



CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES GUIDE

*Your guide to conservation
activities in Douglas County*

Voluntary Stewardship Program Overview

The Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) is an optional, incentive-based approach to protecting critical areas through promoting agricultural viability. VSP provides producers in Douglas County an alternative to regulatory enforcement under the State of Washington's Growth Management Act.

Purpose of This Handbook

To provide more information on conservation activities that are relevant to Douglas County. Each conservation activity title is a hyperlink to a more detailed description of what it entails.

What are Conservation Activities?

Conservation activities are methods of land management that protect or enhance the health of land, water, and habitat resources. Many of these also improve agricultural viability by reducing producer costs and increasing yields and quality of crops.

Field Border

- ❖ Multipurpose strips of permanent vegetation on one or more sides of a field.



Riparian Buffer

- ❖ An area of trees and/shrubs located adjacent to a body of water. Serves as great wildlife habitat.
- ❖ Helps ensure good quality and quantity of water.



Nutrient Management

- ❖ Managing the availability of nutrients to plants through amendments and healthy soil practices.

Upland Wildlife Habitat Management

- ❖ Improving or protecting food and cover for wildlife



Pollinator Habitat Management

- ❖ Enhancing habitat with flowering plants and nest sites for pollinators. Farmer guide in link above.



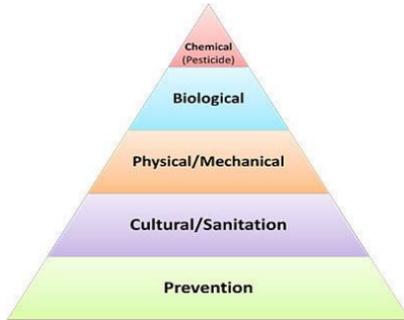
Wildlife Structures

- ❖ Structures that benefit wildlife; can include safe passage, nesting, etc. See link for more examples.



Integrated Pest Management

- ❖ A combination of methods to manage pests and prevent them from becoming a problem
- ❖ Conditions that are good for crops & bad for pests



Fencing

- ❖ A constructed barrier to animals or humans that helps accomplish conservation objectives



No-Till

- ❖ Direct seeding: crops are planted in narrow strips within the untilled seedbed of the previous crop.
- ❖ Increases productivity as the organic material residue decomposes into nutritious soil for plants.



Reduced-Till

- ❖ Limiting soil-disturbing activities used to grow and harvest crops in fields that are tilled pre-planting.
- ❖ Includes mulch tillage, see link for more examples.



Cover Crop

- ❖ Planting grasses, legumes, and/or forbs for seasonal vegetative cover.



Conservation Cover

- ❖ Maintaining perennial vegetative cover to protect soil and water resources on working lands.



Conservation Crop Rotation

- ❖ A planned sequence of at least two different crops grown on the same ground over a period of time.



Organic Certification

- ❖ Certificate recognizing crops grown organically.
- ❖ There are various USDA accredited certifiers available depending on your type of production.



Global G.A.P (Good Agriculture Practice)

- ❖ Certificate assuring that fruit and vegetables grown meet the standard for sustainable agriculture.



Irrigation Water Management

- ❖ Managing soil moisture to promote plant growth through optimizing available water resources.



Sprinkler System

- ❖ A water distribution system that irrigates crops by means of nozzles operated under pressure.



Micro-Irrigation

- ❖ Form of irrigation that delivers water directly where it is needed most, the root zone of plants.
- ❖ Also known as drip or trickle irrigation, this method of irrigation is a highly efficient use of water.



Livestock Pipeline

- ❖ Pipeline installed to convey water for livestock or wildlife. Decentralizes location of drinking facilities.



Watering Facility

- ❖ Provides drinking water to livestock and/or wildlife.
- ❖ Can also be installed to keep livestock out of streams or other areas with water quality concerns.



Prescribed Grazing

- ❖ Managing livestock grazing periods to achieve planned objectives for the plant communities.
- ❖ This may include maintaining adequate vegetative cover, allowing sufficient plant recovery time, etc.



Range Planting

- ❖ Establishing adapted perennial or self-sustaining vegetation such as grasses, forbs, legumes, shrubs.



This handbook is by no means a comprehensive list of the conservation activities applicable to Douglas County. If there are some missing that you see should be included, please let us know.

Technical Service Providers for VSP:

- ❖ Foster Creek Conservation District
(509) 888-6372; fostercreekcd.org
- ❖ South Douglas Conservation District
(509) 745-9160; southdouglascd.org
- ❖ Natural Resource Conservation Service
(509) 745-8561; nrcs.usda.gov

