

CONSERVATION QUARTERLY

SPRING 2010



Area orchardist Raul Sanchez stands next to a "bee box" designed to attract beneficial pollinators to his orchard. The structure is just one of many conservation practices implemented with technical and financial assistance received through the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Environmental Quality Incentives Program.

TWO COMMUNITIES EARN NATIONAL RECOGNITION

The Chumstick Watershed and Stellerwood Neighborhood became the first two communities in Chelan County to earn Firewise Communities/USA recognition.

This nationwide initiative recognizes communities for taking proactive steps to reduce their vulnerability to wildfire. With cooperative assistance from local, state and federal partners, communities use a set of five criteria to develop a wildfire preparedness program tailored to their specific needs.



CONSERVE THE RESOURCES YOU NEED & GET THE HELP YOU NEED TO DO IT

Forest landowners, pasture managers, or anyone who produces over \$1000 of agricultural products per year are encouraged to check out the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

From now through **July 1** applications are being accepted for the competitive conservation program designed to help landowners demonstrate that agricultural production and environmental quality can be compatible, even mutually beneficial, goals.

(Continued on page 2)

The Chumstick Wildfire Stewardship Coalition (CWSC) is the organizing body for wildfire preparedness efforts in the Chumstick Watershed. The CWSC was formed in 2008 with the goal of implementing wildfire risk reduction practices on both public and private lands through collaborative partnerships, outreach, and strategic planning. Prior to participating in the Firewise Communities/USA program, the CWSC had a governing board, mission, operating goals and two-year plan. For them, Firewise Communities/USA status acknowledges years of hard work by a dedicated group of volunteers.

Director Annie Schmidt feels the CWSC is keeping good company, stating that, "The Firewise Communities/USA program is community-driven and highlights grassroots efforts like ours across the country. We are thrilled to be recognized among that group and are grateful to Cascadia Conservation District for making our application possible."

(Continued on page 3)

The Chelan County Public Works Solid Waste & Recycling Department is hosting...



BRUSH DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

See page 3 for more information.

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PROJECT RECOGNIZED FOR ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE

The Washington Chapter of the American Council of Engineering Companies, or ACEC, recently awarded a Best in State Bronze Award to GeoEngineers, Inc. and the Cascadia Conservation District for their work on the Knapp-Wham Irrigation Diversion Improvement Project in the Entiat valley.

The ACEC is a professional trade organization representing consulting engineering firms, land surveyors, planners and scientists in all engineering disciplines throughout Washington state. Their annual awards program recognizes the best engineering achievements in the state, and they are among the most prestigious in the industry.

Working on behalf of the Entiat Watershed Planning Unit (EWPU), the Cascadia Conservation District has undertaken a series of projects to improve water supply reliability, eliminate fish-passage barriers, and restore fish habitat in the Entiat River watershed. The Knapp-Wham Irrigation Diversion Improvement Project represented the final

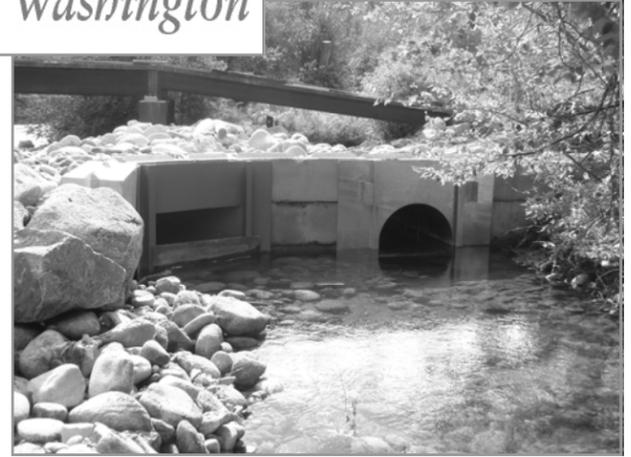
component of the greater Knapp-Wham Hanan-Detwiler Irrigation Ditch Consolidation Project.

"We are truly honored to be recognized by the ACEC for the original design developed between GeoEngineers and Cascadia Conservation District on behalf of the Entiat Watershed Planning Unit. It is the product of the innovative approach used by the EWPU," states Mike Rickel, Program Manager at Cascadia Conservation District and the coordinator for the EWPU.

The Knapp-Wham diversion directs water from the Entiat River to an irrigation system serving agricultural landowners along the southwest bank of the Entiat River valley. The original diversion created obstacles for fish passage and failed regularly, requiring annual maintenance that disturbed fish spawning and rearing habitat.

The Cascadia Conservation District retained GeoEngineers, Inc. to design a new diversion that would allow fish passage and improve fish

ACEC Washington



GeoEngineers, Inc. and the Cascadia Conservation District were awarded a 2010 Best in State Bronze Award by the Washington Chapter of the American Council of Engineering Companies for the Knapp-Wham Irrigation Diversion Project in the Entiat watershed. The project included the design and installation of a new diversion that permits fish passage and improves fish habitat.

habitat, while also providing water to the recently consolidated Knapp-Wham Hanan-Detwiler irrigation systems. The result is an award winning design that provides critical habitat for fish and vital irrigation water for nearby farms.

NRCS EQIP Application Process

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) application process consists of the following six steps...

1. Establish operation with your local USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA);
2. submit an application to your local USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office before July 1;
3. eligibility is verified;
4. applications are ranked based on a locally developed list of natural resource priorities;
5. funds are committed to high-ranking applications;
6. a contract is developed; and
7. following contract signature by NRCS and the landowner, funds are obligated to the project and the landowner may begin to implement practices identified in the plan.

For more information about the program or to apply, call the Wenatchee area NRCS field office at (509) 664-9370.

CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE

(Continued from page 1)

EQIP offers financial and technical assistance for eligible participants to install or implement conservation practices that address regionally specific resource concerns. Contracts generally pay 50 percent of the cost of the practice, although under some circumstances payments may be up to 90 percent. Examples of popular conservation practices by land use are:

Orchard

- hedgerows
- irrigation system upgrades
- Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

Forest

- forest stand improvements
- forest slash treatment
- upland wildlife habitat management

Grazing

- seeding
- pest management
- spring development

A number of landowners in the region have already benefitted from EQIP. Orchardist Raul Sanchez enrolled in 2008 to make improvements to his ten acre orchard north of Rocky Reach Dam and protect the soil, water, plants and wildlife vital to his operation. Since then he has updated his irrigation system to

conserve water, migrated to a more environmentally safe pest-control program, and installed wildlife structures to attract beneficial insects and birds of prey.

Mr. Sanchez was never eager to use broad-spectrum sprays and welcomed the opportunity to integrate mating disruption techniques into his pest control program along with other products less harmful to beneficial insects. He is particularly happy with his new micro sprinkler irrigation system and is thankful for all of the support and guidance provided by NRCS staff.

According to Mr. Sanchez, *"NRCS is always there to help and answer my questions. EQIP has been helpful for me and everything has worked wonderfully so far."*

NRCS Resource Conservationist Amy Hendershot thinks landowners and operators in Chelan County could really benefit from EQIP. *"I would like to see more funding channeled to farms and forest land in the area,"* states Hendershot. *"I see real value in showcasing the beautiful and vital natural resources unique to the area and I would like to work with more folks to protect them for generations to come."*

If you are interested in making improvements to your land that also help benefit the environment, call the Wenatchee area NRCS field office at (509) 664-9370 and sign up for EQIP today!

FIREWISE COMMUNITIES

(Continued from page 1)

For the Stellerwood neighborhood near the south end of Lake Wenatchee, the Firewise Communities/USA application criteria provided an organizational framework and rallying point for neighbors. Concerned about protecting forest health and managing fire risk, resident Wally Prestbo developed a forest stewardship plan for his entire neighborhood and enrolled in the Washington State Department of Natural Resources eastern Washington forest landowner cost-share program. When introduced to the Firewise Communities/USA program he jumped on the opportunity to participate and quickly got to work.

"This has been a very beneficial process for our neighborhood."

Wally Prestbo
Stellerwood Resident

"This has been a very beneficial process for our neighborhood," states Prestbo. *"The Cascadia Conservation District has been exceptionally helpful in providing information on how best to improve our properties to minimize fire hazards."*

Cascadia Resource Specialist Sarah Rudback assisted both the Chumstick Watershed and Stellerwood Neighborhood through the Firewise Communities/USA application process under federal grant funding through the Washington State Department of Natural Resources. She is currently assisting a third community, the Forest Ridge neighborhood in the Squilchuck valley, through the application process.

"It has been a pleasure to work with such motivated folks. I am so happy we were able to help them gain recognition for their work thus far," remarks Rudback. *"In essence, they are helping to fight fires before they start and providing a valuable service to firefighters and the greater community."*

Citizen involvement is the cornerstone of the Firewise Communities/USA program. Combined, both communities have spent countless hours supporting their respective programs. When translated into monetary terms their contributions are valued at over \$20,000 for calendar year 2009, but their efforts to reduce their risk may prove priceless in the face of a wildfire.

Firewise Communities/USA Program Requirements

To apply for Firewise Communities/USA recognition, a community must meet the following standards during the course of a calendar year...

- form a Firewise Board;
- invest at least \$2 per capita in wildfire risk reduction projects including equipment and volunteer hours;
- complete a community assessment with assistance from a trained professional;
- develop a Firewise plan of action to address risks identified in the community assessment;
- and hold a Firewise Day.

Applications are due by **December 31**, but interested communities are encouraged to apply as soon as they have fulfilled all of the requirements. Recognition status is good for the year the work was completed and can be renewed annually.

COUNTY RECEIVES GRANT TO SUPPORT BRUSH DISPOSAL

The Chelan County Public Works Solid Waste & Recycling Department was recently awarded a grant from the US Forest Service Cooperative Forestry Assistance Program to support forest stewardship and wildfire risk reduction on rural lands.

The funding is being used to sponsor multiple brush disposal sites in the county in an effort to help landowners control forest insects and diseases, manage wildfire fuels, encourage commercial timber production, and recycle wood fiber that would otherwise go to waste.

Trees and limbs up to 12 inches in diameter, trimmings, and brush are being accepted. Once debris piles reach a critical mass a large *chipper*, or horizontal hammer mill, will be brought in to recycle the waste into wood chips for composting.

"Because the material will be run through specialized machinery and reprocessed, there are limitations to what can be accepted at each site," states Solid Waste Coordinator Brenda Harn. Noxious weeds, sod, animal waste, garbage and plastic bags are examples of things the County is asking folks to leave at home.

Four brush drop-off sites are currently available. Dates and hours of operation vary by site. A brief list is included below; contact the Chelan County Public Works Solid Waste & Recycling Department at (509) 667-6415 for more detailed information.



2010 Brush Drop-Off Sites

All sites are supported through December 31, 2010 unless otherwise noted.

Dryden Transfer Station

Location: Off Highway 2/97 approximately 1 mile east of the "Big Y" interchange
Operating Hours: Monday through Saturday 9 am-4:30 pm; closed on Sundays

Chelan Recycle Center

Location: Off Highway 97A north of Chelan
Operating Hours: Tuesday through Saturday 8 am-4:30 pm; closed Sundays and Mondays

Entiat Chipping Site

Location: Off Highway 97A behind the Columbia Breaks Fire Interpretive Center
Operating Hours: By request Tuesday & Thursday 11 am-2pm; Saturday 1 pm-3pm
Call Mark Abhold at (509) 670-5598 to coordinate access to the site.

Squilchuck State Park

Location: Off Squilchuck Road approximately 9 miles southwest of Wenatchee
Operating Hours: Daily 8 am-Dusk through June 6, 2010

PLANNING UNIT DEBUTS NEW LOGO

After twelve years of service, the Entiat Watershed Planning Unit has finally put a “face” to a name through the development of a logo.

In 1998, the EWPU was formed to develop local solutions to natural resource issues specific to the basin. Over the years, the EWPU has engaged multiple stakeholders to successfully implement a variety of important habitat, water quality and water quantity restoration projects in the watershed. They have been recognized for developing cooperative, proactive solutions to natural resource issues and now they have an identity to apply to their good work.

The desire for a logo grew from the realization that few people in the area are aware of the EWPU despite their many accomplishments. So they worked with Spurr Design of Wenatchee to develop an identity that represents the natural beauty and diversity of the Entiat Valley.



“The EWPU is here to serve the natural resource needs of the community,” offers Mike Rickel, Program Manager at Cascadia Conservation District and the coordinator for the EWPU. “If community members don’t know who we are, then we might not be adequately addressing their needs.”

Members of the EWPU hope that the new logo will provide them with a recognizable identity that will help increase public awareness and improve communication so their projects remain relevant and effectively address public concerns.

The new logo will be used to brand EWPU projects and outreach activities, including the Entiat Valley Community Survey, the EWPU booth at the Entiat Summerfest celebration on June 19 at Entiat City Park, and the Entiat River Clean-up scheduled to occur on August 28. For more information about the EWPU or associated upcoming events contact the Cascadia Conservation District at (509) 664-9370 or visit www.cascadiacd.org.



CASCADIA
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

215 Melody Lane Wenatchee, WA 98801
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Please Remember to Recycle

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Mike Sandidge, *Resource Specialist*
Jenni Novak, *Resource Specialist*
Sam Huhn, *AmeriCorps Member*

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

Idaho-Washington Forest Owner’s Field Day

June 12 from 9 am to 4:30 pm

Athol, Idaho (15 miles north of Cour d’Alene, Idaho)

\$20 individual advance registration or \$30 family advance registration

Optional \$10 BBQ lunch also available

- Whether you own a few acres or a large tract of land, this educational event is for you! You will learn how to plan and implement sound forest management practices on your land. Join the more than 7,000 people who have already attended events like this across Idaho and Washington. Contact the WSU Chelan County Extension at (509)667-6540 for more information.

Cascadia Conservation District June Board Meeting

June 17 from 3:30 pm to 5 pm at 215 Melody Lane in Wenatchee

- Meeting is open to the public. Attendees are asked to check in at the front desk for the meeting room assignment.

Entiat Summerfest

June 19 beginning at 10 am

Entiat City Park on Lake Entiat

- Look for the Cascadia Conservation District and Entiat Watershed Planning Unit booth at this annual event featuring a parade, kids’ activities, vendors, and the Rods on the River car show.

Living on the Land: Business Opportunities

June 19 from 9 am to noon with site visit to follow

Barn Beach Reserve Barn at 347 Division in Leavenworth

\$20 per individual

- Fifth of five sessions to help you sustainably and productively manage your small acreage property. Presented in collaboration with WSU Extension and the Barn Beach Reserve.

NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program Application Deadline

July 1 at 215 Melody Lane in Wenatchee

- See pages 1-2 for more information on EQIP or call the NRCS Wenatchee Field Office at (509) 664-9370.

For more information on any of the meetings and events listed above, call our office at (509) 664-9370 or visit our website at www.cascadiacd.org.



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