



Palouse News

Palouse CD Awarded Southeast Area District of the Year!



This Fall, the Palouse Conservation District was presented the Southeast Conservation District of the Year award by the Washington State Conservation Commission. Along with an engraved plaque, a letter of recognition was also received. The PCD was congratulated on “the outstanding development and implementation of the WRIA 34 Regional Conservation Partnership Program including the coordination with the 16 partner organizations and neighboring conservation districts on this multi-million dollar cost share program for producers in the five county-two state region.” The State Conservation Commission also commented on the PCD’s “work in conservation education for both youth and adults, the number of projects planned, prioritized and entered into the Conservation Practice Data System, expansion of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program in the Palouse River Watershed, Washington State University Internship Program, and continued leadership in partnering with Washington State University, agencies, organizations, and conservation districts. “ We at the Palouse Conservation District are greatly appreciative of this honor and look forward to continued dedication to quality work in the upcoming year! Thank you for your support!

Dew Drop Seed Drill Lease Program



Need help seeding those small areas?? The Palouse Conservation District has a Dew Drop Drill for lease. Perfect for seeding grasses, wildflowers, or forbs on small acreage plots and CRP fields. This drill can handle a wide variety of seed sizes and types and can be pulled through prepared seedbeds or interseed into existing stands of vegetation. Leaving a 3' wide no-row pattern the Dew Drop Drill is convenient and easy pull with an ATV, UTV, or small tractor. The drill has a 1 7/8-inch ball hitch coupler used to hook up the drill to its towing vehicle. An adjustable top link is used to level the drill to accommodate different hitch heights and can be used to fine-tune the disk/tine angle. There are two rows of disks mounted on the disk rack. The disk rack allows the changing of the angles of the disks for more or less tillage of the seedbed. On the rear of the disk rack is a row of harrow tines, they do the last turning and levelling the soil. The disk rack is raised and lowered by an electric cylinder that is controlled by the operator on the tow vehicle via a remote-control box. Please check our website for more info.

Fees to lease the drill include: \$50 pick-up/check in fee, \$100/day with a \$150 discount rental over the weekend, and a refundable \$50 cleaning deposit. A copy of your driver's license and vehicle insurance is also required. Transportation of the drill will be on your own and is easy to do with a small trailer.

Please contact Drew, Randy, Jake, or Steven if interested. Call the Palouse Conservation District at 509-332-4101!

Drew- Ext 108 drews@palousecd.org
Randy- Ext 104 randys@palousecd.org
Jake- Ext 102 jakec@palousecd.org
Steven- Ext 114 stevenw@palousecd.org



Christmas Tree Drop Off/Pick-up



Don't know what to do with your Christmas tree after the holidays? The Palouse Conservation District can help! Feel free to drop your tree off at the PCD office (1300 NE Henley Ct), any time after Christmas. Or if you don't have a vehicle to move your tree, we will spend one day, **Monday January 16th** picking up trees.

If you would like PCD to pick up your tree, please email Bryana at bryanac@palousecd.org or call her at 509-332-4101 Ext 110.

PCD will be using your used Christmas tree to help with some of our bio-engineered bank stabilization projects along the North and South Fork Palouse Rivers.

Palouse Prairie Remnant Survey Successes

This summer's field season wrapped up the final phase of the Palouse prairie remnant inventory project. PCD has been involved with this project for several years now and the actual site visits to conduct botanical surveys occurred last summer and this summer. These surveys will be used to assess the accuracy of a GIS-based map of potential Palouse prairie remnants in Whitman County.

Approximately 43 individual remnants were surveyed last summer and 30 were surveyed this summer. Fewer individual remnants were surveyed this summer, but several of them were much larger and required multiple visits.

Several nice botanical surprises were found during the course of this work. Two new populations of the federally threatened Spalding's catchfly (*Silene spaldingii*) were found. This rare plant only grows in the highest quality prairie remnants and thus is quite rare on the Palouse. Even more significantly, two new populations of the extremely rare (in Washington) broad-fruit mariposa lily (*Calochortus nitidus*) were discovered this summer. While more frequently found in Idaho, this species has not been seen in Washington other than a single sighting made in 1995 (which hasn't been found since). These are the first two records of broad-fruit mariposa lily in Whitman County in nearly 100 years; the last collections were made before the 1920s and this species was presumed extirpated from the Palouse. Additionally, several new populations of the rare Palouse goldenweed (*Pyrrocoma liatrifolmis*) and the endemic Palouse thistle (*Cirsium brevifolium*), a non-weedy native thistle species, were found across the county.

All in all, it was a productive field season with many high-quality remnants surveyed and a lot of steep hillsides surveyed.



Honey Bees and Plants

Since 2006, as much as 70% of some bee populations have died as a result of Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD). Seventy farm grown crops, about one-third of our natural food supply, rely on honey bees for pollination. Imagine peanut butter without jelly. If the honey bees disappear, so will the grapes and the strawberries, along with many of the other foods that have become not only favorites, but staples of the modern diet. You can help restore the honey bee population with a bee friendly garden and landscape.

It isn't difficult to make your yard, garden or even patio space a haven beneficial for bees. You'll be helping these important insects, as well as bringing more nature to your backdoor.

The greater the plant diversity, the more bees you will attract and support. Always try to choose as many native plants as possible, and consult with experts to find vegetation that will thrive in your specific conditions. The WSU Master Gardner Extension has many articles regarding bee keeping, beneficial plants, and resources on the topic.

Plant long blooming flowers or a variety of plants that will bloom at different times throughout the spring and fall.

Honey bees need to eat until they retreat to their hives for the winter. Try to group at least ten bee plants in a bunch or grouping.

Annuals: Asters, Calliopsis, Clover, Dandelions, Marigolds, Poppies, Sunflowers, Zinnias.

Perennials: Buttercups, Clematis, Cosmos, Crocuses, Dahlias, Echinacea, English Ivy, Foxglove, Geraniums, Germander, Hyacinth, Roses, Sedum, Snowdrops, Honeysuckle, Indigo.

Honey Bee friendly garden plants attract and nourish honey bees with nectar producing plants. Wild flowers, including asters, goldenrod, sunflowers, even dandelions will provide food for the hives, and the native bee population as well.

Plant flowering vegetables and fruits will not only provide a great source of food for your family and they will provide nectar for the bees. The following are a list of some beneficial garden fruit and vegetables.

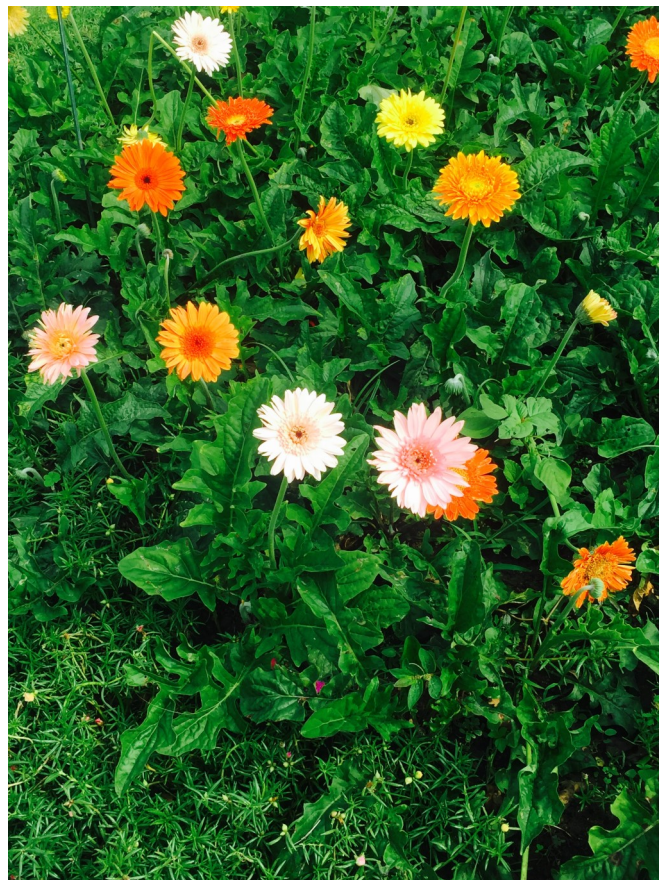
Garden Plants: Blackberries, Cantaloupe, Cucumbers, Gourds, Peppers, Pumpkins, Raspberries, Squash, Strawberries, Watermelons, Wild Garlic, Herbs, Coriander/Cilantro, Fennel, Lavender, Mints, Rosemary, Sage, Thyme.

Not only are plants critical to honey bees thriving, trees provide additional nectar and protection for honey bees. Trees provide shade that helps reduce evaporation of water and shelter for nesting and foraging. The following is a list of honey bee beneficial trees.

Trees: Alder, Fruit Trees (especially Crab Apples), Hawthornes, Magnolias, Maples, Poplar, and Willows.

Honey bees need water in addition to nectar to have a strong colony and survive. Provide a pond, a fountain, or some other fresh water source. Watering your garden at optimal hours to avoid evaporation will provide a suitable source of water as well.

We all need to take simple steps around our homes, farms, and forests to provide an environment that is healthy for bees. Little actions have big results, so next time you are at the nursery take a moment to pick a plant that will not only benefit you, but benefit the honey bees as well.



Washington State Legislature and Conservation Commission triples resources for local partnership

Conservation Districts see increase in jobs and funds for farmers in the Palouse watershed

The Palouse Watershed Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is helping farmers, landowners, and producers establish voluntary incentive-based conservation practices that enhance producer operations, and improve soil and water quality and wildlife habitat. This year, 61 applicants applied for financial assistance for projects including riparian buffers and filter strips, direct seed and mulch till practices, and offsite water and fencing for livestock. Applications are being ranked by their conservation benefits, and the top quarter or more of these projects will be funded within the year. The Washington State Legislature and the Washington Conservation Commission have tripled the funds available this year for applicants, which will increase the number of projects that will be funded by up to 250% from last year's count of 9 projects that ranked high out of a total of 54 applications. Senate Majority Leader Mark Schoesler says, "In the past, at times, the Palouse River has run brown. Due to the hard work of landowners, this has changed, and they deserve recognition for their contributions."

Applicants showed an increased interest in implementing riparian buffers this year. Through these funds, the Partners have designed enhanced riparian buffer incentives to assist landowners and land managers financially in building wildlife habitat, restoring soil health, and maintaining water quality across their land by planting their choice of native trees, shrubs, grasses or forbs. Incentives are designed to compensate for loss of ground and production, and to help protect plantings and control weeds. Producers also showed an overwhelming interest in costshare for direct seed or no-till practices, which reduce erosion and fossil fuel usage. "The landowners that are planning and implementing their conservation systems are taking care of our 'Palouse', a national treasure known for its deep, productive soil", commented Ray Ledgerwood, Conservation Commission Region Manager.



Palouse Conservation District and Partners have also increased local staff to help plan and implement these producer-led projects through a combination of partner, state, and federal Natural Resources Conservation Service funds. Projects are located throughout parts of Whitman, Adams, Lincoln, and Spokane Counties in Washington, and parts of Latah County in Idaho. Eligible applicants will work with RCPP staff over the winter to develop conservation plans and implement projects. Landowners and producers in the Palouse watershed are eligible to sign up with their local Conservation District and are encouraged to call or visit for more details. Laura Heinse, Conservation Partnership Manager, notes that she is very excited about the great response from local landowners to improve their land and practices. "The RCPP allows our planners to provide applicants with a bunch of different funding sources, so that applicants can plan more holistically across their land. We are working hard to make sure these funds are going on the ground to turn the dial for conservation in the Palouse watershed." To apply for assistance or to learn more, visit your local Conservation District or NRCS office, the Palouse Land Trust Pacific Northwest Direct Seed Association, or call the Palouse Conservation District at 509-332-4101.

About the Palouse Conservation District

[The Palouse Conservation District works through voluntary, incentive-based programs to assist landowners and agricultural operators with the conservation of natural resources throughout the district. A volunteer five-member Board of Supervisors along with Associate Supervisors, staff and volunteers carry out District programs and services that benefit both landowners and the environment. The district's mission is to actively assist current and future generations of land managers (rural and urban) in implementing conservation practices by providing educational, technical, and financial assistance. To learn more, visit <http://www.palousecd.org/>, or call us at 509-332-4101.]



Palouse Conservation District
1300 NE Henley Ct.
Pullman, WA 99163

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**Don't forget about the
2017 Annual District
Tree Sale!**

Friday, March 31st 9:00-4:30
and
Saturday, April 1st 9:00-1:00

Be sure to visit our webpage!

Though our webpage has undergone many changes,
our address remains the same! Take a peek at
www.palousecd.org.

If you would like to switch to our e-newsletter, please
add your email address to our contact list by visiting
our webpage, calling the district, or sending an email
to palousecd@palousecd.org!

Cost-Share Available!

*Palouse Conservation District has cost-share
available for projects that improve soil health,
reduce erosion, improve grazing lands, establish
or enhance native vegetation, restore riparian
areas, improve wildlife habitat...*

**Protect valuable natural resources and
improve your land and/or operation**

Projects must meet NRCS standards and specs

**Call today to start a cost-share
application (509)332-4101**

The Board of Supervisors meets monthly on the
2nd Tuesday of each month (call or check our website for
meeting time/location)

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