



## Mason Conservation District

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State Legislative District #35

Congressional District #6

### Board of Supervisor Monthly Summary of Activities

July 2017



My name is Sara Sedgwick, and I'm an AmeriCorps member serving with the Mason Conservation District.

As the Environmental Education and Outreach Coordinator, I've been granted the opportunity to experience and lead a variety of projects within the district. I'm especially thankful for the numerous connections I've made within the Mason County community. I've had the privilege of serving alongside 76 amazing volunteers, who contributed a total 373 hours in service to Mason Conservation District's educational programming and restoration of public lands. While collaborating with the Shelton School District, I helped design and facilitate field trip programs for roughly 1000 students (and I've reached countless more through other outreach events). A couple teams of amazing volunteers and I treated just over 3 acres of public land, removing invasives and planting native species on the Tahuya River and in the City of Shelton. But those are just numbers.

The real gems of my time with MCD have been the connections made with people in our Mason County community. I've collaborated closely with amazingly talented and dedicated teachers who are excited about trying new things with their students and sharing these experiences with me. When working with various programs around the schools, students come up to me and

say "hi", recounting stories from whatever event I was at or activity we had participated in together. It's those moments that help show the impact that environmental education and AmeriCorps make in the community.

During my service, I've had the opportunity to meet with many local groups and give presentations, talk about community gardens, and express why native plants are important. In May, I gave a short talk on pollinators and mason bees at the Master Gardeners' Plant Sale and a couple of weekends ago ran into one of the organizers in my neighborhood. We chatted for a while about the plants I had gotten at the sale for the Evergreen Pollinator Garden, especially because she had seen that Kevin and I were coming to one of their meetings to do a presentation. Earlier this week, at that meeting, I saw so many familiar faces from my involvement around the community, and they had all been interested in what I was up to and what was coming next for me. We caught up on projects I had helped with, and I walked away with many well-wishes and a sense of community that I could not have fathomed when I accepted this position almost a year ago.

My term at Mason Conservation District has more than renewed my passion for environmental education – it has helped me to expand and foster my own capacity as an educator and given me the skills needed to move forward in this profession. But more than that, it has given me a community far from home.

## New Staff Member

Please join us in welcoming Sue Sheldon to the Mason Conservation District team. Sue was recently hired as the Accounting and Administrative Assistant to our District Manager.

Sue recently retired from 10 years with Centralia College as an Associate Professor, teaching computers, basic skills and horticulture to inmates at the Washington Corrections Center. Prior to that, for five years she worked for Read Right Systems here in Shelton as a Reading Consultant and Program Manager. Before that, for eight years she was a Sr. Systems Analyst for Boeing Computer Services. In the non-profit world, Sue is known for being the founder and Executive Director of the SOCK (Save Our County's Kids) Youth Center that was housed at the Shelton armory from 1997-2013. Her outside interest is Genealogy Research and she serves as the President of the Mason County Genealogical Society. She is an avid container gardener and Bokashi composter and completed the Master Gardener course here in Mason County. At home she has a husband, Bob Bottman, an organic vegetable garden, and 21 pastured hens.

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## Shore Friendly Mason

The first Shore Friendly Program bulkhead removal project was successfully bid and will begin in mid-September. This project is also in line to receive "Green Shores for Homes" certification - a third-party certification program similar to LEED, run by WA SeaGrant to promote low-impact shoreline stewardship and "green" shorelines.

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## Mason County Groundwater Work Group

Working under Ecology's Watershed Plan Implementation and Flow Achievement grant program, the Mason County Groundwater Work Group convenes on a quarterly basis to discuss water supply topics. Participants have included local policy makers, Tribes, the public and state agency representatives seeking to answer questions on how human water use impacts stream flows, and groundwater availability in Mason County. A major component of this work is a USGS model of surface and groundwater in the county. On June 29, 2017, Jeff Johnson from the Spanaway Water Company presented on how the Chambers-Clover USGS model has helped inform sustainable water management decisions in Pierce County, including stormwater management, water quality, sewer and reclaimed water potential, flood control and water supply. After the presentation, the group brainstormed on how to get Mason County water users more engaged in the development of the Mason County model.

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## VSP Update

The Voluntary Stewardship Program Work Group has taken a break from their monthly meetings for the Summer. The Group recently reviewed a first draft of the VSP's Background Document and provided helpful edits and comments back to Staff. The Background Document contains information including the VSP's legislative history, Mason County's agricultural beginnings and current production markets, and a series of maps designed to illustrate the physical relationship between farms and land use. The Group will convene again in late September to begin discussing the Work Plan itself where the overall benchmarks, goals, and strategies of the Program will be presented together with a plan for implementation, outreach, and monitoring.

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## Recently completed Best Management Practices



Pasture Establishment



Heavy Use Area Protection



Heavy Use Area Protection



Cross Fence