

Palouse Conservation District

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State Legislative District #9
Congressional District #5

2016 Feature Accomplishment

Palouse watershed Regional Conservation Partnership Program

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Resource challenges within the Palouse watershed include loss of native wildlife habitat, poor soil health, and water quality degraded by high temperatures, nutrients, and sediments. These issues are a concern for local wildlife and aquatic species as well as listed anadromous fish species of the Snake River. The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) was formed to work across the watershed to more effectively address these issues, and provide landowners with multiple funding options to implement conservation practices.



Monitoring team evaluates changes in water quality, soil health, and wildlife habitat associated with voluntary conservation practices



Palouse watershed producers meet with RCPP conservation planners to discuss implementation of conservation tillage and riparian buffers

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS In the first year, the RCPP has implemented 7,500 acres of direct seed/conservation tillage and over 150 acres of riparian buffers. We maintained over 16 riparian buffers and wetlands, and implemented 22 acres of conservation easement protecting Palouse prairie and the federally threatened Spalding's catchfly. We also helped 14 producers become "Farmed Smart" certified, covering approximately 48,000 acres and 20 miles of stream protection.

Partners have collectively contributed over \$2 million in the Palouse watershed to improve soil health, water quality, and habitat during year one of RCPP.

KEY PARTNERS: Palouse Rock Lake, Whitman, Pine Creek, Lincoln, Adams, and Spokane Conservation Districts; Latah Soil and Water Conservation District; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Washington State Conservation Commission; Dept of Ecology; Palouse Land Trust; Pacific Northwest Direct Seed Assn.; Dept of Fish and Wildlife; Idaho Dept of Fish and Wildlife; WSU; University of Idaho; Nez Perce Tribe; Palouse Clearwater Environmental Institute

Other Accomplishments



Relocation of this livestock facility uphill and out of the riparian area will improve the landowner's operation while improving water quality.



Establishing trees and shrubs along the South Fork Palouse River helps this landowner achieve wildlife goals while improving water quality and habitat.



Volunteers work with private landowners to install native plants to restore upland habitat and create wildlife corridors.

More work to do!

- Assist growers who are sustainably producing crops while protecting water and air quality, building soil health, and promoting wildlife habitat to become "Farmed Smart" certified.
- Initiate the Palouse Watershed Enhanced Riparian Buffer Program by providing landowner-identified, watershed-specific incentives designed to maximize voluntary participation and resource benefits.
- Implement listed species recovery projects.