

Kittitas County Conservation District

Serving
Landowners in
Kittitas County
Since 1942

October 2010



Office location:

607 E Mountain View Avenue

Ellensburg, WA 98926 Phone: (509) 925-8585 ext. 4 Fax: (509) 925-8591 Website: www.kccd.net

Volume VII, Issue 4

Manastash Creek Work Continues

Construction started in September at the Keach Jensen irrigation diversion on Manastash Creek. This will be the last large fish screen facility to be installed as part of the Manastash Creek Restoration Project. It is a similar design to the project constructed at the Manastash Water Ditch Association diversion last winter/spring.

As of October 1st, the rock weirs in the creek have been constructed and excavation is underway at the fish screen facility site. The rock weirs provide fish passage at controlled elevations through this reach of Manastash Creek.

The majority of the construction will be completed by the end of 2010, although the full facility will not be operational until April 2011. This project is funded by the Bonneville Power Administration and facilitated by HDR. To follow the progress of the project, follow the KCCD blog at <http://kittitascd.blogspot.com/>.



Don Shriner (KCCD), Mike Garello (HDR), Brent Renfrow (WDFW), and Brandon Drexler (Belsaas & Smith) check the elevations of the new installed rock weirs in Manastash Creek.

Working Together To Improve Defensible Space

The Wagon Wheel/Sandy Ridge community is well on its way to becoming a recognized "Firewise Community".



Community members work to improve Spoke Lane for emergency vehicle access.

The community has organized numerous work parties to improve roads for emergency vehicle access and homeowner evacuation in the event of a wildfire. Wagon Wheel was also able to take advantage of a roving chipper operated by a Washington Conservation Corps crew that chipped debris from thinning and pruning projects left alongside the road. Over 30 yards of chips were hauled away to be used as mulch for future plantings by the KCCD. For more information about how your community can become a Firewise Community, or if you'd like to schedule an individual Firewise assessment, call Suzanne at (509) 925-8585 ext. 113.



WCC Crews help dispose of fuels with a "roving chipper".

New Staff Members in the NRCS Office

The USDA Service Center in Ellensburg is happy to introduce two new NRCS employees, Erin Kreutz and Kara McDaniel. Both started with NRCS this summer as Soil Conservationists and are proving to be valuable additions to the team!

Erin has a Forest Ecology & Management degree from University of Wisconsin-Madison and is currently pursuing her Master's in Natural & Cultural Resource Management from Central. She came to our agency from the Washington State Department of Natural Resources and also has time with the US Forest Service in California. She brings some much needed forestry experience to the service center and local knowledge of conservation issues, having worked in the Ellensburg area for the past 5 years. When Erin is not in the outdoors or writing conservation plans, she is a harpist in her spare time!!



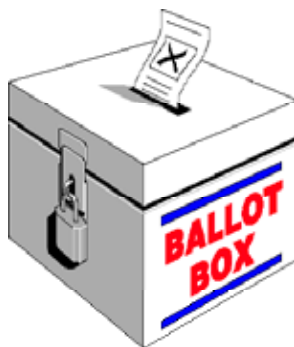
Kara graduated with a degree in Natural Resource Sciences with an emphasis on Fish & Wildlife Conservation from Oregon State University. She has spent summers in the Mt. Vernon and Ephrata NRCS offices, so brings with her experience with NRCS programs and a lot of enthusiasm to assist local producers. She has lived in the Moses Lake area for the last 25 years where she now resides with her husband and 3 children. In her spare time, Kara likes to go camping and fishing.

Feel free to stop by and welcome Erin & Kara to the office.

Interested in Becoming a Board Member?

The Kittitas County Conservation District Board of Supervisors is seeking applicants for one elected supervisor position. The Conservation District is directed by a Board of five volunteers, three elected and two appointed. These supervisors represent landowners, and the general public, while identifying local conservation needs and implementing programs to protect soil, water, wildlife, and other renewable resources within Kittitas County. Supervisors attend monthly meetings, oversee disbursement of District funds and direct paid staff.

To be eligible for the position, the applicant must be a registered voter within the Kittitas County Conservation District boundaries (all unincorporated areas of Kittitas County and the City of Cle Elum). Interested persons should contact the Kittitas County Conservation



Kittitas County Conservation District

Board of Supervisors

Mark Moore - Chair (Elected - term expires in 2013)
Lynn Brown - Vice Chair (Appointed - term expires in 2011)
Jeff Brunson - Auditor (Elected - term expires in 2012)
Bill Boyum - Member (Appointed - term expires in 2013)
Ron Gibb - Member (Elected - term expires in 2011)

District Staff

Anna Lael - District Manager
Sara Leist - Financial Manager
Suzanne Wade - GIS Specialist
Mark Crowley - Resource Technician II
Ryan Roberts - Engineer
Sherry Swanson - Project Manager
Brent Dixon - Resource Technician

Board meetings are generally held on the second Thursday of each month. Call 24 hours prior to confirm meeting time.

The KCCD office is co-located with the USDA Service Center at 607 E Mountain View in Ellensburg

District, 607 E. Mountain View Ave., Ellensburg, WA 98926, (509) 925-8585 ext. 4 (office hours are Monday – Friday 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM). Nomination petitions are available at the District office and will soon be available on our website, www.kccd.net. Nomination petitions require 25 signatures of eligible registered voters in Kittitas County and who reside within the district boundary. Nomination petitions will be due in January 2011, please call KCCD for the specific deadline.



Visit KCCD on the web at kccd.net



Become our Fan on Facebook!

Salmon in our Backyards

by Rebecca Wassell, Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group

Riparian buffers are the strips of grass, shrubs, and trees along the banks of rivers and streams. They serve as a buffer between our uses of the land nearby and the water itself. This is true in both urban and rural settings.

These buffers are complex ecosystems which, when managed correctly, perform invaluable services for all of us. They act as filters to trap pollutants and nutrients that would otherwise wash into our streams. They keep stream banks and streambeds stabilized, resulting in less flood damage. The trees and shrubs provide shade, keeping water cooler. Riparian buffers are also home to a multitude of plant and animal species, and can provide safe travel corridors for wildlife.

Many landowners are reluctant to install riparian buffers, especially in their backyards. Some are concerned that the buffer will block their view of the river, while others are worried that a riparian buffer will be difficult to maintain. The "Salmon in our Backyards" project, funded by the Community Salmon Fund, has created a plan for planting native trees, shrubs, grasses and groundcovers along streams in Kittitas, Yakima, and Benton Counties. The plan, shown to the right, allows for easy access to the river, good views of the stream, and minimal maintenance after the first few years. It is also a beautiful addition to any landscape.

KCCD is working with the Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group to support the installation of backyard riparian buffers. We have funding available from the Department of Ecology to install buffers in Upper Kittitas County; please call KCCD if you are interested in learning more. Additional information about the native plants for a backyard buffer can be found at www.midcolumbiarfeq.com.



Landscape Plan Example

Native Plants

A Mockorange	G Idaho Fescue, Wild Strawberry, Columbine	L Ocean Spray
B Oregon Grape Creeping	H Creeping Oregon Grape	M Ponderosa Pine
C Columbine	I Snowberry	N Vine Maple
D Lewis' Blue Flax	J Kinnikinnick, Blanket Flower	O Snowberry
E Grand Fir	K Quaking Aspen	P Prairie Smoke
F Golden Currant		Q Pacific Ninebark

Land Care seminar Series 2010

Its not too late to attend the Land Care Seminar series. The following classes are still available:

- ◆ October 21—horse grazing disorders and feed management
- ◆ November 4—irrigated pasture management & renovation
- ◆ November 18—stockpiled pasture and winter grazing
- ◆ December 2—rotational grazing and irrigated pasture improvement
- ◆ December 16—livestock grazing and water quality



Each class is held at the Heritage Center, Kittitas County Event Center (fairgrounds) underneath the grandstands on the south side of the rodeo arena at 7 pm—access via 6th St. Contact WSU Extension (509-962-7507) to register or for more information.

John Arum Remembered

We were saddened to learn of the death of John Arum, who was a member of the Manastash Creek Steering Committee. He died in a mountain climbing accident in the north Cascades in late August. John represented the Washington Environmental Council (WEC) and had been involved in the Manastash Creek Steering Committee since its inception in 2001.

The WEC initiated contact with the Manastash Creek irrigators and others through a draft letter of intent to sue under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in February 2001. At the time, it seemed as though a great fear would be realized and that, like irrigators in the Methow and Klamath Falls, irrigators in the Manastash would be shut down. Although very tense in the beginning, the Manastash Creek Steering Committee was able to put together a plan that all parties could agree to and that plan is now being implemented. Construction of the three major fish screen facilities are nearly complete, as the Keach-Jensen diversion fish screen structure is under construction now and will be operational by the spring of 2011.



The success of the Manastash Project to date is due in large part to John's participation in the project. The Committee agreed early on to the basic tenant that whatever solution was agreed upon, agriculture would remain whole in the Manastash. John never wavered from that agreement even though the project had several setbacks over the last several years. There even came a point when at least one of the irrigators stated that he would be comfortable with John negotiating on his behalf because he understood the irrigators needs so well. That statement was an amazing expression of the trust and respect that John earned through his personal efforts on the Manastash Project. John's presence will be greatly missed.

Inside:

- ◆ **Firewise Activities**
- ◆ **Riparian Buffer**
- ◆ **Elections**
- ◆ **Workshops Offered**

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