

Walla Walla County Conservation District

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WANT TO VOTE ABSENTEE IN THE WWCCD SUPERVISOR ELECTION?

*An absentee ballot may be
picked up from the District
office at 325 N. 13th Ave.
in Walla Walla or by call-
ing 509-522-6340 Ext.
101. The deadline is Jan.
17th, 2013.*

2014 WWCCD ANNUAL MEETING & SUPERVISOR ELECTION

Wednesday, January 29, 2014
7:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Walla Walla Regional Airport Community Room

The Walla Walla County Conservation District will hold its 2014 Annual Meeting and Supervisor Election on Wednesday, January 29th, 2014, at the Walla Walla Regional Airport in the Blue Mountain Community Meeting Room. Coffee and rolls will be available at registration beginning at 7:45 am. Chairman Jeff Schulke will call the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. This year we have applied for 2 pesticide credits for the day's program. Jeff has accepted his nomination for re-election to our board for a second 3-year term. Polls will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Lunch will be provided.

Agenda (Subject to Change):

- 7:45 Sign in; Coffee & Rolls
- 8:00 Welcome, Introductions, Opening of Polls: Jeff Schulke
District Chair
- 8:10 WWCCD Activities & Annual Report, Larry Hooker, WWCCD Agri-
cultural Projects Coordinator
- 8:30 Soil Carbon & Its Importance in Agriculture , Wayne Thompson,
Regional Dryland Cropping Systems Specialist, WSU Extension
- 9:30 Break—Make sure you vote!
- 9:45 Walla Walla County Agricultural Burn Program, Kary Peterson,
WA-DOE; Rocky Eastman, Walla Walla Fire Department;
Ed Teel, USDA-NRCS
- 10:45 Raising Canola in Wheat Rotations, Don Wysocki, Extension
Soil Scientist, OSU Extension
- 11:30 Canola Economics and Marketing, Stephen L. Starr | Pacific
Coast Canola, LLC
- 12:00 Implementation of Variable Rate Fertilizer and Seed
Application Based on Aerial Near-Infrared Images, Jim Nichols, XY
Imaging, Seth Small
- 12:30 Hosted lunch

EXPANDED CREP PROVIDES DIVERSE OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF “GREEN STRIP” PROJECTS

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is part of the Farm Service Agency's (FSA's) Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). In the State of Washington, CREP provides incentives to restore and improve salmon and steelhead habitat on private land. It is a Federal-State-Local partnership between FSA, the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC), and the Walla Walla County Conservation District (WWCCD).

CREP is a voluntary program. The predominant restoration practice is restoration of riparian zones by installing a forested riparian buffer. In December 2009, however, three additional practices were added to target water quality issues: riparian hedgerows, grass filter strips, and wetland enhancement.

Land enrolled in 10-15 year CREP contracts is removed from production and grazing. In return, landowners receive annual rental, incentive, maintenance, and cost share payments for establishing one of the CREP practices. The enrolled land must be removed from production during the contract period. All CREP practices must be established according to Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) standards and specifications. Technical assistance to design and install the practices is provided by NRCS and local conservation districts.

Riparian Forest Buffer

Forested buffers must be planted to native trees and shrubs suitable to the site. Grasses will also be included if necessary. Native grasses will be used if available, or comparable introduced grasses if natives are not available or successful. The buffer may include a grass strip on the outside edge if needed to address concentrated flows entering the buffer. The minimum buffer width of the forested riparian buffer is 35 feet and the maximum average width over the total length of the buffer on each side of the stream is 180 feet. A buffer can be wider in places as long as the average does not exceed 180 feet.



Hedgerow buffers

Hedgerows are a 15 foot buffer planted to woody vegetation. The species planted must again be natives, but a greater utilization may be made of shrub-type species. These buffers are limited to salmonid bearing streams 15 feet wide or less when the stream is full to its bank.



Grass Filter Strips

Grass filter strip widths can range from 20 feet to 120 feet depending on the design requirements. Enrollment is limited to non-salmonid bearing water courses within the watershed containing a designated stream, as described above. In high rainfall areas, filter strips may need to be clipped periodically to remove vegetative buildup. Any material removed must be destroyed without economic benefit.



Wetland Enhancement

Wetland enhancement practices help restore the functionality of wetland ecosystems. Enrolled wetland must be hydrologically connected to a designated stream used by salmonids. The enrolled area would include the wetland and a surrounding buffer not to exceed three times the wetland acreage. The buffer will be planted to native and/or introduced species suited for the site.

If you have land that fits any of these CREP practices and would like to discuss enrolling them please call 509-522-6340 ext.121 and talk with Jeff Klundt, WWCCD Restoration Project Coordinator.

WWCCD SUCCESSFUL IN OBTAINING FUNDING TO CONTINUE FISH SCREEN PROGRAM

The Walla Walla County Conservation District was successful in obtaining funding through the Washington Salmon Recovery Funding Board grant process that will allow continuation of our fish screen program for another three years. Competing in the 14th grant round administered by the regional Snake River Salmon Recovery Board, the District was able to secure a three-year grant for \$325,000.

The WWCCD fish screen program is the centerpiece of the Co-operative Compliance Review Program, a partnership between WA Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW), WWCCD and other agencies which assists local irrigators with installing federally approved fish screens. The screens protect young fish from irrigation pump intakes while protecting landowners from regulatory penalties from non-compliant screening. Screen capacities range from 15 gpm to 10 cfs (4500 gpm).



Irrigators needing to upgrade their fish screen(s) in order to get into compliance are encouraged to contact Greg Kinsinger, WWCCD Restoration Project Coordinator soon and get on the project list. Be aware that this may be your last chance to get cost-share assistance on fish screens as funding is becoming more difficult to obtain. Under this program, 85% of each screen project is covered by the grant with the irrigator picking up the remaining 15%. So, get on the list or end up paying the total cost.

METERING PROGRAM TO CONTINUE

State of Washington water laws require all shallow aquifer wells and pumping stations on streams and/or canals be metered. Meters provide accurate water-use information to irrigators, enabling them to better manage their irrigation practices, improve irrigation efficiency, and decrease energy use. Additionally, flow meters enable landowners to measure their water use and come into compliance with state water-use regulations which are monitored by WA Dept. of Ecology (WA-DOE). Well-documented water use records will help landowners protect their water rights from relinquishment. Hundreds of irrigation surface diversions and shallow wells are still without meters in the Walla Walla basin.



Partnering with WA-DOE, the District has obtained a \$400,000 grant for metering over the next two years.

NEED A SPEAKER FOR YOUR MEETING?

As part of the WWCCD Outreach & Education effort, we are available to speak regarding who the Walla Walla County Conservation District is and what we do!

COLUMBIA REA ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAMS

Columbia REA offers energy efficiency rebate programs in a number of areas—residential, commercial, and agricultural. For details, go to <http://www.columbiarea.com/content/rebate-offers>

WATCH FOR MINI-SESSIONS SOON TO BE SCHEDULED FOR YOUR AREA!

After taking a year off in 2013, farmer-hosted mini-sessions are back on the planning board for early 2014. It has been our custom to hold as many as 10 of these rural meetings across Walla Walla County in past years but the number has more recently been consolidated to 6-7 depending upon interest.

Mini-sessions are an important means we use in Walla Walla County to extend information to our farm clients across the county. We have found these informational meetings are an excellent tool to improve two-way communications between the partnering USDA Service Center agencies and managers of working lands. Both Ed Teel, NRCS District Conservationist for the Snake River Team and Travis Martin, FSA County Executive Director for Walla Walla and Columbia Counties plan to assist the WWCCD staff in extending up-to-the-minute program information to program participants.



We like to use this venue to share new Farm Bill information, when available. Unfortunately, such information has been largely “missing in action” the past few years. So, our conservation partnership will do its best to share with what we do know—and what we can expect this next year.

***WWCCD HAS BEEN HOLDING
MINI-SESSIONS SINCE THE
EARLY 1980'S. SHOWN
HERE IS ONE OF THE DIS-
TRICT'S FIRST TECHNICIANS,
DUANE SCOTT, IN 1990***

Watch your mail for the letters announcing the date for your area.

Walla Walla County Conservation District

Board of Supervisors

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Ed Chvatal, Vice Chair
Jim Kent, Secretary
Todd Kimball, Treasurer
Pat McConnell, Member

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Kay Mead, Irrigation Efficiency Coordinator
Jeff Klundt, Restoration Project Coordinator,
CREP Maintenance Technician
Larry Hooker, Ag. Projects Coordinator
Lisa Stearns, Civil Engineering Technician

NRCS Staff

Ed Teel, District Conservationist
Jessica Taylor, Soil Conservationist



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***Check out the newly re-
vised WWCCD website
at www.wwccd.net***

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