



2015 Snohomish Conservation District's
Annual Report

Snohomish Conservation District has a long-standing history of collaboration and technical assistance to the agriculture and forestry communities. In response to the critical need for the protection of Puget Sound, a unique and precious feature of northwest Washington, as well as a vast network of salmonid streams and rivers, the District has developed an urban and suburban program that exemplifies our heritage of working with partners and landowners on land and water resource concerns.

Our programs have grown to include low impact development, Firewise communities, backyard wildlife habitat, on-site septic programs and natural yard care. Snohomish Conservation District is a political subdivision of state government with no regulatory authority. We have been working with farmers, city residents, rural, and suburban landowners on a voluntary basis since 1941. District boundaries include Camano Island (added in 1961) and most of Snohomish County.

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Our mission:

To work cooperatively with others to promote and encourage conservation and responsible use of natural resources.



***The future is not some
place we are going to,
but one we are creating -
together with you.***

LETTERS FROM MONTE MARTI & MARK CRAVEN



2015 was another exciting and productive year here at the Snohomish Conservation District. We have enjoyed our opportunity to engage with such a diverse and committed set of landowners and partners. The accomplishments for 2015 are based upon and driven by the willingness of private landowners and managers to actively manage the natural resources

they control. Additionally, the accomplishments for 2015 are significantly impacted via project collaborations with partners. We sincerely thank everyone that has made a positive contribution and impact on natural resource management this past year.

The volunteer Board of Supervisors and staff here at the District truly understand and embrace the power of collective efforts. We try to bring a positive, can-do approach to project implementation. We understand that the challenges we face are significant and can sometimes feel daunting. However, we have collectively

demonstrated that by working together and by understanding the needs and passions of others, we can find acceptable solutions to complex resource concerns.

It is the continued engagement with all of you that motivates us here at the District. We are passionate about our level of service and our future together. In 2016, we will be celebrating our 75th year of service to all of you. We have a proud history of working with private landowners and partners on natural resource management, and we look forward to sharing our story with you throughout the year.

Please join us in working together on projects in 2016 and help us celebrate the beginning of another 75 years of project implementation that protects and enhances our natural resources for generations to come.

Monte Marti,
District Manager

2015 has been a stellar year for the Snohomish Conservation District. As the Board Chair, I'm very proud of our accomplishments and even more excited as this year, 2016, we celebrate 75 years of service to landowners, technical innovation, resource protection and unique partnerships.

Serving Snohomish County residents for 75 years, and Camano Island residents for 55 years, means that we are working with the 2nd and 3rd generations of landowners. The diversity and number of new residents, which promises to continue to grow, has challenged us to tailor our programs, enhance services to urban areas, and focus on stormwater issues that are increasingly impacting Puget Sound.

We will continue our efforts to encourage food security, soil health and the long-term viability of our agriculture economy. Our youth outreach program with area schools continues to grow as well. They are the generation who will both benefit from, and inherit, the resources we protect. A sustainable community, open space,

clean rivers and streams and a viable agricultural landscape are what we must strive to leave the generations that follow us.

Help us celebrate our 75th year!

Mark Craven, Board Chair



Conservation through the generations

Snohomish Conservation District has a long-standing history of collaboration and technical assistance to the agriculture and forestry communities. We embrace our heritage of working with partners and landowners on land and water resource concerns, as we evolve and move to the future.

1941

In May the Snohomish Conservation District was established in Snohomish County, under State RCW 89.08. At the time, the District encompassed 1,344,000 acres in which there were 6,259 farms.

1945

Flood Control Councils were formed for the Snohomish, Pilchuck, and Stillaguamish watersheds.



1948

A massive flood in the Snohomish Valley causes extensive damage to crops, and to the five wooden flood control structures built in the early part of the century.



1949-52

The Marshland and French Slough Flood Control Districts were formed to acquire funding and receive help from federal, state and local sources.



1961

Camano Island, part of Island County, was added to the District.

1975

Another major flood in December in the Snohomish Valley resulted in dikes collapsing, the failure of the 12 year old French Slough pump plant, and the loss of over 1,000 cattle near the town of Snohomish.

1984

Dairy nutrient management program started with funding for Portage Creek (EPA 319 to DOE to Snohomish County to the District).



1985

District offers first conservation plant sale at the Everett Mall from the back of the District pick-up truck. Plants came from the Bellingham Soil Conservation Service nursery.

1988

First issue of the District Newsletter published in September with George Stocker on the cover.

1993

- District hires first small farm planner to focus on small acreage farms.
- The Snohomish County Council created the Stillaguamish River Clean Water District (CWD) to “provide a comprehensive approach to managing and regulating surface water in order to respect and preserve the county’s rivers, streams, lakes, and other waterbodies” (Snohomish County Code Title 25A.05).
- Launch of the first website

2008

The District began its Low Impact Development program and began focused work with local cities.



2010

Acquired a five-year assessment from Snohomish County and a ten year assessment from Island County for Camano Island

2015

The District works hard to leverage the local assessment funding entrusted to us. In 2015 we were able to secure additional funding from federal, state, and private donations for agriculture producers, Better Ground outreach program development, and our Green Stormwater Infrastructure Initiative.





Dairy

improvements

Dairies in the Stillaguamish Watershed are making big changes to address manure storage issues and increase sustainability on the farm. The District helped two dairies implement waste transfer systems to safely transfer manure. Two dairies also implemented bedding recovery systems this summer.



Featured in these pictures are recently installed manure separator bedding-recovery systems. Typically sawdust shavings are used as bedding material for livestock. With lumber prices increasing and the sources for sawdust in Western Washington decreasing, dairies are turning to a more sustainable process that reuses and recycles cow manure by separating out the fiber, composting it and in the end, getting a clean, dry product to use as bedding.



Safe Fish passage project

In July the District installed an 81-foot long, 14-foot diameter bottomless arch steel culvert on a tributary to Evans Creek in the Snohomish River watershed. This newer design is large enough to handle major flood volumes and allow fish to pass through the culvert without even noticing there is one. This project was funded by the Family Forest Fish Passage Program, a partnership between the Washington departments of Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife, and the Recreation and Conservation Office.

20 Acres and counting



Woods Creek is one of these highest priority streams in the Snohomish River watershed for salmon, yet these fish are struggling due to impaired stream conditions. A loss of trees along the banks to shade the stream has led to increased water temperatures in the summer, temperatures that are so high they stress juvenile salmon that are feeding and foraging in the stream. In addition, Woods Creek has suffered from fecal coliform levels that are also too high during the summer months, making the stream unsafe for human contact. Fecal coliform comes from livestock manure, failing septic systems, pet waste, and wildlife.

Neighbors all along Woods Creek, with help from the District, have been pitching in to restore it and save the salmon that call it home. In 2015 landowners worked with the District to plant 6.8 acres of native trees along the creek on their properties. Nine more landowners just signed up for the same in 2016! These trees will keep water temperatures cooler for fish, slow streambank erosion and keep pollutants from reaching the water.

2015: 6.8 acres planted

Total: 20.9 acres planted

“We all need to take responsibility for our stream frontage and treat it with the respect it deserves, for the sake of the local wildlife, the salmon, and for our own enjoyment, not to mention future generations.”

*Mrs. Eaton,
Woods Creek Landowner*



Every tree makes a difference for salmon and the health of the watershed as a whole, and building these community partnerships are key to reaching our 45-acre goal.



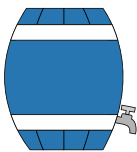
“The result is not only better land values for us, but a sense of being truly good stewards of this valley. Thanks to the Conservation District and Surface Water Management for sharing our vision for our watershed.”

*Joel Selling,
Woods Creek Landowner*



Changing Climate combating drought & new programs

The first statewide drought in a decade afflicted both farmers and urban residents alike in our district this year. Fishing was restricted in local rivers, crops suffered, and lawns dried up. With similar climate forecasts in the future, we continue to adapt our services to meet the needs of our communities, through our Rain Barrel program and new programs like Lawns to Lettuce.



Rain barrels and cisterns are one of the most popular and simple ways to take action at home, reduce your watering costs, and create a resilient landscape. Our program saw continued growth, delivering a record 285 barrels in 2015.



Lawns are the biggest culprit in water waste, and as much of 50% of irrigation just runs off, taking fertilizer and pesticides with it! To compliment its well-established Natural Yard Care program, the District developed Lawns to Lettuce in 2015 to help landowners reduce or eliminate lawns by growing food in a sustainable way.

In July, we hosted our inaugural Lawns to Lettuce workshop on a sunny and warm day on Camano Island. More than 40 participants gathered to learn about gardens and lawns, from the history of lawns and how to plant veggie starts to the amazing-ness of the soils under our feet.

Sound Education

hands-on science lessons

The District works in partnership with Snohomish County Surface Water Management and local municipalities to provide hands-on science education. Our standards-aligned lessons connect students to their local environment while promoting stewardship of natural resources. We offer engaging classroom presentations, field trips, service learning, teacher workshops and green schoolyard support. Sound Education is a free service dedicated to improving environmental literacy in Snohomish County and Camano Island through high quality, hands-on science education.



For the third consecutive year, the District offered classes through the statewide Wheat Week Education Program. Wheat Week is a series of five lessons, delivered over the course of one week, educating students in 4th and 5th grade about water, soil, watersheds, energy, systems, salmon and wheat, and how they impact our lives. This well-received program is offered by Franklin Conservation District and funded by the District, the Washington State Grain Commission, the Snohomish County Farm Bureau, and the Washington State Conservation Commission.

YOUTH EDUCATION

Total Classes	878
Students	11,740
Teachers	516
Workshops/Field Trips	13





EDMONDS RAIN GARDEN CLUSTER

In October, the District partnered with City of Edmonds and WSU Extension to install 6 rain gardens in a high-priority watershed. By clustering these practices together in targeted neighborhood stewardship, a higher level of impact is achieved. The Perrinville project in Edmonds brought together half a dozen homeowners along Seaview's Sierra Drive who wanted to help address rainwater runoff by building rain gardens in their neighborhood.

RIVERBEND FARM TO BE FARMED ONCE MORE

On December 15, 2015, the historic Faber Dairy was rescued from development through a partnership between the District, Forterra, and the Washington State Conservation Commission. This prime open space will continue to be a working farm, in the hands of local hay grower, cooperator, and our 2014 Commercial Farm of the Year award winner, Andrew Albert.



CAMANO GROUNDWATER WORKSHOP

The heat and drought made July's "Your Groundwater and Camano Island Aquifers" workshop a very timely event! Over 160 Camano Islanders attended the workshop that featured a detailed presentation by Island County Hydrogeologist Doug Kelly about Island County's aquifers, seawater intrusion, and the abundance of data maintained on the islands' water wells. Groundwater is Camano Island's main water source and attendees were eager to hear how they can work with the county to protect their drinking water resources.

2015 Highlights

outreach & volunteers

OUTREACH & EVENT FIGURES

New Contacts	901 people
New Cooperators	421 people
Assistances	1,488 assistances
Events	58 events

VOLUNTEER STATS

Volunteers	213 people
Volunteer Hours	884 hours
Volunteer Events	7 events





By the Numbers

year-end accomplishments

LOANER EQUIPMENT

Manure Spreader	23 uses
Broadcast Seed/Lime Spreader	3 uses

LANDOWNER SERVICES & RECOGNITION

Rain Barrels	285 barrels
Soil Tests	133 tests
Number of Plants Sold (at Plant Sale)	40,000 plants
Sound Horsekeeping Signs	8 signs

PROJECTS

Beaver Deceiver/Pond Leveler	3 projects
Residential Bioswales and Filter Strips	2 projects
New CREP Projects	11 projects
Gutters and Downspouts	3 projects
Fencing for Livestock Exclusion	6 projects
Heavy Use Areas (Winter Paddocks)	4 projects
Livestock Waste Separation/Transfer Facilities	4 projects
Rain Gardens	20 projects
Manure Compost Bins	3 projects
Off-Stream Watering System	1 project
Planting Projects	17 projects

WCC CREW

Hours Worked	9,500 hours
Restoration Projects	25 projects
Rain Garden/Urban Projects	19 projects

PLANTING PROJECTS BREAKDOWN

Tree Planting	20,252 trees
Stream Health Improvement	16,271 linear ft
Stream Buffer - Trees	32.99 acres
Critical Area Planting	0.33 acres



Partnerships

working together to achieve more

It is through our partnerships that we accomplish and implement the projects that we do. Our collective work with private landowners is critical, vibrant and valuable. We could not do it without you.

Adopt-A-Stream Foundation
 American Farmland Trust
 Army Corps of Engineers
 Boeing
 Camano Water Systems Association
 Cascade Harvest Coalition
 Cattlemen's Association
 City of Arlington
 City of Bothell
 City of Brier
 City of Edmonds
 City of Everett
 City of Granite Falls
 City of Lake Stevens
 City of Lynnwood
 City of Mill Creek
 City of Monroe
 City of Mountlake Terrace
 City of Mukilteo
 City of Stanwood
 City of Sultan
 City of Woodland
 Coordinating Diking Council
 Dairy Federation
 Department of Ecology (DOE)
 Department of Fish and Wildlife
 Department of Natural Resources
 Ducks Unlimited
 Earth Corp
 ECONet organizations
 Environmental Protection Agency
 Everett School District
 Evergreen State Fair
 Farm Bureau
 Flood control, diking, and drainage districts
 Forterra
 Franklin Conservation District
 Futurewise
 Island County Board of Commissioners and
 Departments
 Island County Public Health

National Association of Conservation Districts
 NOAA
 Noxious Weed Board
 Pacific Shellfish Institute
 PCC Farmland Trust
 Pilchuck Audubon Society
 Puget Sound Conservation Districts
 Puget Sound Natural Resource Alliance
 Puget Sound Partnership
 Snohomish County Council
 Snohomish County Executive & County
 Departments
 Snohomish County Growers Alliance
 Snohomish Health District
 Snohomish Public Utility District
 Snohomish Watershed Salmon Forum
 Snoqualmie Tribe
 Sound Salmon Solutions
 Stewardship Partners
 Stillaguamish Clean Water District
 Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians
 Stillaguamish Watershed Council
 Sustainability Ambassadors
 Sustainable Lands Strategy
 The Nature Conservancy
 The Russell Family Foundation
 Trust for Public Lands (Shoreline Conservation
 Collaborative)
 Tulalip Tribes
 US Army Corps of Engineers
 US Congress
 USDA - Farm Services Agency
 USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service
 Washington Association of Conservation Districts
 Washington Conservation Commission
 Washington Conservation Corps
 Washington Dept. of Health
 Washington State Legislature and Governor
 Washington State Recreation and Conservation
 Office
 WSU Extension



2015

sponsorships

- Focus on Farming
- Cultivating Success
- Cattlemen's Winterschool/Country Living Expo
- Washington Association of Conservation Districts
- National Association of Conservation Districts
- Puget Sound Conservation Districts
- WSU Forest Stewardship Program
- Washington Association of District Employees
- Wheat Week
- Puget Sound Natural Resource Alliance
- Ag Entrepreneurship

Sponsorship Totals: \$43,640

2015 financials

REVENUE SOURCES

Snohomish County Assessment	\$962,362
Camano Island Assessment	\$58,031
Grants and Project Implementation Funding	\$2,499,008
City Partnerships	\$112,030
Other Funding and Donations	\$96,805
Plant Sale	\$101,199

TOTALS \$3,829,435

SPENDING BY PROGRAM

Community Conservation	\$750,000
District Operations	\$500,000
Natural Resource Management	\$2,579,435

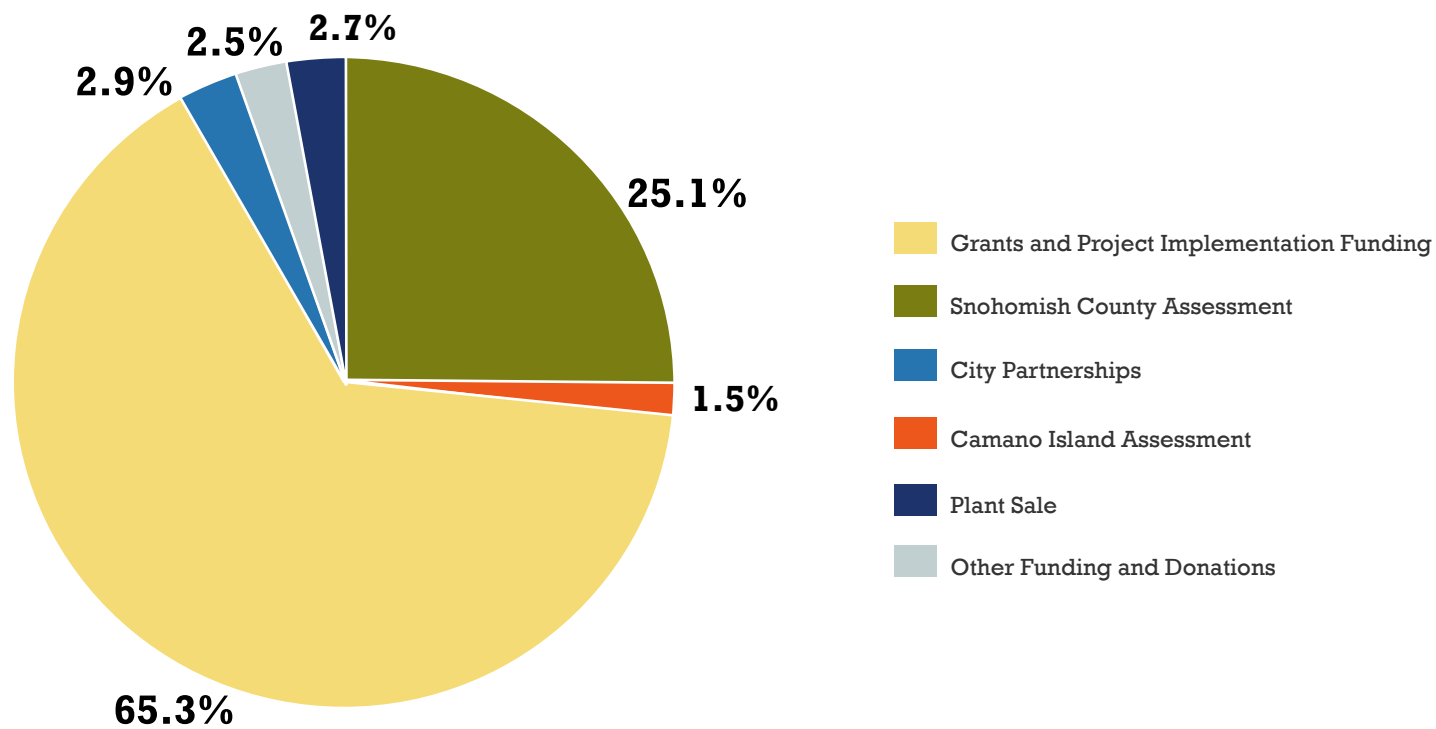
TOTALS \$3,829,435

Private Land Investment: \$1,322,452.73

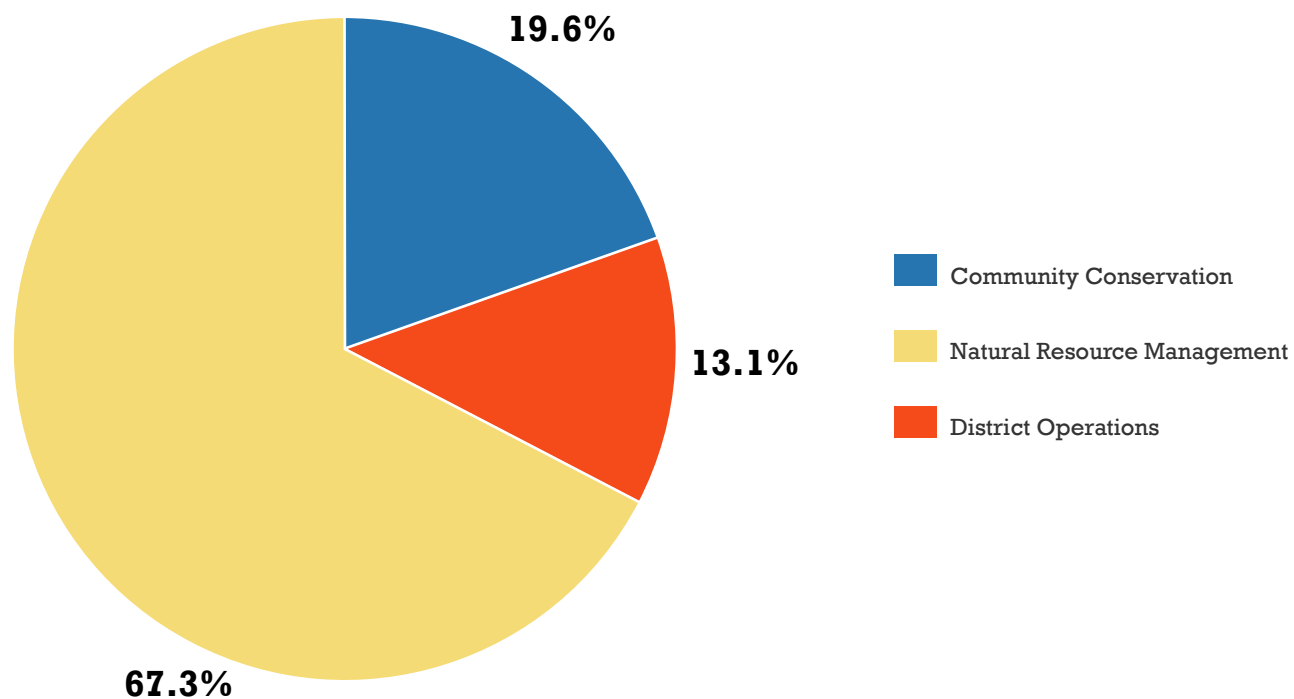
The District works hard to leverage the local assessment funding entrusted to us. In 2015 the District was able to secure additional funding from federal, state, and private donations. A few highlights:

- Regional Conservation Partnership Program funding for agriculture producers from both the Natural Resources Conservation Service(USDA) and the Washington State Conservation Commission.
- Department of Ecology and Snohomish County funding to work with agriculture producers on nutrient management.
- Better Ground program development and Green Stormwater Infrastructure Initiative support from Boeing and The Nature Conservancy.
- Neighborhood rain garden implementation through funding from the cities of Edmonds and Everett.

2015 REVENUE SOURCES



2015 SPENDING BY PROGRAM



Celebrating 75 years



Snohomish Conservation District

working together for better ground since 1941



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