

CONSERVATION QUARTERLY

SUMMER 2010



Mike Patterson and Gretchen Rohde stand in the pasture they renovated with help from the Cascadia Conservation District's Landowner Assistance Program in 2009-2010.

VOLUNTEERS PULL OVER 5 TONS OF TRASH FROM LOCAL RIVERS

According to American Rivers, millions of tons of trash end up in our nation's rivers and streams every year. At first glance one might assume our local waterways are pristine, but a closer look reveals that our area is not immune.

Over the course of two Saturdays in August more than 120 volunteers helped remove an estimated five tons of trash and debris from two major rivers in Chelan County as part of the Wenatchee and Entiat River Clean-up events.

"We filled the biggest raft in our fleet with a pick-up load of rusty debris. It would have been nice to fill a dozen more."

James L. Moore
Wenatchee River Clean-Up volunteer
and owner of Orion River Rafting

Plastic bags, glass bottles, rusty metal pieces and other refuse were collected by volunteers walking along the river bank or floating a stretch of the river. "We filled the biggest raft in our fleet with a pick-up load of rusty debris," recalls James L. Moore, Wenatchee River Clean-Up volunteer and owner of Orion River Rafting. "It would have been nice to fill a dozen more."

Efforts along the Wenatchee focused on the eighteen miles of river between Leavenworth and Monitor while activities in the Entiat occurred along the lower six miles of river between the Entiat National Fish Hatchery and the confluence with the Columbia River.

Following both events, volunteers were treated to a complimentary lunch and live entertainment. Local singer and songwriter Chelsey Craven performed at the Wenatchee River Clean-up, and area musicians Allen Anderson and Vern Smith kept everyone's toes tapping at the Entiat River Clean-up.

In addition to picking up trash and debris, the location of larger materials was mapped for future removal. Under a grant from the Washington State Department

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NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR COST-SHARE ASSISTANCE

As a landowner in Chelan County, you own a piece of something special. Scenic beauty, vibrant plant and animal life, and a peaceful rural atmosphere make for an unmatched quality of life.

The key to maintaining the value of your property begins with the good stewardship of your land. Whether you own two or two hundred acres the Cascadia Conservation District's Landowner Assistance Program is a great way to ensure you are getting the most out of your property without compromising the value of your investment.

Under the Landowner Assistance Program, qualifying landowners can receive free technical assistance and apply for cost-share funding to help cover the costs

(Continued on page 2)

2010-2011
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AT A GLANCE: 2010 River Clean-Ups

Wenatchee River Clean-Up August 14, 2010

Hosts:

- Chelan County Natural Resource Department
- Cascadia Conservation District
- Trout Unlimited
- City of Cashmere

Partners:

- Bureau of Reclamation
- Chelan County Public Works

Sponsors:

- Avalon Music
- Crunch Pak
- Dan's Food Market
- Food Pavilion
- Good Mood Food
- Sleeping Lady Mountain Resort
- Sure to Rise Bakery
- Weinstein Beverages

Entertainment:

- Chelsey Craven

Entiat River Clean-Up August 28, 2010

Hosts:

- Cascadia Conservation District
- City of Entiat
- Entiat Watershed Planning Unit

Partners:

- Bureau of Reclamation
- Chelan County Fire District #8
- Chelan County Public Works
- Upper Columbia Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group
- US Fish & Wildlife Service

Sponsors:

- Entiat Food Center
- Entiat Log Cabin Restaurant
- Entiat Grange
- Entiat Valley Community Services
- Entiat Valley Pastry & Coffee House
- Finchum's Auto Repair
- Jackie Blanchfield Real Estate
- Numerica Credit Union
- Trout Unlimited

Entertainment:

- Allen Anderson & Vern Smith

RIVER CLEAN-UPS *(Continued from page 1)*

of Ecology, the Chelan County Natural Resource Department will be removing unnatural hazardous debris in the Wenatchee River for the second year in a row. The Cascadia Conservation District will be complementing their efforts in the Entiat River thanks to funding provided by the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation's Community Salmon Fund.

Both the clean-ups were the product of collaborative partnerships between local, state and federal entities as well as a long list of generous sponsors.

Planning is already underway for 2011. Individuals, service groups, conservation partners or businesses interested in being involved are encouraged to contact the following people for more information:

Wenatchee River Clean-Up

Matt Shales
Chelan County Natural Resource Department
(509) 667-6436 or matt.shales@co.chelan.wa.us

LANDOWNER ASSISTANCE *(Continued from page 1)*

of select conservation projects on their property. Up to 50% of the labor and equipment costs associated with the implementation of eligible Best Management Practices, or BMPs, are covered through the program. BMPs are actions landowners can take to minimize their impact on soil and water resources, as well as neighboring fish and wildlife populations.

Examples of eligible BMPs include:

- irrigation system upgrades and/or soil moisture monitoring equipment to improve water delivery and timing;
- livestock exclusion fencing and/or off-channel watering facilities to prevent stream bank erosion and keep our waterways clean;
- riparian planting to keep property intact and improve habitat

Seven landowners participated in the cost-share component of the program in 2009-2010. One couple, Gretchen Rohde and Mike Patterson, used the program to renovate a 2.5 acre horse pasture on their property outside Plain.

"The pasture work was long overdue and the cost-share assistance enabled us to do all phases of rehab at one time," says Rohde. Noxious weeds were hand-pulled or sprayed. Light harrowing and supplemental seeding was conducted. Irrigation



Local singer and songwriter Chelsey Craven performed for volunteers at the 2nd Annual Wenatchee River Clean-Up.



Devyn, Joshua, Damon and Dawson Smith show off the trash and debris they collected at the 1st Annual Entiat River Clean-Up.



A sampling of some of the trash and debris collected as part of the 2nd Annual Wenatchee River Clean-Up.

Entiat River Clean-Up

Phylisha Olin
Cascadia Conservation District
(509) 664-9309 or phylisha.olin@wa.nacdnet.net

Water Management (IWM) techniques were applied to the existing distribution system to improve irrigation timing and delivery.

"...the financial help and the expertise of Cascadia staff makes for a superior result."

Gretchen Rohde
2009-2010 Participant in the
Landowner Assistance Program

This practice proved to be both fun and interesting, as both landowners enjoyed learning how to use the soil moisture measurement tools. They placed the sensors and used the monitoring devices to learn how moisture moves through soil and holds at different depths.

Armed with this data, they were able to schedule irrigation according to the needs of the plants and soil, maximizing the efficiency of their water use. The result is just as they had hoped. A weed free, lush green pasture.

Gretchen notes that if a landowner is able to supply manpower and time to take on a project, *"...the financial help and the expertise of Cascadia staff makes for a superior result."*

If you are interested in learning more about how you can benefit from the Cascadia Conservation District's Landowner Assistance Program you are encouraged to contact our office at (509) 664-9370. Technical assistance is available free of charge year around and applications for 2010-2011 cost-share funding are currently being accepted through **October 15, 2010.**



Above: Chelan County Fire District #1 Fire Chief Mike Burnett.

Left: Chelan County Fire District #1 Station 14 after defensible space treatments were applied.

WALK THE TALK: FIRE DEPARTMENT ASSESSES THEIR OWN DEFENSIBLE SPACE

In the spring 2009 issue of the *Conservation Quarterly* one of our staff members turned the mirror on herself and evaluated her own water use in an effort to gauge whether she “walked the talk or just talked the walk” outside of the office.

In the second installment of this column our partner, Chelan County Fire District #1, assesses one of their fire stations to determine if they are following their own recommendations for defensible space around structures.

Chelan County Fire District #1 serves over 13,000 residents in the greater Wenatchee area and is what is referred to as an “all-risk” fire department, meaning they respond to all types of emergencies including wildfires. They are called to an average of 700 incidents annually and actively work not only to fight fires, but to prevent them.

“I am very impressed with the amount of energy residents of the upper Squilchuck valley have put toward wildfire preparedness. In some respects we are a part of that community and we wanted to show our support by practicing what we preach.”

Mike Burnett, Fire Chief
Chelan County Fire District #1

In 2008 Fire District #1 received a grant from the US Department of the Interior for wildfire fuels reduction in the upper Squilchuck valley. With assistance from the Cascadia Conservation District they are treating over fifty acres around one of the most vulnerable neighborhoods in their district and providing a critical link between similar treatments implemented by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources and US Forest Service. The result is a more fire resistant landscape, which will help to slow the speed of an approaching wildfire, improve firefighter safety, and ultimately help protect people and property.

In an effort to encourage residents to implement complementary treatments on their own land, they have coordinated with Cascadia staff to provide free wildfire risk assessments for interested landowners. Participants are encouraged to reduce vegetative fuels on their property and replace combustible building materials with more fire resistant alternatives. Last spring Fire District #1 evaluated

whether they were “walking the talk or just talking the walk” by assessing one of their own buildings in the upper Squilchuck valley.

Station 14 is located approximately 4.5 miles up Squilchuck Valley Road. It is a volunteer-staffed station that provides the first line of defense for residents in the upper valley. When firefighters applied their own assessment criteria to the property they quickly realized there was a problem.

The cinder block construction provides a good defense in the event of a fire, but vegetative fuels were overgrown along three sides of the structure. “Over the years, the vegetation around the station was allowed to grow without proper pruning and control,” recalls Fire Chief Mike Burnett.

There was little to stop a fire in the surrounding landscape from putting the structure, and the essential resources it holds, at risk. “We needed to reduce fuels to prevent a fire from spreading to the structure,” says Burnett. “So we partnered with the neighboring landowner and got to work.”

Volunteer firefighters removed any vegetation in contact with the structure, thinned out trees and shrubs within thirty feet, and laid gravel in an effort to break up fuels that could potentially carry a fire across the landscape.

“We still have some work to do, but the risk of a wildland fire spreading to our station has been greatly reduced,” says Burnett. Managing fuels within thirty feet of the structure will keep heat and flames at a far enough distance to prevent structure ignition and provide firefighters with a safe place from which to fight a fire.

“I am very impressed with the amount of energy residents of the upper Squilchuck valley have put toward wildfire preparedness,” states Burnett. “In some respects we are a part of that community and we wanted to show our support by practicing what we preach.”

The end result is a more defensible fire station demonstrating risk reduction practices and a fire department that not only “talks the walk, but walks the talk.”

FIREWISE TOP



1 Recognize the Hazard

Fire is a fact of life in north central Washington. It is not a matter of *if* a wildfire will occur, but *when*. As residents of a fire-prone area it is important that we recognize the dangers that exist around us and do what we can to protect our families, our firefighters and our property BEFORE a wildfire starts.



2 Define Your Defensible Space

Reducing flammable materials from around your home and outbuildings creates a defensible space and reduces the chances they will be ignited by a wildfire. A 30-200 foot buffer is recommended depending on the steepness of slope and dominant vegetation types.



3 Reduce Flammables

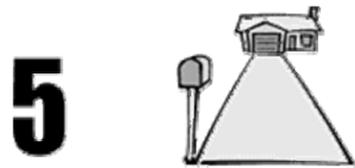
Manage vegetative fuels in your defensible space by...

- removing diseased, dead, and downed trees & brush
- removing tree limbs within 12'-15' of the ground
- breaking up continuous, dense vegetation
- raking up dead leaves, pine needles & other debris



4 Rate your Roof

Your roof is the most vulnerable part of your house in the event of a wildfire. Class A roofing materials such as metal, tile, and asphalt composite are able to withstand the most severe exposure to heat, flames and firebrands.



5 Be Accessible

Make sure firefighters and other emergency responders can find and safely access your property. Ideally, your driveway should be clearly marked, wide enough for two vehicles to safely pass and include an area to turn around.

PROMOTING CONSERVATION ONE PLANT AT A TIME

Over 4,000 native plants found a new home in Chelan County last spring as a result of our 2010 native plant sale. With the help of thirteen volunteers, we were able to support local Arbor Day events and supply over 100 customers with quality conservation grade plants.

For the tenth year in a row, Stemilt Growers was kind enough to provide cooler space to store our plants in prior to distribution. "We are very grateful for their continued support of the sale," affirms plant sale coordinator Phylisha Olin, "It would be very difficult for us to put on the plant sale without their help."

All of the species offered were grown from eastern Washington seed stock by the Washington Association of Conservation Districts Plant Materials Center and the Washington Department of Natural Resources Webster Forest Nursery. Native plants are well adapted to the local climate and more resistant to pests and diseases than non-native options, making them an excellent choice for people interested in using less water and fewer chemicals and fertilizers in their yard. They can also be a very attractive addition to a landscape.

Customer Annie Lesmeister of Entiat integrated her new native plants in with existing non-native vegetation. "I wanted to incorporate the beauty of the area into my yard," states Lesmeister. "The native plants help it blend in more with the surrounding environment."

The native plant sale is an annual event. Preparations are currently underway for 2011. Species suggestions are welcomed. If there is a particular native plant you are interested in seeing this year's sale, let us know.

Order forms for the 2011 sale will be available in the fall edition of the Conservation Quarterly and via our website. If you would like to be added to our mailing list contact us at (509) 664-9370 or visit www.cascadiacd.org.



Volunteers take a break and pose for a picture as they help bundle plants in preparation for our 2010 Native Plant Sale last April.



CASCADIA
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

215 Melody Lane Wenatchee, WA 98801
(509) 664-9370 • www.cascadiacd.org

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UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

2010-2011 Cost-Share Assistance Application Deadline

October 1 at 5 pm

- Qualifying landowners interested in receiving cost-share assistance for the implementation of select conservation practices in 2011 are encouraged to submit applications for financial assistance through our Landowner Assistance Program. See article on page 1 for more information.

Chelan County Household Hazardous Waste Collection

October 2, 9 am to 5 pm, various locations and times.

- Visit the Chelan County web site at http://www.co.chelan.wa.us/pw/pw_hh_hazardous_waste.htm for details, or call 667-6415

Entiat Watershed Planning Unit Meeting

October 6 at 9 am in the Entiat Grange Hall off 14108 Kinzel St. in Entiat

- Meeting is open to the public. The proposed agenda and minutes from the July 7 meeting will be available on our website at www.cascadiacd.org one week prior to the meeting.

Cascadia Conservation District October Board Meeting

October 21 from 3:30 pm to 5 pm at 215 Melody Lane in Wenatchee

- Meeting is open to the public. Attendees are asked to check in at the front desk for the meeting room assignment.

2011 Spring Plant Sale Kick-off

- Watch for information and order form in the next issue of the *Conservation Quarterly*.

Cascadia Conservation District November Board Meeting

November 18 from 3:30 pm to 5 pm at 215 Melody Lane in Wenatchee

- Meeting is open to the public. Attendees are asked to check in at the front desk for the meeting room assignment.

For more information on any of the meetings and events listed above, call our office at (509) 664-9370 or visit our website at www.cascadiacd.org.

WHAT'S GOING ON OUT THERE?

Cascadia has a number of projects in the works. Over the next few months, you may see us with our partners, contractors and Washington Conservation Corps crews working on the following projects in the Entiat and Wenatchee watersheds:

- Installing in-stream habitat
- Drilling wells for off-river irrigation sources
- Re-connecting an historic floodplain
- Planting native vegetation and protecting banks from erosion

In addition, we're helping landowners reduce wildfire fuels in the Squilchuck area.



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