

A Quarterly Educational Publication of the Whatcom Conservation District – Lynden, Washington

## 10th Annual Plant Sale

Saturday, March 8th at Ten Mile Grange

This year, in an effort to reduce costs associated with the plant sale, Whatcom Conservation District is using a new format for ordering and

ter quality, enhanced fish and wildlife habitat, reduction of wind and soil erosion, cleaner air, reduction of energy costs, and beautification



purchasing plants from our annual plant sale. Pre-orders will only be accepted for orders totaling \$100 minimum. Pre-orders require 50% pre-payment and must be received in the District office by February 28, 2003. All other purchases will be based on a first-come, first-serve basis on the day of the sale.

**WHY:** The main purpose of the District's annual plant sale is to promote conservation of our natural resources. Planting native trees and shrubs can provide many positive benefits to your property and the natural environment: improved wa-

ter quality, enhanced fish and wildlife habitat, reduction of wind and soil erosion, cleaner air, reduction of energy costs, and beautification

**WHEN:** The sale will be 8am - 4 pm on Saturday, March 8, 2003.

**WHERE:** Ten Mile Grange (on Hannegan Road across the street from the District office).

**WHAT:** This year there will be 25 different species of seedling trees and shrubs (most of them

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

## Mike & Elaine McRory Earn Statewide Recognition

Each year the Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) solicits nominees deserving recognition for outstanding efforts toward implementing on-the-ground conservation projects. On December 3, 2002 at its annual meeting in Wenatchee, the WACD presented the 2002 Washington State Special Service Award to Mike and Elaine McRory of Bellingham. The Special Service Award honors those outside the professional ranks of conservation work for outstanding achievement and contribution in the field of conservation.

Mike McRory, a retired dentist, and his wife Elaine have dedicated the past ten years of their lives to improving streams in Whatcom County. Their tireless work includes planning, planting, and maintaining streamside revegetation projects. The McRory's work has not only improved habitat for fish but also

has inspired volunteers and students of all ages to take part in improving



(l-r) Mike & Elaine McRory with Wade Troutman, WACD president, at the December 2003 WACD annual meeting.

our environment. Although the McRory's have worked countywide, their primary focus has been Whatcom Creek. Maritime Heritage Park in downtown Bellingham is a great place to view the results of their restoration efforts and the work of the community.

Whatcom Conservation District congratulates Mike and Elaine and applauds them for their efforts locally and their inspiration statewide!

## THIS MAY BE YOUR LAST ISSUE OF WHATCOM CONSERVATION NEWS!

Due to proposed state funding cuts, Whatcom Conservation District must reduce costs. For us to continue to produce this quarterly newsletter, our readers must demonstrate that it is a priority. The District needs your feedback as to how you value this quarterly newsletter.

**TO CONTINUE RECEIVING THIS NEWSLETTER, YOU MUST CONTACT THE DISTRICT OR YOUR NAME WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE MAILING LIST.**

You can contact the District office in any of the following ways:

- Phone the District office at (360) 354-2035 ext. 3
- Fax the District office at (360) 354-4678
- Visit our website at [www.whatcomcd.org](http://www.whatcomcd.org) and fill out the brief survey
- E-mail your comments to [wcd@whatcomcd.org](mailto:wcd@whatcomcd.org)
- Send this form to the District office: 6975 Hannegan Rd., Lynden, WA 98264

I want to continue receiving Whatcom Conservation News via U.S. mail. My name and mailing address are: \_\_\_\_\_

In order to save the District printing and mailing costs, I would be happy to receive an electronic version of the District newsletter. My e-mail address is: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate your area of interest:

- Agriculture (general)  Small farm issues  Dairy  
 Stream Restoration/Fish  Other \_\_\_\_\_

We are looking forward to hearing from all of you! If you choose to receive an electronic version of the newsletter, we will send you a message four times a year, alerting you to the availability of the quarterly on-line newsletter. The District does not sell our mailing or contact lists to any other organizations.

## Restoring Bertrand Creek 10 years in the making...



**Roy and Lila Carlsen show us how perseverance, patience and the passage of time can produce results**



Roy and Lila Carlsen

In the winter of 1992 Whatcom Conservation District (WCD) recognized Roy and Lila Carlsen's on-farm wildlife stewardship efforts by awarding them the County's first-ever Wildlife Farm of the Year honor. At the time, the Carlsen's were raising dairy replacement heifers and 20 head of beef. They also held a keen interest in improving and protecting the natural environment and the beauty of their land. Their in-

terest in improving the natural environment continues to hold true today for the Carlsen's who, now in their 70's, continue to plant trees and walk their property daily. They count returning salmon, watch for birds and other wildlife, pick up garbage that appears on their property, and best of all share the fruits of their efforts with others.

Then... Many years ago the Carlsen farm consisted of 92 acres from "H" St to the Canadian border, with Bertrand Creek meandering through it for nearly two-thirds of a mile. Back in the late 1980s the Carlsen's fenced off almost 2000 feet along the stream to restrict livestock access. In 1986 the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

**NOTE:** CREP tree maintenance includes appropriate herbicide applications, mechanical weed control and handwork to ensure the planted seedlings reach a free-to-grow stage. Currently at the Carlsen's, restoration crews have started prepping and planting trees on either side of the stream by hand. The handwork will continue until the young salmon in the nests (or redds) have vacated the area, at which time some mechanized planting equipment will be used.

Looking for a way to get involved locally for the New Year?

## WCD Plans for March Volunteer Board Election

Are you concerned about agricultural and environmental issues? Do you enjoy leadership? Are you looking for a way to make a difference locally? If this sounds intriguing then read on.

In March of this year, two WCD Board of Supervisor positions, currently held by Ken Thomas and Brian Cieslar, will expire. One of these positions will be filled by the winner of a March 10, 2003 county wide election. The other position will be appointed by the Washington State Conservation Commission. The two positions are for three-year terms and will become available at the end of March 2003.

A District Supervisor serves as a member of the governing board for the conservation district. Volunteer Supervisors must commit to attending 12 regularly scheduled monthly board meetings, as well as committee meetings and spe-

cial events. Any district elector or registered voter in Whatcom County is eligible for the unpaid positions. Serving on the District Board is a great chance to get involved and have a positive effect on protecting our local natural resources!

In addition to supervisor positions, an alternative way of getting involved with the district is as an associate supervisor. WCD participates in a wide variety of committees dealing with issues such as habitat restoration, farmland preservation, dairy nutrient management, funding, and public outreach. Many opportunities exist to provide input and to represent the District as an associate supervisor on these committees.

Contact Dawn Bekenyi at the WCD office (354-2035 ext. 3) for more information about supervisor and associate supervisor positions and about the appointment process.

**Vote March 10th  
Supervisor Election  
at Ag Service Center  
9am- 7pm**

### Making Sense Of All Those Tests

## Dairy Nutrient Results To Be Evaluated

Lynn Johnson, PhD will be working part time for the District on a six-month assignment. The purpose of Lynn's work is to evaluate data from the dairy nutrient records that the conservation district has collected from producers over the last three years. This evaluation will help identify trends and cycles in nutrient levels over time. Lynn will continue working part time for WSU on various nutrition and nutrient management projects. Lynn received her BS, MS and PhD from Washington State University. Her PhD work focused on dairy cattle nutrition.

Lynn lives in Everson with her husband and their 16-month old daughter Kayla. Welcome Lynn!!

## Winter 2003 Announcements

*"Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do a little" – Edmund Burke*

### The WCD staff welcomes baby Ella Marie Gouran born October 31st, 2002

Congratulations Sabina and Brian on your new addition!! Sabina Gouran, one of the District's two CREP technicians, was on maternity leave for a couple of months, but is now back to work part-time. If you have been working with Sabina and have specific questions about your CREP contract, Sabina can be reached via email (sgouran@whatcomcd.org) and she will be in the office on Wednesday mornings. For general CREP questions you can visit our website at [www.whatcomcd.org](http://www.whatcomcd.org) or contact Wayne Chaudiere.



### A Steady Stream Of Community College Interns Continues At The WCD

Angela Nickle is our current intern who works 12 hours a week while attending classes at Whatcom Community College. Angela has been assisting on a variety of projects and providing general office help. We are happy to have Angela as part of our team through spring 2003.

### 2003 Soil and Water Stewardship Week

Annually the National Association of Conservation Districts develops and distributes materials in recognition of Soil and Water Stewardship Week. This year's educational theme is FOOD FOR THE FUTURE. The WCD will be offering presentations to schools and community groups from April 27th- May 4th. Call the District office (360-354-2035 ext. 3) for more information.

### Annual Regional High School Envirothon Set For March 31st

This year's outdoor regional environmental problem solving competition for high school teams will be held at the Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Bow, Washington. This all day event brings in students from Whatcom, Skagit and Snohomish County schools. Homeschoolers, FFA students, natural resource and environmental science students are all encouraged to put together a five-person team to compete. Contact the WCD or the Skagit Conservation District for more information and learn how to prepare for this excellent event!!

### 2003 Whatcom Farm Friends Calendar

This calendar features beautiful pictures and information about 16 local farms/farmers that were highlighted at the Farming, For Life! exhibition at last summer's NW Washington Fair. For only \$10, you may find them at many locations in Bellingham and Lynden. For info, call the Farm Friends Office, 1796 Front Street, Lynden 360-354-1337.

## Water Quality Monitoring

### The Project

Since 1998, Northwest Indian College (NWIC) staff and a consultant have been collecting data and water samples for analysis from specific sites throughout the Nooksack River Basin. In November 2002 Whatcom Conservation District formally partnered with NWIC in an effort to maintain this long-standing, local water quality monitoring program. District staff have begun participating in the regularly scheduled monitoring efforts that have led to the collection of literally thousands of pieces of information. With this information, goals are to:

- Better determine and protect the health of local watersheds.
- Determine effectiveness of current and future pollution control programs.
- Determine sources of water pollution and then design specifically targeted programs to address the determined sources.
- Better identify which factors in our local environment are not causing water pollution.



Kim Charlie, NWIC Research Technician, stores water samples in cooler for later laboratory analysis.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

## Purchase of Development Rights Program Update

During the November 2002 application period, Whatcom County's new Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program received seven applications representing a total of 485 acres. Program staff have begun using criteria established by an ad hoc steering committee to evaluate and rank the properties. A PDR Oversight Committee will review property rankings developed by the staff and forward recommendations to the Whatcom County Council who will then approve the final ranking.

Six of the seven members of the PDR Oversight Committee have been selected: John Belisle (farmer); Doug Dostal (real estate/banking); Michael Durbin (urban) incorporated, non-farmer; Jim Dykstra (farmer); Rod Erickson (farmer); Rich Stipe (agriculture related business). The County Executive will soon appoint the seventh member (unincorporated, non-farmer).

Following County Council approval, the process of appraisal, negotiation and acquisition of development rights will take place. PDR program staff hope to have the property appraisals completed and negotiations under way by the end of February 2003 in order to begin the Federal application process. Whatcom County funds for the PDR program will come from the Conservation Futures fund and will be matched by Federal dollars at fifty percent.

## Blue Tubes

### Tree Protectors Give Seedlings a Fighting Chance



Blue tubes protect newly planted trees on the Christiansen Farm in Everson.

In nature the struggle for survival always takes its heaviest toll on the young. Only a small fraction of the seeds produced by plants live long enough to grow into seedlings, let alone survive to maturity. Seedling plants must compete with other plants for food (i.e. light and water), and they are viewed as food by a many predators (e.g. voles, beaver, deer). Local groups and individuals who are dedicated to improving habitat conditions for fish and wildlife by planting trees along streams have tried a variety of techniques to increase the odds of seedling survival. No practice has worked better or been more widely adopted locally than the installation of tree protectors around seedlings when they are planted. The protector that is currently the most popular in our area is a light blue, semi-translucent plastic tube (18 inches high X 4 inches diameter) made by Norplex. The tube is usually anchored with a 36-inch bamboo stake.

Though the tube may cost more than the seedling it is protecting, tree protection tubes are valuable for many reasons:

- **Greenhouse effect:** Tree growth is accelerated because tubes increase the temperature around seedlings and shield them from the drying effect of wind.

- **Rodent protection:** Tubes provide a barrier that stops voles and other rodents, which proliferate in grassy areas, from devouring seedlings.

- **Reduced maintenance:** Competing vegetation can quickly overtake seedlings in the spring and must be controlled. Tubes readily identify where seedlings are planted and protect them during mowing, tilling, pulling or spraying.

- **Versatility:** Tubes can be used in the home garden to shelter plants like tomatoes and peppers early in the growing season and to hasten germination in squash and other vegetables planted in hills.

# Whatcom CD 10th Annual Plant Sale



## Plant Descriptions

Soil Moisture Tolerance	Light Tolerance	Mature Height in Feet	Features
<b>Evergreen Trees:</b>			
<b>Grand Fir (<i>Abies grandis</i>)</b>			
Dry to moist	Full sun or shade	>200	Widely distributed native. Needles lay flat and are dark green above and silvery beneath. Used for timber, landscaping and Christmas trees. Noted for its fragrant scent.
<b>Noble Fir (<i>Abies procera</i>)</b>			
Dry to moist	Full sun to partial shade	>200	Found in WA Cascades south from Stevens Pass. Blue green 4-sided needles with white stomata on all sides. Used in landscaping and for Christmas trees.
<b>Port Orford Cedar (<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i>)</b>			
Dry to moist	Full sun to partial shade	<50	Southwest Oregon native. Used for screens, windbreaks and general landscaping and for holiday wreaths.
<b>Alaska Yellow Cedar (<i>Chamaecyparis nootkatensis</i>)</b>			
Dry to moist	Full sun or shade	<100	Native. Usually not found below 2000 feet elevation. Its blue-green foliage, pendulous branches and nonsymmetrical shape make it a popular choice for landscaping.
<b>Rocky Mountain Juniper (<i>Juniperus scopulorum</i>)</b>			
Dry to moist	Full sun	15 - 20+	Found locally near salt water. Extremely hardy; drought tolerant. Aromatic berries.
<b>Sitka Spruce (<i>Picea sitchensis</i>)</b>			
Wet to moist	Full sun or shade	> 100	Found from Alaska to California. Stiff, sharp blue-green needle - fast growing; light, strong wood used for pianos, ladders, airplanes, etc.
<b>Shore Pine (<i>Pinus contorta</i>)</b>			
Wet or dry	Full sun or shade	25 - 40	Native - usually found locally near saltwater. The deep green needles are twisted - 2 per clusters - small cone, slow growing; salt tolerant. Good for windbreaks.
<b>Douglas Fir (<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>)</b>			
Dry to moist	Full sun to partial shade	> 200	Widely distributed native. Deeply fissured, reddish brown bark - blue green or yellow green needles; fast growing. Many uses: windbreaks, timber, Christmas trees
<b>Giant Sequoia (<i>Sequoiadendron giganteum</i>)</b>			
Dry to moist	Full sun to partial shade	>300	Native to Sierra Nevada Mountains of California. Does well here - needs plenty of room.
<b>Western Red Cedar (<i>Thuja plicata</i>)</b>			
Wet to moist	Full sun or shade	> 100	Widely distributed native. Yellow/green leaves - reddish brown bark. Its rot resistant wood used for shakes, shingles, fence posts.
<b>Western Hemlock (<i>Tsuga heterophylla</i>)</b>			
Dry to moist	Partial shade or shade	125 - 175	Native - Our state tree. Grows rapidly. An important source of timber for both lumber and pulp.

## Deciduous Trees:

<b>Pacific Dogwood (<i>Cornus nuttallii</i>)</b>			
Dry	Full shade to partial shade	30 - 50	Native. White flwrs in spring & fall - red fruit. A beautiful tree but not suitable for all locations
<b>Oregon Ash (<i>Fraxinus latifolia</i>)</b>			
Wet or moist	Full sun to partial shade	60 to 80	Native, but more common south of Olympia. Found along streams - grows rapidly.
<b>Garry Oak or Oregon White Oak (<i>Quercus garryana</i>)</b>			
Moist to dry	Full shade to partial shade	Slow to 60-70	Native. It's tough and adaptable and will do well where it is dry. Under appreciated for its ornamental value.
<b>Cascara (<i>Rhamnus purshiana</i>)</b>			
Moist or dry	Full sun or shade	30 to 40	Native. A small tree that in dry years produces colorful fall foliage. Birds are attracted to fruit and the bark is harvested for medicinal purposes. One tree beaver avoid.
<b>Pacific Willow (<i>Salix lasiandra</i>)</b>			
Wet or moist	Full shade to partial shade	30 - 40	Native. Long, narrow leaves are green on top and white beneath. As it matures fissures form in its grey bark.
<b>Dwarf Mountain Ash (<i>Sorbus scopulina</i>)</b>			
Moist	Full shade to partial shade	10 - 15	Native - more common inland. Great tree to grow where space is limited - birds love the orange/red fruit

## Shrubs:

<b>Vine Maple (<i>Acer circinatum</i>)</b>			
moist or dry	shade or partial shade	15 - 25	Native. Green bark - fall foliage varies: yellow to scarlet red. Some use chipped vine maple for smoking fish
<b>Serviceberry (<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>)</b>			
moist or dry	sun	10 - 20	Native. white flowers - both birds and humans love the purple fruit which arrives in mid summer.
<b>Red Osier or Redtwig Dogwood (<i>Cornus stolonifera</i>)</b>			
wet or dry	sun or shade	10 - 14	Native. White flwr cluster/white or blue fruit- red bark, deep leaf veins. Used for wildlife cover and wetland restoration.
<b>Mock Orange (<i>Philadelphus lewisii</i>)</b>			
dry	sun or partial shade	8 - 12	Native. Sweet smelling white flwr in late spring - hardy - drought tolerant.
<b>Red Flower Currant (<i>Ribes sanguinum</i>)</b>			
dry	sun or partial shade	3 - 9	Native. Beautiful pendulous flowers in shades of pink and red arrive in early spring. Salt tolerant - needs well-drained soil to thrive.
<b>Arctic Willow (<i>Salix arctica</i>)</b>			
Wet or moist	sun or partial shade	3 - 6	Collected in Aleutian Islands (Adak I.). Narrow, fine leaves. Shades of blue and purple in stems and leaves. Good for hedges and windbreaks.
<b>Snowberry (<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>)</b>			
moist or dry	sun or partial shade	1 1/2 - 6	Native. White berry persists through winter. Good for hedges, stabilizing slopes and areas along streams. Drought tolerant

## Miscellaneous:

<b>Goat's Beard (<i>Aruncus sylvestris</i>)</b>			
Wet or moist	Shade or partial shade	3 - 6	Native. Perennial - A single plant produces several stems - attractive leaves and white flower clusters - spreads by short rhizomes.

## 2003 WCD Annual Plant Sale Inventory & Price List

**SALE DAY - SATURDAY, MARCH 8TH - 8 AM - 4 PM AT TEN MILE GRANGE**  
**Pre-orders accepted for \$100 minimum purchase (pre-order deadline Feb. 28th)**

TREES & SHRUBS	SIZE/AGE	Price/Bundle (Plants per bundle)	Bundles Ordered	COST
<b>EVERGREENS</b>				
Western Red Cedar	P-1	\$ 9.00 (10)	_____	\$ _____
Port Orford Cedar	2-0	\$ 3.00 (5)	_____	\$ _____
Alaska Yellow Cedar	P-1	\$ 5.00 (5)	_____	\$ _____
Douglas Fir	2-0	\$ 4.00 (10)	_____	\$ _____
		\$ 35.00 (100)	_____	\$ _____
		\$125.00 (500)	_____	\$ _____
Grand Fir	2-0	\$ 5.00 (10)	_____	\$ _____
Noble Fir	P-1	\$ 7.00 (10)	_____	\$ _____
Western Hemlock	P-1	\$ 9.00 (10)	_____	\$ _____
Rocky Mountain Juniper	4" cutting	\$ 4.00 (5)	_____	\$ _____
Shore Pine	2-0	\$ 5.00 (10)	_____	\$ _____
Sitka Spruce	P-1	\$ 9.00 (10)	_____	\$ _____
Giant Sequoia	P-1	\$ 5.00 (5)	_____	\$ _____
<b>DECIDUOUS TREES</b>				
Dwarf Mtn Ash	P	\$ 9.00 (5)	_____	\$ _____
Oregon Ash	18-36"	\$ 5.00 (5)	_____	\$ _____
Cascara	2-0	\$ 9.00 (5)	_____	\$ _____
Pacific Dogwood	1-0	\$ 7.00 (5)	_____	\$ _____
Oregon White Oak (Garry)	2-0	\$ 9.00 (5)	_____	\$ _____
Pacific Willow	12-18"	\$ 5.00 (5)	_____	\$ _____
<b>DECIDUOUS SHRUBS</b>				
Red Flower Currant	18-36"	\$ 8.00 (5)	_____	\$ _____
Red Osier Dogwood	18-36"	\$ 5.00 (5)	_____	\$ _____
Vine Maple	18-36"	\$ 7.00 (5)	_____	\$ _____
Mock Orange	18-36"	\$ 5.00 (5)	_____	\$ _____
Serviceberry	2-0	\$ 9.00 (5)	_____	\$ _____
Snowberry	12-18"	\$ 5.00 (5)	_____	\$ _____
Arctic Willow	C-1	\$ 9.00 (5)	_____	\$ _____
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>				
Wildflower Seed Mix	ounce	\$3.00 (1 OZ.)	_____	\$ _____
Goat's Beard	BR trnsplnt	\$ 8.00 (5)	_____	\$ _____
18" Norplex Tree Protectors tube+stake		\$ 5.00 (10)	_____	\$ _____
Native Perennials: available on day of sale in 4 inch and 1 gallon containers.				
NAME: _____	Subtotal	\$ _____		
ADDRESS: _____	8.2% Tax	\$ _____		
DAY PHONE: _____	TOTAL	\$ _____		
				50% Deposit Due at Time of Pre-Order
				\$ _____
<b>\$100 MINIMUM AMOUNT FOR PRE-ORDERS</b>				Balance Due
				\$ _____

### SPECIAL NOTES:

- No Pre-Orders accepted under \$100.
- Payment: Cash or check only (no cash in mail)
- Make checks payable to Whatcom Conservation District.

### AVAILABILITY OF PLANTS:

We cannot guarantee the availability of all the plants. This is a first-come, first-served sale.

### TERMS:

- P= (PLUG):** seedling grown in a plastic tube for 1 yr. A plant grown as a plug will develop a more fibrous root system than one grown in the field.
- P-1:** a 2 yr. old plant which is grown 1 yr as a plug and 1 yr in the field.
- 2 - 0:** a 2 yr. old field grown plant.
- 1 - 2:** a 3 yr. old field grown plant - uprooted after yr. 1 & replanted. Transplanting seedlings tends to improve their root system but it also adds to production costs.
- CUTTING:** a rootless stem or branch.
- BR=BARE ROOT:** seedling with soil removed from roots.

## Plant Sale continued from page 1

native to our area) to choose from. A variety of native perennials will be available in 4 inch and 1 gallon containers. Please see the order form in this newsletter listing available plants, as well as the chart describing each plant's growth characteristics. Please note on the order form that the PRICE listed is PER BUNDLE. You can also find additional information about the plant sale on our website at [www.whatcomcd.org](http://www.whatcomcd.org).

We receive our plants from the nurseries shortly before the day of the sale. For a variety of reasons (i.e. vendor is unable to fill the order, plants

are of unacceptable quality, we sell out of a certain species, etc.), we unfortunately cannot guarantee the availability of all the plants listed on the order form. The District staff will certainly try our best to make your plant sale purchase a pleasant experience! Please note that the plants sold at this sale are conservation-grade (graded on their ability to survive, not on their ornamental value) and most of the plants are sold bareroot. The bareroot plants are not large (note the approximate sizes listed on the order form), so you don't need a high hauling capacity.

## Restoring Bertrand Creek continued from page 1

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) assisted Roy and Lila in their efforts to convert a poorly drained piece of the property into a half-acre pond connecting to Bertrand Creek. For many years that pond annually served as home for approximately 15,000 juvenile silver salmon. On a recent walk of their property, Lila explained, "We started planting tree seedlings for habitat in the early 1980s, long before it was en vogue". On their own the Carlsen's have planted more than 1000 trees.

Now...During visits, the Carlsen's grandchildren enjoy sitting in the shade of the trees and watching salmon swim over clean gravel, seeking cover under logs and root wads (large woody debris or LWD) that characterize this section of stream. Currently the Carlsen's own 70 acres. Thanks to Roy and Lila, their stretch of Bertrand Creek has a riparian buffer of mixed 10-15 year old alders, cedars, ninebark, elderberry, pine and Douglas fir that provide a canopy of shade and habitat

for the stream. The pond still exists but it is no longer connected to Bertrand Creek. WDFW no longer stocks the stream with coho due to changes in salmon recovery policies. The Carlsen's are no longer farming but they do lease out grassland to neighbors.

Additionally, the Carlsen's are enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) through the District. Their CREP buffer restoration project consists of 5128 lineal feet of stream buffer along Bertrand Creek totaling 18.4 acres. Roy and Lila are excited about CREP, as it pays for more trees to be planted on their property, including maintenance for the trees for the first five years after planting. That will leave more time for Roy and Lila to walk their trails, count salmon and enjoy family cook-outs along the banks of Bertrand Creek.

Way to go Roy and Lila!! Keep up the good work. If you would like to see more pictures of the Carlsen property go to [www.whatcomcd.org](http://www.whatcomcd.org)



## 2002-2003 CONSERVATION SPONSORS

Many thanks to our **2002-2003 CONSERVATION SPONSORS!** The support provided by our Conservation Sponsors helps Whatcom Conservation District publish *Whatcom Conservation News* and continue getting the word out about how local solutions are being developed for addressing resource management challenges.

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE: <http://www.whatcomcd.org>

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## Vern Vande Garde to Tackle Watershed Issues in Bertrand

The Whatcom County Ag Preservation Committee with a grant from



Whatcom County have hired Vern Vande Garde as a Bertrand Creek watershed coordinator. During the next six months, Vern will be meeting with landowners to promote the Comprehensive Irrigation District Management Plan or CIDMP. The CIDMP is designed to provide local landowners a voluntary, incentive-based approach to issues such as water rights, water quality and habitat.

Vern has lived in Whatcom County for 40 years, and has spent 37 years in the Bertrand watershed. He owned and operated Vande Garde Dairy for 22 years. Vern has been an active community leader with positions including past President of Pacific Northwest Young Cooperators, past Secretary of the National Milk Producers Federation Young Cooperators Advisory Council, and past President of the Delta Water Association.

With this new project Vern's goals are "to help facilitate a program where fish, wildlife and the agriculture community can not only survive, but prosper."

Vern and his wife Shelly live on 60 acres in the Bertrand watershed

## Water Quality Monitoring continued from page 2

• Recognize and respond quickly to positive and negative trends in water quality.

### What Do We Collect?

Twice per month District and NWIC staff collect information on the water temperature and the amount of dissolved oxygen in the water at specific sites. A sample of the water is also collected. The sample is later tested in a laboratory to determine the number of fecal coliform bacteria present in the water sample. At some sites, the depth and/or flow rate of the water are also measured.

### What Does This Information Tell Us?

Salmon, trout and other fish require a certain amount of oxygen to be dissolved in the water in order for them to breathe. Also, in order for spawning to occur and for the right bugs to be available for fish to eat, the temperature of the water must stay within certain upper and lower limits. Both the amount of dissolved oxygen in the water and the temperature of the water are affected by presence or lack of riparian vegetation and by many types of pollution.

Fecal coliform bacteria are associated with wastes from warm-blooded animals such as livestock, wildlife and humans. The presence of fecal coliform bacteria is an indicator of the potential presence of disease-causing organisms that may be a threat to human health. Fecal coliform monitoring gives us an accurate accounting of the amount of specific bacteria in a stream, ditch or river. This can help us to determine if, when, and where a significant pollution event may have occurred.

### So How Is Our Watershed Doing?

The good news is that water quality in the monitored areas of the lower Nooksack basin has shown improvement since 1998. Though some pollution events occurred in 1999 and 2000 during certain times of the year, many of the problems have been addressed through better land and nutrient management practices. We will continue to monitor the health of our watersheds with the hope that they may provide our community with a safe drinking water supply and a rich, natural habitat for fish, wildlife and for people.

## Benefits Abound for Planting Trees Around the Farm



Start planning now, because the best time to plant trees and shrubs in Whatcom County is rapidly approaching (mid-February through early April). Seedling plants, which are available at a fraction of the cost of those grown in containers, are only available in the early spring, and getting them planted early helps ensure that they will get off to a good start. Check out the Whatcom CD Annual Plant Sale information in this newsletter issue for a perfect opportunity to purchase conservation grade plants at great prices! These are some reasons to consider planting trees:

• **Windbreaks and shelter-belts for livestock** - Even a single row of trees will take some of the chill out of winter wind (though 2 or 3 rows is even better). Trees are also useful for mini-

mizing and/or controlling drifting snow around the farmstead.

• **Privacy and noise reduction** - A row of trees may be the best way to keep inquiring minds from wondering about things that are none of their business.

• **Odor control** - A row of trees accelerates the dispersion of odor by causing air to swirl and lift away from the ground.

• **Beautification** - Trees add beauty (and value) to the landscape and can be used to screen out less than pleasing sights.

• **Wildlife habitat** - Once trees are established you won't have to buy birdseed to entice songbirds to your farm.

## Small Farm Management Workshops Coming this Spring

On Tuesday evenings, May 6- June 3, from 6:30 pm to 9 pm Whatcom Conservation District will partner with the Horses for Clean Water program and local experts to present a series of six FREE workshops focusing on environmentally sensitive small farm management practices. The workshops will take place at the Haynie Grange (3344 Haynie Road in Custer). Educational topics will include West Nile



Virus, horse health, composting horse manure, mud and pasture management, septic system care and maintenance and several other important topics. Anyone is welcome to attend any or all of the sessions. The workshops are free, but pre-registration is required (so that we can provide adequate education materials!). Call Andrea or Beth at the District office for more information or to register.

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