

CONSERVATION QUARTERLY

SPRING 2012

NOW ACCEPTING ENTRIES FOR WATERSHED PHOTO CONTEST: WINNING PHOTOS TO BE FEATURED IN 2013 CALENDAR

From the ridgetops to the valley bottom, the Wenatchee River watershed provides residents

and visitors alike with a spectacular place to live, work, and play.



“Wenatchee River in Mid-October”
by Sy Stepanov

In celebration of everything the watershed provides, Cascadia Conservation District and Picture the Wenatchee are sponsoring a Wenatchee River watershed photo contest. Anyone age 13 and up who shares our appreciation for the watershed is invited to participate.

From now until October 1, 2012 photo entries are being accepted from interested members of the public for six categories including plants, wildlife, agriculture, recreation, landscapes, and water.

Help Capture the Beauty of the Wenatchee River Watershed

All entries will be exhibited at participating local businesses in the watershed during the fall. A panel of local judges selected for their commitment to the watershed will choose two winners from each category for inclusion in a 2013 Wenatchee River watershed stewardship calendar.



“Apricot Blossoms” by Jeff Godfrey

Our photo contest and calendar will combine appreciation for the environment and the Wenatchee River valley with the artistic talent of local photographers.

Help capture the beauty of the watershed and participate by sharing your photos. For complete contest rules, a map of the watershed, and online submission form visit: www.picturethewenatchee.com.

(Continued on page 2)

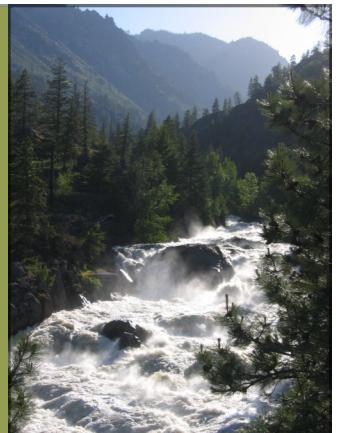
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A new video from the
Entiat Watershed Planning Unit

View the video on our website: www.cascadiacd.org





“The Cutest Apple in the Bunch”
by Judy Mayer

WATERSHED PHOTO CONTEST

(Continued from page 1)

The Picture the Wenatchee watershed stewardship campaign has been in place for one year. It represents a collaborative effort between citizens, businesses, non-profit groups, and public entities interested in improving water quality and stream habitat in the Wenatchee River and its tributaries through education, communication, and action.

See additional information about the Picture the Wenatchee campaign and what you can do to be a better watershed steward at www.picturethewenatchee.com. And don't forget to sign up to receive your FREE Watershed Care Package.

LOCAL LANDOWNERS REDUCE FIRE RISK AND IMPROVE WILDLIFE HABITAT

Since 2008, Denis Du Bois and Linda Merrick have worked with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to accomplish fuels reduction and thinning projects on 10 of their 21 acres of forest land outside of Leavenworth.

Du Bois took the Coached Planning Course and the Advanced Course offered by WSU Forestry Extension and Washington Department of Natural Resources, where he learned about NRCS. NRCS sent experts in stewardship forestry, wildlife, and plant and insect biology out to the property.

“The timeline was structured based on our wants and needs. NRCS tailored the program according to what we wanted to do with our stand, and how fast we wanted to do it.”

“They spent half a day with us, walking the property and learning about our objectives for it. They explained the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and it was pretty appealing.”

Du Bois and Merrick worked with NRCS to draw up a work plan and payment schedule for their contract, which spanned 4 years.

“The timeline was structured based on our wants and needs. NRCS tailored the program according to what we wanted to do with our stand, and how fast we wanted to do it. Once we picked the work and the pace, we were obligated to reach the goals for each year. Being held to a timeline and getting paid for the work at the end of each year was a terrific incentive to get the work done.”



Untreated forest (after treatment photo on next page)

In addition to thinning overstocked stands, Du Bois and Merrick are working to improve wildlife habitat by installing two wildlife piles that will create protective cover for birds and small mammals. Du Bois has also built and installed 25 nesting structures (with 20 more planned) for songbirds and woodpeckers.

The couple especially wants to reduce the risk of forest fire. In the ten years they've owned the property, there have been two lightning-caused fires within a mile of the property.

“I would definitely recommend this program to my neighbors and wish they would all participate. Our plan is to build a house out here. Our land is properly treated and safe, but we're surrounded by acres of untreated land.”

After learning of another valuable program called Firewise, which spells out steps landowners can take to reduce the risk of losing structures to wildfire, the couple incorporated important elements into their property's plan. Examples of Firewise steps include defensible space around the home site, low tree density out to about 100 feet and planned fuel breaks throughout the property.

“When we're done we'll have 21 acres of healthy, mature forest. The Firewise work never ends. Brush will grow in now that the canopy is thinner, so we'll have to manage that in a few years. You can bet we'll check with NRCS when that time comes, to see what they can do to help.”

Denis Du Bois has a blog about his experiences and resources for forest landowners at: <http://smallforestowner.blogspot.com>.

Both Cascadia Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service have technical and financial opportunities to help forest landowners reduce wildfire risks. As residents of a fire-prone area it is important to acknowledge the dangers and take appropriate actions to protect life and property BEFORE a wildfire starts.

A number of communities within Chelan County are situated in the Wildland/Urban Interface (WUI). The Wildland/Urban Interface is the zone where structures and other human development meet and intermingle with undeveloped wildland.

This zone poses a potentially tremendous risk to life, property and infrastructure in the event of a wildfire and is one of the most dangerous and complicated situations firefighters face.



(Continued on page 3)

LOCAL LANDOWNERS

(Continued from page 2)

Past activities such as logging, grazing, and fire suppression have altered the normal fire regime, forest stand species composition, and have affected forest health. Dense forest stands often have contiguous crowns and ladder fuels. These variables provide continuous fuels which can create conditions for an intense and fast moving fire.

For landowners living in the Wildland/Urban Interface, the Firewise Communities/USA Recognition Program is designed to provide a series of steps you and your neighbors can do now to keep homes and neighborhoods safer from fire. For forest landowners, the NRCS has the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) which can help defray the costs of fuels reduction, pre-commercial thinning, pruning, and slash treatment.

If you are interested in learning more about these programs, please contact Cascadia Conservation District at (509) 664-9370.



Forest after fuels reduction and thinning

EARTH DAY ESSAY CONTEST SPURS THOUGHTS ON CONSERVATION AND CONNECTION TO ENVIRONMENT

This spring, Cascadia Conservation District sponsored our second annual Earth Day essay contest. The contest was open to sixth through eighth grade students in Chelan and Douglas counties.

Students were tasked with answering the question:

“What have you learned from nature, and why is what you’ve learned important?”

We received some wonderful essays, which were evaluated based on creativity, thoughtfulness and relevance to topic. The panel of judges, representing Cascadia Conservation District, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Initiative for Rural Innovation and Stewardship, and Wenatchee River Institute were impressed with how well the top three essays addressed the question and the eloquence with which these students wrote about their relationship to the environment.



White-headed Woodpecker
Photo by: Dave Menke,
U.S. Fish and Wildlife

We are pleased to announce that the first place essay was written by Mariela Morales of Orchard Middle School.

The second place essay was written by Isabelle Tall of Cascade Christian Academy.

The third place essay was written by Tommy Tilton of Icicle River Middle School.

The top three essay writers will spend a Saturday in June with a US Forest Service professional wildlife biologist conducting white-headed woodpecker surveys. In addition, the three contest winners will receive prizes courtesy of Bird Cage Press.

Congratulations to this year’s winners!

WHAT MARIELA MORALES HAS LEARNED FROM NATURE First Place Earth Day Essay

What’s damaging nature? Humans. If we say Earth is our mother, then nature is our sister. Nature teaches us how to survive in her. And we dig holes and drill out stuff from her insides, then burn them causing poisons to fill the atmosphere. That pollutes the air preventing the sun from shining on the fields properly.

In nature I learned that you can be free whenever you like. But more importantly I have learned that our lifestyle causes a lot of damage. We have killed off vast amounts of Earth’s ecology turning what used to be delicate ecosystems into deserts.

So, a question we all should be asking is: how can we help? Walk or bike instead of driving a car- a good walk is a conversation between the walker and the environment. A simple walk through nature can provide hope and inspiration. Plant trees- they absorb carbon dioxide. It sounds cliché but we must act now before it’s too late.

Nature is not only enchanting but healing too. Her pleasures may be plain, but are kindly and she’s native to us. She’s our friend and will provide. Nature is consistent, she’ll grow even when cut.

Those who’ve harmed nature have had their day with her beauty; now let our children have theirs with her beauty that remains. If we consider how much we really belong to nature, we shouldn’t care so much for building cities. Nature helps us when we are sick and instead, we are making nature sick.

Knowing that nature is part of our only home means knowing we have to take care of her.



First place essay winner
Mariela Morales of
Orchard Middle School

Read all three winning essays on our blog:
<http://ccdconservationconversation.blogspot.com/>

FREE SOIL TESTS FOR ELIGIBLE LANDOWNERS



Soil testing auger

Soil testing and associated nutrient budgeting are extremely important to the health of your soil. Plans for nutrient management specify the source, amount, timing and method of application of nutrients on planting areas.

Optimized nutrient management will help achieve realistic production goals while, at the same time, minimizing the movement of nutrients and other potential contaminants to surface and/or ground water.

The first five (5) eligible landowners to contact Cascadia Conservation District referencing

this offer will receive a free soil test and nutrient plan!

In order to be eligible you must meet the following criteria:

- 1) Own or manage two or more acres of land that gets annual fertilizer
- 2) The land must be adjacent to a creek, stream or river within the Wenatchee River watershed
- 3) You must not have applied any fertilizer yet this spring
- 4) You do not test your soil regularly

Even if you are not eligible for the free soil testing at this time, you can still benefit from soil testing and nutrient budgeting and are encouraged to explore the benefits of soil testing.

For additional information or to participate contact Cascadia Conservation District at (509)664-9370.



UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

Cascadia Board Meetings

May 17, 3:30pm at 215 Melody Lane, Wenatchee

June 21, 3:30pm at 215 Melody Lane, Wenatchee

July 19, 3:30pm at 215 Melody Lane, Wenatchee

Please contact Cascadia's office for more information: (509) 664-9370.

Entiat Habitat Subcommittee Meetings

May 17, 9am-12pm at 215 Melody Lane, Wenatchee

June 21, 9am-12pm at 215 Melody Lane, Wenatchee

July 19, 9am-12pm at 215 Melody Lane, Wenatchee

Wenatchee Habitat Subcommittee Meetings

Third Wednesday of every month.

Please Contact Mary Jo Sanborn at (509) 667-6532 for more information.

Kids' Fishing at the Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery

Saturday, June 2nd 8am-1:30pm

For kids ages 4-14. Register by going to friendsofnwhatcheries.org and click on "Event Registration".

Kids' Fishing at the Entiat National Fish Hatchery

Saturday, June 9th from 8am-12pm

For kids under 14. Come fish the new pond full of enormous rainbow trout! Bring your own pole or borrow one from the hatchery.

Kids' Fishing at the Winthrop National Fish Hatchery

Saturday, June 9 from 9am-1pm

For kids under 14. Come fish in the brand new kids fishing pond and visit the adult salmon viewing building. Poles are available to borrow, and bait and prizes will be available.

Entiat Watershed Planning Unit (EWPU) meeting

July 11, 9am-12pm at the Entiat Grange Hall, 14108 Kinzel Street, Entiat

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is currently accepting applications from private forest landowners for pre-commercial thinning projects on their land to help reduce fire risk, improve tree health and vigor, and enhance wildlife habitat. For more information, please contact Amy Hendershot at (509) 664-9303.

**Cascadia Conservation District has launched a blog:
Cascadia's Conservation Conversation!**

Please check it out at: <http://ccdconservationconversation.blogspot.com/>



CASCADIA
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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(509) 664-9370 • www.cascadiacd.org

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This newsletter is funded in part by grants from the Washington State Conservation Commission, the Washington State Department of Ecology and other public and private granting entities.



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