



A Message from Gus

Happy Holidays!

It is that time of year again. I get to eat too much. Watch too much football. Work on a sugar high of mythical proportions. And it seems to me these seasons are coming around more quickly than they used to. Why is that?

We have a number of things to be thankful for. We work in an industry that cares about the environment – and really does something to make it better. We work for an agency that cares about its people and gives us considerable flexibility in how we get the job done. We each have an opportunity to make a real difference in the world our children will inherit.

We also need to take time to enjoy our families. Time flies way too fast, so capture those opportunities to appreciate your loved ones. Last spring my youngest child turned 30! That hardly seems possible when I'm just a tad over 40. (Well . . . some 'tads' are bigger than others.)

Many of us will be taking some vacation time. That's good. We need to ensure we keep all our offices open, but we should be able to squeeze in some time off. So I hope each of you takes the chance to relax a bit. Squeeze the ones you love. And come back to work refreshed and ready to go.

This New Year

**This day begins a new year, a new time, a new season; To
set goals, to make plans and yes it is all for good reason.**

Our yesterday is gone forever never to return;

Yet the lessons of yesterday have we all still to learn.

So, we look to this new year of all things anew;

Fresh new start to begin with and blessings the more too!

Let us all be thankful for all the years before;

Holding very dearly all the memories of then and more.

Counting all our blessings the great and the small;

For the treasures of life have been given to us all.

May this new year be bright, our journey, our quest;

Abundantly filled with all of life's best.

Florence Catherine Robertson

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HR News

Goodbye and Good Luck!

Chris Bove, Resource Conservationist, Ellensburg Field Office, reassigned to Arkansas NRCS effective 10/29/06.

John George, Rangeland Management Specialist, Colville Field Office, reassigned to Oregon Farm Service Agency effective 11/26/06.

Amy Rodman, Administrative Support Assistant, Central Area Office, reassigned to Ephrata Bureau of Reclamation effective 11/26/06.

Welcome to New Employees!

Na Yang, reassigned from Forest Service in Montana to the Voucher Examiner position, Spokane State Office, effective 10/1/06.

Heather Drader, Soil Conservationist Technician, Everett Field Office, effective 10/15/06.

Kellie Green, reassigned from Forest Service in Nevada to the Archeologist position, in Ephrata Area Office, effective 10/29/06.

Congratulations to Employees Who Have Recently Received Promotions!

Corey Bensen, Soil Conservationist, Yakima Field Office, promoted, effective 09/17/06.

Steve Durgin, State Design Engineer, Spokane State Office, promoted, effective 10/15/06.

Jeff Kuhlmann, Area Resource Conservationist, East Area Office, promoted effective 11/12/06.

Steve Becker, Soil Conservation Technician, Ritzville Field Office, converted to permanent status effective 11/14/06 and promoted effective 11/26/06.

Location Reassignment

Misty Seboldt, Forester, reassigned to the Colville Field Office, effective 10/1/06.

Items of Interest

Crystal Briggs, Soil Scientist, Mt Vernon Soil Survey Office, converted to permanent status effective 9/5/06.

Molly Smith, Civil Engineer, Chehalis Field Office, converted to permanent status effective 10/31/06

Length of Service Awards

5 Years

Nancy Allison, Toby Rodgers, Emily Smelser, Kathy Smith, Sarah Troutman

20 Years

Dick Erickson, Bela Espinoza, Chris Johnson, Jim Poffel

25 Years

Sharon Bromiley, Dave Brown, Gary Mitchell, Lisa Naylor, Jerry Rouse, Greg Schlenz
Jim Schroeder, Mark Stannard, Rick Stauty

30 Years

Barbara Bolick, Ken Drecksell, Doug Fenwick, Cheryl Jacobson, Chuck Natsuhara, Ray Schuler

35 Years

Bev Burnley, Rod DenHerder, Frank Easter, Herb Klug, Rich Riehle

40 Years

Dennis Roe, Paul Taylor

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

Spot, Performance, QSI Awards

Rick Beck, Patrice Beckwith, Mike Blakeley, Corey Bonsen, Sally Bredeweg, Sharon Bromiley, Dave Brower, Dave Brown, Bev Burnley, Jan Carlson, Gloria Castellaw, Marty Chaney, Harold Crose, Sandy Degner-Crusch, Rod DenHerder, Steve Durgin, Wes Durheim, Frank Easter, Amanda Ettestad, Erica Fifer, Claire Flanagan, Alan Fulk, John George, John Gillies, Anitra Gorham, Kevin Guinn, Keith Harrington, Joy Hawley, Ernie Holt, Monica Hoover, Eileen Jackson, June Johnson, Larry Johnson, Ron Joyner, Jay Kehne, Randy Kelley, John Kendig, Kathy Kilcoyne, Herb Klug, John Kouns, Gary Kuhn, Joe Lange, Jim Loiland, Nieves Lopez, Rachel Maggi, Gale Mayer, Cheryle Miller, Chris Miller, Shelli Moore, Dave Myra, Laren Nalder, Joe Navarro, Leigh Nelson, Ron Nichols, Rick Noble, Sergio Paredes, Scott Pattee, Debbie Penner-Fortner, Joel Poore, Marty Rankin, Dean Renner, Tim Riebe, Glenn Riehle, George Riley, Doug Rochester, Amy Rodman, Dennis Roe, Greg Schlenz, Jim Schroeder, Misty Seaboldt, Ron Shavlik, Jim Shawley, Mark Simpson, Amy Smith, Courtney Smith, Molly Smith Rick Stauty, Kyle Stephens, Oscar Tobias, Sarah Troutman, Carol Wildman, Bari Williams, Scott Williams

Non-Monetary Awards

David Welk – For leadership in implementing the CRP and training others in the Palouse Team in FY06

Emily Smelser – For developing/maintaining Continuous Signup CRP database for Palouse Team in FY06

Palouse Team – For addressing the 1997-2002 EQIP and Continuous Signup CRP backlog workloads in FY06

Spokane Soil Survey Team – For assistance with utilization of internet-based soil databases in Palouse Team

Georgie Leinweber – For dedication/diligence in contract/plan development and implementation for the CRP

Rich Riehle – For sustained effort to involve conservation district and other partners in accomplishing NRCS programs and operations in Whitman County

Steve Sprecher – For assistance in setting ranking criteria in the WRP program and leadership in managing WRP easements in Spokane County

Brad Duncan – For accomplishments as the Assistant State Soil Scientist in FY06

Gary Mitchell – For assistance with the Civil Rights Committee over the years

Becky Morris – For assistance to the Okanogan Field Office staff with producing GIS maps/products, coaching staff on how to better use GIS; and teaching how to use GPS

David Jones – For leadership in implementing backlog of 1997–2002 EQIP practices in Whitman County in FY06

Ed Brincken – For completing field mapping for the Quinault Indian Nation Soil Survey

Cheryl Jacobson – For support given to the Snake River Team

Georgia Sormun – For excellent copy editing and support to the communication effort

Shiraz Vira – For assistance with the Employee Relations Training

Georgia Sormun – For assistance with the Employee Relations Training

Bela Espinoza – For assistance with the Employee Relations Training

Mark Schuller – For 13 years of dedicated service with NRCS resulting in improved fish habitat for Washington State

Kathy Randazzo – For assistance with the Employee Relations Training

Sharon Small – For her assistance in Graphic Design expertise to Washington State PAS

Tony Ingersoll – For development of RC&D training materials and attendance at all Council Capacity Training sessions

Kathy Randazzo – For assistance in preparing materials for the RC&D Council Capacity Training

Equal Employment Opportunity and Civil Rights

By Eileen Jackson, State Office Representative to the CRAC

As part of my collateral duties on the Washington State Civil Rights Advisory Committee (CRAC), I recently attended Roles and Responsibilities of the EEO Advisory Committee training. Our instructor was very dynamic and knowledgeable, and I came away with a lot of great information and some new perspectives. I'd like to share some of the highlights from that class:

- A lot of times agencies and/or managers treat Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Civil Rights as a paper work exercise, and just sort of go through the motions so they can say they have an active program. However, if run properly, Civil Rights and EEO programs can benefit both employees and management. Management should want to know if employees have complaints. First, if managers aren't aware of problems they can't work to fix them. Second, unhappy employees disrupt the workforce, are unproductive, and drain productivity in those around them. It is much better to know if there are problems so they can be dealt with before the situation escalates. We cannot afford to have employees who are not fully engaged, especially in today's climate with more work to be done by fewer employees.
- Managers need to deal with EEO problems at the earliest, lowest level. It's more satisfactory for the person with the complaint, and also less disruptive for anyone else who is affected when problems are handled early.
- EEO and Civil Rights are economic issues, not just a social and moral obligation. Fairness leads to good morale which leads to productivity. Agencies spend a whole lot of money and/or lost time every time there is a complaint. By treating applicants, employees and customers fairly in the first place you save time and money and keep your workforce happier.
- Diversity is also an economic issue. The more diverse your workforce, the more ideas come to the table, the more creative problem-solving you have, and the faster/better things get done. Having one type of employee tends to lead to one type of thinking. It's hard to think outside of the box if none of your players have seen a different box.
- Agencies should recognize supervisors and managers who do a good job on EEO and Civil Rights. There should be recognition not just for managers working on big projects, but also for those who quietly support their employees, help them get the training and experience needed for promotion, and run fair and equitable workplaces.
- Managers and supervisors should recognize their employees who do a good job on EEO Civil Rights. Watch for employees who consistently treat others fairly and equitably, or go the extra mile to accommodate the special needs of their customers or co-workers, or those who come up with new ways to reach underserved populations. It's in our day-to-day operations that we truly see the results of good Civil Rights and Equal Employment Opportunity practices.

In the end, good EEO/Civil Rights practices come down to common sense and common decency. Think about how you interact with others, make room for the other person's differences and point of view, and treat others the way you would like others to treat you. And if you're just not sure what to do or how to do it, or have a great idea for improving Washington State's Civil Rights/EEO program, contact any member of the Civil Rights Advisory Committee!

A Different Kind of Partnership

Submitted by the Northeast team

What happens when one government agency controls all of the land uses, on land owned by another government agency? Why, cooperation, of course! The NRCS and the US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) have combined their resources to reconstruct a meandering stream channel. The NRCS holds the permanent Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) easement on the land, but the USFWS is the land owner. The NRCS had restoration money, and USFWS had the available engineering and environmental review staff. Together, the two agencies have pulled off a nearly seamless construction project, with surprisingly few bureaucratic complications.

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A Different Kind of Partnership...continued

A third party was utilized to speed up the contracting procedure. The NRCS used an agreement with Ducks Unlimited (DU) to accelerate the bidding and construction contracting. DU also helped by staking the project using survey points provided by the USFWS engineer. By using the DU agreement, the project went from piles of paper to Diesel smoke and digging in less than a month.



Excavators create new channel

The USFWS provided engineering and environmental review support (including the Section 106 consultation duties). The NRCS helped by doing cultural resource field work and monitoring during construction.

The old stream channel was heavily incised and the surrounding meadow had lost its wetland hydrology. By reconstructing a stable, meandering channel, the meadow will once again flood in the spring and reconnect with its historic flood plain.

The NRCS has held the WRP permanent easement on the Claude Pearce ranch since 1999. The Pearce easement lies north of Deer Lake in southern Stevens County. In 2001, Claude sold the residual interest in the ranch to the US Fish & Wildlife Service. The parcel became known as the Kaniksu Unit of the Little Pend Oreille National Wildlife Refuge.

Ronald Reagan had a plaque that rested on his Oval Office desk. Anyone that came in to meet with the President would see it. On it were the words, "There is no limit to what can be accomplished if you don't care who gets the credit." In this case, both agencies did what was needed to get the job done. And in the end, the credit goes to everyone.



New meandering channel alongside the old

North Central Washington Economic Development District Receives New Economic Development Agency Grant *Submitted by Jay Kehne*

Press Release by Richard Uhlhorn - 9/13/06

Turning a US Dept. of Commerce Economic Development Agency (EDA) \$50,000 capacity building grant into real economic development wasn't too hard when the members of the reorganized North Central Washington Economic Development District (EDD) put their heads together. They just hired a professional grant writing team, handed that team a list of 11 high priority economic and resource projects selected by the group and told them to seek grants for all of them. Over the past year, the grant writing team has produced \$735,000 in grants and loans for projects in the three county region.

The following projects have received funding:

- \$2,500 for development of marketing rack cards for the VIA 97 project.
- \$60,000 for the Wenatchee Farmers Market.
- \$15,000 for promotion materials and activities on the Wenatchee Farmers Market.
- \$600,000 for pre-construction planning on a water storage tower on Baker Flats
- \$60,000 grant for the Okanogan Trails Scenic Byway.

The EDD is still waiting on the results of another \$32,000 in applications.

On July 28, 2006, the EDD received word that it was approved for another EDA investment of \$50,000 to support the continued implementation of its economic development planning program. The EDA requested that staff be hired with the current capacity building grant and the EDD is currently advertising for a half-time Economic Development Director to help manage its comprehensive economic development program. For more information about this opportunity, individuals can call the current chairman of the EDD, Terry Knapton, at (509) 826-5107.

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North Central Washington Economic Development District...continued

In addition, the EDD receives dues from the three counties, each participating city and organization. "The EDD will use their dues to hire grant writers this year," said Jay Kehne, Resource, Conservation & Development District coordinator. The RC&D board of directors authorized Kehne to assist the EDD last year. The new EDD position is half-time. "The EDD hopes to hire a coordinator in the next two months," said Kehne.

The EDD projects committee will look at new project proposals this fall. Anyone who has an economic project they wish to have funded can call Douglas County Commissioner Ken Stanton at (509) 745-8537. He will explain the process and send out the project proposal requirements.

Any other questions regarding the EDD or RC&D can be directed to Jay Kehne at (509) 470-1767. "The EDD is about local people giving a lot of their time and local government in action for the people," explained Kehne.

The three county EDD was reactivated in October 2004 and entered into a partnership with the NCW RC&D to obtain an EDA Capacity Building Grant. Over the last two years, the group worked hard to develop its list of goals and strategies to help improve the area's transportation network; communication strategies; health care and hospital services; educational support to small businesses; recruiting, retaining and developing new business activities; expanding the area's tourism potential' and expanding the area's recreation opportunities.

Paying sponsors include the following: Bridgeport, Cashmere, Chelan, East Wenatchee, Entiat, Leavenworth, Okanogan, Omak, Oroville, Pateros, Rock Island, Tonasket, Wenatchee, Winthrop, Chelan County, Douglas County, Okanogan County, the Colville Confederated Tribes, Port of Chelan County, Port of Douglas County, the Economic Alliance, The Nature Conservancy, the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Wenatchee Valley College and related business interests in all three counties.

Information about the EDD can be directed to its chairman, Mr. Terry Knapton at (509) 826-5107; Jay Kehne at (509) 470-1767 or the following county commissioners: Chelan County - Buell Hawkins; Douglas County - Ken Stanton; and Okanogan County - Andy Lampe.

Washington Chapter of American Planning Association Conference

Ron Myhrum, Washington State Soil Scientist and Terry Aho, Resource Soil Scientist at the West National Technology Support Center (WNTSC), attended the Washington Chapter of American Planning Association conference held in Yakima, Washington, October 4-6, 2006. The conference was attended by local county planners from counties in Washington, as well as state and federal agencies responsible for land use planning and natural resource management.



They prepared an exhibit that displayed several themes of soil survey data for use at a local level for aiding in county planning, long range growth management and the protection of critical areas (wetlands and prime farmland). The soil themes displayed were acquiring digital soil survey data from the Soil Data Mart, using the GIS tool Soil Data Viewer for creating key soil interpretation maps and layers for use in a GIS, Prime and Important Farmland, Land Evaluation and Site Assessment, and Web Soil Survey.

A screen show using Soil Data Viewer in ArcGIS was conducted demonstrating the use in creating soil interpretations for in a GIS with other local GIS data layers. The demonstrations were highly effective in communicating the potential uses of soil survey data and information in the application of local land-use planning. The conference facility had wireless network and they were also able to demonstrate Web Soil Survey and access to NRCS Web sites for technical information.

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Conference...continued

While visitors to the booth received a limited introduction to the soil survey data and information and tools available for use in their local planning and community development activities, they had the opportunity to visit with several planners about the value of holding one or two day workshops to get into more detail in utilizing the soil survey data and tools (Soil Data Viewer and LESA) in local community planning and development. Regional associations, Inland Empire, Puget Sound and Southwestern Washington were very interested in a more detailed soils workshop at one of their regional meetings. Several Puget Sound counties were very interested in the Field Office Technical Guides. Many of these counties have implemented local ordinances requiring NRCS conservation plans to meet protection of identified critical areas.

Archeologist Digs Earth Team



Robert Sloma receiving certificate of appreciation from State Conservationist Gus Hughbanks, at the East Area Leadership Team meeting November 2006.

Robert “Bob” Sloma has volunteered over 150 hours to the Earth Team program over the past three years. The “Volunteer Voice” Spring 2004 issue featured a Maine Earth Team comprised of students from a local college, learning to survey a sensitive river terrace for archeological sites, prior to implementation of a riparian buffer. Bob, though, is one of NRCS’s first fully qualified volunteer Cultural Resource Specialists (CRS). If he were a federal employee, Bob would qualify in the archeologist (GS-0193) and historian (GS-0170) series. East Area’s regular volunteer brings a GS-11/12 level of talent and over 17 years of professional experience, useful at a time when the discipline is relatively new to the agency.

Bob has worked largely in the Northeast, with a resume launched by a B.A. from State University of New York at Plattsburg in Anthropology and service as Project Director for University of Vermont’s Consulting Archaeology Program. He currently operates a Cultural Resource Management (CRM) firm, called GEOARCH, Inc., in Leicester, Vermont.

He came to Washington with partner Kathy Callum and their son Jozef Sloma, but regularly commutes across the country for archeological and gear archeological projects, spending the rest of the time in front of his Spokane based computer.

Like most archeologists, Bob first became familiar with the then SCS through the indispensable county soil surveys. Since then he has regularly volunteered at the request of Vermont’s NRCS Cultural Resource Specialist, Dave Skinas, to teach 100s of 6th graders about Addison County’s significant resources. Bob has contributed time for NRCS Washington’s Cultural Resource Training, public outreach at the Northwest Anthropology Conference and Washington Archaeology Month, cultural resource survey on EQIP and WRP projects, assisting with archival research, conducted artifact analysis, providing Section 106 and consultation guidance, and helping with reporting. He thinks that “it’s neat that Earth Team volunteers are covered under Worker’s Comp and Tort Claims, eligible for formal training, and may use government vehicles” to accomplish agency missions. After working so long as a small private consultant, he continues to be impressed with the range of expertise and tools available to NRCS, from high end computers to soil mapping. Bob particularly enjoys the GIS site database template developed through cooperative effort DAHP (State of Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation) and NRCS. He feels privileged to have attended Dave Brower’s formal training on the DAHP/GIS site database, a session at DAHP on the historic properties, and meet other specialists at the NRCS national CRS meeting in Salt Lake.

Some of the usual Earth Team goals motivate Bob, such as gaining resource conservation experience here in the Northwest, developing skills in new technology, occasionally seeing his partner during the day-time, stretching his legs in the field, and exploring Washington’s diverse environment. His favorite discoveries here in Washington include megafauna and an odd assemblage of artifacts identified by Courtney Smith in Garfield

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Archeologist Digs Earth Team...continued

County and working with the soil survey party in Spokane County near a National Register eligible homestead. His least favorite finds are ticks! Other more intangible goals clearly reflect his passion for stewarding the nation's significant sites. Bob says, "I get to see how NRCS operates and treats cultural resources", how the "agency approaches" its federally legislated CRM tasks, and to "work with field offices" gaining from their technical expertise in natural resource conservation and sharing his experience in cultural resource stewardship.

Coming Soon—Toolkit SP-3

by June Johnson, Toolkit Coordinator

Toolkit SP-3 is currently being tested and is expected to be released later this fall. It has several new and improved features that will likely be included:

- In order for more than one user to use Toolkit on a laptop with encryption, the location of your checked out Customer files has been moved to C:\Documents and Settings\\My **Customer Files Toolkit**. You will also note text files (such as, Idaho_Farm.mxd_LayerList.txt) listed in the ArcGIS projects folder that tell ArcMap where to look for special layers that you have created within an ArcMap project, e.g. the Soils Map.
- The Toolkit **eAuthentication** login screen includes the standard eAuth features, e.g. Change My Password and Reset My Forgotten Password. It also has a window that says "eAuthentication Login, Success" that shows when you are logging in.
- There is a new option on the File menu, **Delete non-NCPDB folders**, which will allow a user with the appropriate permissions to delete Customer folders from your Server that have never been "checked in". There is no record for them in the National Conservation Planning Database (NCPDB).
- On the Check In/Out tab, a new column has been added under the National Conservation Planning Database that shows the **Last Check-In** date. This will be handy for you to find the most recent folder for a Customer who has more than one. It will also reveal Customers that may have been checked out for a very long time and not checked in.
- The **Business ID** on the Check In/Out page will now return records for partial Business ID's. If you type in CSP under the Business ID and click Go, all of the businesses with CSP as part of the identifier will be listed.
- There is a new **Advanced Search** on the Check In/Out tab. This will enable you to query by Program, Practice, Planned or Applied dates as well as Associated Customer.
- A **Rename Folder** button on the folders tab will allow you to change the name of the folder and the business identifier.
- The **Rename Plan** button on the folders tab will allow you to rename the plan. For example, if you have a consplan, consplan1, consplan2, and consplan3, but consplan2 is really the one you want and it's an EQIP plan, this feature will allow you to change consplan2 to EQIP07 (or whatever name you want to use).
- **Assistance notes** can be sorted by date, assisted by, or program code by clicking on the column headings on the Assistance Notes tab.
- **State, County, Local Programs** are now supported in Toolkit Preferences and the Practice Schedule.
- Applied and recurring practices can be hidden in the Practice Schedule by putting a check mark beside **Hide Applied Practices** and/or **Hide Recurring Practices**.
- When modifying a practice narrative, you can now add an **extended narrative ID** so that you can use more than one additional narrative for the same practice narrative ID, e.g. 00N a and 00N b.
- The contract forms generated by the Contact Wizard are the new **NRCS-CPA-1155** and **NRCS-CPA-1156**.
- In the Practice Schedule tab, you may **add Conservation Guides from nearby counties**. This will give you access to guides not only in Washington, but for counties that are in Idaho and Oregon, too.

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Coming Soon—Toolkit SP-3...continued

- In ArcMap, when using **Copy/Paste** of polygons from another layer, an **inclusion will be created**. This will be very useful when copying a shape from a GPS layer into the Planned Land Unit layer.
- There is a **Center Pivot Tool** to aid with digitizing center pivot fields. When it works correctly, you can take a square field, put a circle inside of it and the result will be five fields. (It still is not perfect, but is better than the way we have been creating these fields.)
- A **Circle** digitizing tool has been added to the Land Unit Editor toolbar. It allows you to specify the radius of a circle, in feet, and add it within an existing field.
- The **Map Products** now allows you to **Save Preferences** and to **Use Preferences**, so you won't have to select them every time you make a map layout.
- The **Soil Map** tool now gives you a choice of creating just the map, just the report, or both.
- In the map document, the **Symbology** is automatically saved for the Practice (lines, point and polygon) layers. If you have Resource Inventory layers, you will still need to right mouse click on the layer and select Save Symbology.
- On the **Reporting Tab**, you may now report a practice as applied that has not previously been reported as planned.

I'm sure that you will enjoy working with these new features of Toolkit.

Windbreak and Hedgerow Planting Workshop Tonasket, Washington August 3, 2006



Ahhh, August in the Okanogan Valley. Temperatures are high, the forest fires have started and orchard season is in full swing. At this point during the year, a conversation with a grower usually consists of an answering machine message-on a good day. However, on August 3rd, the Catholic Church in Tonasket was filled with 19 Hispanic orchardists taking time from their frantic schedules to learn about windbreaks and hedgerows.

After much interest and many questions from producers in the Hispanic community concerning the proper location, planting, and care of windbreaks, NRCS saw the need to provide more in depth and comprehensive information to this sector of the population. Thanks to a concerted effort by the Center for Agricultural Partnerships, Wenatchee Valley College (WVC), and NRCS, the first of two informational workshops was successfully accomplished.

Tim Dring, the State Wildlife Biologist, and Gary Kuhn, the State Plant Materials Specialist, traveled from Spokane to present and answer questions. Francisco Sarmiento of WVC, attended as translator, and several NRCS staff were present. After four hours of presentation slides and questions on everything from plant materials selections to beaver-related property damage, everyone realized that the initial discussions were just scraping the surface of an incredibly complex subject. All participants agreed that a second session with a field visit component would be helpful. A follow-up workshop will take place after the end of apple harvest sometime in November or December.

Walla Walla Conservation Efforts Benefit Fish

The Walla Walla USDA Service Center would like to recognize our conservation district partners for their continuing efforts to remove fish passage barriers. Through their achievements, an additional one hundred and eighty six miles of the Touchet River was opened for fish passage and will aid in the recovery of Bull Trout, Spring Chinook, and Mid-Columbia Steelhead.

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Walla Walla Conservation Efforts...continued

Steelhead is the primary target species with adult summer steelhead migrating upstream from September through March and juvenile steelhead out migration occurring between March and July. There are small numbers of Spring Chinook found in the Touchet River; most of the spawning adults are thought to be recruits from hatchery production from other river systems.



Hofer Dam was built sometime around the turn of the century. It was a concrete gravity dam that spanned the Touchet River approximately 4.1 miles upstream from its confluence with the Walla Walla River. The dam provided irrigation water for agricultural use. The Hofer Dam was considered, by most Basin stakeholders, as the biggest and most complex fish passage barrier in the watershed.

In 2004, the Walla Walla County Conservation District received a Salmon Recovery Funding Board grant (SRFB) to complete Phase 1 of the Hofer Dam Fish Passage project which included everything leading up to construction. Phase 1 progressed on schedule and final plans and specifications were completed.

In 2004-05, the Walla Walla County Conservation District received construction funding from the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Committee (EFSEC), SRFB and BPA for construction of the project. The solicitation for the construction contract was advertised in early June and the construction contract was awarded by June 30. The construction of the Hofer Diversion Project, including a fish ladder, has taken about two months and is nearly completed. The estimated construction cost of the project is \$917,000. The dam will provide irrigation water and allow fish migration past the structure.



In 2005 the Walla Walla Conservation District also received funds from Department of Ecology for a pumping station which will be installed on the new Hofer diversion structure. The Conservation District is planning to complete this work in late November, 2006.

The Walla Walla Conservation District also plans to install 2-3 miles of pipeline (\$1.0 mil project.) with funds provided by Department of Ecology through their infrastructure conveyance and irrigation efficiency grant programs. The Conservation District is currently designing the pipeline system and has crews, in the field, measuring flows to determine water savings and completing the topographic survey.

Wetland restoration in channeled scablands of eastern Washington

Submitted by Rich Edlund, District Conservationist, Palouse Team



Despite yielding only moderate rainfall, the landscape of central Spokane County and to the west and south features a surprising amount of open water in lakes, ponds, and potholes. These water-holding “pockets” across the landscape are the result of the monumental glacial flooding which scoured out the basalt lava landscape, creating what is known as the channeled scablands. Debris-laden floods from glacial melt events in Montana, Idaho, and to the north left dramatic landforms that dominate the landscape in the outflow zones to the southwest. The remaining channels and pockets where water collects vary from small depressions to moderate size lakes.

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Wetland restoration...continued

A notable feature of the wet pockets is the abrupt transition from water to uplands with little or no “beachfront” of seasonal or permanent wetlands. In fact, many of the pockets are bordered by rock cliffs and talus breaks! Wetlands, located between open water and upland, provide valuable, even critical habitat for aquatic, amphibious, and upland wildlife. The few such transitional areas in this part of the Inland Empire, however, were ideally suited for agricultural conversion for crops since they have deeper soils and a wet profile. Conversion began with the earliest settlement and served to reduce the already small amount of transitional wetlands even further, squeezing out habitat diversity and affecting resident and migratory wildlife species. The Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge, established near Cheney, Washington, in the 1930s, created a protected core area representative of the pre-settlement landscape. Despite additions of land to the Refuge, only some of the opportunity for wetland enhancement has occurred in the channeled scablands.

Wetland restoration on private lands has been an eligible practice under several programs, especially the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP), but relatively minor participation has occurred to date. Anecdotally, landowners are, among other reasons, reluctant to give the federal government land rights through easements. Although WRP has the best chance of obtaining its program goals through easement options (eg; 30-year easements or permanent easements), the other, non-easement option of the WRP (eg; a 10-year restoration contract) offers much of the same wetland restoration and habitat benefits, but without the “baggage” of easements. A date-certain contract may act as an incentive to participate in wetland restoration for those reluctant about federal easements. Among the benefits is restoration and wetland protection for the contract period after restoration. In fact, landowners have been known to request conversion of WRP contracts into easements after working with NRCS field personnel over several years on restoration projects. Never dismiss the power of a positive stewardship and work ethic by NRCS staff in the field!



While there never have been extensive wetlands in the channeled scablands of eastern Washington, the restoration option of WRP offers a less-threatening way to encourage landowners to capture the opportunities for stewardship on this unique landscape.



All I Need To Know About Life Learned From a Snowman

- ❖ It's okay if you're a little bottom heavy.
- ❖ Hold your ground, even when the heat is on.
- ❖ Wearing white is always appropriate.
- ❖ Winter is the best of the four seasons.
- ❖ It takes a few extra rolls to make a good midsection
- ❖ There's nothing better than a foul weather friend.
- ❖ The key to life is to be a jolly, happy soul.
- ❖ We're all made up of mostly water.
- ❖ You know you've made it when they write a song about you.
- ❖ Accessorize! Accessorize! Accessorize!
- ❖ Avoid yellow snow. Don't get too much sun.
- ❖ It's embarrassing when you can't look down and see your feet.
- ❖ It's fun to hang out in your front yard.
- ❖ Always put your best foot forward.
- ❖ There's no stopping you once you're on a roll.

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