

Foster Creek Conservation District

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Board Chair: John McLean



State Legislative District #12
Congressional District #4

Accomplishments and Commitments

Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP)



VSP is a voluntary, incentive-based, alternative approach to Washington's Growth Management Act requirements, funded by WSCC through the biennial state budget.

- Hired VSP coordinator in fall 2016
- Established a work group of 11 members to design work plan
- Built interest and participation through meetings and news bulletins
- Continue to meet monthly with work group and public
- Work plan draft underway, will complete by end of 2017
- Compile and generate baseline data for each critical area
- Develop monitoring protocols for protection and enhancement benchmarks
- Implement education and outreach program

Our VSP Requests:

- ❖ **Incentivize producer participation in the VSP program.** Producer buy in and participation is crucial for the success of the VSP program, the protection of critical areas, and the long-term viability of agriculture.
- ❖ **Fund state agencies and require them to control weeds on state lands.** State owned weed patches degrade critical wildlife habitat and exemplify poor stewardship.
- ❖ **Continue to fund the VSP program.** A non-regulatory approach to management of the nexus between critical areas and agriculture is the best solution for Douglas County.

Water Quality Grants from the WA Department of Ecology

The Department of Ecology awarded FCCD 2 water quality restoration grants of 3 years each [2016-18, 2017-19].

- Restoration plans in cooperation with 6 land owners
 - 81 acres at 16 sites on over 6 miles of stream
 - attain necessary permits
 - plant over 28,000 native riparian plants
 - address polluted, 303D streams
- Education and Outreach
 - attend 4 educational events each year
 - implement long-term projects in local schools



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Direct Seed Grant from the WA Department of Ecology

Direct Seed is a reduced tillage system that reduces water and wind erosion. The Department of Ecology awarded FCCD 3 grants of 3 years each [2016-18, 2017-19, 2018-20].

- Enrolled 12 participants; add 10 each year
- Direct seeded a total of 2,732.84 acres; add 2,500 acres each year
- Initiate a soil monitoring program – Direct Seed vs. Conventional Till
- Complete 1.4-mile stream bank riparian restoration
- Complete a Cost/Benefit analysis for each participant

Our Grant Requests:

- ❖ **Support restoration and soil health funding.** These grants are critical to the success of FCCD's work in the community.
- ❖ **Support cost-share funding.** Cost-share funding is an important incentive for producers to participate in our programs.

Farmed Smart Certifications



These are high-standard management practices in: water, air, and soil quality; wildlife habitat; energy conservation; and economic sustainability. Team: FCCD, PNDSA, Palouse CD, Spokane CD and DOE.

- Team completed 18 audits, 60,000 acres, 25 buffer miles
- Team will complete an additional 22 audits, 80,000 acres

VNRCP Task Order for NRCS and WSCC

Voluntary Natural Resources Conservation Plan encompasses all acreage under the operator's control. This task order is funded by the Natural Resource Conservation Service and the WA State Conservation Commission.

- Completed 3 plans and evaluated 11,500 acres
- Complete 8 additional plans, 46,000 acres, by March 2017
- Maintain 2 employees with Level IV Farm Planner Certification

Other Great Projects

Biological Weed Control

Establish a healthy population of federally approved insects as natural predators to control weeds.

- Targeted 4 noxious weeds
- Involved 18 producers
- Distributed 13,500 insects



Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)

HCP was developed in conjunction with VNRCP and VSP to create a comprehensive conservation plan.

- Signed agreements with 65 producers for farm plans that will allow incidental take permits



Washington ground squirrel, Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, Columbian Basin pygmy rabbit, Greater sage-grouse

FCCD Quarterly Newsletter

- Redesigned - added email option

Key Partners:

