

## **5-Year Plan (2018 to 2023)**

# **Snohomish Conservation District**

**For More Information Contact: Monte Marti. 425.377.7001. [monte@snohomishcd.org](mailto:monte@snohomishcd.org)**

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### **Organization of the Snohomish Conservation District (District)**

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

- The District was established in 1941 and is one of forty-five conservation districts in the State of Washington.
- The District is governed by a 5-member, voluntary Board of Supervisors (Board). These five local members of the community volunteer to serve on the Board without pay. Three members are elected by local citizens within the boundaries of the District, and two members are appointed by the Washington State Conservation Commission.
- The Board receives comments and input from the public during public meetings, and seeks additional input and advice from the community, partners, and agencies.
- The District prepares an annual work plan that identifies the activities and budget of the District.
- The policies, programs, and activities identified by the Board are implemented by the staff at the District.

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### **Function of the District**

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

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### **Who we serve**

The District serves the residents of Snohomish County and Camano Island, and supports the efforts of partners. The District provides education, technical and financial support to residents, and supports partners in the management of natural resources.

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### **Mission of the District**

The District's mission is to work cooperatively with others to promote and encourage conservation and responsible use of soil, water and related resources through education, technical and financial assistance. The conservation district is a non-regulatory agency that engages the community in the delivery and implementation of natural resource management.

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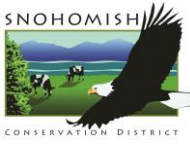
### **Vision of the District**

That the residents of Snohomish County and Camano Island understand how they impact natural resources; and that they take actions to protect, enhance, and responsibly use them. To find, and promote, the balance between protecting the natural environment and using natural resources.

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### **Values of the District**

- To use public funds in a prudent and efficient manner
- To inspire and implement meaningful improvements in natural resource management



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- To implement Best Management Practices (BMP) that have a positive impact on natural resources
- To be accountable and available to the community to serve their natural resource management needs
- To be an effective leader in natural resource education and natural resource management
- To provide excellent service and leadership to individuals, the community, partners, and agencies
- To passionately serve and connect with the community
- To work together with individuals, the community, partners, and agencies to effectively manage our natural resources

### **We believe in ...**

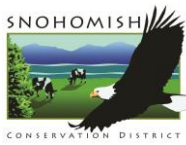
- Stewardship, service, friendliness, compassion, understanding, creativity
- Respect, communication, advocacy, innovation, inclusion

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### **Natural Resource Priorities, Measures of Success and Goals:**

Overall Priorities of the District are:

- To assist landowners and land managers (regardless of parcel size) in the consistent implementation of management practices that address:
  - Water quality and quantity resource concerns
  - Soil health resource concerns
  - Maintenance and restoration of natural habitats
- To support an agricultural industry that is profitable and viable, and is a good steward of the natural resources that it controls.
- To recognize comprehensive natural resource management plans as important tools to address the complex resource management issues faced throughout the District.
- To educate the public in the importance of a local and domestic food supply that is safe, and the importance of maintaining healthy and productive natural resources.
- To work with a diverse set of landowners/managers, tribes, groups, and agencies that value the complexity of our heritage and natural resources, and that strive to work together to address common goals and desired outcomes.



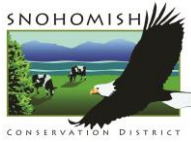
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Strategic Priority	Goal	Objectives	Timeline
Overall Impact to Natural Resources	Improve the awareness and implementation of water quality, water quantity, soil tilth and vegetative land cover practices in priority watersheds through existing and innovative approaches.	1.1 Complete an integrated planning effort that includes partnership and funding strategies that identifies priority areas within Snohomish County and on Camano Island for natural resource improvements. 1.2 Complete a marketing plan focused on the priority areas identified in the integrated planning effort. 1.3 Provide a minimum of 60% of services to the identified priority areas.	Q2 2019  Q3 2019  Q1 2021
Overall Impact to Natural Resources	Increase the awareness and implementation of practices that slow climate change and improve resiliency in rural and urban environments.	2.1 Incorporate climate change messaging into all District programs. 2.2 Actively participate in climate resilience planning with partners and identify projects that demonstrate the sequestration of carbon through land use and management choices. 2.3 Implement multiple demonstration projects that sequester carbon through land use and management choices. 2.4 Implement 25 projects that sequester carbon through land use and management choices.	Q3 2019  Q1 2019  Q4 2020  Q4 2022
Overall Impact to Natural Resources	Increase actions that support the viability, sustainability and resilience of developed, natural and working lands.	3.1 Identify factors that impact viability, sustainability, and resilience of developed, natural and working lands. 3.2 Develop actions that support the increase of the viability, sustainability, and resilience of developed, natural and working lands.	Q4 2019  Q4 2020
Overall Impact to Natural Resources	Increase natural resource improvement through	4.1 Conduct an inventory of existing partners to analyze the collective impact of the partnership and to develop ideas for future collaborations. 4.2 Identify at least 5 new partners and	Q4 2019  Q4 2020



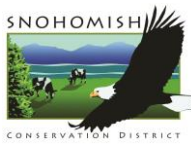
	leveraging existing and new partnerships.	4.3	incorporate them into the District's existing activities. Continue to work with regional partners and be a leader in regional initiatives.	Ongoing
Programmatic Improvements	Develop, evaluate, and prioritize current and new programs.	5.1	Complete an evaluation of current and new programs using criteria that weighs mission, public benefit, effectiveness, partnerships, public input and other District priorities.	Q2 2019
		5.2	Expand programs that rate highly using the evaluation criteria developed in Objective 5.1.	Q4 2022
		5.3	Conduct adaptive management reviews of core programs.	Annually
		5.4	Identify underserved communities and their natural resource needs throughout Snohomish County and Camano Island.	Annually
		5.5	Explore new innovative programs using evaluation criteria developed in Objective 5.1.	Ongoing
		5.6	Include resilience (climate, economic, etc.) in ranking and prioritization of projects and programs.	Q1 2019
		5.7	Expand reach to landowners by developing marketing strategies for new and existing programs.	Q1 2019
		5.8	Create citizen advisory committees, where appropriate, to inform specific programs.	Ongoing
		5.9	Create protocols for following up with landowners after District staff interactions.	Q4 2019
		5.10	Increase conversion of site visits and workshops to Best Management Practice Implementation to 20%.	Q1 2020
		5.11	Identify potential funding sources for existing and new programs.	Ongoing
Programmatic Improvements	Implement an expanded cost-share program to include improved internal awareness and external	6.1	Double the amount of cost share provided to landowners.	Q4 2022
		6.2	Secure increased internal and external funding to implement Objective 6.1	Ongoing
		6.3	Identify cost-share expansion needs within programs as part of program evaluation in Objective 5.1.	Q4 2019
		6.4	Develop a plan to evaluate	Q4 2019



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	promotion	effectiveness of BMP implementation in areas identified in Objective 1.1. 6.5 Conduct evaluation of current cost-share guidelines to ensure internal program awareness and equitable program delivery.	Q4 2021
Programmatic Improvements	Define how to include diversity, equity and inclusion objectives into SCD programs and services	7.1 Establish an advisory committee, with an accompanying internal committee, to develop diversity, equity and inclusion objectives in both District services and staffing. 7.2 Once defined, develop relationships with key leaders within diverse communities. 7.3 Develop programmatic equity objectives and incorporate those objectives into the strategic plan.	Q4 2020
Organizational/Operational Goals	Develop an organization structure that allows for efficient operations.	8.1 Hire an outside consultant to review the District's current organizational structure to evaluate its effectiveness. 8.2 Conduct an internal audit that reviews administrative workflows and standard operating procedures to reduce redundancy and improve efficiency. 8.3 Develop a communication plan that allows for open and transparent dialogue between the staff, board, public and partners. 8.4 Implement a new user-friendly database that will document and track the District's activities, contacts, and relationships, and is effective and adaptable. 8.5 Review content and functions of staff and board meetings to improve effectiveness. 8.6 Develop and utilize Citizen Advisory Committees to solicit and incorporate programmatic feedback on development and implementation of priority programs. 8.7 Ensure compliance with federal, international, and state guidelines related to privacy, accessibility and administrative best practices.	Q4 2018  Q4 2018  Q1 2019  Q4 2018  Q4 2018  Q4 2018  Ongoing

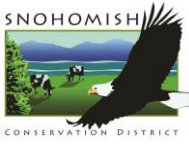


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Organizational and Operational Goals	Secure an increase of Rates and Charges to \$10 per parcel and \$0.10 per acre.	9.1 Gather and create content that shows the District's value to its constituents (partners, residents, grant funders, government entities)	Q3 2018
		9.2 Work with the Snohomish County Council to identify and eliminate barriers to implementation of Rates and Charges.	Q4 2018
Organizational and Operational Goals	Build or find a new facility that allows us to accomplish the District's mission	10.1 Identify potential funding sources for securing a facility that allows the District to accomplish its mission.	Q4 2018
		10.2 Analyze space needs to adequately accommodate future staffing and partner occupation of facility.	Q4 2018
		10.3 The District's facility will function as an administrative, educational, community conservation and natural resources hub for Snohomish County and Camano Island.	Q4 2022
Organizational and Operational Goals	Develop and implement a staffing and training plan that meets the programmatic needs of the District, enhances the value of team members, fosters professional growth, and is aligned with the mission and vision of the District.	11.1 Develop and maintain a District wide staffing plan that identifies programmatic capacity and technical needs.	Q1 2019
		11.2 Develop an efficient and standardized hiring process that reaches the widest employee pool and functions efficiently.	Q4 2018
		11.3 Evaluate and standardize the new employee training process to ensure that all new employees have the skills, information, technology and supervision needed to do their jobs.	Ongoing
		11.4 Increase internal District communication and benefits by implementing cross-team and intra-team interactions and project management.	Q4 2018
		11.5 Determine the method, through software or human management, to track and monitor training for each staff member.	Q4 2018
		11.6 Develop training plans that identify knowledge gaps and funding sources to fill those gaps.	Q4 2018





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### **Critical Geographic Areas:**

- Snohomish Basin
- Stillaguamish Basin
- South County and Puget Sound Drainages
- Camano Island
- Port Susan and South Skagit Bay Drainages
- Sole source aquifers
- Lakes
- Small farm areas
- Urban/suburban areas
- Large forested areas
- Designated Resource Lands – Agriculture and Forestry
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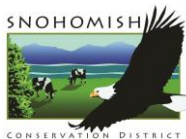
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### **Trends Impacting Conservation in the Snohomish Conservation District**

- Snohomish County is growing faster (by percentage) than any other county in Washington. Increased population and economic growth and development will increase pressure on existing natural resources.
  - Large continuous tracts of land will be increasingly pressured to be converted into rural and sub-urban housing increasing the land value of resource lands.
  - Local jurisdictions require more resources to provide services while protecting sensitive natural resources.
  - The average property size in rural areas is shrinking due to subdivision of large tracts of land.
  - Social, economic and cultural populations of Snohomish County and Camano Island continue to change.
- Uncertain commodity, fuel, and supply markets reducing a producer's ability to plan long-term.
- Movement toward "buy local" food sourcing, and an expansion of community/personal gardens and other "grow your own" foods.
- Regulatory framework, governmental spending, and global economics create uncertainty for natural resource landowners and/or managers.
- Climate change impacts on the water cycle (floods, sea level rise and summer drought), plant communities (invasive species, diseases) and temperature (changing growing season) will create uncertainty with natural resource land managers.
- Grant funding from Federal and State sources can change priorities and initiatives, potentially eliminating funding for District programs.

### **Strategies, Services & Products to Address Trends**

The District currently provides technical, financial and educational resources to residents within Snohomish County and Camano Island focusing on the sustainable use of natural resources.



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These services include: connecting local experts to landowners, one-on-one technical assistance, financial assistance through cost-sharing programs, educational information about implementing best management practices on their own property, working to educate youth on natural resource issues and partnering with other Natural Resource groups to multiply the District's impact on the resources. These activities will continue for the duration of this strategic plan.

In the next 5 years the District's Board of Supervisors and Staff will:

- Incorporate new strategies into the District's suite of services to address emerging issues such as climate change, energy conservation, water conservation, soil health and intensive resource management.
- Expand promotion of its Lawn to Lettuce program to encourage the "buy local" movement and increase community and personal production of food within the urban/sub-urban landscape.
- Develop new engagement strategies to work more efficiently and effectively with landowners.
- Work with local jurisdictions to create a more predictable regulatory environment.
- Request advice and comment on existing programs to identify emerging trends within the local community.
- Expand the services provided to local schools to bring youth outside and provide high-quality educational experiences.
- Provide increased services to historically underserved communities.

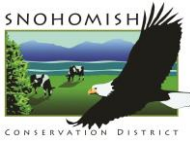
### Natural Resource Data:

Natural resource data has been collected and used from federal, state, local and non-governmental sources (USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, Snohomish and Island Counties, Department of Ecology, Department of Natural Resources, cities, and others).

Snohomish County Land Use			Camano Island Land Use		
Land Use Type	Acres	Percent of Watershed	Land Use Type	Acres	Percent of Watershed
Urban	209,398.55	12.54%	Urban	-	0.00%
Cropland	21,659.05	1.30%	Cropland	-	0.00%
Pastureland	107,590.06	6.44%	Pastureland	3,677.95	19.09%
Forest	1,241,695.83	74.36%	Forest	15,322.73	79.55%
Water	18,501.71	1.11%	Water	32.02	0.17%
Other	70,930.96	4.25%	Other	230.17	1.19%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>1,669,776.16</b>		<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>19,262.87</b>	

Source: National Land Cover Database and USDA Cropland Data Layer, 2011





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Livestock and Septics			
	Estimated Livestock	Estimated Fowl	Estimated Number of Septic Systems
Snohomish County	37,361	878,659	65,601
Camano Island	1,079	726	3,447
<b>Total</b>	<b>38,440</b>	<b>879,385</b>	<b>69,048</b>

Source: National Land Cover Database and USDA Cropland Data Layer, 2011

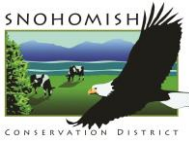
### Expertise Needed:

- Natural resource management services to address:
  - Urban resources
  - Small acreage resources
  - Natural habitat resources
  - Commercial agriculture resources
  - Forestry resources
  - Water quality resources
- Professional engineer services
- Outreach and engagement services to address:
  - Youth education
  - Adult education
  - Marketing and Community education
- Financial and operational services to address:
  - Project management
  - Grant management
  - Financial management
  - Personnel management

### Annual Budget Needs

As of 2018, the District leverages local Rates and Charges and WA State Conservation Commission Base funding to secure State and Federal Grants and Interlocal Agreements from local jurisdictions. Currently, the District leverages each \$1 of base funding to secure about \$2 of grant funding. The District recognizes that leveraging at this rate has risks due to changes in grant funding levels. To address this, the District is seeking an increase in its Rates and Charges to target a \$1 base funding to \$1 grant funding ratio.

Future issues that will impact the District include increasing inflation and shifting grant opportunities. It is estimated that over the next 5 years, inflation will be approximately 2% per year. This could increase project costs by 8-10%.



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The tables below indicate a targeted budget make-up of the District's major programs and provides estimated budget needs for each year, factoring in inflation and assumes consistent staff and project funding throughout the 5-year plan.

### Snohomish Conservation District

#### Estimated Budget Needs per year

2019	\$4,674,000
2020	\$4,767,500
2021	\$4,862,850
2022	\$4,960,100
2023	\$5,059,300

#### Targeted Department Budgets by Percentage

Farm Planning and Rural Resource Management	25%
Community Conservation	20%
Habitat Conservation	25%
Outreach and Education	20%
District Operations	10%