



**WALLA WALLA COUNTY
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**
ESTABLISHED 1941

Walla Walla County Conservation District



Annual Work Plan for Fiscal Year 2025

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Mission

The Walla Walla County Conservation District works to conserve and enhance natural resources in the county through voluntary participation and education.

Natural Resource Priorities

Most of Walla Walla County land is in private ownership. As a result, WWCCD tends to work with agricultural landowners. The Natural Resources Priorities described below have been identified as state, regional and local priorities through various agencies. These agencies include but are not limited to Washington Dept. of Ecology, Washington Dept. of Fish & Wildlife, NRCS Snake River Local Working Group, Walla Walla County, Snake River Salmon Recovery Office and area non-profit organizations. Priorities often overlap and are defined in detail in numerous TMDL reports, several geomorphic assessments on local waterways, the WW Co VSP plan, WW Subbasin Plan, WW Watershed Plan, several USACE flood assessment plans, WW Co Hazard Mitigation Plans, WW Co Community Wildfire Protection Plan and other documents.

- Critical areas and wildlife protection
 - This resource is described in the WWCCD 5-year plan as Fisheries, Range & Pasture, Wetland Resources, and Forest Health. Critical areas include Fish and Wildlife Habitat, Wetlands, Frequently Flooded areas, Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas, and Geologic Hazardous areas. Components of each are described in other resource priorities, below.
- Water Quality
 - Numerous TMDL reports and the Salmon Limiting Factors Report have identified water quality concerns. Establishing and maintaining riparian buffers, facilitating improvements with livestock producers, reducing erosion and restoring waterways to their natural function are ways to protect and enhance water quality.
- Water Quantity
 - Municipal and irrigation withdraws and changing climate conditions have resulted in declining aquifers and instream flows. Several waterways also have “gaining” or “losing” reaches making it challenging to identify the factor related to declining conditions. Installing irrigation efficiency projects, monitoring water use and collaborating with area partners are part of WWCCD’s strategy to address water quantity concerns.
- Air Quality
 - Nearly 94% of Walla Walla County acres are mapped as within a “moderate” to “very high” wind erosion potential which is more severe in the west portion of the county adjacent to the Columbia and Snake Rivers exceeding 10ppm of particulate matter. Walla Walla County, WA-Ecology, USDA NRCS and USDA FSA are working to address these concerns. Encouraging best management practices related to conservation cover and agricultural burning can reduce particulate matter and address air quality concerns.

Program Areas

There are two program areas: natural resource programs and district programs.

- **Natural Resource Programs** are those intended to address specific, identified natural resource concerns in the district area.
- **District Programs** are those supporting basic district operations, education and outreach with landowners, engagement with other processes and entities to advance the work of the district,

etc. Both program area activities relate to the district's long-term goals as stated in the 5-year plan.

Natural Resource Program

Natural Resource Priority Program Area: Critical Areas & Wildlife protection

Goal(s): Increase stability of fish and wildlife populations and protect/enhance habitats

Natural Resource Measurable Result Objective: Remove one fish barrier/install one fish screen per year in Walla Walla County. Assess critical area function and needs within Walla Walla County.

Programmatic Measurable Result Objective: Design one fish related barrier removal or fish screen project annually. Develop farm plans at the request of landowners to address critical area concerns on their property.

Funding Source(s): Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC), Walla Walla County, WA State Dept. of Ecology, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO): Snake River Salmon Recovery Office, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), WA State Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR) and private mitigation funds

Activities for FY2025	Target Dates	Person Responsible	Time (Days) Required	Estimated Funding	Notes
+Lead the Voluntary Stewardship Program including monitoring, developing VSP focused farm plans, and cost-share projects. + Seek funds to design and install fish screens in cooperation & construct fish barrier removal projects.	On-going	Conservation Scientist	140	135,000	Walla Walla County contract
Monitor construction of stream restoration on the Coppei Creek Section 7	Summer 2024	Conservation Scientist	80	691,000	RCO/ Ecology/ Mitigation for TA and project costs
Monitor construction of stream restoration on upper Mill Creek	Summer 2024	Conservation Scientist	40	516,000	Ecology FbD/ Ecology OCR/ SCC Salmon Recovery **additional costs on separate line items
Advance design and bid documents for lower Mill Creek (Wallula Avenue to Bunchgrass Lane)	Through June 2026	Conservation Scientist	80	110,000	ECY cost through June 2025 only. Installation may be July-Sept 2025
Prepare permits and public bidding for Touchet RM 35 and RM 42 projects for Summer 2025 construction	Through June 2026	Conservation Scientist	80	65,000	RCO, ECY cost through June 2025 only. Installation will be July-Sept 2025

Conduct Wildfire Ready Neighbor home assessments with DNR. Conduct thinning of diseased riparian forests along Coppei Creek	Through June 2025	Conservation Scientist	100	75,000	SCC Forest Health & DNR WRN
Seek funds for in-stream restoration and flood mitigation projects on the Touchet River, Walla Walla River, Mill Creek and tributaries.	On-going	Conservation Scientist	70	26,000	SCC Implementation
Complete status reviews of CRP fields or CSP contracts	Through Sept. 2025	Conservation Scientist	50	5,000	NRCS Task Order

Natural Resource Priority Program Area: Water Quality

Goal(s): Reduce pollutants to waters of Walla Walla

Natural Resource Measurable Result Objective: Install 5 acres or 1 mile of riparian buffer.

Programmatic Measurable Result Objective: Work with Walla Walla landowners and conservation partners to remove Walla Walla streams and rivers from the 303d list by planting and maintaining riparian forest buffers on 85% of eligible streambanks, controlling invasive noxious weeds, and restoring natural river function to area rivers and streams.

Funding Source(s): Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC), Walla Walla County, Dept. of Ecology, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), Dept. of Ecology Terry Husseman Account (THA), USDA Farm Service Agency & Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Washington State Dept. of Agriculture (WSDA)

Activities for FY2025	Target Dates	Person Responsible	Time (Days) Required	Estimated Funding	Notes
+Maintain and monitor current enrollment of ~2,500 acres and about 110 contracts. +Assess 6 expiring contracts for re-enrollment, protecting 10–15-year-old buffers. +Conduct mid-management reviews on 20 CREP contracts (41 completed in 2023)	On-going through June 2025	Conservation Scientist (2)	215	158,000	SCC CREP TA and project costs
Continue implementation of Touchet River Canopy Cover (False Indigo removal) replanting project	Through June 2025	Conservation Scientist	20	100,000	Ecology Water Quality includes project costs

Develop and install two riparian forest buffers along the Walla Walla River	Through June 2027	Conservation Scientist	200	350,000	RCO: Riparian cost through June 2025 only
+Seek funds for riparian buffers not eligible for CREP. +Address erosion and damages to streams and fields from natural disasters which impact water quality.	On-going	Conservation Scientist, District Manager	25	10,000	SCC Implementation
Develop and install riparian forest buffers along waterways	On-going	Conservation Scientist	60	182,000	SCC Salmon Riparian includes project costs
Coordinate with livestock producers on water quality concerns.	on-going	Conservation Scientist, District Manager	4	3,000	SCC Livestock
Remove house debris on upper Mill Creek	Summer 2024	Conservation Scientist	10	48,500	Ecology THA includes project costs
Install log piles on cut bank in Dry creek and enhance riparian buffer	Summer 2024	Conservation Scientist	30	60,000	Ecology THA & SCC NRI includes project costs
Aid and monitor construction of bridge across Coppei Creek	Summer 2024	Conservation Scientist	25	51,000	SCC NRI includes project costs
Promote soil testing and soil health practices	on-going	Conservation Scientist, District Manager	4	1,000	SCC Implementation

Natural Resource Priority Program Area: Water Quantity

Goal: Assist with restoring flow in Walla Walla area waterways.

Funding Source(s): Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC)

Activities for FY2025	Target Dates	Person Responsible	Time (Days) Required	Estimated Funding	Notes
Assist landowners in developing on-farm irrigation efficiencies projects.	On-going	Conservation Scientist, District Manager	30	372,000	SCC Irrigation Efficiency
Work with the partners to improve water management.	On-going	Conservation Scientist, District Manager	10	5,000	SCC Irrigation Efficiency
Develop the Gardena Farms District #13 Pine Creek Siphon and upper canal projects	On-going	Conservation Scientist, District Manager	100	15,000	SCC Irrigation Efficiency: GFD allocation for TA and engineering

Natural Resource Priority Program Area: Air Quality

Goal(s): Reduce air pollutants by assisting with Agricultural Burn Permit applications in Walla Walla County.

Natural Resource Measurable Result Objective: Agricultural burn related air quality particulates will be reduced over time.

Programmatic Measurable Result Objective: Landowners (25 to 70) will be guided through the agricultural burn permit Best Management Practices and permit applications resulting in a reduction of burn related air quality particulates.

Funding Source(s): Washington Dept. of Ecology contract with Walla Walla County, landowner fees

Activities for FY2025	Target Dates	Person Responsible	Time (Days) Required	Estimated Funding	Notes
Coordinate rental of no-till drill with area producers	On-going	Conservation Scientist	4	1500	Fees
+Process prescribed agricultural burn permits. Attend Ag Burn Task Force meetings. +Provide technical assistance in Best Management Practices regarding tillage and air quality.	On-going	Conservation Scientist, District Manager	80	25,000	Ecology/ Walla Walla County contract

District Program

District Program Area: Education and Outreach

Goal(s): Continue providing technical assistance to the Walla Walla County community. Share progress on restoration efforts and participate in regional planning forums.

Programmatic Measurable Result Objective:

Education and outreach program will include 1) maintaining publications including website, quarterly newsletters and 2) conducting a farmer hosted mini-session, workshop and/or tour. Education and outreach programs will target and engage 30 landowners annually.

Funding Source(s): Washington State Conservation Commission through Implementation Conservation Scientist; Snake River Salmon Recovery Office through Lead Entity (LE), and other Conservation Districts

Activities for FY2025	Target Dates	Person Responsible	Days Required	Estimated Funding	Notes
Meet all statutory requirements of RCW 89.08: conducting regular audits, fiscal management,	On-going	Bookkeeper	125	50,000	SCC Implementation & Overhead

commission reporting, and management.					
Maintain certifications and skills of WWCCD staff through various trainings (WADE, GIS, Riparian Planting Symposium, SAO, NRCS Conservation planner and others)	On-going	All staff, as needed	4 to 10 each	10,000	SCC Implementation
Inform the public of WWCCD mission accomplishments through quarterly newsletter (650 subscribers), website, videos, and other outreach media.	On-going	District Manager, Staff	25	4000	SCC Implementation
Coordinate a Farmer to Farmer Mini-Session/ Webinar with area producers to inform them of conservation innovations and cost-share assistance.	On-going	District Manager	7	2000	SCC Implementation
Collect yearly and maintain historic records of rainfall data to benefit the community.	On-going	Conservation Technician	5	1,000	SCC Implementation
Educate area youth and landowners through community events (Wheat Week, Fair, Return-to-the-River Event)	On-going	Conservation Scientist (2)	20	22,000	SCC Implementation, LE, other CDs, WSU grant
Participate in regional Lead Entity Committee/Regional Technical Team/Snake River Salmon Recovery Board activities.	On-going	Conservation Scientist (2)	15	4000	LE

Budget

FY 2025 OPERATING BUDGET (7/1/2024-6/30/2025)

Revenues

Project	Salary plus project cost share
SCC (Implementation, Irrigation Efficiency, Basic, Natural Resource Investments, Riparian, Forest Thinning, Livestock)	849,000
SCC-CREP	158,000
SCC/Walla Walla Co.-Voluntary Stewardship Program	135,000
Priority Projects (Coppei 7, Mill Creek FbD, Canopy Cover 2, Touchet 35, Touchet 42, Lower Mill Creek, WW River Riparian, Dry Creek)	1,924,500
SRB Lead Entity	4,500
Ecology/ Walla Walla Co. MOU for Burn Permit	25,000
Other CDs, NRCS (Task Orders), WSU, DNR, equipment rental fees	40,000
Total Revenue:	3,136,000

Expenses and Other Uses

Project Description	FY25 Est. Expenses
Forest Health, Salmon Riparian, Irrigation Efficiency	586,000
Natural Resource Investments	79,000
CREP cost-share	54,000
SCC/Walla Walla Co.-Voluntary Stewardship Program	50,000
Priority Projects (Coppei 7, Mill Creek FbD, Canopy Cover 2, Touchet 35, Touchet 42, Lower Mill Creek, WW River Riparian)	1,705,000
Subtotal Project Expenses:	2,474,000
Wages and Benefits: 8 FT employees	540,000
General Office Expenses	115,827
Total Expenses:	3,129,827

JULY 2024-JUNE 2025 PROPOSED BUDGET

