



# FOSTER CREEK CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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Legislative District: 12 Congressional District: 4

## Other accomplishments:



FCCD led a group of curious folks into the beautiful Moses Coulee to check out the plants and share local knowledge.



Department of Ecology Director Maia Bellon and Pacific Northwest Direct Seed Association President Douglas Poole sign a Farmed Smart Certification memorandum of understanding.



Newly planted native riparian shrubs.

## 2017 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### EXPANDING DIRECT SEED PROGRAM IN DOUGLAS COUNTY

#### Resource challenge

Over the past century, agricultural practices have impacted Douglas County's limited surface water resources. The economy of this low-rainfall area is dependent on dryland cereal grains, such as wheat and canola. Many producers use multi-pass conventional tillage practices to cultivate their land. This disturbs the soil and leads to extensive water and wind erosion. Eroded materials end up in the ephemeral waterways, streams, and rivers of Douglas County.



Including peas in a crop rotation can help to reduce input costs of nitrogen and energy, decrease weed pressure, and provide benefit to overall soil health.



Wheat almost ready for harvest in the Dyer Hill area of Douglas County.

#### Project summary and results

With funding from two Department of Ecology grants, Foster Creek Conservation District (FCCD) developed a cost-share program that assists producers with the transition from conventional tillage to direct seeding. Direct seeding technology reduces the number of field passes, limits soil disturbance, and retains residue from previous crops. It also provides multiple benefits to soil health by increasing organic material and improving soil structure and water infiltration rates. All these features combine to help significantly reduce soil erosion. FCCD hopes to continue this program, which currently has 21 participants who have transitioned 5,917 acres from conventional tillage to direct seed.

**Key partners:** Private landowners and operators in Douglas, Grant, Lincoln, and Okanogan Counties; Washington Department of Ecology; Washington State Conservation Commission

## MORE WORK TO DO

- ▶ Increase the number of participants and acres in the Direct Seed program to help reduce soil erosion and promote soil health.
- ▶ Maintain ongoing water monitoring and riparian enhancement projects.
- ▶ Complete the Voluntary Stewardship Program work plan to facilitate protection and enhancement of critical areas, while maintaining the viability of agriculture within the county.