

### A Message from Gus

There are two sure signs that autumn is just around the corner: 1) the mornings start getting significantly cooler, and 2) my hay fever starts to kick in. Since I had to roll up the windows while driving to work this morning and had a sneezing fit when I went out at lunch time, I think I can safely say it is on the way. (There is that whole post-nasal drip thing, but I believe I'll spare you the details!)

The final sure sign that fall is coming is when the State Conservationist reminds everyone to get their end of the fiscal year reporting done on time. Consider yourself reminded.

I was looking at the FY06 performance progress this morning. We've had a pretty good year. I'm sure it will look even better as folks wrap up projects and get things reported. Like many of you, I'm looking forward to a new fiscal year on October 1. But let's not get too distracted until we finish this year.

I seem to remember an old saying that goes something like 'the job isn't finished until the paperwork is done.' Maybe that needs to be revised a bit to 'the job isn't finished until the e-work is done.' Reckon?



**Fall Back**  
**October 29<sup>th</sup> is Daylight Savings Time**  
**Don't forget to set your clocks  
backward one hour**



#### Volunteer Hours

**Have you been reporting your volunteer hours?**

**The National Office will be pulling Earth Team Year-end reports on September 29<sup>th</sup>.**

**If you have forgotten to turn in volunteer hours, please send a report to your area coordinator.**

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# HR News

## **GOODBYE AND GOOD LUCK TO THE FOLLOWING EMPLOYEES:**

- Nancy Rau**, Budget Assistant, Spokane State Office, retired effective 4/29/06.
- Dora Van Dyke**, Purchasing Agent, Spokane State Office, retired effective 5/27/06.
- Jason Outlaw**, Soil Scientist, Mount Vernon, reassigned to Oregon NRCS and promoted, effective 7/09/06.
- Mark Amara**, Archeologist in the Ephrata Area Office, retired effective 7/22/06.
- Josie Kamkoff**, Student Trainee Soil Science Pullman PMC, resigned effective 7/24/06.
- Peter Venable**, Biological Science Aid (Plants) Pullman PMC, resigned effective 8/11/06.
- Cara Fisher**, Biological Science Aid (Plants) Pullman PMC, resigned effective 8/19/06.
- Brad Bennett**, Biological Science Aid (Plants) Pullman PMC, resigned effective 8/19/06.
- Danielle Rohde**, Soil Conservationist, Prosser, resigned effective 8/25/06
- Roger Briggs**, Soil Conservationist, Ephrata Field Office, retired effective 9/02/06.
- Maria Momiyama**, Voucher Examiner, Spokane State Office, resigned effective 9/2/06.
- Mike Deering**, State Design Engineer, Spokane State Office, promotion/relocation to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, California, effective 9/17/06.
- Jaida Belle**, Purchasing Agent, Spokane State Office, will resign effective 9/17/06

## **WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW EMPLOYEES!**

- Tracy Hanger**, Student Trainee, Agronomy, Ephrata Field Office, effective 6/11/06; reassigned to Johnson Hall in Pullman, effective 8/20/06.
- Nicole Isaacson**, Student Trainee, Soil Conservationist, Colville Field Office, effective 6/11/06; reassigned to Spokane Field Office, effective 9/17/06.

## **CONGRATULATIONS TO FOLLOWING EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE RECENTLY RECEIVED PROMOTIONS!**

- Justin Mount**, Resource Conservationist, Wenatchee, reassigned/promoted, effective 6/11/06.
- Linda Appel**, Range Management Specialist, Okanogan Field Office, effective 8/20/06.
- Erik Dahlke**, Soil Scientist, Mt Vernon Soil Survey Office, effective 8/20/06.
- Corey Bensen**, Soil Conservationist, Yakima Field Office, effective 9/17/06

## **LOCATION REASSIGNMENT**

- Jeff Kuhlmann**, Area Resource Conservationist, East Area Office, effective 8/20/06.

## **ITEMS OF INTEREST**

- Heather Huffman**, Purchasing Agent, State office has changed her name to Jaida R. Belle, effective 8/20/06.

## Saying “thank you” is so easy!

*The Employee Recognition Committee would like to acknowledge the following employees who have recently received awards*

### **Time Off, Spot or QSIs**

Group spot award given by Oregon to Allen Aronica and Scott Pattee for their participation in special snow survey

### **June Non-monetary Awards**

Ron Nichols, Gloria Castellaw

### **July Non-monetary Awards**

Will Keller, Eileen Jackson, Misty Seiboldt, David Weber, Barry Rookey, Courtney Smith, Ron Joyner, Joe Navarro, Oscar Tobias, Rick Beck, Martin Rodriguez, Roger Amerman, Sue Myra

### **August Non-monetary Awards**

Anitra Gorham, Doug Fenwick, Ray Schuler, Kathy Dickerson, Steve Becker, Gary Cook, Dick Erickson, Erica Fifer, Kim Galland, Jerry Robeson, Molly Smith, Marlene Tilton, Scott Williams, Shawn Woodard, George Riley, Keith Harrington, Ron Joyner, John Kouns

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## **Orientation for New Employees**

*By Sherre Copeland, Training Officer*



*How many new employees can you name?*

Thirty one students from NRCS Washington participated in a week-long session of Orientation for New Employees (ONE) in Ellensburg. The course, which is required for all NRCS employees in their first year of employment, provides students with an awareness of the diversity of our work, customers, and partners. While many participants have worked well beyond their first anniversary with the agency, the State has historically had difficulty obtaining enough slots in the NEDC-sponsored course to satisfy the need. Therefore, a backlog of employees requiring the training had developed over a few years. Completion of the Washington-hosted

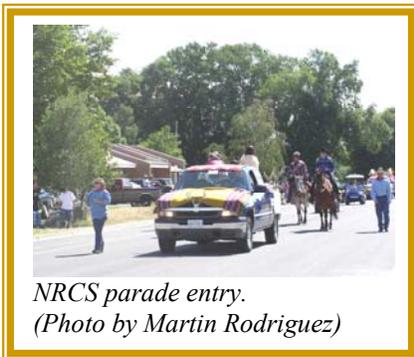
session allowed us to meet the mandate and clear the backlog.

A large part of the instruction included field trips to show students various types of field work and activities performed by our agency, and introduce new employees to some of our customers and partners. Chris Bove, Resource Conservationist in Ellensburg, who was also a student in the class, did an awesome job arranging the many field trips that spanned a three-day period. Instructors included Kim St. John, RC&D Coordinator from Illinois; Anthony Burns, National Technology Specialist from North Carolina; and Jerry Williams from the NEDC in Ft. Worth, Texas. Each student was also required to develop a five-minute presentation on their duties and responsibilities performed for NRCS. Therefore, the class provided a great opportunity for our newest employees to meet one another and gain a better understanding of the diversity of work, challenges, and unique conditions and customers encountered by their colleagues across the State.

## South Central Team participates in “Treaty Days” Celebration Parade

By Roger Amerman, NRCS Tribal Liaison

Energetic Washington NRCS staff from Yakima, Benton, and Klickitat Counties participated in the annual Treaty Days Parade held June 9 in Toppenish, Washington on the Yakama Indian Reservation. NRCS participants included--Patrick Beres, Goldendale; Roger Amerman, Yakama Tribal Office; Rick Beck and Barbara Bolick, Prosser; Corey Bensen and Sue Myra, Yakima; Dannelle Aleshire, Amanada Ettestad, Chris Johnson, Kelley Paup-Lefferts and Martin Rodriguez, Zillah.



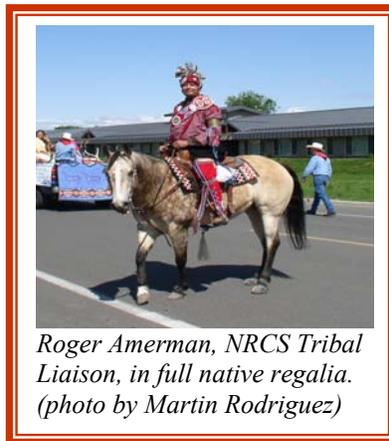
NRCS parade entry.  
(Photo by Martin Rodriguez)

An NRCS pick-up vehicle was decorated with elk antlers, draped with Pendleton blankets, and included NRCS banners. NRCS employees and family members tossed candy to children along the parade route. Three NRCS employees rode horses and wore cowboy and traditional tribal attire. “We even had our own ‘Pooper Scooper’ team,” said Roger Amerman from the Yakama tribal office. “The group worked hard to create a very fun and eye-catching parade entry that was enjoyed by all,” he said.

The parade was part of the many activities held during the three-day celebration which had over 100 entries. A powwow, rodeo and golf tournament was held over the weekend. "Honor the children" was this year's theme and the NRCS team competed in the 'community float' division.

Treaty Days commemorates the June 9, 1855 signing by Indigenous leaders of the 14 tribes and band of the Yakama Nation acknowledging them as a sovereign nation. In that treaty document the Yakama Nation reserved, in perpetuity, several rights including tradition, culture, government structure and religion. Most importantly, the leaders reserved the right to fish, hunt and gather their traditional foods, not only on the reservation, but on over 12 million acres ceded to the federal government during the treaty negotiations.

NRCS works closely to partner with citizens, staff and leadership of the Yakama Nation who participate in tribal EQIP, WRP and WHIP projects. NRCS assistance on the Yakama reservation includes everything from installation of 'state-of-the-art' pivot irrigation systems to the restoration and enhancement of thousands of acres of range and wetland habitat.



Roger Amerman, NRCS Tribal Liaison, in full native regalia.  
(photo by Martin Rodriguez)

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## Female Producers are an Integral Part of Washington Agriculture

by Amanda Ettestad, Federal Women’s Program Manager

Women are not new to the agricultural scene. They have always played an important role whether it is taking care of the family, keeping books, or participating in the day-to-day labor. However, as times change, women’s roles seem to have expanded. More women than ever are principle operators in agriculture. Terry Willis knows this to be true in her own life. Terry has been a partner of her family’s dairy in Montesano, Washington (30 minutes west of Olympia) for the past 33 years. Together with her husband Greg and her son Geoff, who has recently become a partner, Terry plays an active role in Olympic View Dairy, LLC.

When asked about her decision to become a producer, she said it was never her goal to be a dairy farmer. However, when she married her husband, who was the owner of a dairy, she immediately focused on working on the farm and building their business. They started out milking 60 cows and farming 120 acres. They currently milk 125 head, have 200 head of young stock, raise several hundred head of heifers for other herds, and farm 1000 acres of silage corn and sweet corn. Over the years Terry has been very

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## Female Producers...continued

active in the hands-on daily activities that come with managing a dairy. Since the business has grown and her children have become actively involved, Terry now focuses more on managing the office work. However, she candidly stated "I can still drive a tractor; I can still do hard labor!"

Like many women, Terry definitely wears more than one hat. In addition to being a partner in her business she is also a wife, a mother of four children, a grandmother of 5 (soon to be 6!), and an active member of her community. She is a supervisor of the Grays Harbor Conservation District and Chairman of the Board. She is also the policy chairman for Grays Harbor/Pacific County Farm Bureau. Terry participates as a member of the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation Farmland Preservation Program, a committee that reviews applications for grants to conserve prime land in the state of Washington by buying development rights on property zoned agriculture, or by buying the property outright. She is also a citizen representative for Grays Harbor County on the Chehalis Basin Partnership, a conglomeration of groups who address water quality issues in the Chehalis Basin, and she chairs its satellite Water Quality Committee.

The Willis dairy has participated in NRCS and other USDA programs for many years. When asked for her opinion on how the NRCS could best serve female producers, Terry had several thoughts. First, she agreed that even though a man's signature is on a contract, that does not mean that a woman is not involved. Many agricultural productions are family businesses or corporations, which likely involve women as well. Although, she did state that you will rarely see her husband's signature on many official documents! Terry also mentioned that word of mouth is a great way to advertise. Producers are more likely to be interested in a program if they hear about it from other producers. However, she did not discredit the use of flyers or mailers, since she says she looks through all the mail everyday and if she sees a new program they can use, she goes into town to talk to someone about getting involved.

Terry said she does recognize that men and women tend to communicate differently and it is important to appreciate these differences. She mentioned that other organizations have had success with female-oriented agricultural conferences. These organizations have not been shy about emphasizing that they were conferences for women in agriculture and have received an impressive response. She pointed out that women in agriculture can get isolated and not talk to other female producers for awhile and that these types of events are great opportunities for women to form connections with others who have a common interest. Making presentations about NRCS programs at these types of events would be one good way to reach even more women about participating. She said "it's a positive thing to get this information out to women in a way that is usable."

There are many women like Terry that are crucial in the success of agricultural businesses. These women are not in the background, they are decision makers, managers and very actively involved. If we are able to help them help the land, we will be better NRCS employees.

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### Washington State DOT Visits Highway 195 Road Cut Plantings

*Submitted by Wayne Crowder, Soil Conservationist, Pullman PMC*

On July 25<sup>th</sup>, Sandy Salisbury and Susan Buis from Washington State Department of Transportation, Olympia, visited five road cut plantings made by the Pullman Plant Materials Center (PMC). Also on hand were Gary Kuhn, Plant Material Specialist, Spokane State Office, Ann Swannack, East Area Agronomist and Wayne Crowder from the Pullman PMC. Site locations were from mile mark 49.9 to 60.3 north of Steptoe, Washington.

The five sites were planted with snowberry, Wood's rose, mallow ninebark and western clematis in 1999 and 2000. All plants were rooted in pots. The idea was to try to find plants which would root deeper than the Durar hard fescue cover which was present on most sites. Hopefully, deeper rooting plants would help prevent some of the erosion taking place. Erosion generally was sheet, rill, gully and soil sloughing/slides.

**Continued on page 6**

## Washington State DOT...continued

For the most part, the plantings are reflective of the extremely droughty conditions on clay subsoil which is deficient in nitrogen and organic matter. Growth and vigor of the plants to date are usually not adequate to provide significant stabilization effects. There are instances where Wood's rose and snowberry are suckering, providing additional plant numbers. But usually the droughty soil, slope and lack of fertility were tough items for the plants to overcome.

### Summary of 2006 evaluation data for the five sites

planting year	species	% survival	height (inches)
1999	snowberry	98	13.5
	Wood's rose	91	16.2
	ninebark	67	11.1
2000	snowberry	82	8.8
	western clematis	10	12.9
	ninebark	22	5.3
1999	snowberry* in disturbed site	100	33.0



Snowberry in rodent disturbed site, Hwy 195, mile mark 54.1, west facing slope.

\* Disturbance from rodents among four plants of snowberry on one site apparently provided for extra moisture and nitrogen availability.

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## Woody Biomass to Energy Conversion

### “If it can't happen on the Peninsula, where can it happen?”

*By Nancy Allison, RC&D Coordinator, Columbia Pacific RC&D*

In April, Columbia-Pacific RC&D partnered with the North Olympic Peninsula RC&D Council, the Rural Technology Initiative, the Olympic Natural Resources Center, Washington State University, and the University of Washington to sponsor a one-day forum to take a hard look at what's happening in the world of bio-energy on the Olympic Peninsula and the Washington Coast, specifically from woody biomass. Our purpose was to bring together utilities representatives, private industry, government leaders, and members of academia to discuss perceived opportunities and obstacles for coastal communities with an interest in wood utilization for renewable energy projects.

What we uncovered at the end of the day was a very strong interest in the development of bio-energy as an environmentally and economically attractive opportunity for coastal communities with broad public benefits associated with decreased reliance on fossil fuels. A number of needs were uncovered that, if addressed, could provide valuable assistance to rural coastal communities.

1. Modeled estimates of potential bio-energy projects by magnitude; by individual community, tribe, or private industry; by energy development type (heat, power, gas, liquid fuels); and by biomass fuel type (i.e. manufacturing residuals like hog fuel, municipal solid waste, logging slash, thinnings, etc.) with associated fuel, transportation, and production costs are needed for comparison against energy market sales opportunities. An analysis program for use by community representatives could be developed where fuel price, haul distances, steam consumption, and power price are input variables for preliminary analysis of economic feasibility.
2. Development of a comprehensive analysis and valuation of avoided costs, non-market values, environmental services, life cycle analysis, employment and tax revenues, and other ancillary

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## Woody Biomass...continued

public benefits associated with bio-energy development but not reflected in the market value of energy. A broader accounting of public values is needed to guide policy development in support of a prudent investment with long term public savings. For example, power delivered to rural communities results in transmission line losses and infrastructure costs that would be avoided with development of rural distributed facilities but market prices of electricity do not reflect such costs. Avoided pollution and landfill costs are also significant examples of public liabilities currently not captured in energy markets.

3. An examination of funding sources from government, green banks, and NGOs that currently support bio-energy development with critical review of effectiveness and availability would be helpful for communities considering the feasibility of local bio-energy projects.
4. An examination of local, county, state, PUD, BPA, state, and federal institutional arrangements and infrastructure with analysis of implications for bio-energy development in rural coastal communities. How are power sales agreements negotiated and with whom?

The Columbia-Pacific RC&D Council is examining these needs and determining what role they can play in teasing out the issues. Stay tuned . . .

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## Protecting shellfish and salmon habitat through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

*By Dan Larsen, Soil Conservationist, Port Orchard*

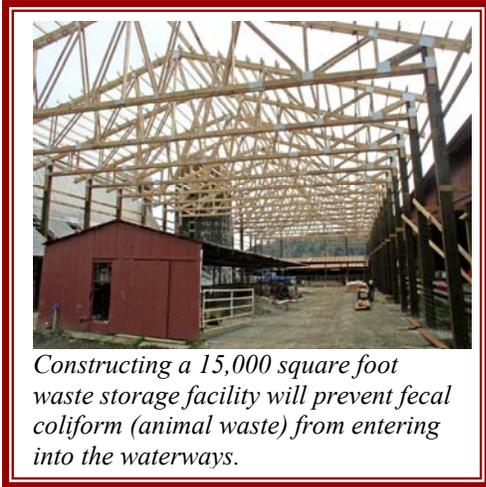
**Project Summary:** Hunter Farm's pastures and confinement area have been under scrutiny over the last eight years - due to high bacteria counts from samples taken by Washington Department of Ecology and the Skokomish Tribe. A conservation plan was developed to restrict livestock access, establish vegetation along Weaver Creek, and provide proper manure storage and application while diverting clean water away from waste storage areas. These installed practices will address non-point agricultural pollution sources and are effective in reducing overall waste contamination as well. Partners for this project include: Mason County Conservation District - Shannon Kirby, Rich Geiger; Natural Resources Conservation Service - Bari Williams, George Riley, Dan Larsen; Skokomish Tribe - Gus Miller; and landowner - Paul Hunter.

**Resource Challenges:** The Hunter Farm is located on Weaver Creek, a tributary of the Skokomish River which is a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) approved watershed that drains into Hood Canal, a sensitive shellfish area. Washington Department of Ecology, the Skokomish Tribe, and Mason County Health Department have been taking routine water samples from the Creek to determine purity levels. Hunter's 200 head beef operation was identified as a possible contributor to elevated levels of fecal coliform bacteria and other contaminants. It was decided that a covered waste facility would help divert storm water runoff from areas of high concentration of contaminants preventing discharges into the stream.

**Conservation Programs Used:** Paul Hunter is contracted with the NRCS under EQIP. EQIP provides Paul the flexibility he needs to address several different issues on the farm. Paul was able to fence his cattle out of the creek, construct a 15,000 sqft waste storage facility, and replace a bridge over a salmon-bearing stream. Hunter Farm has not experienced a wet winter yet, but Paul is confident his new facility will serve its purpose well and decrease the amount of contaminants from entering Weaver Creek.

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## Protecting shellfish and salmon habitat ...continued



**Innovations/Highlights:** The waste storage facility was the largest building Rich Geiger, engineer from Mason County, has ever designed. The exact dimensions were 60 ft. wide by 253 ft. long by 40 ft. tall. It was intended to cover a large amount of animal waste from over 200 head of beef cows. This was necessary in an area that can receive up to 80 inches of rainfall each year along with floods from high precipitation levels. The cooperation between landowner, tribe, county government, and NRCS was outstanding. When considering the area's unique climate and sensitive salmon/shellfish habitat, each interest had to be addressed with all options weighed so each conservation partner could agree upon a viable management solution.

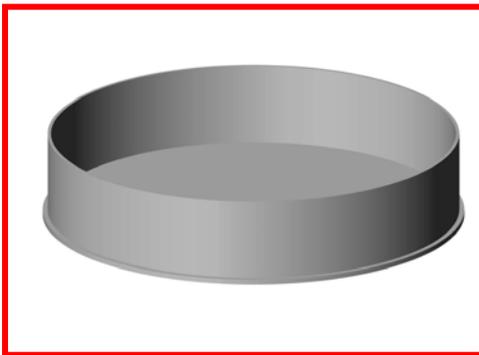
**Results and Accomplishments:** The roof was just completed and awaits its first winter. A roof runoff system has been designed to control rain water and direct that flow to an outlet for clean water. By preventing contaminated storm water from entering the Skokomish River, water quality will be improved and fish and shellfish habitat protected. A comprehensive nutrient management plan has been written to provide guidance for each step in waste handling - manure application plans, crop rotation and nutrient uptake, land application site information, and all permits or certifications will be obtained. Any changes to the initial nutrient management plan must be reviewed and approved by the cooperating partners.

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### Spokane Multi-State Design Team Introduces Version 1 of a Standard Design for a Circular Waste Storage Tank

*Submitted by Mike Deering and Steve Durgin*

As an efficiency measure, the Washington State Engineering Team requested from the Multi-State Design Team (MSDT) a standard design of a circular above-ground waste storage tank (Figure). Anticipated sizes range in diameter from 40 feet to 200 feet and from 6 feet to 20 feet in height. Required soil conditions for the tank include stiff soil, very dense soil, soft rock, rock and hard rock. While tank details will vary, the designs will be developed for every seismic zone in the state. Further, the tanks will have applicability throughout the United States.



Three Dimensional View of Standard Tank

The MSDT is developing two versions of the tank. An agricultural waste version is based on American Concrete Institute Committee 318 requirements (ACI-318). An environmental waste version is based on ACI-350. The MSDT plans to submit a 100 feet diameter by 16 feet high prototype of each version to the Fort Worth National Design and Construction Center for review. The review is planned for September.

For more information contact: Steve Durgin - 509-323-2957 or [steve.durgin@wa.usda.gov](mailto:steve.durgin@wa.usda.gov)

## Adams and Lincoln County Employees Learn to Plan for Wildlife

By Tim Dring, State Wildlife Biologist and Gary Kuhn, Plant Materials Specialist

On June 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of 2006, the staff of Adams and Lincoln Counties met to sharpen their skills before installing nearly fifty field borders and hedgerows for the purpose of creating wildlife habitat on cropland and rangeland. The training session was the idea of Ann Swannack, East Area Agronomist. After seeing the large number of EQIP participants in the two counties who were planning to apply field borders and hedgerows, Ann and Les Hannemann, District Conservationist, decided to invite some of the State Office staff to come and talk about how to apply these practices to best benefit wildlife.



**Gary Kuhn talks about tree and shrub establishment at a snow fence with the group.**

The session started with Tim Dring, State Biologist, reviewing the Upland Wildlife Habitat Management Practice Standard and Technical Note 14 the Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Guide. Tim also reviewed the Hedgerow Practice Standard and he spoke with the group about how best to install field borders when wildlife is the primary resource



**This snow fence shows how a hedgerow for wildlife cover would look in Lincoln County.**

concern. These practices are two of the three best that can be applied in Eastern Washington with the third practice being riparian forest buffers. They create corridors for wildlife to travel through and when properly installed, greatly enhance cover, the most limiting resource for wildlife east of the Cascades.

On Friday the group traveled to the field and visited a living snow fence installed north of Davenport. Gary Kuhn explained how to establish plants for a successful application of hedgerows using the snow fence as an example. The group then journeyed to a field border along the north



**Great Basin wild rye is an excellent grass to establish in hedgerows and field borders where wildlife is the primary resource concern.**

side of Route 2 east of Davenport. At that site the group had the chance to see how native vegetation could be used to establish wildlife habitat on cropland. The Upper Palouse Team then worked on improving their planned practices to better provide wildlife with the food and cover they need to maintain a successful population. They also selected plant species adapted to low precipitation and resistant to the occasional herbicide drift. Much of the information to select species for field borders, hedgerows, and windbreaks can be found in the new Plant Material Technical Notes in EFOTG, Sec. I: Reference Lists, Technical Notes by Discipline, Plant Materials. PM Technical Notes 1-16 cover seeding mixes and rates, species descriptions, plant identification, seedbed preparation, riparian revegetation, windbreak technology, and more. This information can also be found at the PMC WSU website: [www.wsu.edu/pmc\\_nrcs](http://www.wsu.edu/pmc_nrcs). Check them out!

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### Building Soils for Better Crops Field Day

On June 21<sup>st</sup>, Ken Drecksel, Central Area Resource Soil Scientist, spent the morning in a soils pit? Not too surprising or unusual for Ken who ranks digging in the soil right up there with an inexpensive cut of meat. Ken was one of the presenters at a recent field day at the Royal Organic Products composting facility west of Royal City. Ken was relating the characteristics of a virgin soil and what effects years of intense farming have on the biological and chemical properties of soil. The soils at this pit had not been farmed and exhibited traits of numerous pre-farmed/native soils in the arid part of Central Washington.

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## **Building Soils...continued**

Also at the soils pit as a presenter was Hal Collins of USDA-ARS, who discussed soil biology with the participants. Web Soil Survey was also discussed as a current source for soils information.

There were five other stations for participants to rotate through. A presenter from Royal Organics, a mint composting company in Royal City, discussed large scale composting. This company hosted the event at its facilities. Royal Organics markets large volumes of a black compost finished product which contains considerable nutrients, is weed free and certified for organic use. This particular composting material has demonstrated that it can add greatly to soil organic matter content, soil tilth, and available water holding capacity. It is commonly added to mineral soil materials and sold as topsoil.

Sponsors of this event were A.M Todd Company, Royal Organics, WSU-Extension, Grant Conservation District, and others. Approximately 80 people attended the event, including people from various agencies, producers and Master Gardeners. Ron Hull, District Manager of Grant Conservation District, was pleased with attendance. He stated that the purpose of this event was to give producers and others hands-on education on soils and soil amendments so they can better understand how soil amendments benefit soil quality.

There was also a free lunch provided. Who says there is no free lunch?

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### **Sustainable Rural Enterprise Conference – May 23-24, 2006**

*Submitted by Andrea Mann, RC&D Coordinator, Big Bend RC&D*

The Sustainable Rural Enterprise Conference and tour brought almost 40 participants to the La Quinta Inn outside of Ritzville, Washington to hear diverse stories of sustainable rural enterprises in the northwest.

An Peischel, Goats Unlimited owner and Tennessee State University extension professor, encouraged participants to consider livestock body condition scoring primarily when negotiating a vegetation management contract. An shared a photographic journey of her education, learning sites and enterprise development experiences throughout the two day conference and tour.



Other presentations included a look at mobile slaughtering facilities, poisonous weeds, holistic management, naturally and environmentally produced beef and a field tour giving participants direct insight to invasive vegetation management using goats. The field tour was held near Sprague Lake at a site adjoining a public boat launch and interpretive trail. One of the highlights included the pitchfork steak fry prepared by the Adams Cattleman. The meals created opportunities to continue networking and share management strategies.

Participants were eager to learn more and plan on participating in the conference and tour in 2007. This conference and tour was partially funded through a three year Sustainable Research Education (SARE) grant.

For more information please contact: Andrea L. Mann (509) 754-2463 x115

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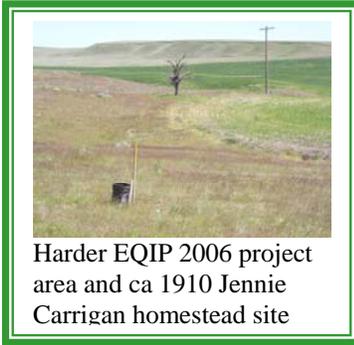
### **The Stove Site – Harder Farms Inc. EQIP in Franklin County**

*By Kathy Callum, East Area Cultural Resource Specialist*

At first glance, it looked like an average scatter of artifacts. Bill Harder, who is in his 70s and is the program participant's father, was as surprised as anyone by the archeological discovery. We were aware the site held a rare and unique treasure by the time NRCS submitted the final cultural resource report to National Historic Preservation Act consulting parties. The 50 odd fragmented artifacts wouldn't bring much if sold on eBay (which, of course, I'm not advocating). The real significance of the "Stove Site" lies with the story it tells.

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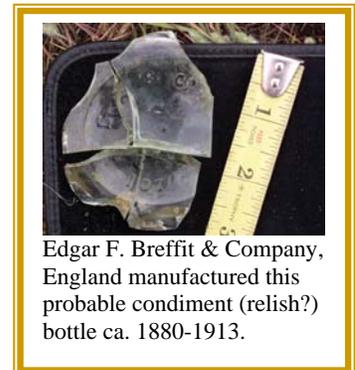
## The Stove Site...continued



The Stove Site holds a tangible, irreplaceable piece of Franklin County history, one that has almost been forgotten. The artifact cluster, rock, and charred wood, are situated about 250' from a lone black locust tree, in the hills between Kahlotus and the Snake River, along one of the relatively larger Washtucna Coulee tributaries. The rugged rangeland currently receives 8-10" of rain annually. A sheet metal stove, the cheap and portable type typically used by sheep herders and miners, marks the site. The discovery of a stove, a single whiskey bottle (fine cream rye for medicinal purposes?), and the lone tree posed a tantalizing mystery. What type of site would one expect in this harsh country?

Courtney Smith, Rangeland Management Specialist in the Clarkston Field Office, reviewed the archival sources and identified both sheepherding and marginal homesteading, plus found maps from the 1910s. Roberta Lewis, East Area Cultural Resources Specialist and Dave Brower, Cartographer in the State Office, helped "rubbersheet" or overlay a modern topographic map over the historic maps. Cheryl Jacobson, East Area Administrative Specialist, volunteered her online genealogical subscription to track down information about individuals. They were described in general terms by historian Phillippay (1973) in *Kahlotus Is Home* as "brave, misguided homesteaders"... "to all of the claims was the problem of water"...for "woman past their youth, some were widows, some spinsters" and a handful of bachelors ... "they practically gave their land away and traveled on to seek their fortunes elsewhere."

Archival research allowed NRCS to link several homestead claims with actual names. Jennie L. Carrigan claimed the NE ¼ of Section 10 in Township 13 North Range 34 east of Franklin County, Washington on April 27, 1908, the quarter section in which the Stove Site is located. Solarized (purple) glass, a hole-in-top can, four diagnostics, and other artifacts confirmed a date of ca. 1910, which would be consistent with her homestead entry. One of the bottles held condiments imported from England. Jim Loiland, Soil Conservationist in the Walla Walla, Field Office, thinks the domesticated locust must have required "years of dishwater" to establish. That's all we know about "spinster" Jennie L. Carrigan: a homestead entry and a handful of artifacts. Like others who sought their own free land across the United States, she was obligated to prove up on her 160 acres by building a residence, digging a well, plowing 10 acres, and building a fence.



Thanks to genealogical data we know a bit more about Jennie's neighbors. Next door was 63 year old Louisa Dunn and 27 year old daughter Alice, who came from Nebraska and operated a "general" farm. Down a historic road was 48 year old Clara Briley with two sons lately of Palouse, Washington, and who had the funds to pay cash for their quarter sections. The Compton brothers, bachelors from Latah Idaho, also bought into their homesteads. Apparently one bachelor, unfortunately not named for posterity by local historians, lasted only four nights. Was that lone individual Walter Locke, who paid the General Land Office cash for his homestead, perched on the steepest Snake River breaks?

By the 1930s, the Harders had puzzled together their ranch from many of these former quarter sections. Only a unique assemblage of artifacts speaks for Jennie Carrigan, and indeed, now represents all of the non-traditional, marginal homesteaders between Kahlotus and the Snake River. Failed homesteaders rarely leave written histories authored by descendants who can relate a tale of triumph over hardship.

Did boom-town agriculture draw a higher proportion of women and bachelors as opposed to the more traditional pioneering families? Did better local climate at the tail end of the Little Ice Age factor into arid land rush? Taking the marginal homesteads together, they exhibit relative differences in surface

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## The Stove Site...continued

watersheds, ground water hydrology and potential for natural springs or shallow dug wells, and presence of soils suitable to subsistence agriculture. For example, Jennie Carrigan's homestead in a larger tributary draining directly into Washtucna coulee contrasts favorably with that of Walter Locke's. While none of the families are traditional, it does appear that some of these Kahlotus area homesteaders could rely on close relatives. How much did differential access to vital resources like water or lack of a functioning



An artifact scatter yields pieces of Kahlotus' forgotten homesteading past

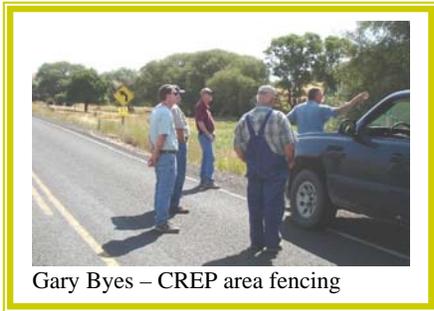
social support system play in the rate and timing of homestead abandonment?

What drew Jennie Carrigan to bet that particular ground would yield a good living and what happened to her in the end? Stewarded *in situ* by Harder Farms Inc, the Stove Site has potential to answer these questions. NRCS redesigned the EQIP project to avoid Jennie Carrigan's site. Harder Farms Inc. is able to steward their cultural resources, along with natural ones, as part of their working landscape. The program participant and the community of Kahlotus gain from NRCS' investigation of this non-renewable resource a story of the past, one that can contribute to the future's economic vitality, through heritage tourism.

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## Pomeroy Field Office Hosts Tour

*By Jim Shawley, Civil Engineering Technician, Pomeroy*



Gary Byes – CREP area fencing

The Pomeroy field office was excited to host our State and Area Conservationists on their tour through the East Area on August 3rd. Carol Wildman and Rick Stauty, local Resource Conservationists for the Pomeroy field office, selected cooperators with livestock projects that represented all four corners of Garfield County. Carol, Rick, and Jim Shawley met Gus Hughbanks and Ralph Christiansen at Central Ferry at 9:00 AM, along with Ed Teel our District Conservationist. We traveled east on Deadman Road to the first stop of the day, McGreevy Ranches. Don McGreevy, ranch manager, was introduced to all attending. Don

then described his EQIP project to the group and explained protecting water quality, in the salmon bearing stream, was the main objective of moving the feed lot off the creek. Don also explained the advantages of his new corral system. The system includes concrete feeding pads, heated water troughs, holding tanks, a new well, and a yearling branding and vaccinating area. Don stated that money from the Livestock Influenced Water Quality Grant (Conservation Commission) was used in conjunction with EQIP money to complete the project. It was time to move on to the next stop. Gary Bye's EQIP project fenced off a tributary to Deadman Creek and placed a culvert in stream, for a machinery crossing. This is a project that will improve water quality. Our next stop on the tour was the Tramway Road looking east form Garfield County vertically down into the Snake River canyon. This has an elevation drop of 1000 feet. The old Wheat Tramway was used in the early 1900 hundreds to send grain from the ridge top to the bottom of the canyon to waiting barges below. Next on the tour was the recently completed feeding area of Ledgerwood Farms, funded by the SWACA program. The feed lot provides feed bunk space for 400 yearling cattle - also noted was the mulched wind break on three sides of feed lot area. It was twelve o'clock lunch in town (Pomeroy) with good company and conversation.

At one o'clock, Rick directed the tour towards the south end of Garfield County. This is the location of last years School Fire. Over 55,000 acres burned and included Forest Service, state ground and private ground. The Pomeroy Conservation District as well as the Conservation Commission provided grass seed for over 3000 acres for the most severely burned areas on private ground. The local NRCS office assisted

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## Pomeroy Field...continued

in recommending the grass seed varieties and pounds per acre of seed to be applied. Two local spray pilots flew on the seed with fixed wing aircraft. Gus and the crew had fun identifying new grass seedlings. Last stop on the tour was on the east side of Garfield County and was hosted by Ledgerwood and Sons Farm. Sam Ledgerwood, the farm manager, led the tour. Sam discussed how the CREP program, as well as the SWCA program, has allowed him to change management systems and to better control his livestock. The farm has 6 miles of fish bearing stream that is now completely fenced, with new tree and shrub plantings, new wells, tanks and troughs. The cooperater was generous with his time and very willing to explain, to the group, the pros and cons of the programs from his prospective. We all had fun and learned something. Gus and Ralph were then off to Asotin County to get a look at what Jim Schroeder and crew had in store for them the next day.



## Teaching in the Field

*By Scott Williams, West Area Cultural Resources Specialist*



Over the past three years I have been volunteering with South Puget Sound Community College's Archaeology Fieldschool at the site of *q<sup>w</sup>u? g<sup>w</sup>as* ("Gathering Place"), a one-thousand year old archaeology site on the shores of Mud Bay near Olympia. The site is located on private property owned by Ralph and Karen Munro, who each year welcome a dozen or more students and numerous visitors to their property to learn about the culture and archaeology of the Squi-Aitl people, the ancestral family group of the Squaxin Island Tribe on that inlet. The Munro's have formed a close bond with the Squaxin Island Tribe, and work in close cooperation with the Tribe's Cultural Resources Department and South Puget Sound Community College. The agreement is an outstanding example of how private landowners can work with Tribes and archaeologists to carefully

study an archaeological site for the benefit of everyone. Students come from all over the Northwest to attend the fieldschool, and the site has regularly scheduled tours open to the public.

My involvement with the fieldschool came about through a set of lucky (for me) circumstances. Shortly after moving to Olympia I met Dr. Dale Croes, the SPSCC Archaeology Professor who has taught the fieldschool since its beginning eight years ago. Dale is a specialist in Northwest basketry, and basket fragments and other wood and bark artifacts are often found at *q<sup>w</sup>u? g<sup>w</sup>as* because it is a waterlogged site, a type that is rare. My area of interest is stone tools, and Dale asked me to look at some of the artifacts that had been recovered from the site. Also, as part of my Tribal consultation efforts at NRCS, I often work with the Squaxin Island Tribe and their Cultural Resources Department, including Tribal Historic Preservation Officer Rhonda Foster and CR Specialist Larry Ross. Both Rhonda and Larry are actively involved in the fieldschool, and as a result the relationship between the Tribe's Cultural Resources Department and NRCS has been strengthened by my work at *q<sup>w</sup>u? g<sup>w</sup>as*. Recently, we finished an article on projectile points from Puget Sound that incorporates the findings from *q<sup>w</sup>u? g<sup>w</sup>as* and that will be published next year by Simon Frazier University. The article was also presented at this year's Northwest Anthropology Conference by one of the fieldschool students, who co-authored the paper along with Dale, Larry, me, and two other collaborators.

My involvement with the fieldschool is varied. At the start of the class, I give students a lecture on stone tool manufacture and a demonstration of how stone tools are made. During the course of the excavations and laboratory work I answer any questions they might have about the stone artifacts and help to identify the more



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## Teaching in the Field...continued

problematic or unusual ones. The site is close enough to the area office that I can visit during lunch and answer questions in the field. Students do a summer research project, and I serve as a resource and help those that choose to do something related to stone tools, and teach them stone knapping techniques in informal “teach-ins” at my house during the early evenings. I also work throughout the year with students who continue their studies of anthropology, both on class research projects and on presentations at archaeology conferences.

For me, volunteering with the fieldschool and helping the students is a great way to stay connected to teaching and to keep in touch with current developments in my field, and to work with the Squaxin Island Tribe. For Dale and Rhonda, who operate the fieldschool on a limited budget, I like to think I provide another resource to add to the skills and knowledge they provide to the fieldschool, without taking funds from other areas of the fieldschool. And for the students, I show them that there are real jobs in archaeology, and that it can be a fun and rewarding career. It certainly has been for me!

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### Not Your Ordinary Spring Development

*Submitted from the Northeast Team*



Yes, it is basically a spring development and pipeline. But the pipe is a mile long, six inches in diameter, roughly half steel and half PVC and drops 600 vertical feet from the spring to the center pivot it feeds. And, oh by the way, you have to bring it down nearly vertical slopes, through the timber, across a perennial stream and back up to the field where the water is needed. No problem, the old timers did it over 50 years ago!

Halo Ranch lays up St. Peter Creek in northern Ferry County. Through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the new owners wished to replace a very leaky irrigation supply line and terribly inefficient irrigation system. Sounds normal enough. Resource Conservationist Patrice Beckwith worked with Halo Ranch to plan and develop the EQIP contract. Civil Engineering Technician Doug Rochester was tasked with designing this intimidating project. With assistance from Area and State Office staff, the project was finally designed and cleared through cultural resource reviews.

But the contractor faced a daunting task. How do you build a steel pipeline on a slope you can barely stand up on? Trenching was easy; let gravity take the bulldozer and backhoe downhill for you (with help of some cables to hold you in place). But welding the steel sections and placing them in the trench was going to be hard. Do you start at the top and push it down? Or do you start at the bottom and drag it up? The answer is both.



The contractor built a work station in the creek bottom and welded each section to the next. A bulldozer then hauled that completed section uphill until the end was in place to weld the next section. That worked fine until the weight of the completed pipeline snapped the cable. It was time to start at the top and push the completed sections downhill. Again, it all had to be controlled so the whole pipeline didn't slip downhill all at once.



The final step was to complete the new head works at Arctic Spring. This is the water source for the new center pivot irrigation system - way down the hill and a mile away. Arctic Spring pops out of the ground on a mountain above Halo Ranch. Hundreds of gallons of clear, cold water pour out each minute. A previous landowner initially tapped the spring for irrigation over 50 years ago. You have to admire the determination and ingenuity of our predecessors. They did some amazing things with what we would call “old technology.”

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## **Not Your Ordinary Spring Development... continued**

So now, a simple spring development and pipeline once again bring water to a farm field along St. Peter Creek. What will folks 50 years from now think about what we have done today? I hope they will be complimentary of our efforts.

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### **Group Forms to Secure Wildfire Protection Plan**

*Submitted by Lisa Naylor, RC&D Coordinator, Blue Mountain RC&D*

by Diane Longanecker

On August 5, 2005—one year ago this week—the School Fire wildfire began. Two weeks later its blazing, wind-driven march had lain waste to forestlands, structures, and homes in a 75-square-mile area across Columbia and Garfield counties.

On a recent Wednesday evening at the Pomeroy Ranger District building—in a conference room where School Fire maps still line the walls—a "core team" of individuals representing a tri-county area took the first step toward providing organized, coordinated protection against future wildfires and other natural disasters. This group elected a leader and agreed to pool resources and work as a unit to secure a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) for Columbia, Garfield, and Asotin Counties.

"I want to see this Community Wildfire Protection Plan get done," said Jay Holtzmillier, the newly-elected chair of the yet un-named group. "I have wide shoulders, so let me know right away if something isn't going right." Holtzmillier is a landowner from the small town of Anatone in Asotin County.

A pair of guest speakers from the Clearwater Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council in Moscow, Idaho, shared valuable tips on getting a CWPP done. Based on their experience with forming a five-county regional plan in north central Idaho in 2003, Dick Hodges, RC&D Fire Resources Committee member and Dan Pierce, coordinator, summarized the lessons they learned:

- 1) Get all the players (stakeholders) on board.
- 2) Communicate consistently and frequently!
- 3) Contract with a single, experienced firm to prepare the CWPP.
- 4) Have all county commissioners "sign on" to the plan.

The comprehensive plan will be paid for, in part, out of funds that trace their way back to timber sold off of local federal forestlands. For example, earlier this year local Resource Advisory Committees (RAC) earmarked funds specifically for creating a Community Wildfire Protection Plan. These committees were created at the local level as part of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000, Public Law 106-393. The legislation replaced county payments made to communities where federal timber is harvested. The Washington Department of Natural Resources has also committed funds.

With funding pledged, this newly-formed group is charged with seeing that a useful, high-quality Community Wildfire Protection Plan for the tri-county area is secured. By mid-2007, when it's estimated the CWPP will be completed, communities in Columbia, Garfield, and Asotin counties could then apply for federal fuel hazard reduction funds to "fire-proof their properties" from future wild fires or other natural disasters.

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