



FY 2014 (7/1/13 – 6/30/14) Annual Work Plan Whatcom Conservation District (Adopted May 9, 2013)

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Mission of the Whatcom Conservation District

- ***to assist land managers with their conservation choices.***

Natural Resource Priorities

- Water Quality
 - *Natural resource priority description:* To protect water quality for beneficial uses. Address the fecal coliform contamination of the Nooksack River and its lowland tributaries; California, Dakota and Terrell Creeks and Sumas River.
 - *Is this a state and or regional natural resource priority along with being a local priority? If yes, indicate supporting information:* Yes. It is a state and regional natural resource priority. Former Governor Gregoire mandated the improvement of water quality in Whatcom County in December 2011.
 - *Source of data relied upon to indicate the resource concern:*
 - WRIA 1 Salmonid Recovery Plan, June 2005
 - WRIA 1 Watershed Management Project, March 2000
 - WRIA 1 Detailed Implementation Plan, July 2007
 - Whatcom County 2012 Water Quality Report and Priority Areas, Fecal Coliform in Coastal Drainages, Whatcom County Public Works, March 2013
 - Bacterial TMDLs for Nooksack River, Johnson Creek and Drayton Harbor
 - Washington 303(d) List
 - North West Indian College water quality monitoring from 1998 to 2007
 - Whatcom County Water Quality Monitoring Program, current
 - Nooksack River Watershed Riparian Function Assessment, Treva Coe, Nooksack Indian Tribe Report #2001-001, October 2001
 - Portage Bay Closure Response Strategy, 1998
 - Drayton Harbor Shellfish Protection District Recovery Plan - 2007 Update, March 2007
 - Increasing trends of bacterial contamination shown through water quality testing are threatening the closure of Portage Bay to commercial shellfish harvest. Much of Drayton Harbor is entirely closed to commercial shellfish harvesting or conditionally open during a few months of the year. A portion of Birch Bay is closed to the recreational harvest of shellfish. Livestock and failing Onsite Septic Systems are thought to be major sources of this contamination. The Governor has directed State agencies to address the pollution problems in Whatcom County.
 - *Other entities engaged in addressing this resource concern:* Department of Ecology, Department of Agriculture, Whatcom County, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Lummi Nation



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- Water Quality & Water Quantity
 - *Natural resource priority description:* To protect water quality and enhance quantity for beneficial uses. Address degraded conditions of riparian and wetland areas in agricultural areas.
 - *Is this a state and or regional natural resource priority along with being a local priority? If yes, indicate supporting information:* Yes. It is a state and regional natural resource priority. Former Governor Gregoire mandated the improvement of water quality in Whatcom County in December 2011. This is being implemented locally through the Whatcom Water Quality Initiative.
 - *Source of data relied upon to indicate the resource concern:* Same as above.
Lowland Whatcom County has been highly modified through clearing, ditching, draining, dredging, tiling, filling and grading in order to make its lands productive for agriculture. The tributaries once produced large populations of salmon and trout. Some species (Spring Chinook, Bull Trout and Steelhead Trout) that use these areas are now threatened with extinction. Many of the lowland tributaries suffer from low flows in the summer. This isn't good for fish or farms. A program of voluntary restoration of riparian and wetland areas can perhaps avoid the imposition of mandatory buffers typically prescribed to recover these species. By restoring wetlands, water can be stored during the rainy season for later use.
 - *Other entities engaged in addressing this resource concern:* Whatcom County, Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association, Lummi Indian Nation
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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.*

Natural Resource Priority Program Area: Water Quality

Goal(s): Reduce the contributions of bacterial pollution from livestock operations in the Nooksack River and its lowland tributaries; California, Dakota and Terrell Creeks and Sumas River.

Natural Resource Measurable Result Objective: Reduce the contributions of bacterial pollution from livestock operations within target watersheds to TMDL levels or below as measured by Whatcom County.



Programmatic Measurable Result Objectives:

- Deliver technical and cost share assistance to commercial farming operations that result in the implementation of best management practices that protect and improve water quality.
- Consult with agencies on policies and regulatory programs that protect the environment not only to ensure program effectiveness but also avoid undue or unintended negative impacts to livestock-based industries.

Commercial Livestock Operations

- Provide technical assistance to 60 producers
- Conduct risk 30 assessments for and provide recommendations. (Steps 1-5 of farm plan process)
- Develop 10 custom LNMPs – (complete farm plan through certification.)
- Assist 30 operators apply for cost-share programs to install needed BMPs.
- Provide 60 engineering designs and specifications.

Non-Commercial Livestock Operations

- Provide technical assistance to 40 individuals
 - Conduct 15 risk assessments and provide recommendations
 - Develop 14 standardized LNMPs for non-commercial & small commercial livestock operations and/or crop producers
 - Assist 5 owners to implement their plans
 - Complete critical area/land capability assessments for 40 individuals
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Funding Source(s): Washington Conservation Commission, US Environmental Protection Agency through ARM and Birch Bay Project grants, Natural Resources Conservation Service

| Activities for FY 2014 | Target Dates | Person Responsible | Time (Days) Required | Estimated Funding |
|--|--------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Commercial Livestock | | | | |
| Provide Technical Assistance to Livestock Operations | On going | Livestock Team | 11 | \$ 5,100 |
| Conduct Risk Assessments | On going | Livestock Team | 23 | \$ 9,514 |
| Develop/Update Custom LNMPs | On going | Livestock Team | 146 | \$ 46,330 |
| Implement Custom LNMPs | On going | Livestock Team | 59 | \$ 25,819 |
| Implement Cost-share Program | On going | Livestock Team | 11 | \$ 5,185 |
| ARM Research Project | On going | Science Team | 203 | \$ 60,756 |
| Other Research Projects | On going | Science Team | 23 | \$ 8,827 |
| TSP - Planning & Design work | On going | Engineering Team | 295 | \$ 126,207 |
| Non-Commercial Livestock | | | | |
| Provide Technical Assistance to Livestock Operations | On going | Livestock Team | 5 | \$ 1,539 |
| Conduct Risk Assessments | On going | Livestock Team | 23 | \$ 7,695 |
| Develop Standardized LNMPs | On going | Livestock Team | 97 | \$ 26,454 |
| Implement Standardized LNMPs | On going | Livestock Team | 56 | \$ 19,238 |
| Implement Cost-share Program | On going | Livestock Team | 9 | \$ 3,046 |
| EPA Birch Bay Project | On going | Livestock Team | 131 | \$ 49,454 |
| General | | | | |
| Work with Agencies & Stakeholders | On going | As Appointed | 52 | \$ 26,228 |
| TOTALS: | | | 1141 | \$ 421,393 |



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Natural Resource Priority Program Area: Water Quality & Water Quantity

Goal(s): Address degraded conditions of riparian and wetland areas in agricultural areas.

Natural Resource Measurable Result Objective:

- Enhance fish habitat while maintaining drainage for farm fields.
- Improve hydrological conditions of the lower watersheds.

Programmatic Measurable Result Objectives:

- Provide technical and cost share assistance to landowners for the installation and maintenance of CREP eligible practices along eligible watercourses.
- Partner with the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association and obtain grant funding to re-meander and install large woody debris in straightened and degraded watercourses.
- Partner with Whatcom County Planning & Development Services to deliver a program of technical and cost share assistance to non-commercial livestock operations that result in the implementation of best management practices that protect sensitive areas and improve water quality.
 - Develop and plant 24 CREP projects on 72 acres
 - Maintain 129 projects on 505 acres
 - Remove 3 fish passage barrier culverts and replace with bridges.
 - Replace two hardened crossings with bridges.
 - Daylight 500 linear feet of stream

Funding Source(s): Washington Conservation Commission, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Environmental Protection Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service

| Activities for FY 2014 | Target Dates | Person Responsible | Time (Days) Required | Estimated Funding |
|---|---------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| RIPARIAN/WETLAND ENHANCEMENT CREP | | | | |
| Recruit new CREP Projects | Winter/Spring | Riparian Team | 54 | \$ 18,081 |
| Develop and Plant CREP Projects | Winter/Spring | Riparian Team | 203 | \$ 68,235 |
| Monitor and properly maintain CREP Projects | Summer/Fall | Riparian Team | 270 | \$ 90,112 |



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|--|----------|---------------|----|----|--------|
| Effectively administer CREP cost-share and maintenance reimbursement program | On going | Riparian Team | 79 | \$ | 27,589 |
|--|----------|---------------|----|----|--------|

WCFCZD Riparian and Flood Control Projects

| | | | | | |
|---|--------|-------|----|----|-------|
| Plant & maintain riparian buffers, provide TA for flood project | Spring | Frank | 25 | \$ | 9,963 |
|---|--------|-------|----|----|-------|

Conservation Partners Salmon Recovery Project

| | | | | | |
|---|----------|-------|-----|----|--------|
| Recruit landowners and secure habitat project funding | On going | Frank | 104 | \$ | 41,665 |
|---|----------|-------|-----|----|--------|

General

| | | | | | |
|---|----------|---------------|----|----|--------|
| Record plan and management data records into database | On going | Riparian Team | 9 | \$ | 3,305 |
| Create/Update Plan GIS Shape files | On going | Riparian Team | 32 | \$ | 11,076 |
| Mitigate/adapt for Climate Change | On going | Riparian Team | 7 | \$ | 3,630 |
| Receive Professional Training Appropriate for Staff to Meet Program Tasks | On going | Riparian Team | 20 | \$ | 6,951 |

| | | | | | |
|----------------|--|--|------------|-----------|----------------|
| TOTALS: | | | 801 | \$ | 280,607 |
|----------------|--|--|------------|-----------|----------------|

District Program Area: Public Information & Education

Goal(s):

- Landowners, students and other public entities will make wise use of natural resources for present and future generations.
- Residents of Whatcom County will have a better appreciation for the value of livestock-based industries.

District Program Measurable Result Objective:

Programmatic Measurable Result Objectives:

- *Promote conservation-wise stewardship practices to landowners, students and other public entities through various media.*
- *Connect with rural and urban dwellers through a plant sale, workshops and county fair.*
- *Hold workshops on topics of small farm stewardship and low impact development.*
- *Coordinate with other organizations and agencies on natural resource education efforts*



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Funding Source(s): Washington Conservation Commission, US Environmental Protection Agency, Proceeds of District Native Plant Sale

| Activities for FY 2014 | Target Dates | Person Responsible | Time (Days) Required | Estimated Funding |
|---|--------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| PUBLIC INFORMATION & EDUCATION | | | | |
| Publish Whatcom Conservation News | Annually | WCD Staff | 34 | \$ 11,799 |
| Publish presentations, flyers, videos, internet content | On going | WCD Staff | 5 | \$ 1,207 |
| Conduct Annual Native Plant Sale | Feb/Mar | WCD Staff | 38 | \$ 11,496 |
| Provide support (office, graphics, website & GIS) to partners in sub-basin initiatives | On going | WCD Staff | 34 | \$ 11,543 |
| Conduct livestock stewardship workshops | On going | Livestock Team | 27 | \$ 8,571 |
| TOTALS: | | | 137 | \$ 44,615 |

District Program Area: District Operations

Goal(s):

- Strengthen partnerships and relationships with NRCS and other agencies and groups.
- Put the District on firm financial footing.
- Maintain the appropriate technical staff to accomplish District goals

District Program Measurable Result Objective:

- *Support the District's Board so they may serve successfully as the grassroots representatives of landowners and general public of Whatcom County by achieving widespread voluntary cooperation in natural resource conservation programs.*
- *Serve as the technical resource for landowners, general public and agencies on conservation matters.*
- *Administer District operations to ensure compliance with its enabling statute RCW 89.08 et seq., as well as the policies and standards established by the Commission or other funding sources.*
- *Capture financial resources to implement Annual and Long Range Plans*
- *Participate in the County's initiative to develop a comprehensive water resources management funding strategy.*
- *Maintain the appropriate technical staff to accomplish the District goals.*



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Funding Source(s): All Grants, Discretionary Funds

| Activities for FY 2014 | Target Dates | Person Responsible | Time (Days) Required | Estimated Funding |
|--|--------------|------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| DISTRICT OPERATIONS | | | | |
| Recruit/Support District Supervisors and Associates in implementing the District Charge. | On going | Board & Executive Director | 5 | \$ 2,420 |
| General Technical Assistance to Agencies, Public and Landowners not addressed through other programs. | On going | Board & Executive Director | 68 | \$ 36,304 |
| Administer Programs/Grants consistent with prescribed management standards | On going | Administrative Team | 207 | \$ 80,280 |
| Pursue and obtain funding to implement District Annual and Long Range Plans | On going | Exec. Dir. & Appointed Staff | 20 | \$ 10,891 |
| Provide the training, equipment and support to District staff necessary to successfully accomplish their respective program responsibilities | On going | Administrative Team | 7 | \$ 2,717 |
| TOTAL: | | | 306 | \$ 132,613 |

FY14 Desired Level of Staffing and Funding: (budget for FY 2014 – 7/1/13 – 6/10/14)

| Operations | Full-time Equivalents | Estimated Funding |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Improving Water Resources | 5.07 | \$ 421,393.32 |
| Habitat Enhancement | 3.56 | \$ 280,607.04 |
| Public Information & Education | 0.61 | \$ 44,614.80 |
| District Operations | 1.36 | \$ 132,612.84 |
| TOTAL: | | \$ 879,228.00 |
| Overhead (25%) | | \$ 219,807.00 |
| | | \$ 1,099,035.00 |