

# Walla Walla County Conservation District

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Summer 2015

Published regularly to provide information to land users

Volume 17, Issue 2



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## REMEMBER:

*If you need help with  
your burn permit(s),  
Frank is in on Tuesday,  
Wednesday, & Thurs-  
day as needed from  
8:00 to 12:00 & from  
1:00 to 4:00 BY AP-  
POINTMENT at 509-  
522-6340.*

## INTRODUCING GABRIELA FAJARDO, NRCS SOIL CONSERVATION TECHNICAN

Please welcome Gabriela “Gabby” Fajardo—the newest member of the Walla Walla Service Center NRCS staff. She comes to Walla Walla with ten years of experience as an environmental planner with the Williamsburg Environmental Group, Inc. in Virginia.

Gabby received her B.S. degree in Environmental Science in 2000 from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) in Blacksburg, VA. In 2006, she received her M.S. degree in Crop and Soil Environmental Science, also from Virginia Tech. Her experience has had a primary focus in wetland mitigation which included feasibility studies, conceptual planning, Inter-agency Review Team coordination, mitigation banking documentation, construction planning and oversight, as-built surveying, site monitoring and maintenance and annual reporting. Gabby has also been involved in nutrient management planning and habitat restoration planning. She holds certifications as a Professional Soil Scientist and as an Erosion and Sediment Control Contractor.



Gabby enjoys travel, wetlands, college football, soccer, running, cycling, hiking and digital photography. *By: Larry Hooker, WWCCD Agricultural Projects Coordinator*

# PROJECTS UNDER DEVELOPMENT

The WWCCD has a number of projects on tap in several stages of development.

**JONES DITCH - PASSAGE, SCREENING & HABITAT:** This project was first conceptualized in 2010 and design funding approved through the Snake River Salmon Recovery Board (SR-SRB) in 2011. Jones Ditch takes its irrigation water through a headgate that diverts water through a culvert under the Mill Creek flood control dike near Rooks Park. This un-screened diversion historically has allowed ESA listed fish access to the ditch that becomes dewatered during the summer resulting in fish death. The goal is to modify the intake to allow for year-round flows down the creek and create some great rearing habitat. The three pumping stations on the ditch will be screened.



**McCAW FISH HABITAT RESTORATION DESIGN — PHASE B:** Planning for the McCaw Phase A & B project was started in 2007 with an assessment of restoration needs on the Touchet River from Waitsburg down to Bolles Bridge. Given the magnitude of the restoration needs, it was determined that a phased approach was needed to secure funding. Phase A was completed in the 2013 in-water work window and the CD started working on Phase B (downstream of Phase A). Funding for a design was secured from the SR-SRB in 2014 and design development is currently underway.



**TITUS CREEK DIVERSION FISH PASSAGE & SCREENING:** The Titus Creek project has been on the radar for a number of years but wasn't tackled because of its complexity. Flows from Titus (and Mill Creek) are diverted into Titus irrigation ditch just upstream of Five Mile Road. The diversion is un-screened and the ditch becomes a death trap stranding fish when flows drop off. Funding has been secured from WDFW and SR-SRB to modify the diversion and install a screening structure as well as improve the habitat along the return flow channel to Mill Creek.



**LOWDEN 2-GARDEN CITY-MUD CREEK 7 PIPING:** Over the past 15 years, the WWCCD has put a lot of effort into irrigation piping e.g. Touchet Irrigation District's West Canal & East Canal, Gardena Farms Irrigation District #13's South Lateral, their North Lateral, the Bergevin-Williams and Old Lowden canals. There is still work to be done and water to be saved due to improved delivery efficiencies. For the last couple of years, the District has been working with irrigators on designs to pipe the Lowden 2, Garden City, and Mud Creek 7 open canal/ditch delivery systems. There is also some livestock related water quality improvements to be gained with this project as well as saved water left in the river for fish.



## *BURN PROGRAM - FRANK'S HOT SPOT!*

*REMEMBER: All permit holders who have completed their field burns need to complete their blue cards and mail them in to DOE. If desired, field burn completion can be reported via DOE's website as per the permit transmittal letter. If a permitted burn was not completed, be sure to turn in a "Request for Refund"! As soon as you know you will not complete a permitted burn, turn in your refund request as soon as possible.*

# PROJECTS UNDER DEVELOPMENT

## CONTINUED

**GALEY BRIDGE:** This project is a great example of what needs to occur at numerous equipment fords throughout the region—replacing the ford with a bridge. In this case, this equipment crossing is on a reach of the Touchet River between Touchet North Road and Luckenbill Road. To date, a bridge design has been developed by a private engineer and the landowner and WWCCD staff is working their way through the permitting process. If all needed permits can be obtained in time, construction is planned for the next in-water work window.



**REA FARMS BRIDGE:** Featured here is another ford being replaced by a bridge— but on a smaller scale. This site is located on the South Fork of Russell Creek. The bridge design developed by our WWCCD engineering staff is in hand and permit applications are under development. Construction is planned for late this summer after wheat harvest has been completed.



**HOFER DAM SEDIMENT UPGRADE:** Approximately 10-years ago, the WWCCD worked on a project to modify the irrigation diversion and fish ladder at Hofer Dam. As occurs with all dams, sediment tends to accumulate behind the structure creating a problem for diverting irrigation water. WWCCD engineers have been working on a solution for the last couple years and a scale model is now being utilized to test potential solutions. Our engineers and WDFW partners believe we have a solution. Construction for the upgrade is planned for the 2016 in-water work window.



**GARDENA FARMS IRRIGATION DISTRICT #13 UPPER CANAL PIPING PROJECT:** The WWCCD staff has been hard at work to develop a pipeline design and to secure funding to pipe GFID #13's Upper Canal. This 11 miles of open deliver canal is the last large piping project remaining in Walla Walla County and the water savings implications are tremendous. The South Lateral was piped in 2010 (4.5 miles) and the North Lateral plus 2,800 feet of the upper ditch were piped in 2013 (7.3 miles). Since funding has yet to be secured, the timeline for construction is uncertain.



**RIPARIAN FOREST BUFFERS:** Walla Walla County has a reputation for having a great riparian forest buffer program. In fact, almost 25% of the state's riparian forest buffers are in this county. While the "low hanging fruit" has been plucked from the tree, there remains a lot of work to be done. For the fall of 2015 and spring of 2016, the District staff has about 100 acres of new buffers lined up for installation along our county streams.





# METERING PROGRAM UPDATE

Travis Morrison, WWCCD Civil Engineering Technician Intern has recently visited all operating data logging meters installed through our meter program in Walla Walla County and has programmed them to data log. Upon request only, the District will download water use data from your meter and generate a water use report (spreadsheet) for your irrigation use records. There will be no charge for this service.

REMINDER: Batteries need to be changed in 3-inch and smaller meters annually (four AA batteries) and in the 4-inch and larger meters every 2-3 years (lithium batteries).



## *STILL NEED A FISH SCREEN OR METER?*

*The WWCCD still has funding available for both NOAA compliant fish screen installations and metering. If you need either a fish screen or meter, it is important to get your name on the list! Call Greg Kinsinger at (509) 522-6340 Ext. 109 or Lisa Stearns at (509) 522-6340 Ext. 116.*

### Walla Walla County Conservation District

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Gabriela Fajardo, Soil Conservation  
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#### WDFW Staff

Sean Taylor, Fish Passage &  
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*View the updated  
WWCCD website at  
[www.wwccd.net](http://www.wwccd.net)*



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