

MASON CONSERVATION DISTRICT

BOARD OF SUPERVISOR SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

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State Legislative District #35
Congressional District #6

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Jen Thurman-Williams and Logan Kallam have been active in environmental education programs within the Shelton School District as well as service projects with Cedar High School and the Hood Canal School (Earth Day planting pictured).



EDUCATION AND OUTREACH UPDATE

BARBARA ADKINS, JEN THURMAN-WILLIAMS, AND LOGAN KALLAM

Public Workshops

In coordination with this year's Native Plant Sale, two workshops were offered to the general public on the importance of planting for pollinators and landscape design utilizing native plants. Workshops were held at the Shelton Timberland Public Library, Mason County Public Works' and via zoom. Survey questions were provided to those in attendance to ask a few questions before and after the presentation to gauge their level of knowledge about sustainable landscaping. Surveys are conducted by our AmeriCorps volunteer. These volunteers are crucial to our ability to accomplish this type of work.

Teaching in Schools

Fifth graders from Olympic Middle School participated in two separate outdoor field trips, with 250 students attending each. The first was a walk through the Huff and Puff Trail to learn about watersheds and pollution utilizing a watershed model and to conduct vegetation surveys. The second field trip to one of Shelton's stormwater facilities on Shelton Creek to learn about stormwater infiltration and "hands-on" invasive plant removal. Oyster dissection programs for third-grade students in the Shelton School District have also been a blast in partnership with Aimee Christy from Pacific Shellfish Institute.



EDUCATION AND OUTREACH UPDATE CONT.

BARBARA ADKINS, JEN THURMAN-WILLIAMS, AND LOGAN KALLAM

School Service Projects

Mason CD was involved with a few different schools doing service projects this spring including the fifth-grade students removing invasive plants on their field trip. This fall and spring students at Cedar High School helped with the planting projects and worked significantly at the Callanan Park Community Garden. We also planted 325 native plants with the Hood Canal School on Earth Day. This was done with teachers Heather Akiyama and Toby Syrett, many students of all grade levels. The project was also made possible by the Skokomish Indian Tribe through biologists Lisa Belleveau and Julian Sammons with funding from the Skokomish 1% grant.

Annual Plant Sale

Mason CD had another successful plant sale this spring in which all plants sold out. To establish a baseline of native plant purchasing habits, at least through the District, a survey was created and administered to all purchasers. Plants must be purchased online and with the email addresses provided an email link with the survey was attached. Those who did not respond to the email survey were queried when they picked up their plants. The survey results and analysis were provided to the city in its report to Ecology.

Urban Tree Event and Rain Gardens

The third Urban tree event is currently underway. The district has been able to hold an urban tree event, or urban tree giveaway, for three years under a green stormwater infrastructure grant from ecology. This provides Shelton residents with an “opportunity for stewardship” under the permit guidelines with each individual contributing to the overall mitigation of stormwater. The third round of rain gardens is also being done under this grant. These gardens, and the grant will be complete by the end of June. There are 5 garden sites proposed for this summer, all in the Mt View neighborhood.

Community Garden

The Callanan Park Community Garden was partially funded by a grant the District received from the National Association of Conservation Districts. Its design and construction were a partnership effort with HOPE Garden Project and the City of Shelton. Almost 20 beds were constructed that people in the community can apply for and use free of charge. The garden's grand opening was on Earth Day to introduce it to the community and let garden members get started with their planting. Mason CD is also collaborating with Hope Garden Project on a workshop series open to the public to engage the community.

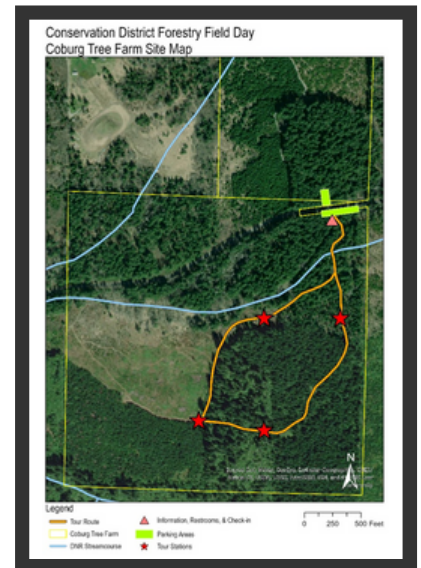
Photos: [Previous page] Lisa Bellevue and students planting at the Hood Canal School (center) and students at Mt View Elementary conducting an oyster dissection. [Current page] From top to bottom: Students from Olympic Middle School after removing scotch broom during a field trip, our AmeriCorps member, Logan Kallam, during plant sale, one of the rain gardens installed in the City of Shelton, and a few of the beds and the shed at Callanan Park Community Garden. Courtesy of Logan Kallam, Imelda Acosta, Jen Thurman-Williams and Barbara Adkins.



FORESTRY TEAM UPDATE

MARGARET KREDER AND MARK MEAD

The forestry team has been hard at work with site visits, forest plans, and community education. There have been a total of 157 forest landowners served since Jan 2021 and they continue to serve small forest landowners through technical assistance and forest stewardship plan writing. Working with other south sound conservation districts they have put on a joint forestry education webinar series and field day. The webinars were advertised throughout Mason, Kitsap, Thurston, Pierce, & King CDs. They covered General Forest Health and Hazard Trees, Wildfire, Multi-Benefit Forestry Methods, and Riparian Habitat and Invasive Species. The webinars were tied into a cumulative field tour at a Tree Farm in Pierce Co. which already has 26+ signups. The foresters have continued working with NRCS to get landowners in CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program) and EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program). They are currently working with several CSP applicants for the latest CSP enrollment to get cost-share on their property for various forest and habitat improvement projects. Additionally, they are preparing to present at WADE to other conservation districts regarding forestry programming.



Photos: Forester Margaret Kreder enjoying her work (left), views from recent site visits (middle), and a map of the upcoming Forestry Education Series Field Day (right). Courtesy of Margaret Kreder and Mark Mead.

HABITAT CONSERVATION TEAM UPDATE

KEITH UNDERWOOD AND MATT PHILLIPS

A current project for habitat conservation is the South Fork Skokomish River Large Woody Debris Project. This summer 13 log jams will be created along the shores of South Fork Skokomish River between the mouths of Church and Pine Creeks (River Miles 20-22) on US Forest Service Land. This project will increase habitat for fish rearing and support an effort to reduce sediment from being passed downstream and contributing to flooding in the valley. Approximately 1,100 trees were pushed over last year and stored for use in this year's habitat enhancement project. Stacks of trees will be helicoptered to key locations along the river and then heavy equipment will dig the trees into the ground forming tree mounds referred to as Engineered Log Jams.



Photo: Trees to be used in project. Courtesy of Keith Underwood

RESTORATION CREW UPDATE

MARISSA NEWBY, JOHN JOHNSON, MARIESA FLORES, CHASE JOHNSON AND LES TOBIAS

Over the course of the spring planting season, the crew planted a grand total of 37,845 plants! This covered a total of approximately 136 acres around the county with 41 of those as new acres planted and 95 acres of replanting from previous projects. New planting sites were Caille and Bourgault Farm, Replanting sites included Hibler, Rose Wetland, DIPS, Skokomish Valley, Green Diamond, Skokomish Tribe, Vanoverbeke, and PWW Decommissioned Rd along with assisting Great Peninsula Conservancy with a planting at Hahobas. The crew is now in maintenance and spray season.



Photos: Crew members Chase Johnson and John Johnson (top right), the fields planted by the crew (bottom left and middle) and bags of soon to be planted bareroot plants (bottom right). Courtesy of Marissa Newby,

GETTING TO KNOW OUR NEWEST STAFF

MEGAN CHAPMAN

RIPARIAN RESTORATION TECHNICIAN



Megan joins Mason Conservation District as the new Riparian Lead! She has ten years of experience doing restoration work with the public sector. Megan studied environmental science at Western Washington University and botany at Oregon State University. Megan specializes in invasive plant treatments, planting plans, and native plant identification and she uses her skills to restore riparian areas. In her free time, Megan likes to hike, backpack and travel.

JACOB MURRAY

HABITAT TECHNICIAN



Salmonid guide turned recovery advocate, Jacob joins Mason Conservation District as the new Habitat Technician! He will be taking on the responsibility of our Salmon Recovery Lead and coordinating Shore Friendly Mason. Enchanted by Washington's natural landscape and fabled rivers, Jacob left the Midwest and acquired his MPA from the University of Washington. He is your go-to contact for all of your stream and marine shoreline needs!