5-Year Plan (2010 to 2015)
Whitman Conservation District

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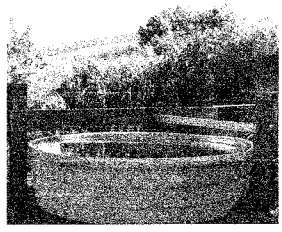


Organization of the Whitman Conservation District

A political subdivision of the State of Washington, the authorities, powers and structure are contained in RCW 89.08.

- The Whitman Conservation District was formed in 1966 through a consolidation of the Central Whitman Soil Conservation District (originally formed in 1945) and the West Whitman Soil Conservation District (originally formed in 1946).
- The district's area is approximately the southwest quarter of Whitman County.
- The District is governed by a Board of Supervisors, three elected by the District's voters and two appointed by the Washington State Conservation Commission.

Function of the Whitman Conservation District

To make available technical, financial and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land manager with conservation of soil, water and related natural resources.

We Serve & Why

Whitman Conservation District serves all the residents of the District to guarantee the long-term sustainability of the natural resources in a voluntary manner through activities and actions that meet local needs in an economically and socially acceptable manner.

Mission of the Whitman Conservation District

The Mission of the Whitman Conservation District is to promote the wise, ethical and sustainable use of natural resources by leadership in the education and assistance of all people in the District. The Whitman Conservation District will promote the implementation of the best available conservation measures and provide a forum for local input on natural resource issues.

Vision of the Whitman Conservation District

That Whitman County will achieve sustainable use of its natural resources while maintaining productive agricultural and natural resource-based industries.

Values of the Whitman Conservation District

The District demonstrates its values through

- honest and open communication, integrity and professionalism in its leadership and partnerships;
- the development and application of best management practices that protect healthy, viable natural resource systems and promote sustainable use of those systems for future generations;
- encouragement of voluntary cooperation for the implementation of conservation practices which are economically and socially acceptable;
- support to the people of the District through the locally-led process.

Natural Resource Priorities, Measures of Success and Goals:

The Natural Resource Priorities as designated from the 2010 Public Input Session are as follows with the goals to be met by 2015:

- Erosion Control, Soil and Water Conservation, and Water Quality
  - *there will be 15 producers moving from a conventional tillage system to a minimum tillage system*
  - *a promotion of mulch till with 5 producers*
  - *5 shop talks completed addressing soil erosion or soil quality*
  - *an expansion on the promotion of alternatives to burning stubble*

- Livestock Management, Grazing and Water Quality
  - *there will be 100% participation by livestock operators to have a plan in place to address water quality issues*
  - *10 acres of stream protected*
  - *no feedlot runoff into streams*
- Precision Farming
  - *there will be an annual review of the financial incentive rates and allotments for precision farming (increase request and more producers per year)*
- Noxious Weed Control
  - *research / investigate: Would there be enough incentive money in cost-share for weed control*
  - *review financial incentive practices to include chemicals, biological and application for weed control*
- Conservation Reserve Program Takeout
  - *through resolution with CRP takeout, there will include seeding the crop following with minimal soil disturbance*
  - *through resolution and policy, grazing will be added as a maintenance option for CRP without payment reduction*
  - *through resolution and policy, grazing will be added as a weed control option on CRP*
  - *there will be a demonstration site on grazing CRP*
- Alternative Energy and Crop Cover
  - *program development: Bio-fuels promotion and crusher – promotion and funding to demonstrate*
  - *newsletter article: Consider the different types of grasses that could be used for bio-fuels coupled with the cover crop concept and soil health*
  - *newsletter article: Wind Power Demonstration (Jack Fulfs)*

Critical Geographic Areas: (attached map)

- Whitman Conservation District specifically focuses on diversity.

Information – Education Priorities, Measures of Success, and Goals:

Education goals to be met by 2015 will be:

- All listed households of the District will be on the mailing list for the District's newsletter, *The Steward*
- 5 educational shop talks and/or tours will be held
- attendance at the Board meetings by teachers in the District
- 500 youth reached with conservation education
- an increase in visualization of demonstration sites and practices with signage

District Operations Priorities Measures of Success, and Goals:

District Operation goals to be met by 2015 will be:

- complete, effective and efficient operations including accounting; grant vouchering; personnel management; supervisor elections and appointments; training and development; and annual planning and reporting
- a continuation to strive for stable funding through grant funding, program development and contracting, exploring funding through fee for service, county funding and private funding sources

Trends Impacting Conservation in the Whitman Conservation District

- Increased operational costs for agricultural producers
- Increased regulatory pressure
- Increased demand on conservation district services from other agencies without financial support
- Increased education and public awareness

Strategies, Services & Products to Address Trends

- Be a one-stop shop for all conservation technical and financial assistance programs for landowners with or without other program assistance
- Raise awareness through education and outreach with local and state officials
- Continue the role as a buffer/facilitator between regulatory agencies and individual landowners

- Take economic situations and circumstances into account when the district is being requested to provide a service, and discuss promotion and marketing of the grass roots organization for reaching different audiences in different ways

Natural Resource Data

The District is the southwest corner of Whitman County and encompasses 424,065 acres:

Crop	283,301
Range	112,800
Pasture	12,703
Woodland	1,600
Balance	13,661 (includes city, towns, county, state grounds and private parks)

The rainfall ranges from 10-12 inches annually.

There are 7 watersheds that the District is a present in: Alkali Flat Creek, North Fork Palouse River, Palouse River, Rebel Flat Creek, Snake River, South Fork Palouse River, and Union Flat Creek.

There are 10 stream associations within the District: Alkali Flat Creek, Almota Creek, Goose Creek, Mud Flat Creek, Palouse River, Penawawa Creek, Rebel Flat Creek, Snake River, Union Flat Creek, and Willow Creek.

Staffing Needs

Maintain the current position of:

- District Coordinator

Add the following position when funding allows and need occurs:

- Information/Education/Outreach/Public Relations Technician

Annual Budget Needs

Salaries/Benefits/Taxes	$ 54,000.00
Additional Staff	$ 25,000.00
Office/Grant/Program Supplies	$ 14,000.00
Training/Travel	$ 4,000.00
Cost-Share Program	$ 15,000.00
Insurance/Dues	$ 6,500.00
Grand Total	$ 118,500.00

Key Decision Makers

- Local Land User/Owner
- WCD Board of Supervisors
- WCD Associate Supervisors
- Local Schools
- Agricultural Leaders
- City Councils
- Other County Conservation Districts
- County Commissioners
- County Extension Agency
- Washington State University
- University of Idaho
- Conservation Commission
- State Representatives, Senators, and the Governor
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Department of Ecology
- Department of Fish & Wildlife
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Natural Resources
- Salmon Recovery Board
- Farm Service Agency
- US Representatives, Senators, and the President
- County Port District

Benchmarks, Timeline, & Actions:

- Below are the first two line items from some of the categories contained in the Whitman Conservation District's 2011 Annual Plan of Work; please refer to the full Plan for additional information.

Strategic Priority: Water Quality Issues (Livestock and Sedimentation)
Measurable Goal: By March 2015, there will be 100% participation by livestock operators to have a plan in place to address water quality issues; 10 acres of stream protected; and no feedlot runoff into streams.

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Annual Plan of Work Review	7/2010-6/2015	Provide technical assistance for the implementation of Best Management Practices
Annual Plan of Work Review	7/2010-6/2015	Cooperate with WSU County Extension on Riparian Area Study – Flash Grazing vs. Continuous Mar-Nov Grazing

Strategic Priority: Soil Erosion and Soil Quality
Measurable Goal: By March 2015, there will be 15 producers moving from a conventional tillage system to a minimum tillage system; a promotion of mulch till with 5 producers, 5 shop talks completed addressing soil erosion or soil quality; and an expansion on the promotion of alternatives to burning stubble.

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Annual Plan of Work Review	7/2010-6/2015	Provide technical assistance for the implementation of Best Management Practices
Annual Plan of Work Review	7/2010-6/2015	Negotiate and complete Technical Service Provider Agreements with NRCS

Strategic Priority: Wildlife Management
Measurable Goal: By March 2015, an additional 50 acres of wildlife plantings to improve bird habitat will be completed.

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Annual Plan of Work Review	7/2010-6/2015	Provide technical assistance and service for the Annual Plant Sale and Guzzlers

Strategic Priority: Air Quality
Measurable Goal: The District will continue to be a Burn Permit Authority, assisting 75 persons each year with the permitting process.

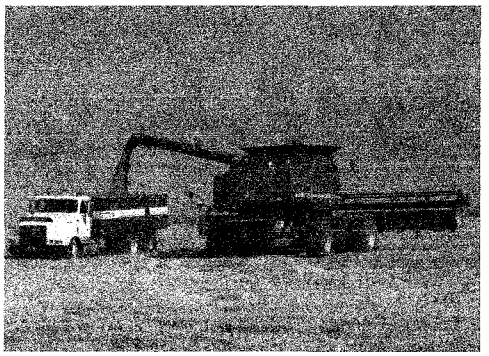
Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Annual Plan of Work Review	7/2010-6/2015	Provide technical assistance and service for the Burn Permit Program including alternatives to burning stubble
Annual Plan of Work Review	7/2010-6/2015	Develop or use existing agriculture burning alternatives / recommendations handout

Strategic Priority: Education Outreach
Measurable Goal: By March 2015, there will be a copy of The Steward received by all the people of the District (on newsletter mailing); 10 educational shop talks and/or tours; attendance at the Board meetings by teachers in the District; hosted speakers at the schools; 500 youth reached with conservation education; and an increase in visualization of demonstration sites and practices with signage.

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Annual Plan of Work Review	7/2010-6/2015	Co-sponsor the legislative relations session with the other SE Area Districts
Annual Plan of Work Review	7/2010-6/2015	Publish four editions of The Steward annually

Strategic Priority: Cost-Share
Measurable Goal: As money is available, provide financial incentive to participate in the District Cost-Share Program through implementation of District approved Best Management Practices.

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Annual Plan of Work Review	7/2010-6/2015	Financial incentive to implement Whitman Conservation District Accepted Best Management Practices



Washington Conservation Districts assisting land managers with their conservation choices