



**Douglas County, WA**

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## Our quarterly newsletter is shifting to email!

But don't worry, you can still receive a paper copy if you prefer.

### Hey newsletter readers!

We are updating our mailing list.

Please call, email or mail us a note to update your contact information\* and newsletter preference (email or paper mail).

**\*We will not share or sell your information\***

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*Thank you to those of you who have already responded!*

*¿Quiere leerlo en Español? ¡Mándenos un mensaje a [info@fostercreekcd.org](mailto:info@fostercreekcd.org)!*



# Producer Spotlight

## Direct Seed, Cover Crops and “Cow-Fallow” Rotation

*Our Producer Spotlight series will highlight producers using innovative methods for their operation. We hope this will inspire and instill confidence in viable farming and ranching techniques. Want to volunteer yourself or nominate someone for a Producer Spotlight article? Contact Olivia Schilling at 509-860-2453 or [oschilling@fostercreekcd.org](mailto:oschilling@fostercreekcd.org).*



Dan Cavadini and his dad, Norman, own the Cavadini Partnership near Bridgeport in northern Douglas County. Motivated to reduce soil loss from wind and water erosion, the Cavadinis converted to Direct Seed three years ago. They actually tried Direct Seed a while back, but it didn't work out. Dan said it's working for them now because the whole Direct Seed practice has changed. There is more support, more products and more specialized equipment. In part because of its popularity, it's easier to have a successful practice than it was back then. For the Cavadini Partnership, the initial investment in equipment was worth the ongoing benefits of less erosion, better soil health and less hours on the equipment (and therefore less gas).

Last year, the Cavadinis added rotational grazing to reduce the weeds on fallow wheat fields - what Dan has aptly named “cow-fallow” rotation. This practice allowed them to cut the number of herbicide passes on the field in half. Last year they grew winter forage triticale on 50 acres of land to feed their 200 cattle. They harvested the triticale for winter feed, then grazed the regrowth twice more. They are also experimenting with different cover crops to improve soil health and decrease the amount of fertilizer they use.

*The full article is available online on our blog at [fostercreekcd.wordpress.org/](http://fostercreekcd.wordpress.org/)*

### Biological Weed Control



#### Last call for orders!

We are taking orders for insects until **May 1<sup>st</sup>** – get your 2017 order in now!

To place your order, to learn more about a management plan or for additional information, please contact Elizabeth Hanwacker at [ehanwacker@fostercreekcd.org](mailto:ehanwacker@fostercreekcd.org) or 509-888-6372.



Monthly meetings are held in the Hearing Room at the Superior Court of Douglas County Building, 203 S Rainier St, Waterville, WA 98858. **Next meeting is Monday, May 15<sup>th</sup> at 6PM.** For more information check out the VSP webpage at [www.fostercreekcd.org/programs/voluntary-stewardship-program/](http://www.fostercreekcd.org/programs/voluntary-stewardship-program/) or contact Aaron Rosenblum, VSP Coordinator, at 509-426-5990 or [arosenblum@fostercreekcd.org](mailto:arosenblum@fostercreekcd.org).

A big thank you to our sponsor for helping fund this newsletter



# Riparian Enhancement Projects in Douglas County

Spring has finally come to Douglas County, and it is time to plant! As you are reading this, Foster Creek is busy planting native riparian vegetation.

Foster Creek is planting 6,500 riparian plants this spring and another 5,000 in the fall. The planting of woody riparian species will eventually shade the stream corridor to lower temperatures, improve the surrounding habitat by connecting the channel and the floodplain, and decrease the presence of shade-intolerant invasive species. Shading through the planting of riparian woody species will improve dissolved oxygen and pH levels by limiting aquatic plant growth. Aquatic plants can decrease dissolved oxygen when they decompose, and they increase pH through their respiration processes. The establishment of a riparian corridor will also introduce woody debris to the streams naturally, which will improve aeration potential as surface water flows are stirred and mixed.



There is always more work to do! In the coming year, Foster Creek Conservation District will develop similar restoration projects on East Foster Creek, McCarteney Creek, and Matthiesen Creek. If you are interested in implementing a Riparian Restoration Project on your property, please contact Aaron Rosenblum, Natural Resource Specialist at [arosenblum@fostercreekcd.org](mailto:arosenblum@fostercreekcd.org) or (509) 423-5990.

## Education and Outreach

In the beginning of the year, Foster Creek Conservation District partnered with four University of Washington students for a “Management of Endangered Species” class. The students worked with FCCD to develop two materials relating to the Multiple Species General Conservation plan: an informational brochure and a detailed report. Both will be posted on our website and on display in our office. We welcome you to check them out!

Foster Creek Conservation District is out and about this spring at a lot of fun education and outreach activities. In late March, we gave an after school presentation called “Wild Animals, Water and the Sagebrush Steppe” at the Waterville library. In April, FCCD helped out at Envirothon at the Filaree Fruit Farm in Okanogan, and spent

Earth Day at Chief Joseph Dam with Okanogan CD playing a water quality game with



3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade students. In May, FCCD will present on upland restoration and the Multiple Species General Conservation Plan at the Washington Native

Plant Society’s stewardship course. That month we will also be helping out at the Kids in the Creek Habitat Sense Station and Chelan PUD River of Power. In June, FCCD will test water quality with high school students for the Hydropower STEM Career Academy through Rocky Reach Dam. Thus ends our spring fun-packed line up! Stay tuned for more education and outreach updates in our summer newsletter.



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## Spring Water Quality Tip:

**Try Drip Irrigation!** Have you been dreaming about your garden? Bright yellow sunflowers, juicy tomatoes, crunchy cucumbers, aromatic herbs... why not save time, water and money with a more efficient watering system? Try drip irrigation! The water slowly drips out of a hose directly into the soil surrounding the plant you want watered. Because the transfer method is more direct than sprinklers, there is much less evaporation, less unnecessary weed watering, and less chance of foliar diseases due to wet leaves. Check out more information online or inquire at your local hardware store!

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## Featured Bird of the Season

### Northern Harrier

(*Circus cyaneus*) hen harrier, marsh hawk

If you have spent any time around sagebrush habitat, it is likely you have seen a Northern Harrier. These majestic, medium-sized hawks (40.2-46.5 inch wingspan) are found gliding low and slow over marshland or grassland. Males and females possess a distinctive white rump patch (*see photo*). They are a year-round resident of eastern Washington, and in winter communally roost on the ground. During the breeding season, in an attempt to win female affection, males will perform a sky dance of elaborate barrel rolls.

These owl-like hawks use both sight and sound to hunt for prey. They are certainly a welcome sight for landowners that would like to see a decrease in the resident rodent population. Their diet consists of small mammals, small birds, reptiles, and amphibians, but the Northern Harrier can also catch and subdue larger targets, like rabbits and ducks, by drowning them. The male is the main provider, supplying most of the food for his offspring and his mates.



© Hawk Mountain Sanctuary



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"Conservation & Monitoring." *RSPB: giving nature a home*. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Northern Harriers remain common; however, their populations have been steadily declining due to habitat loss and fragmentation. *How can you help?* Help conserve these regal raptors by providing healthy, continuous sagebrush steppe and wetland habitat. Foster Creek CD has opportunities and funding to assess and improve rangeland, cropland, and wetland or riparian habitat. If you are interested in learning more about conservation stewardship or enhancing degraded habitat, contact us today, (509) 888 – 6372!

"Northern Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)." *Hawk Mountain*. Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, 2017.

Literature Credit: "Northern Harrier." *The Cornell Lab of Ornithology: All About Birds*. Cornell University, 2015. Web. 27 March 2017.