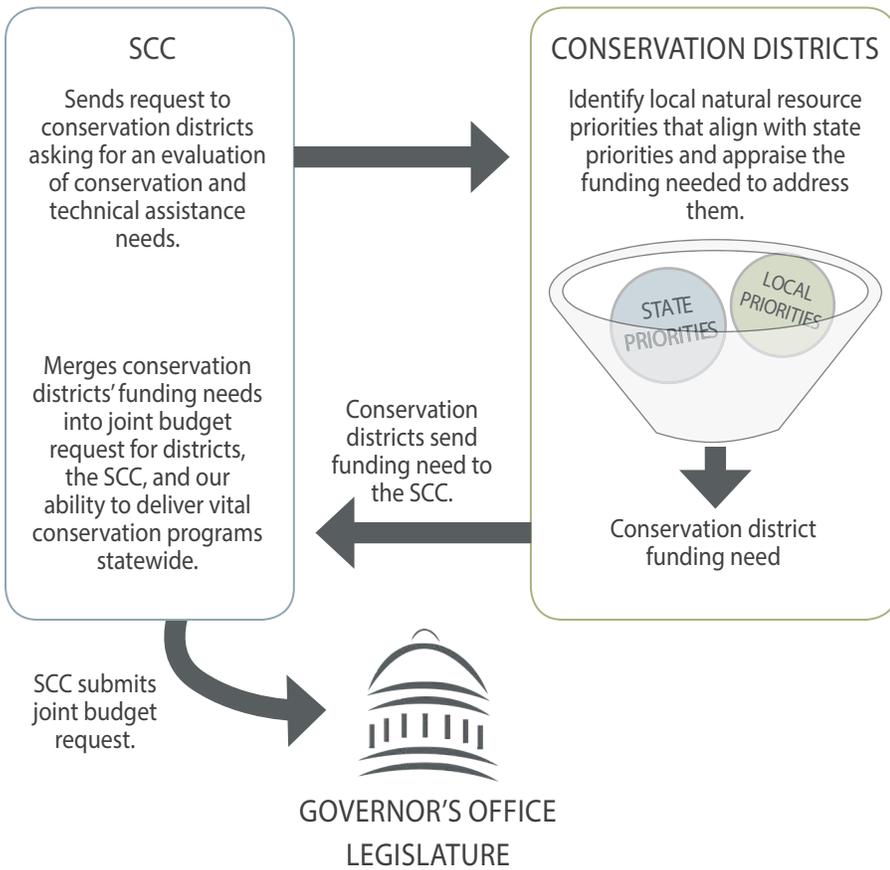


## FY17 CAPITAL BUDGET

- Natural Resource Investments - \$4,474,381 (see p. 18-19)
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program - \$4,102,491
- Shellfish Program - \$3,143,261 (see p. 14-15)
- Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), state match - \$1,378,668
- Agricultural Conservation Easements - \$567,999
- Deep Furrow Conservation Drill, R&D grant - \$222,140

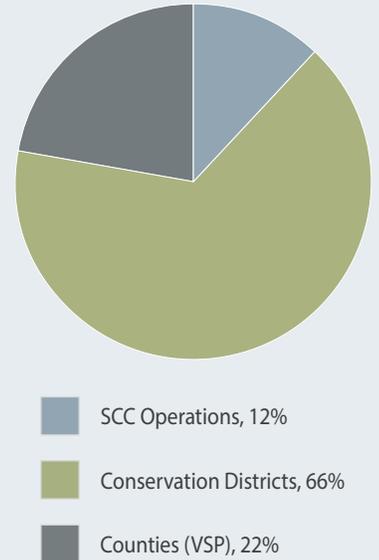


# HOW WE BUILD OUR BUDGET

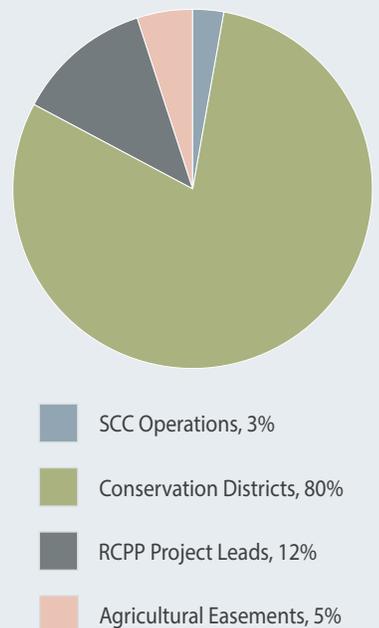


# FY17 FUNDING DISTRIBUTION

OPERATING FUNDS

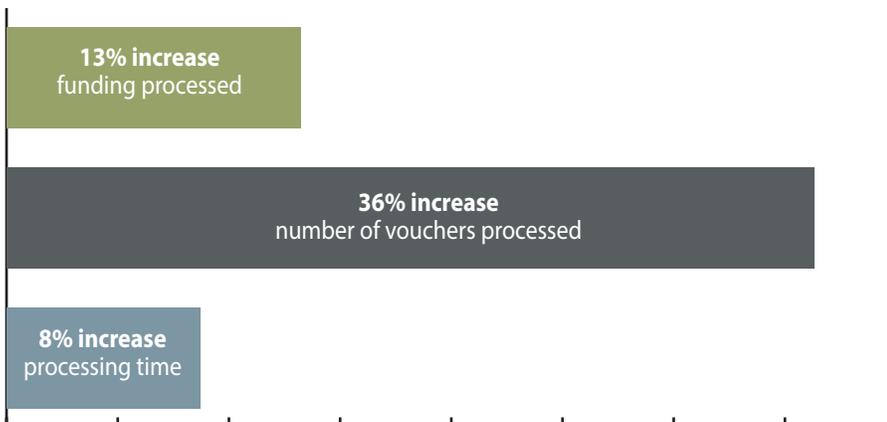


CAPITAL FUNDS



# MAINTAINING EFFICIENT PAYMENTS

Despite double-digit increases in the amount of funding and vouchers our staff processed this year, our average payment processing time only increased by eight percent and remains less than three days.

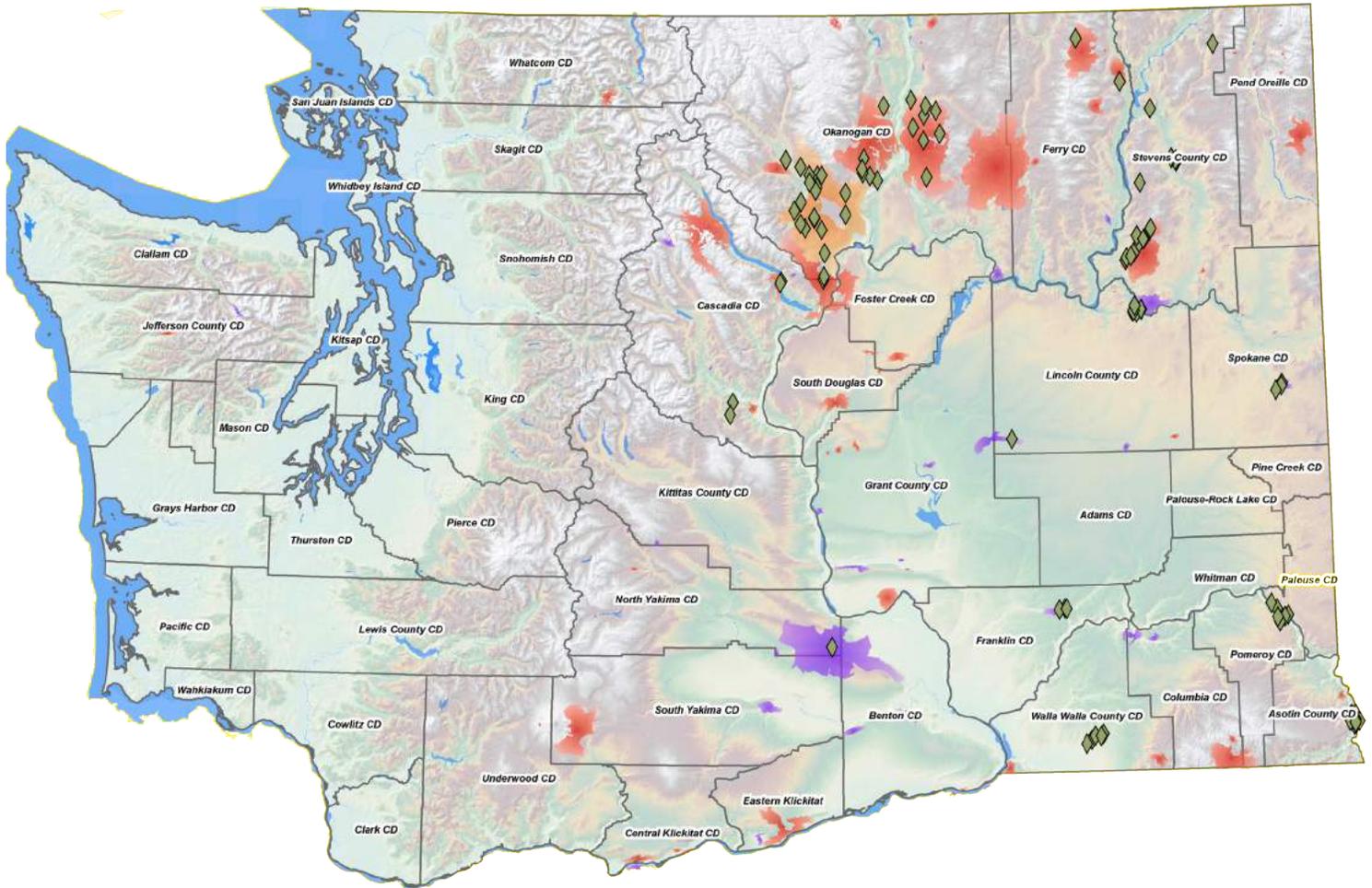


# FIRE RECOVERY PROGRAM

FUNDS EXPENDED (FY17)

**\$4,078,428**

Created by the state Legislature and administered by the SCC, conservation districts use funding from the Fire Recovery Program to help landowners and cooperators recover losses to natural resources and agriculture that occurred during the 2014-16 wildfire seasons.



**LEGEND**

-  Conservation District Boundaries
-  Hydro
-  FY17 Fire Recovery Projects
-  2016 Wildfires NWCC
-  2015 Wildfires
-  2014 Carlton Complex Fire

**IN THEIR OWN WORDS – EXPERIENCE WITH THE FIRE RECOVERY PROGRAM:**

*“Our work with [Stevens County] Conservation District was instrumental in getting the ranch repaired and on a solid environmental footing for the future. Working with the district was like working with neighbors, which they were. They facilitated all the necessary requirements to get our project done and showed how incentive-based conservation services can be successful.”*

Jonathan Birnbaum, owner of Black Horse Canyon Ranch, which was damaged in the Carpenter Road Fire

## EXAMPLES OF FIRE RECOVERY PROJECTS



Repair of the flood-damaged Wenner Lake overflow channel and Benson Creek Irrigation Water Users Association headgate. Damage was caused as a result of post wildfire flash flooding following the 2014 Carlton Complex Fire. (Learn more about this project on p. 49.)



A large debris flow affected three landowners and deposited nearly four feet of mud, rock, and debris on the uphill side of one home after the 2015 First Creek Fire. This project installed a debris flow/flood channel for a drainage on the south shore of Lake Chelan. The project was a partnership between the Cascadia Conservation District, SCC, and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service through the Emergency Watershed Program. (Learn more about this project on p. 29.)

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

**105**  
landowners assisted

**189**  
fire recovery practices  
completed

**441,465**  
feet of fencing constructed

**1,931**  
acres replanted/reseeded  
for erosion control

**34,642**  
feet of access (e.g. roads,  
trails) treated for erosion

**6,755**  
feet of water conveyance  
installed (irrigation)



- ▶ Learn more about the SCC Fire Recovery Program: [scc.wa.gov/firerecovery](http://scc.wa.gov/firerecovery)
- ▶ Watch a video about the Black Horse Ranch Fire Recovery Project: [vimeo.com/238095321](https://vimeo.com/238095321)

# SHELLFISH PROGRAM

FUNDS EXPENDED (FY17)

\$ 3,143,261

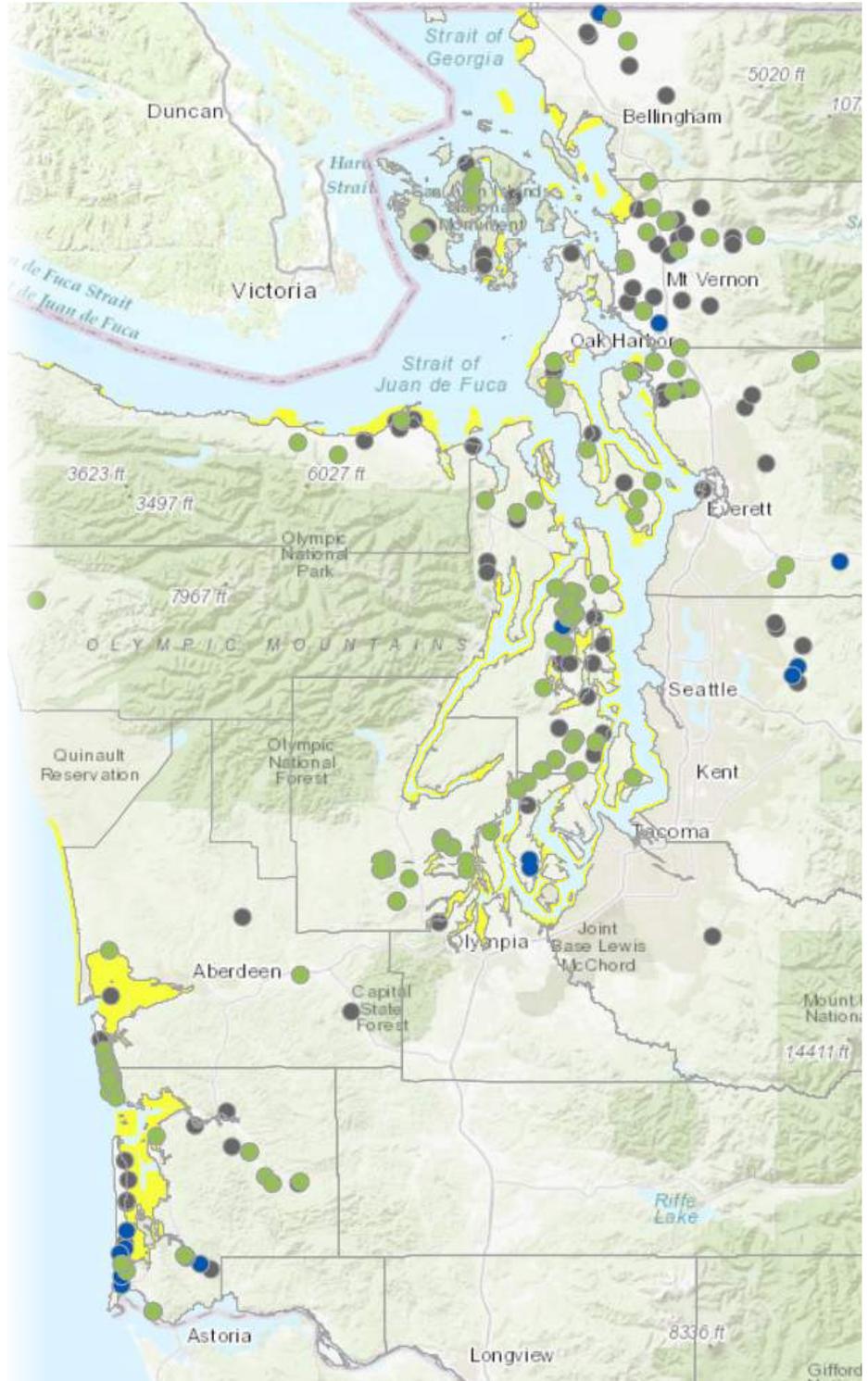
Our Shellfish Program uses a targeted approach to invest in best management practices (BMPs) installed by conservation districts and landowners that build cumulative results for shellfish recovery. Priority is given to “project clusters” within a watershed or stream reach where there’s a water quality concern.

AREA OF DETAIL



**LEGEND**

-  Conservation District Boundaries
-  Commercial Shellfish Growing Area
-  FY17 Shellfish BMPs
-  FY16 Shellfish BMPs
-  13-15 Shellfish BMPs



IN THEIR OWN WORDS – EXPERIENCE WITH THE SHELLFISH PROGRAM:

*“The two years of planning, preparation, tear down, rebuilding, and completion of the heavy use area was a wonderful experience... Working together makes our creeks cleaner, our environment healthier, and the planet better for generations to come.”*

Jeff Stokes, Kitsap County farmer on his experience working with Kitsap Conservation District to install best management practices

## EXAMPLES OF BMPs FUNDED THROUGH THE SHELLFISH PROGRAM



Livestock heavy use area. Installation of roof structures and stable, non-eroding surfaces helps protect and improve water quality.



Livestock off-site watering facility. Construction of fencing and watering facilities prevents livestock from having the need or ability to access streams that drain into shellfish areas.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

**213**  
best management practices  
installed

**5,932**  
acres of land and habitat  
improved

**7,619**  
trees and shrubs planted

**3,129**  
feet of stream and shoreline  
protected or improved

**800**  
feet of livestock fencing  
installed

**25**  
chemigation units installed  
(improves efficiency of chemical  
application to cranberries, which  
reduces water pollution)



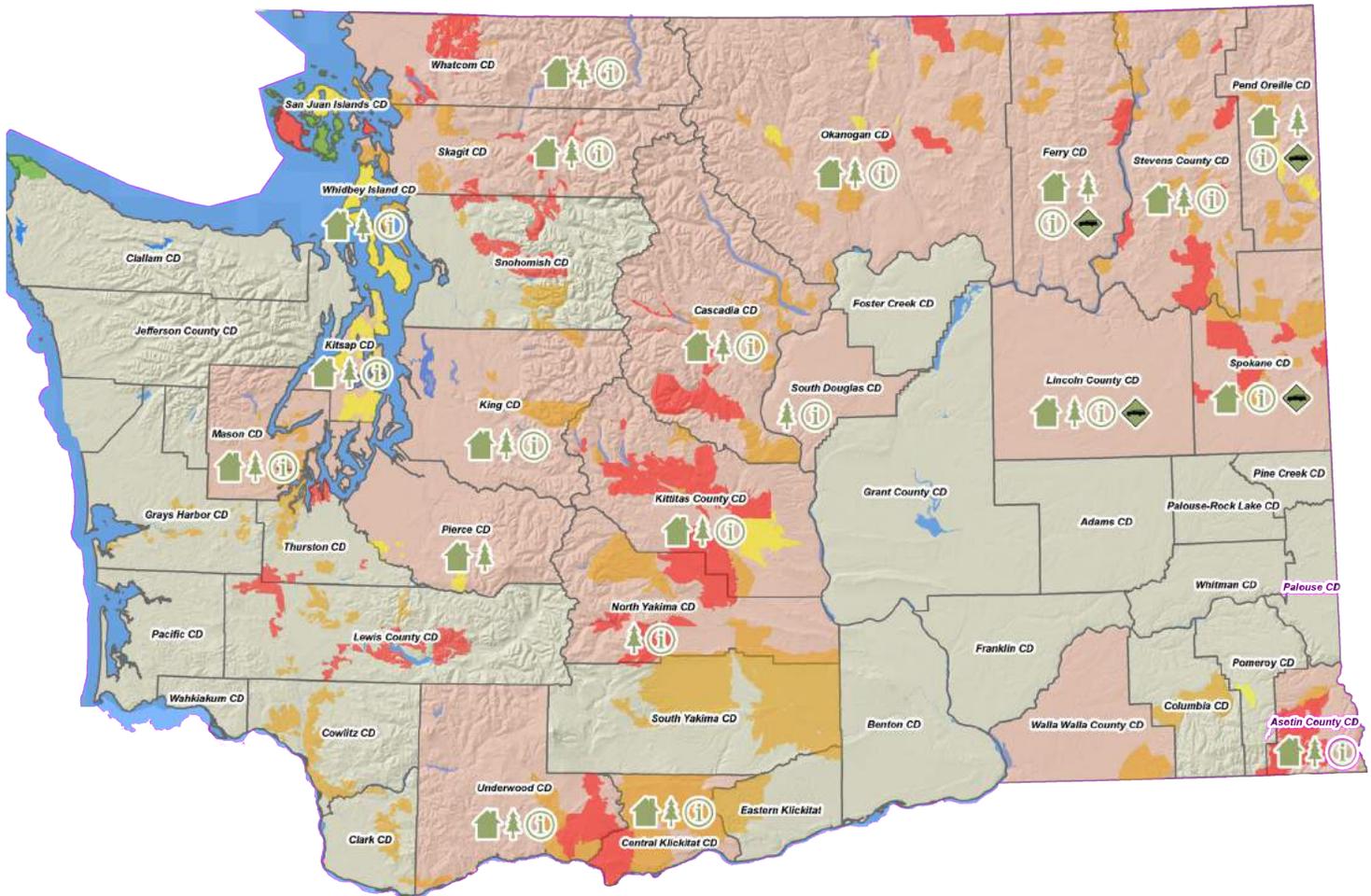
- ▶ Learn more about the SCC Shellfish Program: [scc.wa.gov/shellfish](http://scc.wa.gov/shellfish)
- ▶ Watch a video showing how Clallam Conservation District worked with local partners to improve water quality for shellfish in Dungeness Bay: [vimeo.com/205970871](https://vimeo.com/205970871)

# FIREWISE PROGRAM

FUNDS EXPENDED (FY17)

**\$991,243**

The SCC — in consultation with the DNR — administered funds for conservation districts to implement local Firewise activities. Individual landowners and entire communities were engaged in activities that help prepare and manage property in a way that reduces risk of wildfire damage.



**IN THEIR OWN WORDS – EXPERIENCE WITH FIREWISE:**

*“I had not considered the specific dangers and what could be done to lessen them, only that I was moving to a high fire danger area. Learning that there was funding and expertise available to lessen the real dangers we face in Ferry County was a great relief not only economically, but I will sleep better with less worry.”*

Wayne Christopherson on Ferry Conservation District's Firewise service

LEGEND		CONSERVATION DISTRICT FIREWISE ACTIVITIES:	
	Conservation District Boundaries		Site Assessments
	2016-17 Firewise Grants		BMP Implementation
	Hydro		Workshops / Education
<b>WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE HAZARD RATING:</b>			Emergency Signage
	Low		
	Moderate		
	High		
	Extreme		

## EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES FUNDED THROUGH FIREWISE



After the 2016 Suncrest Fire, fire chiefs praised landowners' use of Firewise principles, which allowed for safe, efficient response and resulted in no structure loss.

### Your Home & Wildfires

**Schedule your FREE Firewise Risk Assessment, including:**

- Basics of wild fire behavior and how homes ignite
- Important home ignition risks
- Easy steps to reduce threat of unnecessary losses
- Firewise funding opportunities
- Free Address Sign to help firefighters find your home

**Be prepared before another wildfire strikes your area.**

**FIREWISE COMMUNITIES**

Spokane Conservation District answered several calls for Firewise assistance after they used billboards to advertise free services for landowners.



North Yakima Conservation District was one of several conservation districts that used a mobile wood chipper to remove branches and stumps that can provide fuel to wildfires.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

**140,298**  
landowners provided with  
Firewise information

**1,397**  
landowners assisted  
to implement Firewise  
practices

**717**  
home or community-scale  
Firewise assessments  
completed

**601**  
acres treated for fuels  
reduction

**31**  
communities assisted to  
achieve Firewise recognition

**827**  
homes provided with  
signage to direct  
emergency responders



► Learn more about the SCC's Firewise Funding: [scc.wa.gov/firewise](http://scc.wa.gov/firewise)

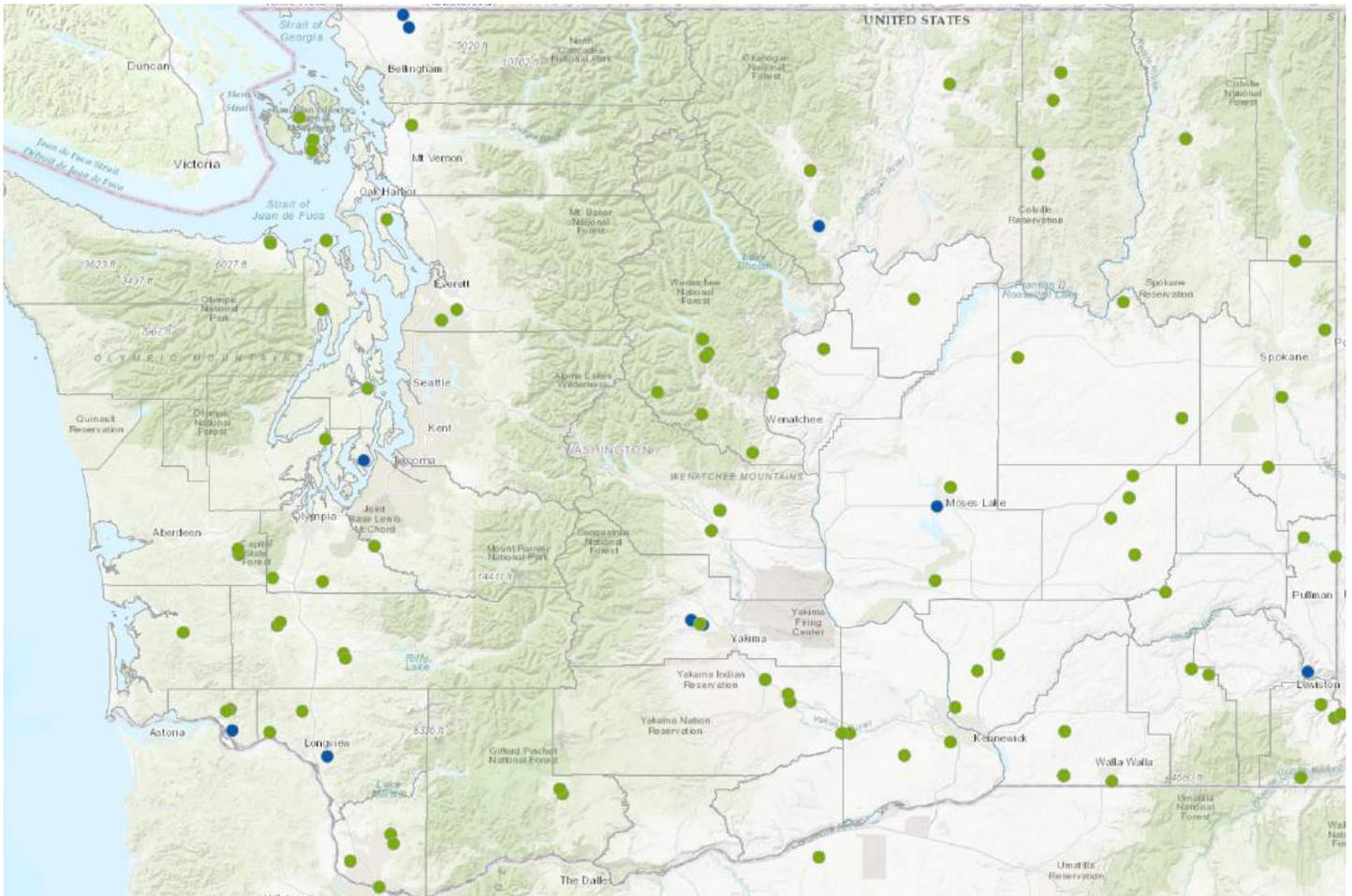
► Learn more about Firewise principles: [firewise.org](http://firewise.org)

# NATURAL RESOURCE INVESTMENTS

FUNDS EXPENDED (FY17)

**\$4,474,381**

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



**LEGEND**

-  Conservation District Boundaries
-  FY17 BMPs
-  FY16 BMPs

IN THEIR OWN WORDS – EXPERIENCE WITH NATURAL RESOURCE INVESTMENTS:

*“Protecting the resource is important to me for future generations. If I don’t fish that stream another day in my life, that’s no big deal. But to know that the next generations are going to be able to — my kids, the landlord’s grandkids — they can come fish. They’ll be able to hunt there. It’s a spot that’s not overrun. It’s close for them, and we know that we’ve done something that’s going to carry on into the future.”*

Chris Heitstuman, Whitman County landowner and Palouse Conservation District board member

## EXAMPLES OF BMPs FUNDED BY NATURAL RESOURCE INVESTMENTS



Livestock feeding pads. Installation of stable, non-eroding surfaces protects the feeding area from erosion and aids in manure collection. This helps protect water and air quality.



Streambank stabilization. Installation of wood structures and fencing along salmon-bearing streams reduces sediment, prevents cattle traffic, and results in improved water quality.



Sprinkler conversion projects. Converting flood irrigation systems to efficient sprinklers helps reduce water usage and soil erosion, which improves downstream water conditions.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

**155**  
best management practices  
installed

**1,989**  
acres of land and habitat  
improved

**6,648**  
trees and shrubs planted

**3,707**  
feet of stream and shoreline  
protected or improved

**3,283**  
feet of livestock fencing  
installed

**164**  
instream wood structures  
installed



► Watch a video showing how North Yakima Conservation District works with land managers to install BMPs that benefit native fish and local ranching operations:  
[vimeo.com/205969388](https://vimeo.com/205969388)



# OTHER HIGHLIGHTS...



## CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (CREP)

CREP is an incentive-based program that compensates farmers who plant native vegetation to form a “buffer” between farmland and salmon-bearing streams. In FY17, 63 new project sites were enrolled in CREP, and 80 sites were re-enrolled that were set to expire. The SCC also hosted a series of four field tours statewide focused on lessons-learned and evaluating site-specific strategies for salmon restoration. Learn more: [scc.wa.gov/crep](http://scc.wa.gov/crep)



## COORDINATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (CRM)

CRM is a locally-driven, collaborative process to address natural resource issues using recommendations from those most affected. In FY17, two CRM groups completed work relating to grazing management and research. A new CRM group formed to address wildland fire, sage-grouse habitat, and grazing management. Ongoing CRM groups continued work on wolf predation, water quality, easements, grazing, and public lands management. Learn more: [scc.wa.gov/crm](http://scc.wa.gov/crm)



## FOOD POLICY FORUM

The SCC convened the Washington State Food Policy Forum in early 2017, 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 together to develop recommendations for a strong, resilient food system in Washington. Learn more: [scc.wa.gov/food-policy](http://scc.wa.gov/food-policy)



## IRRIGATION EFFICIENCIES GRANT PROGRAM (IEGP)

IEGP offers incentives for water-right holders to increase the efficiency of on-farm irrigation systems. Saved water is returned to drought-prone streams that are home to ESA-listed fish, without risk of relinquishing water rights. Three new IEGP projects launched in FY17 — two by Clallam Conservation District on the Dungeness River and one by Underwood Conservation District on a While Salmon River tributary — that will save 1,374 acre feet of water per year into the state’s Trust Water Program. Learn more: [scc.wa.gov/iegp](http://scc.wa.gov/iegp)



## OFFICE OF FARMLAND PRESERVATION (OFP)

OFP provides resources that assist farmers, communities, and policy-makers with promoting and retaining viable agricultural lands. In FY17, OFP worked with North Olympic Land Trust (Clallam County) to purchase an agricultural conservation easement that permanently protects 60 acres of the 159-year-old Ward Farm. OFP also partnered with Thurston Conservation District to host a two-night estate planning workshop. Learn more: [scc.wa.gov/ofp](http://scc.wa.gov/ofp)



## 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. In FY17, we issued requests for proposals for conservation projects in priority areas around Puget Sound. We provided state match for three other RCPP efforts, including one in the Palouse River Watershed (led by Palouse Conservation District) and one in the Greater Spokane River (led by Spokane Conservation District). Learn more: [scc.wa.gov/rcpp-in-wa](http://scc.wa.gov/rcpp-in-wa)

# 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 use public funds responsibly, employ transparent performance measures, and provide high-quality service and expertise.



## WORKING WITH THE STATE AUDITOR

The SCC works closely with the Washington State Auditor’s Office (SAO) to maintain agency and conservation district transparency and compliance with state, federal, and local laws.

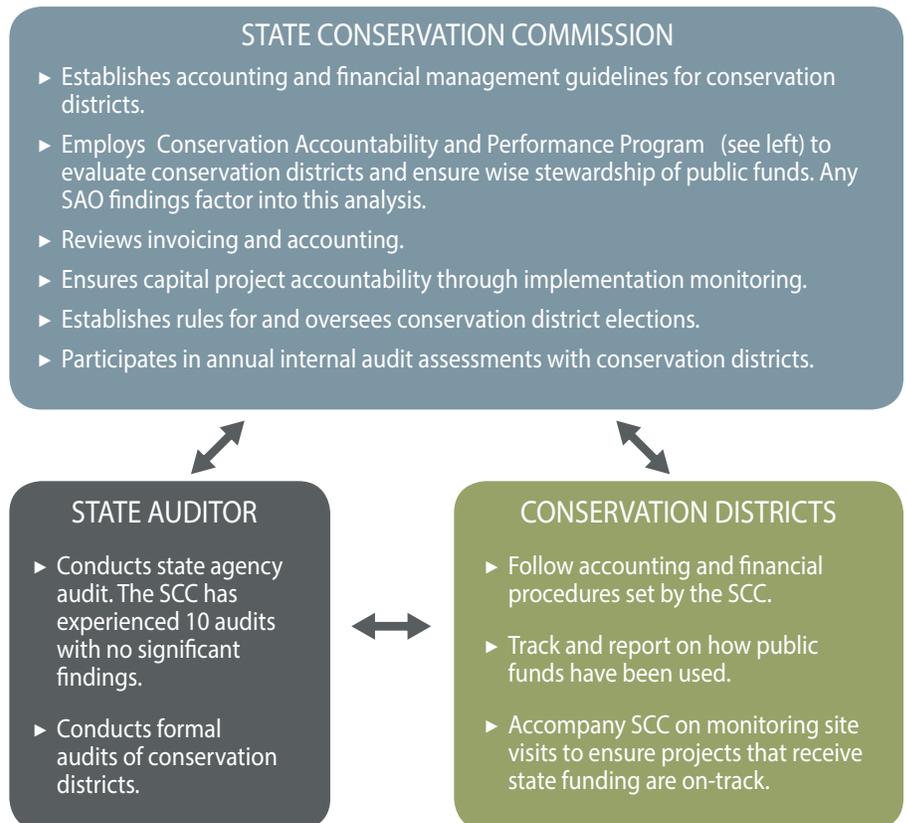
The SAO conducts regular formal audits of conservation districts. This fiscal year — following an intensive audit — Snohomish Conservation District was presented with the State Auditor’s Stewardship Award (pictured left) for “outstanding accomplishment in the stewardship of public funds.”

## CONSERVATION ACCOUNTABILITY AND PERFORMANCE PROGRAM (CAPP)

In 2017 the SCC launched an upgraded system of guidelines and controls that we use to govern conservation districts’ use of state funds, property, and services. The revised CAPP system includes a checklist of functions that all conservation districts must perform to comply with statutory requirements.

The SCC also is piloting a set of high performance measures that conservation districts voluntarily may follow to achieve a higher level of accreditation. These performance measures currently are being test-run by five conservation districts.

## AUDIT PROCESS

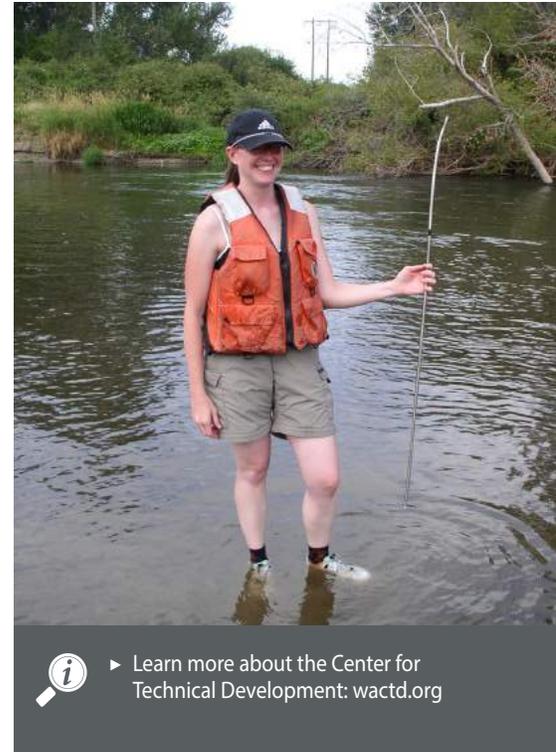


# CENTER FOR TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT (CTD)

The 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 2017, the CTD took steps toward fulfilling this purpose, including:

- ▶ Planned and completed three technical trainings for over 50 conservation district employees, in coordination with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Topics included conservation planning, mentoring, and comprehensive nutrient management planning.
- ▶ Continued development of staff certification programs in dairy nutrient management, farm, and riparian planning.
- ▶ Maintained a mentorship program and statewide staff directory for technical employees.



▶ Learn more about the Center for Technical Development: [wactd.org](http://wactd.org)



## TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGY

Our ability to track our spending and the impacts of our investments on natural resources is a vital piece of accountability.

We're in the final stages of upgrading our Conservation Practice Data System (CPDS). The SCC and conservation districts use CPDS to track conservation projects through all stages of development, from planning through completion and monitoring. Once the CPDS upgrade is complete, the system will be more efficient for users and allow us to track more comprehensive data about the projects we fund.

In FY17, SCC staff trained 131 staff from 42 conservation districts on the upgraded CPDS system.

# CONSERVATION DISTRICT FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The following pages showcase key accomplishments from each of Washington's 45 conservation districts during fiscal year 2017. All of this work was completed voluntarily and in collaboration with countless private landowners and partners.

Nothing better illustrates the theme of this year's report — *participation is key to conservation* — than the diversity of work and engagement you'll find as you flip through these pages.





Okanogan Conservation District staff celebrate after completing nine days of soil sampling as part of their cover crop trials. (Photo by Chelsea Trout, Okanogan Conservation District)



# 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:



Local 5th graders participated in our field day to learn about bees, soil, recycling, weather monitoring, weeds, and wildlife.



Winners of the 6th grade essay contest read their papers on “the importance of pollinators” at our annual meeting.



Over 230 students from 18 schools participated in the FFA Land Judging Contest hosted by Adams Conservation District.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

# LIVESTOCK WATERING FACILITIES SUPPORT RANGELAND HEALTH



This solar panel can be rotated seasonally to follow the sun, and the watering tank is designed to reduce ice buildup.

## Resource challenge

Healthy rangeland provides habitat and food for wildlife and domestic livestock. A diverse mixture of grasses, forbs, and shrubs provide shelter and nutrients. The sagebrush-steppe areas in Adams Conservation District provide rangeland for many producers. If rangeland is overgrazed, desirable native vegetation may be replaced by invasive species. Weedy invasive species often out-compete natives, which results in decreased plant diversity and less forage opportunity for livestock and wildlife.

## Project summary and results

In order to expand livestock grazing capabilities, Adams Conservation District provided assistance to install two wells and four watering facilities in rangeland pastures. The watering facilities are solar powered and include panels, pumps, and troughs. Water availability now allows the operators to include those pastures in their grazing rotation, which reduces grazing pressure on the rest of their property. Moving livestock frequently and between multiple pastures ensures native plants aren’t overgrazed, reduces the risk of weedy invasion, and supports plant diversity and habitat.



Livestock watering facility on rangeland east of Ritzville.

**Key Partners:** Washington State Conservation Commission

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Provide operators with assistance to implement reduced tillage practices and install livestock watering facilities.
- ▶ Work with landowners and partners to improve riparian and wetland habitat.
- ▶ Expand outreach efforts to educate our community and land operators and address their 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:



Completed winter feed area project, including feed pads and waste storage facilities for manure management.



Provided federal and state cost-share to help replace fencing after over 10 miles of fence were destroyed during the 2015 fires in Asotin County.



Provided Salmon in the Classroom lessons and tanks for eight schools, reaching over 250 students who raised and released rainbow trout.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### ASOTIN CREEK HEADGATE DAM FISH PASSAGE PROJECT



Headgate Dam before construction, which was a fish passage barrier for juvenile fish.

provided water to an irrigation system that serviced orchards in Clarkston Heights, approximately 15 miles away.

#### Project summary and results

Six design options were developed and several public meetings were held before a preferred design was approved. The approach was to increase the notch in the concrete structure to be approximately 20 feet wide and a minimum of 3.2 feet in depth. This would allow for a free-flowing stream channel. The design also included the construction of a roughened channel to maintain stability of the stream bed material to prevent head cutting and provide habitat for fish. Asotin County Conservation District received a grant from the Washington Salmon Recovery Funding Board, and the barrier removal construction was completed in September 2016.



Headgate Dam after project completion, which allowed Asotin Creek to be free flowing.

#### Resource challenge

Headgate Dam, owned by Asotin County, was identified as a partial fish passage barrier and considered an imminent threat to ESA-listed juvenile chinook, steelhead, and bull trout. Previous attempts to improve fish passage, including a fish ladder, were not successful and abandoned. Headgate Dam has historic and cultural significance to Asotin County. Until the 1960s, the dam

**Key Partners:** Asotin County; Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board; Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife; Bonneville Power Administration; Snake River Salmon Recovery Board

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Finish Geomorphic Assessment and Conceptual Restoration Plan for Asotin County Streams to assist with project prioritization in the future.
- ▶ Assist landowners in Rattlesnake Creek watershed with natural resource concerns due to the flood in April 2017.
- ▶ Finalize the Asotin County Voluntary Stewardship Plan for adoption by the Washington State Conservation Commission, and start the implementation phase of the process.



# 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:



BCD applies science to natural resource concerns, such as this innovative pneumatic tube for fish passage at our Salmon Summit. Photo by Rachel Little



BCD provides free drinking water well testing for nitrates, which are colorless and odorless, yet can render water unsafe to drink. Photo by Rachel Little



SCC Natural Resource Investment funds allowed for the conversion of 23 acres of flood irrigated pasture to pod lines. Photo by Heather Wendt

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### CONSERVATION INNOVATION PROTECTS TRADITIONS



New wheat harvester leaves stalk standing as a windbreak, which stops erosion, traps moisture, and provides cover for wildlife. Photo by Rachel Little

#### Resource challenge

Brothers Garrett and Devin Moon wanted to continue the family tradition of wheat farming. Local soil is rich, but desert conditions without irrigation make fields vulnerable to wind erosion. This erosion leads to a type of air pollution when so many soil particles from acres of fields become airborne. The prevailing winds carry dust from the wheat fields directly to the most heavily populated areas of the county, often crossing roads and causing car accidents from reduced visibility.

#### Project summary and results

Benton Conservation District (BCD) provided financial assistance to Moon Farm to demonstrate novel harvesting equipment. The new harvester cuts only the valuable seed head, so the wheat stalks remain standing. These standing stalks become windbreaks, greatly reducing erosion and trapping snow, which improves soil moisture. Designed to resolve a resource issue, this practice also enhances public safety by protecting roadway visibility.



Wind blows soil and snow off traditional fields, across State Route 221, but not from stripper header field (brown background). Photo by Rachel Little

Devin explains “There’s a whole laundry list of benefits from using equipment like this, from less erosion issues, less fuel, [to] benefiting wildlife. Yeah, it’s a win-win all the way around.”

**Key partners:** Moon Farms; Benton Clean Air Agency

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Continue development of groundwater characterization project, and work with stakeholder group to develop recommendations.
- ▶ Begin implementation of Benton County Voluntary Stewardship Program work plan.
- ▶ Begin “Lower Yakima Water Quality, Nutrient, and Aquatic Vegetation Dynamics” project (funded by Department of Ecology) as soon as funding linked to capital budget is released.



# 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:



Parkside Community Garden built by Women’s Resource Center residents, with Lowe’s volunteers and donated materials.



Annual “Kids in the Creek” outdoor education program.



Tire cleanup on Chumstick Creek near Leavenworth.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT FIRE AND FLOOD

### Resource challenge

Wildfire — it’s the most frightening threat to life and property in our region. Even after the flames are out, the steep burned slopes are prone to sudden, severe flooding for many years.

A fall 2016 storm triggered a post-fire slide on Lake Chelan’s south shore that sent over 600 cubic yards of mud and rocks down a driveway. One home was completely surrounded with up to four feet of debris that took 52 dump truck loads to remove. Even worse, every storm is another threat for a repeat event.

### Project summary and results

With funding from the SCC Fire Recovery Program, three landowners worked with the Cascadia Conservation District and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to design and implement a trench and berm project to protect homes and an access road from flood events, and to direct and control the debris flow above the shoreline.



Digging a protective debris diversion while the archaeologist watches for historic artifacts that may need to be documented.

Landowner Tim Bean wrote, “Today our properties are better protected from a potential future event...Words cannot express how thankful we are.”

Through forest stewardship technical assistance, cost-share, fire planning, plant lists, Firewise assessments, and community events, Cascadia Conservation District continues to help local residents with their wildfire management needs.

**Key partners:** Private landowners of Chelan County; Washington State Conservation Commission; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Assist irrigation water users with conservation and system upgrade projects.
- ▶ Develop urban conservation and community garden programs; continue education and outreach.
- ▶ Continue watershed planning/coordination and project development for water quality/quantity and habitat.



## 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](mailto:cdoffice@ckcd.org) | [www.ckcd.org](http://www.ckcd.org)  
Legislative District: 14 Congressional District: 3

### Other accomplishments:

- ▶ Installed 600 feet of exclusion fence to protect a water catchment drain constructed to divert clean water away from a winter feed lot so it flows directly into Swale Creek.
- ▶ Installed 2,500 feet of exclusion fence to protect 1,500 feet of the Little Klickitat River that provides critical habitat to ESA-listed steelhead. 86,000 square feet of streambank habitat was planted with native shrubs and trees to enhance water quality.
- ▶ Hosted the CKCD Annual Meeting that drew 42 attendees and provided local producers with information on farm worker safety, biotechnology in agriculture, farmland preservation and succession planning, and much more. Producers with pesticide application licenses earned four continuing education credits, and funds were raised through a silent auction for a greenhouse that CKCD is working on with the local middle school.

### 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH TO INCREASE WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS

### Resource challenge

Through active fire suppression over the last 100 years, our public and private forests have developed into densely overgrown stands that compete for limited resources. This results in widespread disease, drought stress, beetle infestations, and catastrophic fires. As more people move into the wildland urban interface (WUI), more families live with the threat of wildfire. Many landowners moving to the Goldendale area are unaware of fire danger on their own property.

### Project summary and results

The Firewise Program was created to educate landowners living in the WUI. Central Klickitat Conservation District (CKCD) has been involved with Firewise over the years when funding is available. This year, the district partnered with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and received funds from the Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) to promote Firewise. CKCD assisted the DNR in developing two Firewise communities — High Prairie and Keystone Acres. Forty-two people attended two workshops held by the district in conjunction with DNR. Staff completed 32 individual Firewise assessments. And, 22 people participated in a CKCD-sponsored mobile chipping program that treated 59 acres for wildfire fuels reduction.

**Key partners:** Washington DNR; SCC; Klickitat County residents



Left: Ladder fuels (e.g. tree branches that allow fire to travel vertically) and brush adjacent to a home that increased risk of wildfire damage. Right: Same site after fuels were removed to create a fire resistant buffer.

### MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Continue to assist in developing Firewise communities.
- ▶ Continue to offer technical assistance to develop and implement livestock and water quality improvement projects.
- ▶ Assist landowners interested in the mobile chipping program and cost-share to implement fuels reduction around their homes.



# 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:



Assisted Sequim High School with installation of a roof water collection demonstration project.



Hosted farm tour showcasing an innovative feeding slab in a horse boarding facility.



Replaced over three miles of irrigation ditch with pipelines, saving approximately three cubic feet of Dungeness River water per second.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### RESTORING DEGRADED RIPARIAN AREAS, ONE ACRE AT A TIME

#### Resource challenge

Lack of adequate riparian (streamside) vegetation, excessive sediment in waterways, and degraded water quality are all limiting factors in the recovery of endangered salmon. Clallam Conservation District uses the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) as a tool to assist landowners and organizations in establishing vegetated buffers along agricultural riparian areas. Installing buffers helps lower water temperature, reduce sediment, and provide a source of long-term woody debris.



Washington Conservation Corps crew planting a CREP project.



A 3.45 acre vegetated CREP buffer installed along Nelson Creek on the North Olympic Land Trust's Lyre Conservation Area.

#### Project summary and results

CREP successfully has assisted landowners with implementing conservation plans and has strengthened partnerships with organizations and tribes. A recent partnership between the district and the North Olympic Land Trust used CREP to help restore 13 acres of river and wetland buffer on two of the Land Trust's properties. To date, Clallam Conservation District has assisted with 29 CREP projects, totaling 116 acres of vegetated buffer along 8.9

miles of waterways. Already for 2018, the district has over 21 acres of vegetated buffers along 1.15 miles of salmon-bearing streams, wetland, and ditches slated for planting.

**Key partners:** Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe; Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe; North Olympic Land Trust; North Olympic Salmon Coalition; Washington Conservation Corps; Washington State Conservation Commission; USDA Farm Service Agency

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Implement pollution identification and correction project in the Matriotti and Lotzgesell Creek Watersheds.
- ▶ Assist dairies with implementation of conservation practices funded through the Dungeness Regional Conservation Partnership Program.
- ▶ Complete design work for irrigation ditch piping to be initiated in fall of 2018.



# CLARK CONSERVATION DISTRICT

District Manager: Denise Smee 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:



Assisted a cattle operation with a manure storage and composting facility and heavy use area to reduce water pollution.



Helped local schools install rain gardens and native plants.



Installed riparian plantings along the East Fork Lewis River.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

# SUPPORT FOR URBAN FARMERS AND LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTION



A Clark County farmer and Salmon-Safe representative talk about urban farming practices.

## 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, non-traditional 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 Salmon-Safe are promoted with the Salmon-Safe label and can gain competitive advantage in the marketplace. The district also developed the Clark Food and Farm Network, which provides technical assistance and support for urban agriculture; fosters community engagement with farmers, organizations, and citizens interested in conservation; and promotes access to local food.



Clark Food and Farm Network display banner.

**Key partners:** Washington State Conservation Commission; National Association of Conservation Districts; Clark County Clean Water Restoration Fund; Salmon-Safe; Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Secure a long term, stable funding source.
- ▶ 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: David Carlton  
202 South 2nd Street Dayton, WA 99328  
(509) 382-4273 | tb-ccd@daytonwa.net  
Legislative District: 16 Congressional District: 5

## Other accomplishments:



Installed splitting log structure in Tucannon River side channel for juvenile rearing habitat. Photo by Kris Below



Walla Walla Community College Watershed Ecology Program volunteers planted riparian area of previously installed project sites. Photo by Justin Pearson



Installed 50 structures for in-stream and floodplain habitat as part of Little Tucannon Post Assisted Log Structure project. Photo by Justin Pearson

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### MANAGING ACIDIC SOIL FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE



Producers harvested treated and untreated plots of equal area for comparable data. Photo by Terry Bruegman

#### Resource challenge

Soil health is a major concern for production agriculture. Soils with high acidity and low pH can be detrimental to crops. In Columbia County, producers noticed increased acidity levels in the upper 12” of the soil profile. In 2013, Columbia Conservation District began research with WSU Extension that included annual intense soil sampling on 76 production and native (control) sites in 2013.

Results indicated severe stratified soil acidity layers — 90 percent of fields had less than 5.2 pH in the top 6” of the soil profile. The district applied lime (CaCO<sub>3</sub>) at variable rates (600/1200/2400 pounds per acre) in 2015.

#### Project summary and results

In 2016, producers harvested lime-treated plots along with an adjacent untreated control plot of equal area. Harvest samples from plots that received applications of lime showed mostly positive results, with average yield increases of 3.4 bushels per acre for wheat and 96 pounds per acre for peas. Soil acidity showed significant improvement on most plots. Tests indicated some micronutrients were low. Overall, the results indicate steps in the right direction, and continued work is needed to address soil acidity and pH balance. The addition of micronutrients also should be considered to achieve healthy, balanced soil improvement.



Data was obtained from each harvested area using an in-field weigh wagon. Photo by Terry Bruegman

**Key partners:** Washington State Conservation Commission; landowners/cooperators; WSU Columbia County Extension; Columbia County Ag Improvement; Columbia Wheat Growers Association

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Re-enroll expiring Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program sites to maintain environmental gains.
- ▶ Provide technical support to Columbia County Voluntary Stewardship Program plan development and implementation.
- ▶ Implement Tucannon River salmon habitat recovery projects.
- ▶ Pursue cost-share support to minimize livestock impacts.
- ▶ Pursue funding to develop the Touchet River Conceptual Design Plan for ESA-listed salmon habitat recovery.



# COWLITZ CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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

## Other accomplishments:

- ▶ Completed the Coweeman River Community Watershed knotweed treatment and riparian restoration project.
- ▶ Surveyed and designed two salmon recovery projects slated for implementation during the 2017 hydraulic window.
- ▶ Continued working on a proposal to address mitigation opportunities within Cowlitz County.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### COWEEMAN RIVER COMMUNITY WATERSHED PROJECTS



Legislative tour - the gravel bar in foreground is part of the sediment accumulated.

as a source of warming water temperature. Anchoring large in-stream wood to bedrock helps address these resource concerns, but it's challenging to do this while managing stream forces in this part of the watershed.

#### Resource challenge

Cowlitz Conservation District completed two project sites to improve gravel collection along bedrock reaches of the Coweeman River. The district has been working with landowners in the watershed to address their resource concerns for about 10 years. Stream temperature is a concern for fisheries and water quality. Monitoring indicated solar radiation on bedrock

#### Project summary and results

Cowlitz Conservation District designed a project to install wood-based structures across the channel to trap gravel. Logs were anchored to the bedrock through use of epoxied anchors and lashing chain.



Sediment accumulation after high fall flows.

The structures began trapping gravel during the first storm event and exceeded the landowners' expectations with each flow event that mobilized sediment. Photo documentation clearly shows the tremendous accumulation of gravel. District staff hope to secure resources that will allow us to resurvey the site and quantify results.

**Key partners:** Landowners; Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board; Washington State Conservation Commission; Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Implement salmon recovery projects in the Abernathy Creek Community Watershed and in 1.5 miles of Delameter Creek in the Arkansas Creek Community Watershed.
- ▶ Implement two salmon recovery projects in the Germany Creek Community Watershed.
- ▶ Continue to develop project opportunities with cooperators.



# EASTERN KLICKITAT CONSERVATION DISTRICT

District Manager: Board Chair: Rhon Raschko  
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:

- ▶ Partnered with the US Department of Agriculture, Department of Ecology, Washington Association of Wheat Growers, and local seed companies for a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Field Day event. The event provided CRP monitoring and maintenance training to agency staff and 20 farmers with CRP contracts.
- ▶ Identified potential restoration sites and recommended best management practices to improve water quality and salmonid habitat in the Rock Creek Watershed (WRIA 31).
- ▶ Hosted a native plant sale and provided residents with an affordable source of native plants, which are not readily available from local retail nurseries.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### COLLABORATING FOR CONSERVATION



View of the Simcoe Mountains Conservation Area

#### Resource challenge

When a large forest property went up for sale in the Simcoe Mountains, there was potential that the results of long-term conservation practiced on the property could be at risk.

Generations of sustainable livestock grazing and timber harvest in the Simcoe Mountains has resulted in

healthy forestland. These forests are resistant to wildfires and beetle infestations that impact Klickitat County. They also provide habitat for wildlife and fish.

Natural resource and working lands management is part of Klickitat County's heritage. It's highly valued by residents and a critical component of the local economy. With the land up for sale, a new management solution was needed.

#### Project summary and results

The seller reached out to Eastern Klickitat Conservation District (EKCD) for help in achieving that goal. The district partnered with the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW), who is purchasing the property in phases, to co-manage the property and author a property management plan through a Coordinated Resource Management (CRM) process. EKCD is facilitating the process, which includes incorporating input from local citizens who are intimately familiar with the property and invested in seeing that it's well cared for. This ensures that WDFW has the information needed to manage the property in a way that meets the needs of both the natural resources and the local citizens.

**Key partners:** Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife; Central Klickitat Conservation District; Klickitat County; Yakama Nation; local ranchers; Klickitat County residents

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Continue negotiating three conservation easement proposals that could protect 18,000 acres of range, forestland, and riparian areas with prime wildlife and fish habitat. These lands include white oak communities that provide critical habitat.
- ▶ Continue water quality monitoring at two permanent stream gauge stations using Washington State Conservation Commission funding and EKCD reserves. A new Centennial Clean Water grant from the Department of Ecology will permit additional monitoring at 18 seasonal stations.



# 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](mailto:candy.lammon@conservewa.net) | [www.ferrycd.org](http://www.ferrycd.org)  
Legislative District: 7 Congressional District: 5

## Other accomplishments:



A small stretch of the five miles of fence rebuilt after 2015 Stickpin Wildfire.



Liz Carr, our Water Quality Specialist, teaches fourth graders about wildlife habitat at the Lake Roosevelt Festival.



A fall 2016 riparian restoration project after the spring 2017 floods.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### RIPARIAN RESTORATION ON SANPOIL RIVER TRIBUTARIES



The road bed has become the stream bed. This results in high temperatures, low dissolved oxygen, and siltation.

#### Resource challenge

The Sanpoil River runs the entire length of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (CTCR). Water quality monitoring by staff from Tribal Environmental Trust identified excessively high water temperatures, low levels of dissolved oxygen, and excessive turbidity in the main stem of the river. Environmental Trust technical staff identified old logging roads that were poorly-located and poorly constructed as one source of these concerns.

#### Project summary and results

Ferry Conservation District provided funding that allowed the CTCR Environmental Trust to complete work that benefits water quality in the Sanpoil Watershed and, by extension, the Columbia River. With Conservation District assistance, the CTCR Environmental Trust decommissioned 6.4 miles of worn-out forest roads and restored 15.6 acres of riparian habitat. Once all roads were decommissioned, work began to plant new riparian buffers in compliance with tribal forestry regulations. Expected results of this project include lower water temperatures, higher dissolved oxygen levels, and lower sediment levels in the river. This project is part of a 10-year watershed restoration plan and is a great example of cooperation between stakeholders to achieve a shared goal.



Water is put back into its original bed, and the old road is reclaimed as a riparian buffer.

**Key partners:** CTCR Environmental Trust Department; Washington State Department of Ecology; Washington State Conservation Commission

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Continue Firewise program elements, despite the lack of funding for this work.
- ▶ Help residents who incurred flood losses in Spring 2017.
- ▶ Continue our partnership with Curlew and Republic School Districts to build a model farm as a base for an enhanced vocational agriculture program.



# 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:



FCCD led a group of curious folks into the beautiful Moses Coulee to check out the plants and share local knowledge.



Department of Ecology Director Maia Bellon and Pacific Northwest Direct Seed Association President Douglas Poole sign a Farmed Smart Certification memorandum of understanding.



Newly planted native riparian shrubs.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### EXPANDING DIRECT SEED PROGRAM IN DOUGLAS COUNTY

#### Resource challenge

Over the past century, agricultural practices have impacted Douglas County's limited surface water resources. The economy of this low-rainfall area is dependent on dryland cereal grains, such as wheat and canola. Many producers use multi-pass conventional tillage practices to cultivate their land. This disturbs the soil and leads to extensive water and wind erosion. Eroded materials end up in the ephemeral waterways, streams, and rivers of Douglas County.



Including peas in a crop rotation can help to reduce input costs of nitrogen and energy, decrease weed pressure, and provide benefit to overall soil health.



Wheat almost ready for harvest in the Dyer Hill area of Douglas County.

#### Project summary and results

With funding from two Department of Ecology grants, Foster Creek Conservation District (FCCD) developed a cost-share program that assists producers with the transition from conventional tillage to direct seeding. Direct seeding technology reduces the number of field passes, limits soil disturbance, and retains residue from previous crops. It also provides multiple benefits to soil health by increasing organic material and improving soil structure and water infiltration rates. All these features combine to help significantly reduce soil erosion. FCCD hopes to continue this program, which currently has 21 participants who have transitioned 5,917 acres from conventional tillage to direct seed.

**Key partners:** Private landowners and operators in Douglas, Grant, Lincoln, and Okanogan Counties; Washington Department of Ecology; Washington State Conservation Commission

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Increase the number of participants and acres in the Direct Seed program to help reduce soil erosion and promote soil health.
- ▶ Maintain ongoing water monitoring and riparian enhancement projects.
- ▶ Complete the Voluntary Stewardship Program work plan to facilitate protection and enhancement of critical areas, while maintaining the viability of agriculture within the county.



# FRANKLIN CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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

## Other accomplishments:



Wheat Week education program broke records last school year reaching 26,063 students and 1,094 teachers in 327 weeks. Photo by Kara Kaelber



The Heritage Garden Program continues to grow, one garden at a time, saving water and reducing pesticide and nutrient inputs. Photo by Heather Wendt



The Franklin County Water Conservancy Board, with technical assistance from the Franklin Conservation District, processed its 100th Water Right Change/Transfer.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### SECURING NATURAL RESOURCES THROUGH FIRE RECOVERY



The Kahlotus and Palouse Falls Fires in August 2016 decimated fences and farming infrastructure. Photo credit: Erin Hightower

#### Resource challenge

In August 2016, two fires — the Palouse Falls Fire and Kahlotus Fire — ripped through the coulees and rangeland in northeastern Franklin County, burning over 26,000 acres. The fires destroyed native vegetation and laid waste to the fences, watering facilities, and farm infrastructure needed to support historic cattle grazing operations in the area. Loss of infrastructure also left vital natural resources at risk to wind and water erosion.

#### Project summary and results

After assessing affected areas and infrastructure, the Franklin Conservation District applied for funding from the Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) Fire Recovery and Natural Resource Investments programs to re-build fences that were destroyed. The district assisted landowners with the cultural resource review process and provided oversight during construction.



Cost-share from the SCC allowed producers to re-build infrastructure and protect natural resources. Photo credit: Heather Wendt

This project allowed the district to assist three landowners with the installation of almost 24 miles of fencing. The fences will prevent livestock from accessing surface water and promote rotational grazing.

**Key partners:** Harder Farms; James D. Moore Farms; Dick and Melette Moore; Pearson Farm and Fence; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Cascadia Conservation District; Washington State Conservation Commission

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Begin implementation of Franklin County Voluntary Stewardship Program work plan.
- ▶ Conduct final evaluation of Deep Furrow Conservation Drill prototypes.
- ▶ Oversee the implementation of 20 irrigation water management contracts in partnership with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.



# 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 | columbiabasinncds.org  
Legislative District: 9, 12, 13 Congressional District: 4

## Other accomplishments:



Dairy waste storage pond at large dairy. Lined structure will prevent contamination to nearby creek and residential wells. Photo by Lyle Stoltman



Berming and runoff containment at custom feedlot to protect large fresh water pond from contaminated runoff near Othello. Photo by Lyle Stoltman



Trout release with students from area schools. Trout were raised from eggs and released providing students with field experience. Photo by Lyle Stoltman

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### SOAP LAKE CITY PARK RESTORATION



Neighbors didn't like the renovation plan at first, but an arborist said the trees were dying and should be replaced. Photo by Lyle Stoltman

#### Resource challenge

The Soap Lake Recreation Committee approached the Grant County Conservation District (GCCD) with the hope of renovating an important stand of trees in the City's oldest park. Providing wildlife habitat, efficient irrigation, natural weed suppression, planting pollinator plants, and using compost were all components of the renovation plan. The district was eager to partner with the group because of their commitment to resource management, coupled with extensive volunteer participation and impressive community involvement.

#### Project summary and results

After meeting with the volunteer group on-site and reviewing the plans, the GCCD put together cost estimates and material lists for plan implementation. Native trees and pollinator species were carefully selected, as were the components of the trickle irrigation system. Weed control during establishment was accomplished by applying a thick, dense layer of recycled mulch from chipped trees. Trees were planted using volunteer labor, and today all of the plants have survived. None of the trees have been lost due to adverse conditions or pest damage. Monitoring is an important aspect and is ongoing.



Healthy trees were planted using volunteer labor. Trickle irrigation was installed and mulch applied for weed control. Photo credit: Lyle Stoltman

**Key partners:** Soap Lake Recreational Committee; City of Soap Lake

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Prepare nutrient plans and updates for dairy and livestock producers, and offer services, technical assistance, and cost-share to farmers and residents in Grant County.
- ▶ Develop strategies for implementing rates and charges funding sources that is transparent and cost-effective.
- ▶ Continue educational programs in schools that improve soil health while reducing degradation of soil, water, and air resources.



# 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:



GHCD Service Forester wrote 12 forest management plans and the Chehalis Basin Watershed Landscape Master Forest Stewardship Plan. Photo by Dave Houk



GHCD implemented six projects, and also provided technical assistance for 18 farm producers and 25 forest producers. Photo by Megan Martin-Aust



Kim Smith, GHCD watershed planner, talks to local students about the importance of stream health.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### SATSOP RESTORATION BEGINNINGS

#### Resource challenge

This project addressed two fish passage barriers in the West Fork Satsop River system that blocked access to over nine miles of upstream habitat for at-risk fish species. Undersized culverts had created outfall drops and high velocity that restricted passage by salmon. Correcting fish barriers is an important objective in the Grays Harbor Conservation District (GHCD) five-year plan. The Satsop River system is a high priority watershed within the Chehalis Basin. The project benefits chinook and coho salmon, steelhead, and cutthroat and bull trout.

#### Project summary and results

GHCD partnered with Weyerhaeuser to complete the West Fork Satsop project. We secured funds from the Washington Coast Restoration Initiative, and Weyerhaeuser provided matching funds. Working with Weyerhaeuser, GHCD was able to remove two fish barrier culverts and replace them with a bridge and an arch culvert. Weyerhaeuser provided engineering and construction oversight, while GHCD provided technical assistance and grant management. Our partnership with Weyerhaeuser allowed them to complete this fish work ahead of schedule.

The new crossings allow for unimpeded fish passage upstream and downstream, as well as natural transport of gravel and wood.

**Key partners:** Weyerhaeuser Corporation; Salmon Recovery Funding Board; Washington Coast Restoration Initiative



Top: Middle Fork Satsop before project implementation with culvert that restricted fish passage. Bottom: Site after bridge installed allowing for fish passage.

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Complete the Church Road Family Forest Fish Passage Program and the Hoquiam Tidal restoration projects.
- ▶ Construct three farm pads in the lower Chehalis River Basin to protect farm equipment and livestock from floods.
- ▶ Implement the Grays Harbor Voluntary Stewardship Program work plan.



# JEFFERSON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

District Manager: Al Cairns Board Chair: Glen Huntingford  
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:



State Conservation Commission (SCC) cost-share funds helped a cattle farmer install fencing, a livestock crossing, and in-stream fish habitat.



SCC cost-share funds helped a farmer install off-channel drinking troughs fed by development of a spring to protect water quality.



SCC cost-share funds helped a horse owner install fence, heavy use areas, and rain gardens to protect water quality for shellfish.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### LIVING WITH BEAVER ON AGRICULTURAL LANDS



Conservation district staff install a fence and pipe flow device to address flooding from a beaver dam while leaving the dam in place.

#### Resource challenge

In the early 1900s, the local beaver population declined in the Chimacum Watershed due to habitat loss from stream channelization. Around 2000, Washington passed a law banning body-gripping traps, and beaver pelt prices dropped.

Likely a result of these factors, local beaver populations have grown over the past decade. Beaver activity in reaches of

Chimacum Creek that flow through farmland have caused flooding that has killed streamside trees and reduced acreage of productive farmland.

#### Project summary and results

Jefferson County Conservation District partnered with local conservation organizations to develop and share strategies for addressing beaver issues on farmland and living “with” beaver. The project resulted in a beaver management plan, a workshop attended by 40 local land managers, and a volunteer program to assist with monitoring. The workshop taught land managers how to identify undesirable beaver impacts, potential strategies to address impacts, and about available assistance in Jefferson County. The project has started a conversation around collaborative beaver management in the community. It is all about building bridges, not dams.



Beaver activity along a streamside planting. Beaver rely on woody vegetation along streams for food and habitat.

**Key partners:** North Olympic Salmon Coalition; Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife; WSU Jefferson County Extension; Jefferson Land Trust

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Assist Jefferson County in developing a Critical Areas Ordinance Update as it relates to agriculture that focuses on adaptive management and voluntary stewardship.
- ▶ With local conservation partners, coordinate priority watershed-scale restoration and protection projects on farm and forest lands.
- ▶ Develop an On-site Septic System Repair Cost-Share Program to assist more landowners with natural resource protection.



# KING CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Executive Director: Bea Covington Board Chair: Dick Ryon  
 1107 SW Grady Way, Suite 130 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:



Partnering with the City of Redmond to improve the health of forested natural areas in housing developments. Photo by Michael Sladek



Contracting with the cities of Newcastle and Renton to deliver water quality and watershed education to over 400 students. Photo by Kristen Reichardt



Continuing to partner with King County Flood Control District to improve drainage and bring more acres into food production. Photo by Mark Musick

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

# BUILDING COMMUNITY AROUND CONSERVATION AND FOOD ACCESS

## Resource challenge

Many of King County’s newest residents are immigrants and refugees from far away, often war-torn countries. Many of these community members have no direct access to the foods they traditionally have grown and eaten. We’re challenged to find opportunities for dense, urban food production in ways that enhance our neighborhoods, expand natural resource conservation in our cities, and connect people with each other and the natural world.



Turner Construction donated staff and equipment to de-pave nearly an acre to turn into food production. Photo by Melissa Tatro

## Project summary and results

Hillside Church is located in the heart of Kent — King County’s third largest city and the 10th most diverse in the country. The church donated one acre of their parking lot for King Conservation District to de-pave and turn into a community garden. The garden is open to the public and helps provide food security and micro-enterprise opportunities to over 1,000 immigrants and refugees settled by World Relief within one mile of the church. A planting party brought over 90 supporters out to plant, socialize, and hear testimonials from future Hillside gardeners. This demonstrates what can happen when a community builds a vision together.



A community Planting Party brought over 90 people out to plant, socialize, and hear testimonials from future gardeners. Photo by Ash Knepper Photography

**Key partners:** World Relief; Hillside Church; Construction 4 Change; Home Depot; City of Kent; Turner Construction; Living Well Kent; King County Councilmember Dave Uptegrove; The Nature Conservancy; 30/30 Project; Kent faith community

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Embark on rigorous Theory of Change analysis to understand and improve the outcomes of King Conservation District’s programs and services.
- ▶ Expand urban agricultural, forestry, and shoreline work to additional municipal and private sector partners.
- ▶ Begin work on four working lands initiatives to: Expand availability of Firewise; initiate a discovery farms pilot project; begin building an agriculture strategic plan, and; address agricultural drainage.



# 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](mailto:kcd@kitsapcd.org) | [www.kitsapcd.org](http://www.kitsapcd.org)  
Legislative District: 23, 26, 35 Congressional District: 6

## Other accomplishments:



Cisterns have become popular for suburban landowners as part of the Low Impact Development (LID) program.



Kitsap Conservation District maintains a rain garden demonstration site at their office.



'Fish Out' at Kitsap Conservation District stream restoration project.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

# COST-SHARE PROGRAM IS WIN-WIN FOR FARMERS AND SHELLFISH



BMPs include large waste storage structures that reduce nutrient runoff.

## Resource challenge

Constructing best management practices (BMPs) that protect water quality can be a challenge for some small farm operators. Often close to suburban areas, streams, and shorelines, many Kitsap County farmers need financial and technical assistance to build BMPs that meet local and state regulations.

## Project summary and results

With careful planning by Kitsap Conservation District, designs and farm plans were made to assist farmers. The district coordinated funding from grants, Kitsap County's Clean Water Kitsap program, and the Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) Livestock Technical Assistance fund to pay for technical expertise leading up to the construction of BMPs. Major assistance for project construction came from the SCC Shellfish Program, which provided Kitsap Conservation District and farmers the ability to build 87 BMPs by awarding \$826,437 in cost-share assistance.



Farmers tour Kitsap Conservation District office to see demonstration of stormwater infiltration.

This amazing effort by all will protect creeks and shorelines from farming pollution for many years to come.

**Key partners:** Washington State Conservation Commission; Clean Water Kitsap

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Reach out to urban agriculture with a grant from National Association of Conservation Districts. The GRACE project (Gardening for Restoration and Conservation Education) trains new small farm operators in gardening skills and provides opportunities for restorative justice for criminal offenders.
- ▶ Expand effort in the Backyard Habitat Program for stream restoration.
- ▶ Expand conservation district general capacity.



# 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:



The 16th annual elementary Agriculture Appreciation Day involved over 400 third graders and their parents from around the county.



Kittitas County Fire Districts operated a roving chipper that assisted 20 communities and 200 landowners with fuels reduction.



A gravity irrigation diversion was converted to a pump station with fish screen. The passage barrier was removed on Naneum Creek.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### MANASTASH CREEK RESTORATION: REED DIVERSION DAM REMOVAL



Reed Diversion dam in Manastash Creek created a significant fish passage barrier into more than 20 miles of habitat.

#### Resource challenge

The Manastash Creek Restoration Project began over 15 years ago to address fish passage for mid-Columbia summer steelhead, a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. Access to more than 25 miles of Manastash Creek was blocked by gravity irrigation diversion dams and lack of instream flow. Over several years irrigation diversions were rebuilt with fish screens and fish passage structures until just one barrier remained — the Reed Diversion dam.

#### Project summary and results

Over the last decade, work by the Kittitas County Conservation District and countless partners has resulted in the construction of new irrigation water diversion facilities designed with proper screens to prevent fish from entering the irrigation ditches and incorporating fish passage structures. In 2014, pipelines were constructed to allow the water diverted at the Reed Diversion dam to be diverted at one of the new facilities. This meant the Reed Diversion dam was no longer needed and could be removed, fully restoring passage into Manastash Creek. The project to remove it was completed in December 2016.



Manastash Creek after removal of the Reed Diversion dam. In early 2017, adult steelhead were detected above the site.

**Key partners:** Washington Department of Ecology; Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife; US Fish and Wildlife Service; Kittitas Reclamation District; Yakama Nation; Yakima Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Plan Working Group

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Complete the Voluntary Stewardship Program work plan for priority Kittitas County watersheds.
- ▶ Implement the Regional Conservation Partnership Program project beginning with a producer sign-up for on-farm cost-share for drought/water efficiencies, water quality, and fish habit improvements.
- ▶ Complete an update of the county-wide Fire Protection Plan, in cooperation with the Kittitas Fire-Adapted Communities Coalition.



# LEWIS COUNTY 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 | lewiscountycd.wordpress.com  
Legislative District: 19, 20 Congressional District: 3

## Other accomplishments:



Fronia Creek – before (top) and after (bottom) fish barrier was replaced with bridge.



Completed fish passage project on tributary to Independence Creek.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### REMOVING FISH BARRIERS IN CHEHALIS RIVER BASIN

#### Resource challenge

The Lewis County Conservation District began to survey and replace fish-blocking structures (e.g. undersized culverts) in 2000. The Chehalis River Watershed has over 2,000 documented fish passage barriers, which are located on private lands and public roads. Replacing barriers with larger culverts or bridges allows fish of all ages to freely swim up and down stream, but projects can be extremely expensive for landowners.

#### Project summary and results

Using funds from the Washington State Conservation Commission, the Lewis County Conservation District worked with nine landowners and a homeowners' association to apply for and receive grants that covered 11 fish passage projects. These projects opened 75 miles of salmon habitat for spawning and rearing. Funding came from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board, Family Forest Fish Passage Program, and Chehalis River Habitat and Protection dollars. Projects were put out for bid, and four contractors completed all 11 projects between July-September 2016.

**Key partners:** Washington State Conservation Commission; Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife; Washington Recreation and Conservation Office; Washington Department Natural Resources; Salmon Recovery Funding Board; Family Forest Fish Passage Program; Beaver Glen Homeowners' Association; local landowners



Fox-Middle Fork Newaukum – before (top) and after (bottom) fish barrier removal

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Complete more irrigation water management plans, conservation plans, and provide more fish screens to cooperators.
- ▶ Continue to apply for and implement fish passage projects and flood damage relief projects.
- ▶ Continue to work with cooperators on the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and enroll new landowners in this vital program. There currently are 76 CREP contracts in Lewis County, protecting 909 acres along 55 miles of stream.



# 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:



Assisted landowners impacted by 5,000-acre Hart Rd fire — replaced 25-miles of fence, reseeded 225-acres, and rebuilt road. Photo by Lea Shields



Increased defensible space for sage grouse in Swanson Lake area by creating roadside fuel breaks (gaps in vegetation and combustible material).



Partnered with Lincoln County Sheriff Department to provide free blue reflective home address markers. Photo by Elsa Bowen

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### DAVENPORT COMMUNITY GARDEN AND WATER CONSERVATION



Original Davenport Community Garden. Photo by Val Vissia

#### Resource challenge

Water conservation is a challenge in Lincoln County. Over-watering and lack of knowledge about water conservation practices contribute to this issue. Lincoln County residents received handouts about water conservation practices — such as drought-resistant plants and xeriscaping (low-water use landscaping) — with their water bills.

The Lincoln County Conservation

District decided to provide local examples of water conservation practices by rebuilding the Davenport Community Garden as a demonstration site.

#### Project summary and results

Lincoln County Conservation District received an Urban Agriculture Grant from the National Association of Conservation Districts for the garden. The district excavated and rebuilt the garden from the ground up. It now provides an inviting space for the public to gather and learn about water conservation practices and native plants. A paver pathway and ADA-compliant garden boxes make the garden accessible. A garden gazebo serves as a place for educational programs, 4-H demonstrations, agriculture classwork, and demonstrations on “Farm to Table” sustainability.



Garden after renovation. Photo by Dean White

**Key partners:** City of Davenport; Northwest Farm Credit Service; National Association of Conservation Districts; local utilities, contractors, and community volunteers

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Educational programming and outreach for the Davenport Community Garden water conservation project.
- ▶ Well monitoring partnership with Department of Ecology to collect water-level data, create a database for county use, and build a long-term monitoring effort.
- ▶ Channeled Scablands Cooperative Weed Management cost-share partnership.



# 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:



Expanded knotweed control efforts by completing the first year of knotweed treatment in two high priority watersheds.



Owners of a new waste storage structure displaying their sign "Completed in Partnership with Mason Conservation District..."



Removed three road crossings on a salmon-bearing stream in partnership with South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

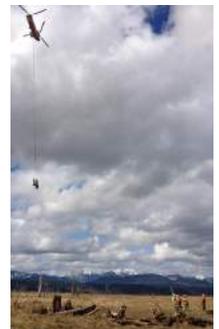
### SKOKOMISH RIVER ESTUARY RESTORATION

#### Resource challenge

Multiple plans identify loss and degradation of estuarine habitat as a key limiting factor in recovering salmon populations. The Skokomish Estuary complex constitutes the single largest contiguous saltmarsh habitat in Hood Canal and is utilized by many salmon populations. Here, estuary and ecosystem processes were altered and degraded by historic practices, including building levees and roads, manipulating flow paths, and installing culverts and tide gates.

#### Project summary and results

In 2007 Mason Conservation District received their first grant to begin restoration of the Skokomish Estuary. In 2017, the district and partners celebrated its completion. This \$8.57 million project restored function to 907 acres of habitat and reduced flooding on the Skokomish Reservation. It involved many elements, including removal of three miles of levee, placement of over 141,000 cubic yards of fill in remnant borrow ditches, restoration of 6.3 miles of tidal channel, removal or modification of 51 fish passage barriers, helicopter placement of 250 pieces of large wood, and planting more than 40 acres.



Helicopter placement of large wood.

**Key partners:** Skokomish Indian Tribe; Tacoma Public Utilities; Mason Co. PUD 1; Skokomish Watershed Action Team; Hood Canal Coordinating Council; Salmon Recovery Funding Board; US Environmental Protection Agency; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Program; Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program; US Fish & Wildlife Service

Before removal of levee that surrounded estuary (2010), and after (2017) showing restored estuarine channel.



## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Fill critical unmet needs by responding to additional landowners waiting to implement water quality best management practices and expanding availability of shoreline landowner technical assistance and education.
- ▶ Continue implementation of species recovery plans and watershed assessments.
- ▶ Implement the Mason County Voluntary Stewardship Program.



# NORTH YAKIMA CONSERVATION DISTRICT

District Manager: Michael Tobin Board Chair: Gail Thornton  
1606 Perry Street, Suite C Yakima, WA 98902  
(509) 454-5736 x5 | mike-tobin@conserve.wa.net | northyakimacd.wordpress.com  
Legislative District: 13, 14, 15 Congressional District: 4

## Other accomplishments:



Began working with Yakima City Irrigation to replace a siphon that causes fish barriers on Cowiche Creek.



Installed Post Assisted Willow Structures (a.k.a., beaver dam analogs) to assist in floodplain connection portion of Nedrow Project.



Washington Conservation Corp crew conducted fuels reduction activities as part of the NYCD's Firewise Program.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### AHTANUM CREEK PROJECT - PARTNERSHIP DELIVERS RESULTS



Typical wood structures used in project to stabilize streambank, create habitat, and allow flood water to access floodplain.

#### Resource challenge

Ahtanum Creek has multiple resource challenges and needs, including ESA-listed fish species, flooding, impacts to homes and infrastructure, erosion, loss of farmland, and limited riparian habitat. Each issue affects several stakeholders in different ways. North Yakima Conservation District (NYCD) coordinated with stakeholders to ensure each understood how they would benefit and respect how others would mutually benefit from a collaborative project to address resource challenges.

#### Project summary and results

Partnership was the key to success for this project. By bringing together landowners, the Yakama Nation, and state and federal partners, the NYCD was able to design and implement a "reach scale" project. The project enhanced over 26 acres of floodplain and constructed 63 wood structures that stabilize eroding streambanks and allow flood flow to access intact floodways. Over 4,700 riparian plants were established and 6,530 feet of riparian exclusion fencing was constructed throughout the 7,200-foot project reach. These efforts have improved in-stream habitat and water quality, averted flood damage on site, and are of value to the landowners' agricultural uses.



Wood structures with plantings and livestock exclusion fencing. Plantings provide stream shade and improve stream function.

**Key partners:** Jack Field; Charles Vetch; Morton Farms; Yakama Nation Fisheries; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Washington Recreation and Conservation Office

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Continue to implement and expand the NYCD's successful Firewise Program to other needed areas.
- ▶ Implement NYCD's Farmland Preservation Program, and partner with the Washington State Conservation Commission's Office of Farmland Preservation.
- ▶ Begin looking at implementation strategies that will complement the Yakima County Voluntary Stewardship Program work plan in high priority watersheds.



# 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:



Soil health cover crops help to conserve soil while protecting limited soil moisture for the cash crop. Photo by Leslie Michel



Chilwist community members discuss evacuation routes and placement of firefighting resources at their annual Firewise meeting. Photo by Kirsten Cook



Attendees discuss fire recovery at the 2016 Coordinated Resource Management executive task force tour in the Methow Valley. Photo by Allisa Carlson

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### FACILITATING WILDFIRE RECOVERY AND RESTORATION

#### Resource challenge

The Carlton Complex fire burned 85 percent of the Benson Creek watershed in July 2014. That August, a 10-year storm event caused a 1000-year flood event. The flood breached two of five dams, deposited thousands of tons of sediment on farms, and destroyed roads, driveways, and irrigation systems. As the sole non-regulatory agency dealing with fire recovery in the area, Okanogan Conservation District helped facilitate landowner and agency meetings and the planning for recovery.



Failed spillway, following 2014 flash flood. Photo by Bob Clark

#### Project summary and results

Okanogan Conservation District staff facilitated meetings between irrigation users, residents, and agency partners. After months of perseverance and negotiation, partners secured the funding and commitments needed to repair the earthen dam, emergency spillway, and irrigation settling pond of the largest reservoir. The conservation district provided nearly \$400,000 in fire recovery funds, matched by over \$150,000 from the Community Foundation of North Central Washington. The project restored irrigation to 160 acres of agricultural land and many acres of residential land. Future projects are planned to improve water quality in Benson Creek.



Spillway finishing touches following dam reconstruction. Photo by Kyle McGovern

**Key partners:** Benson Creek Water Users Association; Washington State Conservation Commission; Community Foundation of North Central Washington; Okanogan County Long Term Recovery Group; Washington Department of Ecology; Farm Service Agency; Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife; Methow Conservancy; and most importantly seven private landowners

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Engage with development and implementation of the Voluntary Stewardship Program.
- ▶ Implement water quality conservation projects in priority areas.
- ▶ Collaborate with cooperators on wildlife habitat conservation programs.



# PACIFIC CONSERVATION DISTRICT

District Manager: Mike Nordin Board Chair: Mark Ashley  
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:



Installed over 1,000 feet of beach nutrient recruitment and habitat protection, which also protects homes.



Naselle River Restoration Phase 2 - Partnering with the Willapa Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group.



Pacific County Voluntary Stewardship Program work plan is approved and ready to roll out!

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### PROTECTING FARMS AND SHELLFISH FROM POLLUTION AND FLOODS



Coastal erosion and risk of drainage failure puts natural resources and communities at risk.

#### Resource challenge

Sixty-three family farms depend on a stormwater drainage system of dikes and tide gates provided by Pacific County Drainage District No. 1. The cranberry industry in the Grayland area farms 816 acres, with an estimated value of \$20-50 million. If the dike and tide gates fail, water would rush from Willapa Bay to Grays Harbor — bringing contaminants from the Grayland Ditch with it — and kill the local cranberry industry.

#### Project summary and results

Pacific Conservation District worked with partners to construct a 650-foot buried retaining wall to defend the dike and tide gates against wave erosion, which seemed inevitable. If left unprotected and the tide gates fail, water could back flow from Willapa Bay, flood the cranberry bogs, and contaminants from the Grayland Ditch would be carried all the way to the Elk River in Grays Harbor. The three constructed retaining wall sections will prevent this and protect vital shellfish beds and the natural environment. Much more work needs to be done, and Pacific Conservation District continues work with partners on solutions.



Retaining wall construction nearly complete. Next steps – finish cover and plant vegetation.

**Key partners:** Pacific County Drainage District No. 1; Shoalwater Bay Tribe; Washington Department of Transportation; Pacific County; Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Complete Rue Creek Washington Coastal Restoration Initiative project, opening nearly 17 square miles of salmon habitat.
- ▶ Complete Naselle Smith Creek project, opening up estuarine acreage and freshwater runs for salmon.
- ▶ Finish treatment of Loomis Lake for aquatic invasive weeds.



## PALOUSE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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

### Other accomplishments:

- ▶ Through the newly established Soil Health Program, landowners and Palouse Conservation District staff are working together to identify region-specific indicators of soil health for the Palouse River Watershed. This will support changes in management that can improve soil health.
- ▶ In cooperation with partners, an extensive paired watershed study has been established to examine water quality improvements associated with voluntary, incentive-based conservation practices installed through the Palouse RCPP.
- ▶ Emergency fire recovery funds were provided to ranchers to implement conservation practices.

### 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

## PALOUSE WATERSHED REGIONAL CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP



District staff and interns work with landowners to plant a restoration site funded by RCPP. Photo by Jerry Prout

issues and provide landowners with multiple funding options to implement conservation practices.

### Project summary and results

Palouse Watershed RCPP partners have leveraged federal, state, and local funds to implement over \$4.8 million in conservation practices. This has enabled landowners to implement 105 acres of streamside vegetation to protect water quality and 21,108 acres of conservation tillage to reduce erosion and improve soil health. Local communities, landowners, and partners are improving soil health, water quality, and habitat in the watershed while preserving prime farmland to ensure the Palouse landscape remains healthy for generations.

**Key partners:** USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Washington State Conservation Commission; Palouse-Rock Lake, Adams, Spokane, Lincoln County, Whitman, and Pine Creek Conservation Districts; Latah Soil and Water Conservation District; Department of Ecology; Palouse Land Trust; PNW Direct Seed Association; Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife; Idaho Department of Fish and Game; Washington State University; University of Idaho; Nez Perce Tribe; Palouse Clearwater Environmental Institute

### Resource challenge

Loss of native wildlife habitat, poor soil health, and water quality degraded by high temperatures, nutrients, and sediments threaten local wildlife and aquatic species in the Palouse watershed and listed anadromous fish species of the Snake River. The Palouse Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) was formed to work across the watershed to more effectively address these



Financial assistance provided to landowners from RCPP supports conservation tillage, cover crops, and precision agriculture. Photo by Stephen Johnson

### MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Connect producers interested in cover crops through a series of cover crop symposiums planned for 2018, 2019, and 2020.
- ▶ Increase awareness of the district's Cultural Resources Program to help partners increase capacity to implement more conservation projects throughout eastern Washington.
- ▶ Expand financial and technical assistance for producers interested in cover crops and precision agriculture.



# PALOUSE-ROCK LAKE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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

## Other accomplishments:



Installed livestock exclusion fencing, off-stream water system, and streamside planting on .7 mile of Imbler Creek through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). Photo by James Schierman



Planted over 25,000 trees and shrubs along 4+ miles of stream through Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Department of Ecology, and RCPP projects in spring 2017. Photo by James Schierman



Used Aquaspy technology to measure differences in soil moisture, temperature, and conductivity of cover crops. Photo by Dan Harwood

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### DIRECT SEED PROGRAM HELPS PROTECT WATER QUALITY

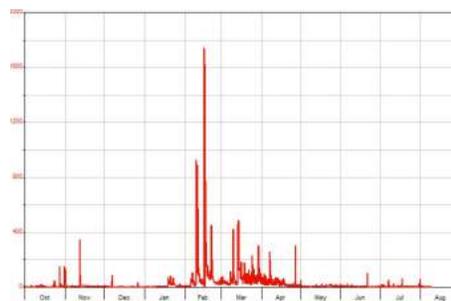
#### Resource challenge

Soils in the Palouse-Rock Lake Conservation District (PRLCD) are silt loam and erode easily in the winter and spring. The erosion flows into water bodies and streams, where it affects fish and aquatic wildlife habitat, water quality, and recreation. Conventional tillage turns up bare soil causing soil loss to occur at much higher rates than direct seed systems. Planting perennial working buffer strips along stream banks can increase soil retention and further reduce sediment.

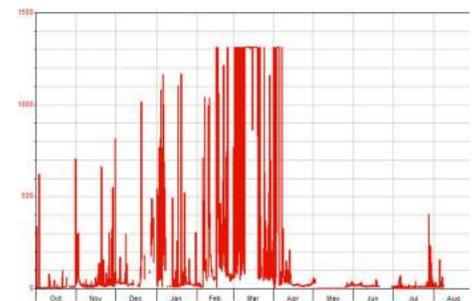
#### Project summary and results

Producers in Kamiak Creek watershed have been converting to direct seed with assistance from a PRLCD cost-share program. Comparing water quality data from Kamiak Creek watershed and nearby Thorn Creek watershed (where mainly convention tillage is used) indicates this makes a difference. Turbidity in Thorn Creek is higher and lasts longer than Kamiak Creek during heavy erosion months. Kamiak Creek also has a mile of working buffer strips of alfalfa that reduce erosion entering the stream. PRLCD and partners continue to review stream data to better understand and share evidence of direct seed impacts on water quality.

**Key partners:** Palouse Conservation District; Pine Creek Conservation District; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Washington State Conservation Commission; Department of Ecology; Kamiak Creek watershed producers



The lack of red on this graph for Kamiak Creek shows noticeably less turbidity or sediment from erosion because the watershed is mostly direct seed acres.



Red on this graph shows higher erosion and sediment in Thorn Creek, where conventional tillage is most common in the watershed.

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Install over one mile of CREP plantings on Lower Downing Creek and Cottonwood Creek.
- ▶ Continue monitoring soil health and ground moisture with Aquaspy technology.
- ▶ Increase current acres of direct seed cropping systems to 70 percent of the cropland acres.
- ▶ Continue to monitor and research water quality in Kamiak and Thorn Creek watersheds.
- ▶ Increase working buffers on stream banks.
- ▶ Document riparian projects with drone imaging.



# 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:



Installed 3,565 native plants throughout the county in an effort to stabilize banks, filter nutrients, and improve habitat.



Combined SCC Natural Resource Investments funding with federal funding to install 2,600 feet of riparian fencing.



Hosted volunteer event to complete annual maintenance at the Verbrugge Environmental Center.

Photos by David Marcell

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### REDUCING WILDFIRE FUELS IN PEND OREILLE COUNTY

#### Resource challenge

Pend Oreille County is heavily forested with 78 percent of land covered in mixed conifer. Overstocked stands are an ever-growing concern as wildfires occur more frequently in Washington. A majority of parcels in Pend Oreille County are small forested acres, which elevates the need to maintain private acreage for the sake of life and property. Pend Oreille Conservation District (POCD) got involved to leverage funds and resources to make individual fuels reduction projects possible.

#### Project summary and results

With Firewise funding secured through the Washington State Conservation Commission, the POCD was able to develop several partnerships that maximized our Firewise efforts. Working with both the Stevens County Conservation District and two of our local fire districts, POCD completed over 130 home ignition zone assessments. In addition to one-on-one landowner fire prevention education, these assessments resulted in four projects that treated 65 acres in our target area and generated dozens more potential fuels reduction projects. With additional funds, much more could be accomplished.

**Key partners:** Stevens County Conservation District; South Pend Oreille Fire & Rescue; Pend Oreille County Fire District 6; Washington State Conservation Commission; WSU Extension



Mossman Acreage: Before (left) and after (right) removal of tree limbs and brush that could have added fuel to wildfires. Photos by Shannon Mossman and David Marcell

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Expand and amend current agreements with our local public utility district.
- ▶ Secure Washington State Department of Ecology water quality funding.
- ▶ Host a natural resource management workshop focused on wildfire fuels reduction and water quality.



# PIERCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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

## Other accomplishments:



Secured two grants to help Harvest Pierce County launch an effort to begin reaching non-English speaking communities.



Received \$8 million for farmland conservation in Pierce County through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program.



Continued to build support from the community with over 2,100 volunteers helping our work last year.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### SAVING ENERGY ON FARMS STATEWIDE



USDA Rural Energy Program managers look over Tahoma Farm's solar installation, a product of a Renewable Energy for America Program (REAP) grant.

#### Resource challenge

Farming or operating a rural business is challenging enough, but the impacts of climate change are making it more difficult. In the past year, Pierce County had both a record wet winter and a record dry summer, forcing farmers to deal with drainage challenges and drought in the same growing season. While we can't control the weather, we can control our impact on it through the practices we employ and, in the process, help farmers reduce their monthly energy bills.

#### Project summary and results

Pierce Conservation District helps address these challenges through our Climate Resiliency Strategic Initiative. We help farmers and rural business owners make their operations more energy efficient and help them install renewable energy to lower their monthly costs. These efforts reduce the carbon footprint of our cooperators and make them more economically viable. The district kicked off this effort through a USDA Renewable Energy Development Assistance grant in the summer of 2016 in partnership with Spark Northwest. In spring 2017, in partnership with the Washington State Conservation Commission and USDA, the district expanded the program statewide.



Participants on an SCC tour see the solar array installed at Early Bird Farm with support from a REAP grant.

**Key partners:** USDA Renewable Energy for America Program; Washington State Conservation Commission; Spark Northwest

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Farmland conservation: Begin implementing our Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant to conserve over 1,000 acres of prime farmland over the next five years.
- ▶ Depave Puget Sound: Through a National Estuary Program grant, conduct two major Depave projects and continue to promote the program regionally.
- ▶ South Prairie Creek Preserve: Plant 37 acres in fall of 2017 to restore prime salmon habitat.



## 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](mailto:pinecreekcd@frontier.com)  
Legislative District: 9 Congressional District: 5

### Other accomplishments:

- ▶ Assisted landowners with direct seeding implementation.
- ▶ Provided conservation planning and GIS mapping for landowners.
- ▶ Participated with other conservation districts in implementing Regional Conservation Partnership Program.
- ▶ Presented riparian development proposals to local landowners.
- ▶ Processed agricultural burn permits for local landowners and farmers.

### 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

## FACILITATING COOPERATIVE PLAN FOR FLOOD CONTROL



Flooding on SR27, with Oakesdale beyond and sewage treatment lagoons immediately to the left of picture.

### Resource challenge

The frequency and magnitude of flooding has been increasing at the junction of McCoy and Spring Creeks at the southeast edge of Oakesdale, Washington. Springtime flooding of the town has impacted businesses, roads, residents' basements, and potentially a state-owned railroad. The town and Representative Mary Dye asked the Pine Creek Conservation District to assist with efforts to alleviate flooding and improve streamside habitat.

### Project summary and results

This project is complicated due to it involving two streams, a state highway, county road, several private landowners, an adjacent town sewage facility, state railroad, and an abandoned private railroad trestle. The conservation district managed to work with all entities involved to develop a mutual, three-phase plan. The district will be most involved with installing upstream practices in the watershed to reduce sediment entering the streams. The district also will work with landowners adjacent to the stream on permits and potentially stream clean out and streamside enhancement.



Two streambanks completely submerged, and state railroad surrounded by water and cutting into rail bed.

**Key partners:** Washington State Conservation Commission; Washington Department of Ecology; Washington Department of Transportation; Whitman County Commissioners; Whitman County Road Department; Town of Oakesdale; Representative Mary Dye; Union Pacific; Palouse River and Coulee City Railroad; Palouse Conservation District

### MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Assist with Oakesdale Flooding and Riparian Enhancement Project.
- ▶ Continue with Direct Seed Project.
- ▶ Improve conservation district efficiency and administrative functions.



# 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:

- ▶ Completing final draft of the Voluntary Stewardship Program planning process and will be submitting the plan by early spring of 2018.
- ▶ Completing a Department of Ecology-funded project to install Beaver Dam Analogs (BDA) and Post-Assisted Log structures (PALS) on the Pataha and Alpowa Creeks. The district has completed the installation of all the monitoring equipment and additional BDA and PALS on Pataha Creek and over 200 PALS on Alpowa Creek.
- ▶ Continuing our effort to provide information and education on the benefits of direct seeding.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### RECOVERY EFFORT FROM AUGUST 2016 SNAKE RIVER FIRE



Typical terrain where fire burned along the rim of the bluffs. Fencing was completely destroyed. Photo by Duane Bartels

#### Resource challenge

The Snake River Fire in August 2016 burned almost 5,000 acres of pasture and some standing wheat in Garfield County. Seven landowners lost approximately eight miles of fence. The terrain of the fire was located on steep rocky slopes. The timing of the available cost-share and the availability of contractors was the main challenge in getting the fence rebuilt.

#### Project summary and results

The Pomeroy Conservation District secured funding from the Washington State Conservation Commission's Fire Recovery Program. We took signups for cost-share from six ranchers and were able to provide funding within the required timeline for three. The district worked with the local USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) to make sure that there was enough funding available from the fire recovery funds, and also the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), which was administered through FSA. The Fire Recovery Program enabled the district to provide \$64,000 to replace and repair 6.4 miles of fence. The ECP program has a later deadline and will provide funding to complete the fence.



Completed fence along Wawawai grade. Photo by Lance Fredrick

**Key partners:** USDA Farm Service Agency; Washington State Conservation Commission

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Complete the Voluntary Stewardship Program work plan for Garfield County by June of 2018.
- ▶ Continue to enroll and re-enroll additional project sites located on eligible streams in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.
- ▶ Continue with a cost-share and education program to assist farmers in converting more acreage to a direct seed practice to reduce soil erosion and improve water quality.



# SAN JUAN ISLANDS CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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

## Other accomplishments:



Biochar burn at the Lopez Island Biochar Workshop. Photo by Linda Lyshall



Shoreline Landowner Workshop field trip at Jackson Beach (San Juan Island) with Coastal Geologic Services. Photo by Samantha Sprenger



The Friday Harbor Electric Vehicle Car Show brought more than 250 people out to share and learn about electric vehicles. Photo by Ryan Palmateer

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### SAN JUAN ISLANDS YOUTH CONSERVATION CORPS



Orcas Island YCC completing trail work at Moran State Park in partnership with Washington Trails Association.

(YCC), providing an avenue for youth to contribute to their community and build a sense of stewardship. We are committed to nurturing the development of strong, creative, and informed young adults.

#### Project summary and results

This year, our crews completed 34 projects on eight islands. They restored habitat, conducted species assessments, and learned about cultural heritage. For many of our crew members, this was a first work experience. We emphasize the development of job skills and life skills necessary for working with a team. Individuals can begin the program as early as middle school and graduate into the high school program. Then, after high school, they can become a crew lead by mentoring the generations succeeding them. Through this program we strive to improve the health of our youth and our environment.

#### Resource challenge

The San Juan Islands Conservation District provided a county-wide structure for nurturing a conservation ethic and awareness for the youth of San Juan County. We provided access to education and employment within the field of natural resource conservation and stewardship through three island-based Youth Conservation Corps



Lopez Island YCC beach seining and conducting near shore species inventory at Watmough Bay.

**Key partners:** Bureau of Land Management; San Juan Island National Parks; San Juan County Land Bank, Parks, and Public Works; San Juan Preservation Trust; Orcas Community Land Trust; Washington State Parks; Washington Trails Assn.

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ No-till Direct Seed Drill Pilot Project is underway! Ten farmers will participate in a pilot project to restore pastures and increase soil health.
- ▶ Promote forest health by providing technical assistance and cost-share to implement forest management practices.
- ▶ Engage shoreline landowners to protect and restore shoreline habitat through technical assistance, workshops, and re-vegetation.



# 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:



Waste storage facility installation.



Celebrating a job well-done at the Firewise Community Preparedness Day.



Students thank bus funding sponsors at the 2017 Skagit Youth Conservation Tour.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### SKAGIT STREAM TEAM - CITIZEN SCIENCE SUCCESS STORY



Stream Team is the outcome of a mission to educate and involve local citizens in the stewardship of local streams.

#### Resource challenge

High levels of fecal coliform bacteria threaten the health of priority rivers and tributaries in Skagit County, putting public health at risk and contributing to closures and downgrades of commercial shellfish harvest. The Skagit Conservation District (SCD) Stream Team Program, established in 1998, has engaged hundreds of local citizens in conducting routine sampling to assess water quality trends, identify hot spots, and document improvements. Volunteer contributions are valued at over \$90,000 annually.

#### Project summary and results

The Stream Team sampling efforts were critical in documenting fecal coliform contamination problems in the Samish Watershed. In support of a request from the state Department of Health, the eleven-member “Storm Team” was born — a group of dedicated volunteers who responded to the local pollution crises by conducting an extensive bacteria storm event monitoring program along the Samish River and its tributaries. Their efforts resulted in the “Clean Samish Initiative,” a partnership of local, state, and federal agencies and organizations who have been working together since 2010 to reduce fecal coliform loadings and restore the health of Samish Bay.



SCD's Stream Team has provided a critical role in protecting local shellfish resources and supporting PIC and TMDL efforts.

**Key partners:** Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve; Skagit County; Washington Department of Health; Washington State Conservation Commission; City of Anacortes; City of Burlington; City of Mount Vernon

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP): Implement the Skagit County VSP to protect critical areas through farm planning, best management practices, the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, and Regional Conservation Partnership Program.
- ▶ Shellfish: Assist Clean Samish partners with strategic actions to improve protection of shellfish resources.
- ▶ Firewise: Identify funding to continue and expand our Firewise program and other actions that better prepare Skagitonians for impacts of climate change to our 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 | staff@snohomishcd.org | www.snohomishcd.org  
Legislative District: 1, 10, 21, 32, 38, 39, 44 Congressional District: 1, 2, 7

## Other accomplishments:



Completed our fourth rain garden-cluster project with six homes in Lynnwood. Volunteers are ready to plant. Photo by Taylor Pesce



Puget Sound Starts at My School projects with K-12 students help divert and filter an estimated 435,767 gallons of stormwater. Photo by Kathryn Wells



Worked with partners to create and plant a new stream channel to prevent salmon stranding and improve habitat on this farm. Photo by Ryan Williams

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### MOGA PROJECT SUPPORTS FISH, WILDLIFE, AND FARMING



The new channel, bottom center, flows into the Snohomish River. Photo by Kari Quaas

#### Resource challenge

The 98-acre Moga Farm is in the floodplain of the Snohomish River, the second largest producer of chinook salmon in Puget Sound. In the 1930s, the farm was diked to protect farmland from flooding, and the river has barely moved in 70 years. The dike and farm access road cut valuable side-channel fish habitat off from the river. The project in this reach was an exciting opportunity to restore off-channel habitat and improve farm access for the landowner.

#### Project summary and results

This story shows how multiple benefits — salmon habitat, flood capacity, and improved access to farmland — can be incorporated into one project in the floodplain of a large river. Three remnant barriers were removed, and channels were excavated to re-engage the river with this habitat. Two 12-foot culverts and large wood were installed, 0.55 mile of relic channel was excavated, and six acres were planted. This restored 0.71 miles of off-channel habitat by re-connecting wetlands in the historic side-channel. The landowner is excited and has better access to fields, prime wildlife viewing, and more flood storage. The Moga project is the largest habitat project to-date for the Snohomish Conservation District.

**Key partners:** State Salmon Recovery Funding Board; Washington State Conservation Commission; Moga family; Cardno; McClung Construction

District habitat specialist Kristin Marshall checks on the new channel with a volunteer. Photo by Kari Quaas



## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Continue to work with agricultural, environmental, and tribal communities, as well as partners, on the development of the Agriculture Resilience Plan, and increase engagement with agriculture producers.
- ▶ Work with partners to expand implementation of the Better Ground brand and website, and increase use of electronic and social media.
- ▶ Continue implementation of the Regional Conservation Partnership Program.



# SOUTH DOUGLAS CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Coordinator: Carol Cowling Board Chair: Eddie Greer  
206 N Chelan Ave, Waterville, WA 98858  
(509) 745-9160 | carol.cowling@gmail.com | www.southdouglascd.org  
Legislative District: 12 Congressional District: 4

## Other accomplishments:



Provided cost-share for fire recovery projects, such as replacing fencing destroyed in 2015 wildfires.



Installed micro-sprinklers in local cherry orchard to increase irrigation efficiency using cost-share dollars.



Installed cattle guard to help control animal movement using cost-share.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### FIREWISE COST-SHARE PROJECT MITIGATES WILDFIRE RISK

#### Resource challenge

A local landowner had an eight-acre forest in East Wenatchee. This unique piece of property provides green space, wildlife habitat, and privacy in a developed residential neighborhood. However, the trees and vegetation were overgrown and presented a potential wildfire hazard.

#### Project summary and results

South Douglas Conservation District assisted the landowner by providing cost-share for projects to reduce the fuel load and improve the health of the plants. Trees were thinned, which allowed sunlight to access the forest floor. Lower tree limbs and dead branches were removed and will reduce wildfire impact should a fire ignite. This work will help protect the landowner's property and the neighborhood.

**Key partners:** Washington State Conservation Commission



Left: Before the Firewise project, overgrown trees and branches on the property presented a potential wildfire risk to the landowner and surrounding neighborhood. Right: After the Firewise project, thinning of trees and branches creates defensible space and reduces wildfire fuels.

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Continue to develop Firewise Program in Douglas County, and increase awareness of fire risks and prevention.
- ▶ Assist landowners with cost-share projects and technical support for rural and urban cooperators.
- ▶ Provide 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, and Wheat Week reached 2,272 students and 115 teachers from six schools. Photo by Rachel Little



Co-hosted a nutrient management workshop that provided producers with tools to improve nutrient management. Photo by Rodney Heit



Completed a 10-year report on the first operating dairy digester in eastern Washington (funded through the WSDA Energy Freedom Program). Photo by Andgar Corporation

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### "RANGE 12" FIRE BURNS THOUSANDS OF RANGELAND ACRES



The "Range 12" fire burned around 176,000 acres of rangeland in Yakima and Benton Counties. Photo by BLM Fire Fighters-InciWeb

#### Resource challenge

The Range 12 fire burned a large area of grazing and rangeland and most of the fencing for one rancher in our area. The South Yakima Conservation District (SYCD) was approached to provide cost-share assistance to repair and replace approximately 172 miles of owned/leased interior and boundary fencing. As a first step, it was extremely important to replace

the northern boundary fence to keep cattle in the grazing area. SYCD received cost-share from the Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) Fire Recovery Program to replace six miles of fence.

#### Project summary and results

Our biggest challenge was to complete this project — from start to finish — by the end of the state fiscal year. Thankfully, the SCC and their governing board quickly approved the project. Staff from our partners at Cascadia Conservation District worked diligently to submit a cultural resources survey for approval by May 2017 so the project could move forward. After receiving additional approval from the Washington DNR, the project began. Working as quickly as possible, we installed 4.5 miles of fencing before the project was stopped due to high temperatures that presented a fire hazard. In the end, the rancher was very thankful with what we completed!



New fencing installed on the northern border of project area. Photo by SYCD

**Key partners:** Landowners; Cascadia Conservation District; Washington State Conservation Commission; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Yakama Nation; Washington DNR

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Implement the Voluntary Stewardship Program work plan to enhance sustainable agriculture while protecting and enhancing critical areas.
- ▶ Continue to provide educational workshops for dairies and local growers on the importance of soil health, nutrient management, and irrigation water management.
- ▶ Provide technical assistance to implement the Groundwater Advisory Plan 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:



Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) in Spokane County: The VSP Work Group meets with landowners to discuss and plan for critical areas.



Completed three fish barrier correction projects this year. Since 2006, 23 projects have opened 106 miles of stream habitat.



Education for adults continues to be successful with the Backyard Conservation Stewardship Program and a new Rain Barrel Program.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### MULTI-PRACTICE APPROACH FOR EFFECTIVE CONSERVATION



In its first year, the commodity buffer program enrolled 92 acres of buffer on 27 miles of stream.

#### Resource challenge

Planting strips of vegetation along streams, called buffers, is one way to protect water quality in agricultural areas. Wide buffers often are thought to be better. But, this decreases producers' productive ground and profits and ignores contributing upland practices. The Spokane Conservation District (SCD) is promoting a combination of practices that address upland tillage and variable-width buffers along streams. Revised Universal Soil Loss Equation modeling indicates this combination of practices is far more effective than just a buffer.

#### Project summary and results

Through the Spokane Greater Watershed Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), \$15.4 million will be invested in various conservation programs over the next five years. This primarily will promote reduced tillage practices and install appropriately sized buffers on agricultural land to protect waterways, while fairly compensating producers for the lost acres of production. To date, the program has contracts for over 30,000 acres of conservation tillage and 27 miles of commodity buffer. SCD will use edge-of-field monitoring stations and drone technology to collect data and evaluate effects.



The Washington State Conservation Commission has invested \$241,000 to date in no-till and buffers in 27 projects.

**Key partners:** USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Washington State Conservation Commission; Recreation and Conservation Office; Idaho Dept. of Lands; Coeur d'Alene Tribe; Inland NW Land Conservancy; Spokane Tribe of Indians; Pacific NW Direct Seed Association; Pine Creek, Kootenai-Shoshone, and Benewah Soil and Water Conservation Districts; Washington Department of Transportation; Spokane Falls Chapter: Trout Unlimited; Spokane River Forum; The Lands Council; Department of Ecology; DNR; Spokane County

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ SCD acquired property that includes 50 acres of land and a 7,000-square-foot office building. It will be developed as a "conservation campus" with conservation resources and demonstration areas.
- ▶ SCD is a driving force in the Vets on the Farm (VOTF) program. This fall the VOTF Learning Farm will take on an incubator concept, giving farm interns independence within a mini-plot. Education, networking, and partnership development continue to grow.



# 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:



Firewise outreach - Youth at a 4H event learning how to exit a house during a fire and protect the house from a wildfire.



Streambank stabilization on the Colville River will reduce sediment and protect productive agricultural ground.



Senator Short presenting awards at the State Forestry Contest held in Stevens County.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### STEVENS COUNTY FIRE RECOVERY



Landowner on Marble Valley Fire planted 1,000 Western larch and Ponderosa pine seedlings on five acres. Photo by SCCD

#### Resource challenge

2015 was one of the worst wildfire years for Stevens County. There were over 100 brush and forest fires. The two largest encompassed over 75,000 acres and impacted around 300 small private landowners. The majority of the rest of the fires were from five to 300 acres, predominately on private lands. The loss of timber, grass, and fencing was devastating. And, the loss of ground cover on steep slopes increased the risk of further losses and damage to private lands.

#### Project summary and results

After the fires, Stevens County Conservation District (SCCD) received requests for assistance from over 60 private landowners. SCCD made site visits and provided technical information on restoration and protection measures. Twenty landowners completed fire recovery cost-share projects using state funding from the Washington State Conservation Commission.



Landowner on Carpenter Road Fire replaced .75 mile fence. "Good fences make for good neighbors" - M. Newbill. Photo by SCCD

With this funding, SCCD was able to partner with landowners to: plant 64,000 trees; apply three tons of grass seed to 240 acres; treat 385 acres with woody residue using dead trees and brush to prevent soil erosion; rebuild 3.2 miles of fence; restore 8.8 miles of road, and; restore an irrigation system.

**Key partners:** Washington State Conservation Commission; Landowners; Department of Natural Resources; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Berrigan Forrestry

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Fire recovery and prevention through education, technical assistance, and implementation.
- ▶ Flood management and steambank stabilization.
- ▶ Education and outreach on agricultural practices and impacts to water quality and critical areas.



# THURSTON CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Executive Director: Kathleen Whalen Board Chair: Eric Johnson  
2918 Ferguson Street SW, Ste A Tumwater, WA 98512  
(360) 754-3588 x114 | [tcd@thurstoncd.com](mailto:tcd@thurstoncd.com) | [www.thurstoncd.com](http://www.thurstoncd.com)  
Legislative District: 2, 20, 22, 35 Congressional District: 3, 10

## Other accomplishments:



McLane Creek project site that included culvert replacement, livestock fencing, and riparian buffer planting. Photo by Dakota Dominguez



Climate Change Affecting Agriculture in Puget Sound forum where producers and the community discussed needs for the future. Photo by Dakota Dominguez



Watershed Adventure Camp provided place-based learning from Mount Rainier to Puget Sound during a week of summer exploration. Photo by Dakota Dominguez

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### RIVERBEND RANCH RESTORES SALMON STREAM



Flooded pasture on Riverbend Ranch. Photo by Riverbend Ranch

#### Resource challenge

Historic clearing of native plants to the river's edge for grazing cattle was causing increased erosion and flooding in pastures. Allowing cattle to access the river for drinking water was impacting water quality in the river system. Undersized culverts and unused culverts on a tributary to the Skookumchuck River were increasing seasonal flooding and causing water back-up, making it difficult for steelhead, coho, and chinook salmon to move upstream to spawn.

#### Project summary and results

Thurston Conservation District worked with Riverbend Ranch to identify three blocked culverts that caused flooding on the landowner's property. We are designing the remaining three crossings to suit landowner needs, decrease flooding, and provide safe passage for salmon. We customized the placement and width of a 6.8 acre buffer of native plants along 1.4 miles of the river, including 7,370 feet of fence, and a well and solar-powered water pump for the cattle.



3,400 plants installed along Skookumchuck River. Photo by Riverbend Ranch

Keeping the cattle out of the buffer will provide good habitat for wildlife, filter run-off water, and allow vegetation to grow and shade the river, which will keep the the water cool and healthy in the Chehalis Basin.

**Key partners:** Riverbend Ranch; Lewis County Conservation District

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Facilitate working lands easements to keep working lands in production and maintain wise stewardship of critical habitat.
- ▶ Assist producers in critical habitat areas through the Voluntary Stewardship Program.
- ▶ Restore riparian habitat and reduce the impacts of flooding in the Chehalis Basin.



# 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:

- ▶ Assisted 10 landowners with Firewise cost-share projects.
- ▶ Provided mobile tree and branch chipping service to more than 100 landowners to reduce wildfire fuels.
- ▶ Sponsored three local presentations of “The Era of Mega-Fires.”
- ▶ Mailed Firewise program information to more than 6,000 local homeowners.
- ▶ Provided technical expertise, field work, and landowner coordination for the Wind River Habitat Strategy.
- ▶ Updated and printed a district-wide Landowner Handbook.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### MILL CREEK FISH PASSAGE PROJECT



Former fish barrier culvert under Lakeview Road, considered a 100 percent barrier due to its slope and outfall drop.

#### Resource challenge

Mill Creek is a tributary to the White Salmon River above the former Condit Dam. In 2009, Underwood Conservation District (UCD) technicians assessed the Mill Creek culvert under Lakeview Road. The culvert was found to be a full barrier to fish passage due to its slope and outfall drop. Fish recolonizing the White Salmon River watershed were unable to reach over 4.5 miles of habitat upstream of this culvert.

#### Project summary and results

After a two-year design, permitting, and funding process, construction on the project began in the summer of 2016. The old culvert under Lakeview Road was removed and replaced with a new 19.9-foot wide, open-bottom box culvert. The streambed was reconstructed to simulate a natural stream. Now salmon, steelhead, and other fish can access more than four miles of the cold, clear waters of Mill Creek. The White Salmon River watershed is currently recolonizing with salmon and steelhead since the removal of Condit Dam in 2011-12. Access to high-quality habitat in Mill Creek is integral to recovering fish populations.



The newly constructed modular box culvert with a constructed streambed to simulate a natural stream for fish.

**Key partners:** Washington State Conservation Commission; US Fish and Wildlife Service; Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board; Yakama Nation Fisheries Program; Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery; Clark-Skamania Flyfishers; Tenneson Engineering Corporation; Inter-fluve, Inc.; James Dean Construction; Skamania County

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Continue planning, final design, and permitting of the White Salmon Irrigation District Irrigation Efficiencies, Fish Screen, and Fish Passage Project.
- ▶ Continue planning, final design, and permitting of the Little Wind River Habitat Enhancement, Phase IV Project.
- ▶ Pursue and secure district-wide Firewise program funding.
- ▶ Implement multiple livestock, water quality, and stream health best management practices.



# 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:

- ▶ Completed Skamokawa Creek Community Watershed knotweed treatment and riparian restoration project.
- ▶ Designed, permitted, and contracted additional Wilson Creek project for implementation during 2017 hydraulic window encompassing 1.5 miles of stream.
- ▶ Designed, permitted, and contracted a stream restoration project on 2,500 feet of the Grays River.
- ▶ Successfully funded two salmon recovery projects.
- ▶ Worked with cooperators to prepare and submit six additional project opportunities.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### COMMUNITY WATERSHED PROJECTS CONTINUE



Porous debris jam regulates flow into side channel habitat and creates pool habitat in main stem. Photo by Wahkiakum Conservation District

#### Resource challenge

Wahkiakum Conservation District continued to work with the Skamokawa Creek and Elochoman River Community Watersheds. Flood damage, water quality, invasive weeds, and salmon recovery are high priority community concerns in both drainages. The district is the ideal entity to assist the community through a voluntary-based approach to address resource concerns. The district works with landowners to collaboratively plan and design projects that address community-identified resource concerns.

#### Project summary and results

During 2016-17, Wahkiakum Conservation District implemented two projects that directly addressed watershed resource concerns identified by the community. Both were stream restoration projects, and they included instream wood-based structures, riparian restoration, and fish passage. Wahkiakum Conservation District coordinated available grant funding with landowner resources in order to implement the projects. Instream structures immediately influenced fisheries habitat diversity and quantity and streambank and channel stability. Restoration of riparian function will continue to support improved resource condition in the long-term.



Debris jam deflectors create pool habitat and protect streambank that was once full of junkyard cars. Photo by Wahkiakum Conservation District

**Key partners:** Landowners; Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board; Washington State Conservation Commission; Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Implement Grays River stream restoration project.
- ▶ Implement Wilson Creek stream restoration project.
- ▶ Complete the preliminary design and secure necessary funding to complete a 1.5 mile project in the Elochoman River Community Watershed.



# WALLA WALLA COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

District Manager: Renee M. Hadley Board Chair: Ed Chvatal  
325 N 13th Avenue Walla Walla, WA 99362  
(509) 522-6340 x5 | information.cd@wwccd.net | www.wwccd.net  
Legislative District: 16 Congressional District: 5

## Other accomplishments:



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



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



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

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### FISH SCREEN SAVES LIVES OF SALMON



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

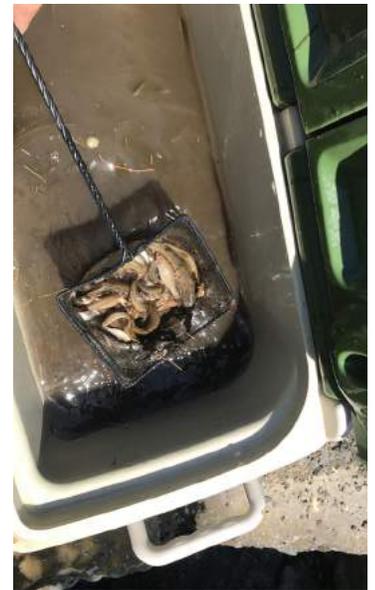
#### Resource challenge

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

#### Project summary and results

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

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



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

## MORE WORK TO DO

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



# WHATCOM CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Executive Director: George Boggs Board Chair: Larry Helm  
 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:



Installed 26 Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program projects on 99,116 feet of streambank with 95,006 native plants, while maintaining 114 existing projects.



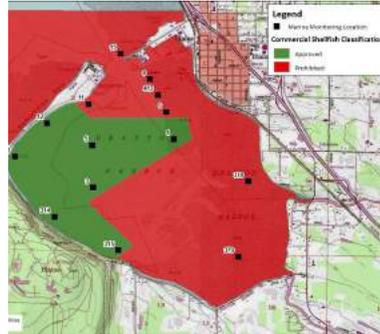
Reached over 3,000 local residents with the "Whatcom Explorer: Mobile Watershed," connecting them to the importance of land stewardship.



Employed edge-of-field monitoring, which enables WCD and producers to measure nutrients and bacteria in runoff and compare management systems.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

# SHELLFISH GROWING AREA UPGRADE IN DRAYTON HARBOR



After two decades of closure, shellfish are harvested again in 810 acres (shown in green) of Drayton Harbor.

## Resource challenge

Since the late 90s, high levels of fecal coliform bacteria in Drayton Harbor have forced shellfish harvest closures for all or part of each year. These waters had provided commercial, recreational, and subsistence aquaculture for generations. Then, in December 2016, the community celebrated an upgrade of 810 acres of shellfish harvesting ground. The Drayton Harbor success story is the cumulative result of a wide variety of actions taken by community members to keep pollution out of the bay.

## Project summary and results

Actions taken to repair septic systems and invest in waste and stormwater management systems have reduced pollution from human waste. Bacteria runoff from animal waste has been reduced by fencing farm animals out of waterways, managing manure storage and application, and managing wildlife and pet waste. Whatcom Conservation District (WCD) farm planners worked with over 140 farmers on 15,000 acres in the watershed to improve farm practices. WCD was honored with an Environmental Excellence Award from the Department of Ecology — the agency's highest award — for service to the agricultural community.



WCD was honored with an Environmental Excellence Award from the Dept. of Ecology for services to the agricultural community.

**Key partners:** Whatcom County Public Works; Department of Ecology; City of Blaine; Whatcom County Health Department; Drayton Harbor Oyster Company; Drayton Harbor Shellfish Protection District; Washington State Department of Agriculture; Puget Sound Restoration Fund; Port of Bellingham; Drayton Harbor Community Oyster Farm; Nooksack Indian Tribe; Whatcom County Planning and Development Services

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Habitat: Restore access to 8.4 miles of salmon habitat by replacing 14 fish passage barrier culverts.
- ▶ Shellfish: In partnership with Whatcom County, continue to offer education and technical assistance to landowners through the Pollution Identification and Correction Program.
- ▶ Research: Deploy and test new, real-time water quality monitoring technology in the Nooksack Watershed.



# WHIDBEY ISLAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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

## Other accomplishments:



A Waste Storage Tour linked interested property owners with three WICD cost-share-funded waste storage facility installations. Photo by Kelsi Mottet



With Firewise funding from the State Conservation Commission, WICD and five partner agencies provided wildfire education at a Whidbey Island Firewise Day. Photo by Karen Bishop



ADA parking space at the WICD office owned by Frank and Miriam Meyer was a low impact development project mimicking natural hydrology. Photo by Kelsi Mottet

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### COST-SHARE PROGRAM EMPHASIZES WATER QUALITY



Completed french drain system diverted surface water to existing swale onsite. Photo by Ken Drecksel

#### Resource challenge

Residential population on Whidbey Island has increased significantly in recent years. This impacts the island's water quality and quantity, which are of highest concern for the public. Whidbey Island Conservation District's (WICD) cost-share program helps urban and rural landowners thoughtfully design and implement complex projects that simultaneously address water quality concerns, mitigate livestock issues, and empower residents to enhance the sustainability of natural resources.

#### Project summary and results

Whidbey Island residents range from large acreage livestock owners to urban dwellers on small city parcels. WICD's cost-share program reduced nutrient runoff, improved surface water quality, and managed drainage more effectively in several sensitive watersheds through use of the conservation planning process. Eight landowners worked with WICD to identify high-quality best management practices, develop designs, and implement projects they might otherwise have been unable to afford, including waste storage facilities, livestock fencing, hoof-grid, rainwater diversion systems, and pervious pavement.



Covered waste storage facility with 28 feet of gutters installed, made possible in part by WICD's cost-share program. Photo by Kelsi Mottet

**Key partners:** Washington State Conservation Commission; landowners

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Expand Firewise Program to include community-wide wildfire assessments and Firewise Communities/USA recognition support.
- ▶ Continue work with farmers through the Whidbey Island Growers Association and the Whidbey Island Grown brand to help with environmental and economic sustainability.
- ▶ Continue conservation planning as guide for voluntary stewardship.
- ▶ Assist municipalities with stormwater code implementation.



## 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](mailto:brianwhitmancd@gmail.com) | [www.whitmancd.org](http://www.whitmancd.org)  
Legislative District: 9 Congressional District: 5

### Other accomplishments:

- ▶ Provided cost-share for livestock fencing to increase the number of pastures so they can be grazed rotationally.
- ▶ Provided cost-share for soil electrical conductivity mapping so custom nutrient applications can be performed to reduce inputs and the potential of non-point source pollution.
- ▶ Provided cost-share for tractor GPS navigation system so there is more precision when seeding and applying chemicals, which reduces inefficiencies.
- ▶ Acquired a grant to continue more cover cropping.

### 2017 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 an experimental 25-acre cover crop in his chemical fallow field in spring of 2016. The cover crop was grazed upon maturity and then planted with a winter wheat crop in fall 2016. The cover crop trial performed so well that the landowner requested more cost-share from the district to plant cover crop on a different 40-acre section of the field that was just harvested. The field was chemical fallowed in summer 2016, except for where a fall cover crop was planted. The cover crop was then grazed in spring 2017 upon maturity. It performed so well, the landowner actually was able to bale some for later use before spraying it out to plant winter wheat this fall.

**Key partners:** Washington State Conservation Commission



Cover crop mixture of clover, plantain, radish, brassica, and cabbage on a field that would have been fallowed.



Cover crop after rotationally grazing the livestock to increase utilization.

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Continue cover crop trials and outreach among dryland wheat producers.
- ▶ Continue work under 34 contracts through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (WRIA 34).
- ▶ Incorporate more volunteer wildlife planting days.



SCC members and partners participate in a water quality testing demonstration during a tour hosted by Pierce Conservation District in March 2017.

# 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
- ▶ Tulalip 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!



# AGENCY BOARD AND STAFF

## SCC BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



**Lynn Brown, Chair**  
Central region representative (elected)



**Jim Kropf, Vice-Chair**  
WSU Extension



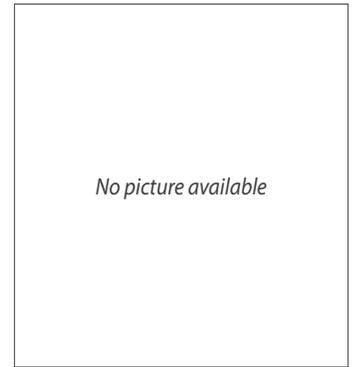
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Western region representative  
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**Trevor McConchie**  
Washington State  
Department of Natural Resources



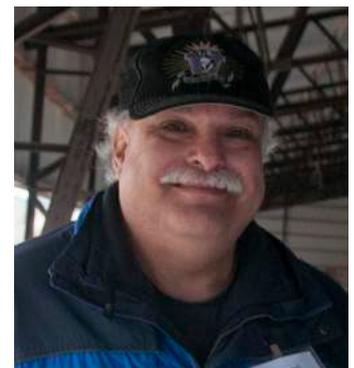
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Washington Association of  
Conservation Districts, President



**Sarah Spaeth**  
Governor-appointee,  
Jefferson Land Trust



**Kelly Susewind**  
Washington State  
Department of Ecology



**Daryl Williams**  
Governor-appointee,  
Tulalip Tribes

# AGENCY STAFF AND ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

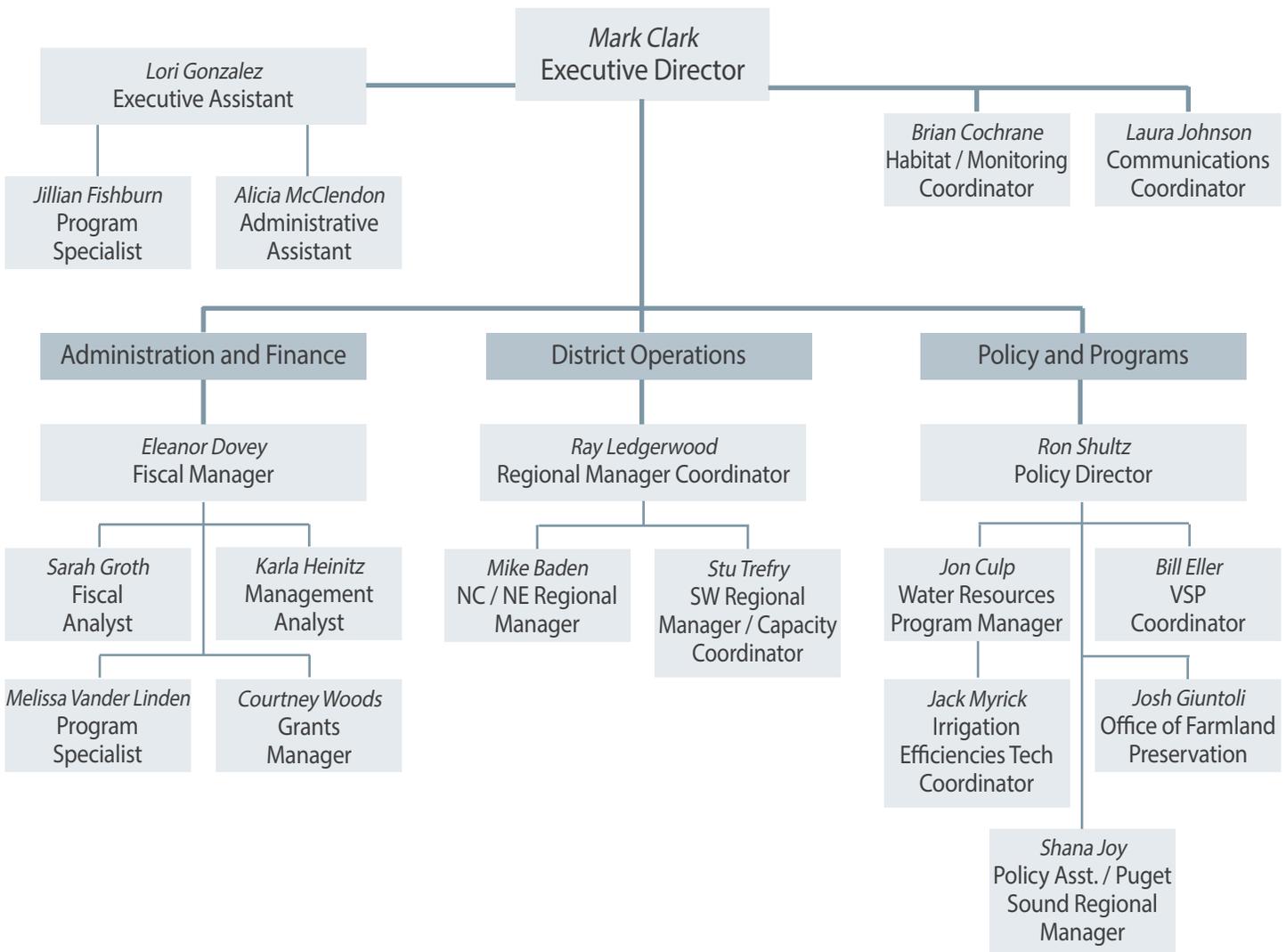
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- ▶ SCC staff: [scc.wa.gov/commission-staff](http://scc.wa.gov/commission-staff)



**Mark Clark**  
SCC Executive Director



# GET IN TOUCH...

Have questions about the SCC, conservation districts, voluntary conservation, or anything in this report? Please let us know!

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Lacey, WA 98503

### MAILING ADDRESS

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Olympia, WA 98504-7721

### CALL US

360-407-6200

### VISIT OUR WEBSITE

[scc.wa.gov](http://scc.wa.gov)

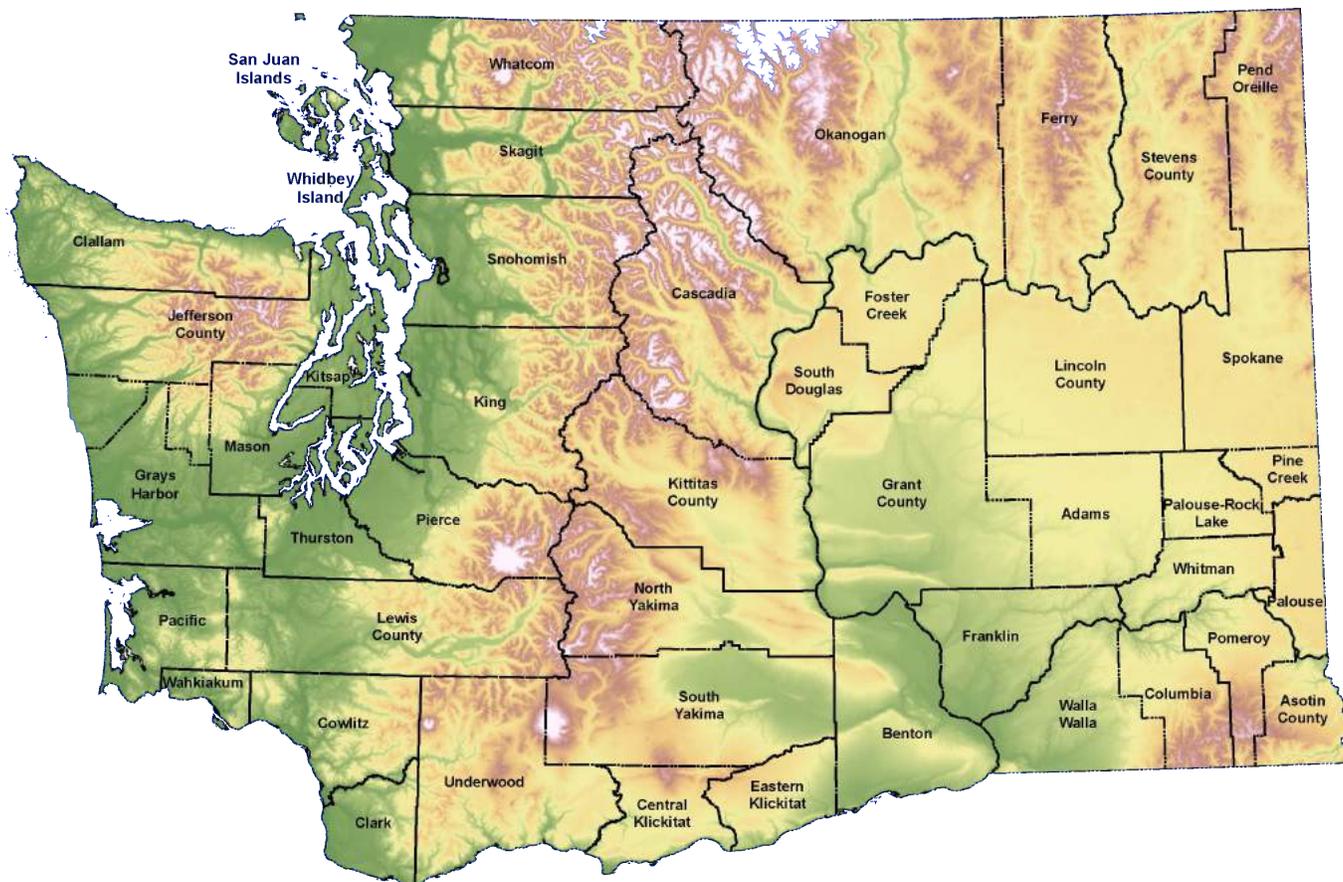
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## CONTACT YOUR CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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](http://scc.wa.gov/conservation-district-map).







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