

Walla Walla County Conservation District

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WA-DEPT. OF ECOLOGY TO HOLD PUBLIC HEARINGS ON NEW BURN FEES

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INCREASED BURN FEES TO BECOME EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2011

The Washington Department of Ecology (WA-DOE) recently released information on proposed changes to agricultural burn fees to become effective on the first of 2011. The Agricultural Burning Practices and Research Task Force determines the fees under a cap set by the legislature. The caps are \$3.75 per acre and \$1.00 per ton. The funds generated from permit fees help pay for Ecology's smoke management system, local permitting agencies, and fund research into alternatives to agricultural burning.

New Agricultural Burn Fees have been proposed as follows:

Field Permits

Old Fees:	Field up to 10 acres	\$25.00
	Field 11 acres+	\$2.25/acre
New Fees:	Field up to 10 acres	\$30.00
	Field 11 acres+	\$3.00/acre

Pile Burning Permits

Old Fees:	Pile up to 22 acres	\$50.00
	Pile 23 acres+	\$2.25/acre
New Fees:	Pile up to 100 tons	\$80.00
	Pile 101 tons+	\$80.00 + \$0.50 for each ton over 100 tons

WA-DOE is now taking public comments until September 9th, 2010. You can testify at public hearings, email comments to Richelle.Perez@ecy.wa.gov, fax comments to (509) 407-7534, or mail comments to WA-DOE, Richelle Perez, P. O. Box 47600, Olympia, WA 98504-7600.

Public hearings will be held on Thursday, Aug. 26th, 2010 at 7 p.m. in the Columbia County Rural Library, 111 S. 3rd St., Dayton, WA and on Thursday, Sept. 2nd, 2010 at 6 p.m. in the Wenatchee Public Library, Wenatchee, WA.

Frank Lane, WWCCD Agricultural Burn Technician, will again be assisting local producers process their permit applications. If you have questions, you may call Frank at (509) 522-6340 Ext. 117.

JAPANESE KNOTWEED IN WALLA WALLA COUNTY, WASHINGTON – INVASIVE WEED OR A NEW TASTY FOOD?

This large eye-catching plant is, in fact, **both** an invasive weed of great concern and an outstanding source of great tasting desserts, teas and treats. The Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) considers Japanese knotweed to be **a class A invasive weed** which means that it is illegal to knowingly plant and spread this non-native species anywhere in the State of Washington. It only takes a half ounce of living stem or root to start a whole new plant. So we have to legally get rid of this highly invasive plant wherever it is located. There are several methods of eliminating Japanese knotweed.



There are several effective methods of greatly reducing this plant's population here in Walla Walla County. The old traditional way is to go out and spray it with a low solution of herbicide allowing time for the roots to take up the herbicide and kill the plant. Then there is the other method of constantly cutting off the plant and sapping the plant's energy over time. **Never pull** this plant out of the ground as you will leave dozens of root fragments in the ground and they will all come up as new plants. So while carefully cutting off the shoots and stalks takes time, it is an effective method of control.

Now there are only two things to do with the shoots and stalks you cut off. One method is to **dry all the stalks** out in the sun, then bag them after they are completely dry and ship them to the sanitary landfill. **DO NOT bury, burn or compost this plant. Never re-introduce any part of this plant back into the soil as you could unintentionally spread it.**

The other method (and much more enjoyable) is to cut off the shoots and stalks and use them in your cooking. This plant is a very healthy source of nutrients such as resveratrol which is the "good for you" compound in grapes, red wine, blueberries and cranberries. If desired, you can "Google" Japanese knotweed recipes on line to see the many beneficial uses of this plant. *By: Mike Denny, Riparian Restoration Coordinator.*

CAMELINA – ANOTHER POTENTIAL BIOFUEL

Check out what is going on up at LaCrosse on the Steve Camp farm. He is growing camelina, an oilseed crop with better production potential than Canola and mustard. Read the article posted at <http://www.wsutoday.wsu.edu/Pages/Publications.asp?Action=Detail&PublicationID=20864&PageID>

ATTENTION ASPARAGUS GROWERS!

A grower, with any size of operation, who produces asparagus and can meet the USDA Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for Farmers eligibility requirements is eligible for an intensive technical assistance training program, professional consultation in the development of a business plan, and a cash payment of up to \$12,000 to help implement the plan. The training will help any asparagus grower increase profitability, improve production efficiency, consider marketing opportunities, evaluate alternative enterprises, and in general become more competitive. The training will be developed and be provided by Extension educators, specialists, and industry experts. Training will be available on-line and in person-to-person workshop formats.



It is important for any interested asparagus producers to apply for this program with the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) by the **September 23, 2010 application deadline**.

Information on the Asparagus TSS for Farmers program is available at:

1. any local USDA FSA office
2. on the web at: <http://taaforfarmers.org> or (<http://www.fas.usda.gov/itp/taa/taa.asp>) or by emailing or
3. calling John Nelson at the WSU Western Center for Risk Management Education, jgnelson@wsu.edu, 509-477-2176.

Eligibility Requirements: Asparagus producers must provide documentation that they produced asparagus in the 2009 marketing year and during at least one of the three years previous marketing years (2006, 2007, 2008). Producers may also need to certify that their production or price declined from previous years. Interested family members or business partners may be listed as an alternate on the application form if producers are unable to attend training.

FISH PASSAGE BARRIERS STILL A PROBLEM ON SMALL STREAMS

Created intentionally or unintentionally by the informed, uninformed or indifferent – fish passage barriers are still a significant problem on small streams in the Walla Walla area. Some of the older barriers were created many years ago to divert irrigation water to small farms or garden plots or for livestock. A great many of these have been remediated over the past 10-years or so and others are on the radar screen for future treatment.

Two other types of barriers are especially irksome, however. These are 1) recreational dams – created by kids playing in the creeks, and 2) barriers created by livestock fencing. While fish can generally get through or around the recreational dams, some of the barriers created by hog-wire fencing placed in the stream are far more serious. And they need not happen. Either the WWCCD or your local NRCS staff can provide examples of good fences along or across streams that are fish friendly.

SNAKE RIVER SALMON RECOVERY REGION **COMPLETES 11th GRANT ROUND CYCLE**

As is usual this time of year, the Snake River Salmon Recovery Board (SR-SRB) has completed its most recent round of project applications. The summer and fall of 2010 marks the 11th grant round cycle held for the Snake River Salmon Recovery Area. This year, there were initially 22 proposed projects from the five counties included in the recovery area (Asotin, Columbia, Garfield, Walla Walla, and Whitman). After an exhaustive screening process that including pre-application reviews, tours of proposed projects, pre-scoring, final application development and final scoring, a total of 13 new projects and one carry-over project were considered for funding.

For the 11th grant cycle, recovery dollars were less than in previous years. Therefore, competition for available funding was even more rigorous than the past. There were close to \$2.2 million dollars in projects competing for part of the \$1.6 million dollars available for SR-SRB recovery efforts. Again, the Lead Entity Project Review Committee used a uniform ranking methodology to score and rank project proposals based on their relative merits. This committee is made up of one technical representative and two citizen representatives from each of the five counties in the recovery area.

After final scoring, ranked projects along with recommendations of the Lead Entity Project Review Committee were forwarded to the SR-SRB. The Board can accept the ranking and recommendations or re-rank the projects if desired. It appears that perhaps only 11 or 12 projects will be funded this cycle.

For details, visit the SR-SRB website: <http://www.snakeriverboard.org>. *By: Larry Hooker, Agricultural Projects Coordinator.*

Walla Walla County Conservation District

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