

WATERSHED WISE

MASON CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Fall 2016



WHAT CAN THE DISTRICT DO FOR YOU?

Most residents of Mason County don't know what Mason Conservation District is. Most landowners in Mason County don't know what Mason Conservation District can do for them. That is changing... fast! Mason Conservation District (Mason CD) has been a resource for Mason County landowners dealing with natural resource concerns since 1956. And we've been busy in those 60 years: helping farmers get the most productivity out of their soil, protecting the health of our waterways, restoring salmon populations, providing shoreline property owners with the knowledge and resources needed to keep their land above water, and much more. We have continued to grow through the decades and are now arguably one of the most productive conservation districts in the state (every county in Washington has at least one conservation district working within its borders). But this growth was fueled almost exclusively by word-of-mouth from our satisfied cooperators, a wonderful compliment to the work we do but ultimately not conducive to the kind of "brand awareness" growth that would allow ALL Mason County landowners and residents to know what Mason CD is and can do for them. For that reason, we hired our first-ever community engagement coordinator, Kevin Schmelzlen, in April to help spread the word. Kevin spent much of the summer attending community events and farmers markets throughout the county, as well as presenting to various service and community groups. Beyond introducing more communities to Mason CD and the services we provide, we hope this outreach will give our constituents greater opportunity to let us know which natural resource concerns or opportunities we should be focusing our capabilities on.

For a list of upcoming presentations or events at which Mason CD will be present, or for more information about the conservation district, please visit our website, www.masoncd.org, or call (360) 427-9436.

We look forward to getting to know you better!

WHY YOU SHOULD THINK ABOUT COMPOST NOW

Composting recycles the nutrients plants have taken from the soil, stabilizes them, and makes them available again to the next generation of plants when applied as a soil amendment. The process takes waste products and makes a beneficial material – so much so it's often referred to as 'Black Gold'! Compost adds organic matter to the soil, loosening clay soils, helping sandy soils retain water, and improving fertility. Making compost saves money and resources and supports the soil and environmental health. Using compost means using less water, no need for chemical fertilizers, and reducing leaching nutrients to contaminate our streams and bays.



Composting takes time, and fall is the time to start the process, gathering materials and building piles that will be ready for your garden and plantings in the spring. Creating compost is like making a slow baking cake. A good compost pile should have a balanced ratio of ingredients and moisture and cook at the right temperature for a length of time. A compost pile should also be located away from water sources and covered during the winter rainy season so that valuable nutrients are not washed away. Then, with a little tending, you can enjoy its benefits in the spring!

What do you put in your compost pile and where do you get it? Animal manure is a great material to compost and you can get it for free through the Manure Exchange Program! Composted, manure provides a large amount of nutrients and has no unpleasant odor. It's an ideal resource to turn into a valuable soil amendment.

For more information on how to build compost piles to suit your needs and where to get free manure go to: <http://www.betterground.org/composting-basics/> or contact: Amy Rosen at arosen@masoncd.org or at 360-427-9436 Ext. 112.



PLANT SALE 2017

Get ready for the 2017 Native Plant Sale! We will start taking orders November 1st on our website. Mason Conservation District promotes the use of native plants and strives to provide you with a variety of high quality, affordable bare-root and small potted plants. These plants are proven growers in our variable climatic conditions and have been selected because of their beauty and adaptability to most growing conditions. You will be able to pick up your plant orders on Saturday, February 25th 2017. If you would like to volunteer to help sort seedlings please contact Sara at sara@masoncd.org or (360) 427-9436 ext. 103

View, Order, and Pay for plants Online starting November 1st on our website www.masoncd.org



MASON CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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AMERICORPS VOLUNTEER

Hello everyone! I'm Sara Sedgwick, Mason CD's new AmeriCorps member. I'm a life-long New Englander, excited to experience life here in Washington. I hold a BA in Environmental Studies and Anthropology/Sociology from Goucher College in Baltimore, and since graduating I've worked at several outdoor and environmental education programs throughout the Northeast. As the Environmental Education and Outreach Coordinator at Mason CD, I'm looking forward to expanding my knowledge to the Pacific Northwest and helping to make Mason County more sustainable.



One of my first major projects is working in collaboration with the HOPE Garden Project and the Shelton School District to install a school garden at Bordeaux Elementary. An irrigation system was installed by the School District Maintenance staff over the summer, and Mr. Gordon's shop class at Shelton High just finished up preparing raised bed garden kits for the Bordeaux students to install and is starting work on a shed for the garden.

If you're interested in seeing what the HOPE Garden Project is all about, we're currently looking for volunteers to participate in garden work days both at Bordeaux and the HOPE Garden located at Mason General Hospital. For more information about the organization and Mason CD's partnership with it, or to inquire about volunteer opportunities, I'd love to hear from you at sara@masoncd.org or 360-427-9436 ext. 103.

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