



Mason Conservation District

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State Legislative District #35

Congressional District #6

Board of Supervisor Summary of Activities

June 2018

WADE Conference

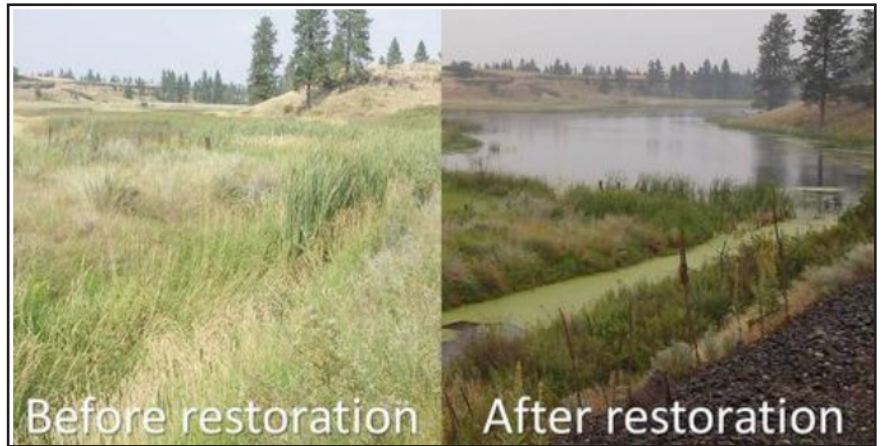
During the week of June 11th, Kendall Carman and Jennifer D'Annibale ventured to the beautiful Sleeping Lady Resort in Leavenworth for the annual Washington District of Employees (WADE) Conference. During the three days in the warm sun, Kendall focused on the farm and fields presentations – learning about soil health, small farm considerations, and pollinator habitats all while meeting and learning from various farm planners throughout Washington state. A highlight for Kendall was learning about various grant opportunities to assist small rural businesses and/or rural farms with acquiring renewable energy systems on their property.

Jennifer mostly concentrated on the riparian restoration seminars. She was able to learn about various methods for timing in-stream restoration projects appropriately with fish movements, as well as ways to effectively thin overstocked forests and then use the removed trees as large woody debris in nearby streams. She was also able to further her understanding for how the CREP program will be affected by the new 2018 Farm Bill. A highlight for Jennifer was furthering her knowledge on the local flora of Washington state in the plant identification course.



Voluntary Stewardship Program

Funded under a grant from the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC), the District was chosen to initiate Mason County's first Voluntary Stewardship Program. As part of the Washington Growth Management Act, this Program sets out to foster healthy and viable agriculture, while simultaneously protecting and enhancing the County's sensitive critical areas – all outside the usual regulatory approaches. Scoped under this Grant was the creation of a Work Plan outlining what the Program is about and how to successfully apply it within our agricultural areas. The Plan provides information on what and where critical areas are within the County, as well as how local farmers in close proximity to those areas can voluntarily implement conservation practices that protect and enhance them. Practices suggested were chosen not only for how they benefit sensitive lands, but also for how they contribute to sustaining crucial farm land. The first step in this Program is the creation of the Work Plan. District Staff have worked closely with a group of interested citizens and agency representatives on creating this Plan since June of 2016. As of June 19, 2018, the Work Plan has been complete and finally approved by the WSCC. This is an historic milestone in local environmental protection measures and an important step in the promotion of our community's agriculture. We will now begin to implement the Work Plan by reaching out to the farming community with information and ideas that improve their operations while improving their environment.



AmeriCorps Update

"This is the time of my life!"; "Best field trip EVER!"; "I never want to leave." These are but a few quotes from children during our field experiences this spring. (We also heard, "When is lunch?," and, "My feet hurt," and nausea but those are less inspiring.) Jen and I have had an incredible few months of environmental education. We have planted seeds with 14 preschoolers, taken 377 kindergartners to Twanoh, shared the Skokomish estuary with 389 second graders, helped 289 3rd graders dissect and sample shellfish, and, in one day, we taught 384 5th graders about sustainable forestry. And that, my friends, is only a sample of the 1,382 people we've taught this spring!

"How can two women do all of this on their own?," you may ask. We can't. We have an incredible group of volunteers and community partners who make this possible. This spring alone we have amassed over 300 donated hours from 57 incredible volunteers. Their support, and yours, make our work possible.

We have some fun plans for July, including a "Plastic Free July" initiative in Shelton, WA, including four free workshops for the community to learn why and how to reduce their single-use plastic habits. We are also searching for our next AmeriCorps volunteer, who will bring with them new ideas, energy, and excitement to keep the District's Outreach and Education program growing.

