



# WALLA WALLA COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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Legislative District: 16 Congressional District: 5

## Other accomplishments:



Fire Recovery grants helped remove burnt forest buffers while maintaining water quality and preventing soil erosion. Photo credit: Joanna Cowles, WWCCD



Walla Walla Voluntary Stewardship Program work group facilitated by the District completed a 90% draft of the local VSP plan.



District staff aided NRCS & FSA with 36 CREP re-enrollment contracts totaling 520 acres and will help with 16 contracts in 2018. Photo credit: Joanna Cowles, WWCCD

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT FISH SCREEN SAVES LIVES



Fish Screen with 6.4 cubic feet per second flow capacity will save lives of salmon. Photo credit: Lisa Stearns, WWCCD

### Resource challenge

Fish and salmon presence within the Walla Walla basin is common. So is diverting 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

The District worked with the landowner and Washington Dept. of Fish & Wildlife 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 & 300+ fresh water 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.



Nearly 200 salmonids and over 300 fresh water fish were salvaged during construction. Photo credit: Sean Taylor, WDFW

**Key partners:** Washinton Department of Fish & Wildlife fish biologists, WDFW Yakima Screen Shop, Byerley Farms

## MORE WORK TO DO

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