



# ACCD NEWSLETTER

720 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite B Clarkston, WA 99403 509-758-8012

### *Conservation Mission Statement*

*"To advocate, educate and assist people in responsible land management and agricultural practices that conserve and improve air, soil and water quality and fish and wildlife habitat for present and future generations."*



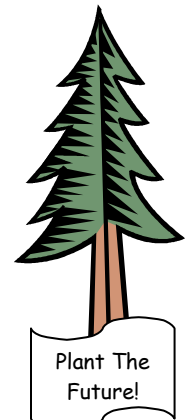
### From the District Manager

Here we are again, the end of another year. Where did 2010 go? And, what's on the horizon for 2011? At this joyous time of year I hate to even talk about such a depressing subject as the 2011 state budget, but I think it's important to let you know the effect the existing deficit will have on districts around the state. As most of you are probably aware, the state budget is in dire straits again. Worse than last year it appears. Obviously, there will be significant cuts in an effort to make up the huge shortfall. We have attended several meetings dealing with this issue, primarily how to minimize funding reductions to conservation districts for natural resources programs. We expect the upcoming legislative session to be highly contentious with representatives from numerous agencies attempting to convince the legislature why their program(s) need to be funded over others. In addition to the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC), Washington Association of Conservation Districts (WACD) and a professional lobbyist, many Board Supervisors from CD's around the state travel to Olympia for this same purpose. We have a dedicated team looking out for district interests, as well as a very important "plus" on our side: **Conservation Districts are known for getting conservation on the ground, on time AND within budget.** Many agencies cannot say that. That being said, we do expect a cut. How much that will be is yet to be seen. This is why it is imperative that when project applications are approved by the ACCD Board of Supervisors and money is allocated to these projects, they must be completed on time. If for some reason you are unable to get your project done, please let us know in advance so we can use the money for another project before the grant runs out.

On a more positive note, with 2011 right around the corner, don't forget to mark on your calendars the ACCD Annual Meeting March 3 and our Annual Tree Sale March 25 & 26. Both events are a lot of fun! Additional notification will be sent prior to both events.

On behalf of the ACCD Board of Supervisors and staff, we want to thank each and every one of you for your continued participation in our programs and supporting our ongoing efforts to conserve and improve our natural resources for current and future generations.

***Wishing you and your family a very Happy, Healthy and Memorable Holiday Season and Prosperous New Year!***



**Board of Supervisors**

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District Manager

**Megan Stewart**

Financial Coordinator / Res. Tech.

**Casey Scott**

Resource Technician / CREP

**Mike Miraglio**

Resource Technician / Firewise

**Pat Worle**

Office Assistant

**NRCS Staff**

Jim Schroeder

Courtney B. Smith

**Board Meetings**

All District Board meetings are open to the general public and are normally held on the Thursday of the first full week of the month and the Thursday of the third full week. Meetings begin at 6:30 p.m. during the winter (Nov – Mar) and at 7:30 p.m. during daylight savings time (Apr – Oct). Meetings are held at the District Office located at 720 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite B, in Clarkston, WA.



Direct Seed/Residue Management

**Direct Seed Meeting  
December 20, 2010  
1:00 PM  
USDA Service Center Office**

The Conservation District and NRCS is holding a round table discussion for farmers to share their experiences, success, problems and other issues regarding direct seed or no-till operations. Below is a list of the topics that will be covered during the meeting.

**Round Table Discussion Topics**

1. Results from 2010 crops. What type of things did you try that were new or different this year? Examples: New chemical treatment for weeds, or new piece of equipment, new or alternative crop. What were the results? Discuss those with the group.
2. How to kill a Russian Thistle, or China Lettuce, or Italian Ryegrass? What worked, and what didn't?
3. Do you have CRP or other grass that you plan on bringing back into production in the near future? What is your plan to preserve the soil quality benefits that have occurred in these fields? Do you have a plan?
4. Jim & Megan – Program funding opportunities in 2011, Conservation District and NRCS.

**WASHINGTON  
WITHOUT NOXIOUS WEEDS  
IS A WONDERFUL SIGHT!**

[www.nwcb.wa.gov](http://www.nwcb.wa.gov)



## Last Decade Shows Effect of Drought

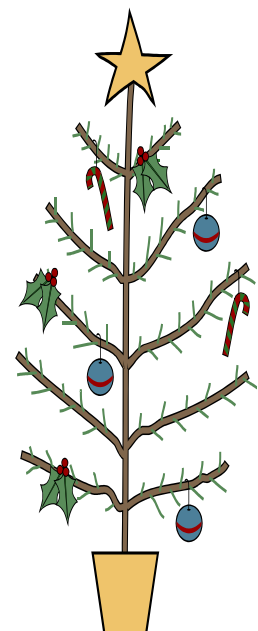
There are 3 producers in the County that have collected long term precipitation data for the Conservation District and from those years of data we can find trends. Larry Reeves has compiled rainfall data since 1975 on the Anatone Flat. Now Dustin Browne, down the Onstot road from the Reeves has taken over the duties and is continuing on with rainfall collection for a location that has 35 years of data. Tom and Vicki Petty have collected precipitation data since 1976 on the Cloverland Ridge and report monthly totals to the National Weather Service. Ed Rimmelspacher on the Peola Ridge has collected precipitation data since 1957 at their home near the Garfield County line. At the Lewiston Airport weather data has been collected since 1948. Prior to that, a location at the Lewiston water plant collected weather data from 1894 through 1955. All of these locations reported downward trends in the new century's first decade, with the exception of the Lewiston Airport. At the airport the long range average was .31" higher following the decade than the average prior to the decade. Given the numbers over the past decade the long range NOAA weather figures seem to have trouble. At Tom and Vicki Petty's the long term average fell .70" as a result of droughty years during the decade. At Larry Reeves the long term average fell .24" during the decade, and at Ed Rimmelspacher's on the Peola Ridge, the long term average fell .33". The driest year was the 2006-2007 growing year, followed by 2007-2008. Ed Rimmelspacher had a particularly dry 2009-2010 year at 10.21" at Peola. Almost all reporting years during the last decade were below the established long term averages. These are not good trends for dryland farmers and ranchers. Several ranchers have felt the effects of the drought. Springs and wells that have reliably watered livestock over the years are drying up or being reduced in volume from less groundwater recharge. It has particularly hurt the shallow source springs where water does not travel long distances and have a chance to combine with other sources or veins of water. Spring developments are often expensive to develop, and some pastures require every drop that is available. There have also been impacts to the grain production side of agriculture in the county. The droughty years have made recropping difficult. This has cut into the number of producers willing to raise spring barley for feed grains. As barley prices remained fairly low for the majority of the decade most growers began moving away from that rotational crop. Drought has had a big impact on crop quality, most notably in spring wheat DNS crops. With discounts increasing dramatically in 2010 for adverse protein contents many growers will have second thoughts in the future about the risks associated with its' production. As producers learned years ago in Asotin County, in times of drought best keep your head down and minimize potential economical risks. In this day and age there are several tools to help producers evaluate and reduce risks. Insurance programs and new USDA disaster program options are there to help producers in times of need. Compared to past decades however, the present line between profitability and income losses has become quite thin.

The table below shows how important it is for dryland farmers to try and conserve every little bit of moisture we receive.



**PRECIPITATION  
FOR THE LAST DECADE  
2000 -2010**

Year	Reeves/Browne	Tom Petty	Rimmelspacher	Lewiston Airport
1999-2000	11.7	10.45	11.52	12
2000-01	13.75	12.74	14.07	11.77
2001-02	15.17	13.63	14.61	11.71
2002-03	13.19	12.93	13.15	13.04
2003-04	13.63	14.99	12.79	13.44
2004-05	14.09	13.97	13.8	11.52
2005-06	11.06	14.2	12.45	11.89
2006-07	7.43	9.97	12.23	9.01
2007-08	11.76	13.7	12.23	8.3
2008-09	14.1	15.3	15.07	12.48
2009-10	13.71	14.16	10.21	12.36
11 year average	12.69	13.28	12.92	11.59
average before 2000	14.4	15.94	14.74	12.43*
average after the decade	14.26	15.24	14.41	12.74*



\*From the NOAA Weather Website

## IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING SOLAR SYSTEMS

There has been a lot of confusion as to whether or not electrical permits are required for solar systems. It has now been determined by the courts that **an electrical permit is required for all solar panels/ pump systems.** This of course will also include an inspection. As a convenience to our landowners, we have permit applications available at the district office. In addition, the Washington State Dept. of L & I confirmed today that they will show leniency to landowners who installed systems this year without obtaining a permit/inspection provided they contact the electrical inspector (Rex Burns 1-800-509-0025 or cell: 509-595-8440) immediately to request a permit and inspection. We just received a copy of L & I's December 2010 newsletter "Electrical Currents" with an article on "*Installing Optional Standby Generators*" that states: **"If you have installed a generator system, this year, without a permit and inspection, L&I will not assess any penalties if you proactively get the required permit and inspection before January 30, 2011."** L & I confirmed today that this also applies to solar panel/pump systems. You can obtain more information at [www.Lni.wa.gov/TradesLicensing/electrical](http://www.Lni.wa.gov/TradesLicensing/electrical) or by contacting the district office.

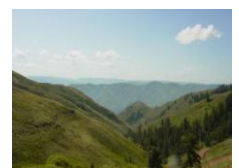
### Cutting Your Own Christmas Tree

Last Sunday my twenty three year old daughter and I headed out to the Blue Mountains to cut our Christmas tree. I have been cutting Christmas trees in the forest the last thirty years for the family, friends, neighbors, and folks that couldn't afford to buy a tree. My wife declined to go with us as she mostly remembers Christmas tree expeditions as long journeys followed by forced marches in deep snow, with cold and crying kids, and looking for hours for the perfect tree. Well, this year we had sunshine and blue skies with snow on the ground and lots of nice trees to choose from. We were up on the Iron Springs Road in the Umatilla National Forest. I had called ahead to the Pomeroy Ranger District to see what roads the loggers had plowed out. The roads were slick but in good shape as it hadn't snowed since the loggers plowed them. We came upon one four wheel drive pickup in the ditch and lent them our shovel to dig out. There must have been ten or more couples and families cutting trees while we were there. They all looked like they were having a good time finding perfect trees and the kids had big smiles on their faces. The Iron Springs area from about three miles inside the national forest boundary to the Clearwater Lookout has lots of nice trees and easy walking access.

We loaded our trees in the pickup had a picnic and headed down the mountain. My daughter commented on the drive back down the Iron Springs Road that she "didn't like the look of the forest." I told her it's hard for this forest to look good to her after all it has been thru. This area had the School Fire burn thru in 2005, it was logged this past year, and the big November windstorm had just ripped thru blowing down and snapping off hundreds of trees. Next spring bark beetles will breed in the blow down then attack and kill more green trees. The forest is entering back into a younger recovery stage maybe with a little more diverse habitat till the canopy closes in again. We will definitely have more woodpeckers and more Christmas trees in the future.

This brings me to the point I want to convey along with trying to get you in the holiday spirit. The Asotin County Conservation District Forestry Program does provide cost share money to improve the health of your forest and reduce the chance that it will burn up. A thinned healthy forest is a good insurance policy and the trees will grow faster.

Merry Christmas, P.S. my wife liked the tree we cut.



Please contact  
Mike Miraglio  
[mike@accd.cableone.net](mailto:mike@accd.cableone.net)  
ACCD Resource  
Technician

for additional  
information on the  
Firewise and Forestry  
Cost-Share Programs

509-758-8012

720 6<sup>th</sup> St, Ste. B  
Clarkston, WA 99403

### **CONSERVATION PROGRAMS SIGNUP TO END**

January 7<sup>th</sup> is the deadline to apply for several NRCS conservation programs to receive funding in 2011. They would include, but are not limited to, the CSP Conservation Stewardship program, EQIP Special Emphasis Funding, and WHIP Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program. The EQIP Special Emphasis funds will help producers who are bringing CRP lands back into production in 2011. This funding is to promote the use of direct seeding cereal grain crops during the transition from perennial grass stands to commodity crops. The objective is to prolong the soil quality improvements achieved from the CRP for as long as possible during crop production years. The EQIP program will make a special payment the first year of the contract to assist producers with the costs associated with grass stand to cropping conversion. This payment is to help reduce the risks associated with CRP breakout and direct seeding. These contracts are a 3 year commitment and you are expected to utilize direct seeding methods through a cropping system. The CSP program contracts are a 5 year commitment and include all acres that you operate. In order for the acres to be determined eligible you must be listed as the operator of record with FSA Farm Services Agency. The program includes payments for previously applied conservation stewardship levels, and for newly adopted resource enhancement practices. The WHIP program will pay a generous cost share for practices producers wish to implement for the creation and enhancement of wildlife habitat. For additional information about conservation program opportunities including CSP, EQIP, WHIP, and others go to Washington State NRCS web page; [www.wa.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.wa.nrcs.usda.gov) and access the programs tab.



### **Increased CREP Cost-Share Rates**

- **Water Development:**  
From \$3,000 to \$3,600  
(total reimbursement of \$7,200)
- **Pipeline:**  
From \$2,000 to \$2,400  
(total of reimbursement \$4,800)
- **Livestock Watering Facilities:**  
From \$2,000 to \$2,400  
(total reimbursement of \$4,800)

Contact Casey Scott at the District  
509-758-8012 or [caseyaccd@cableone.net](mailto:caseyaccd@cableone.net)  
for information and assistance.

### **COMING SOON: GRASSED FIELD BUFFER PROGRAM**

We are currently working with funding sources to create a new program for 2011-2013. The Grassed Buffer Program will provide an annual incentive payment to cooperators to maintain a grass buffer around the perimeter of fields bordering highly erodible rangeland. The buffer shall be a minimum of 30 feet and a maximum of 60 feet wide and will not be part of the adjacent cropland rotation. There will be an annual payment per acre for each year of the program that the buffer is maintained and is left specifically for wildlife habitat. Buffers will receive reduced payment per acre if grazing, haying or mowing takes place. Once the details for this program have been finalized, the District will take applications for the program. If you are interested in this program please contact Megan at 509-758-8012 or [meganaccd@cableone.net](mailto:meganaccd@cableone.net).

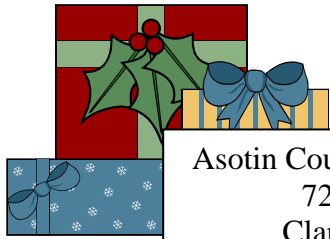


### **GENERAL CRP SIGNUP COMPLETED IN 2010**

This year marked the first general Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) signup in the County since 1998. Conservation plans for the recent signup are being completed and finalized this week with the Farm Services Agency. Asotin County accepted approximately 2600 acres in nine contracts during the recently concluded signup #39, with the majority of those acres being expired contracts that will now be renewed for 10 years.

A common theme among the contracts is the type of cover that will be established on old and new cropland. The contracts selected had the majority of their acres being seeded to high point cover types, usually native grass, legumes, and forb stands. For the old CRP stands that were comprised of mainly introduced grasses like tall wheatgrass, intermediate wheatgrass, smooth brome grass, and orchardgrass, this will mean conversion of those type of grasses to a stand of native grasses with legumes and/or forbs in the mixture. Program administrators feel that the expense and effort to plant native grasses is worth the benefits to wildlife species and their habitat. In some instances throughout Washington the type of cover on CRP is critical to wildlife species whose habitat may be threatened or limited due to past agricultural practices or urban conversion of their habitat. Those critically suppressed wildlife species require native herbaceous species for sources of food and cover for their livelihood. The types of grasses and beneficial forbs required for suppressed upland terrestrial wildlife was an important component in Washington's over all CRP program negotiations with wildlife management agencies.

With the new CRP general signup the old slate is scrubbed clean with both old and new acres now considered on the same playing field. Those producers who haven't had a chance of participating in the CRP due to County acreage limitations will now have an opportunity to offer acres for the program. Producers who have taken advantage of CRP in the past may also feel that is their best option for the future. It is a new program, and the playing field has changed somewhat. There will be new options to consider, and with commodity prices remaining strong, continued pressure for cropland conversion.



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 720 6th St., Suite B  
 Clarkston, WA 99403  
 509-758-8012  
[www.asotincd.net](http://www.asotincd.net)



# ACCD BULLETIN BOARD

## UPCOMING DATES

12/24/10 *Holiday - Office Closed*  
 12/31/10 *Holiday - Office Closed*  
 1/4/10 *N. Central ID Grazing Conf. -LCSC*  
 1/6/11 *ACCD Board Meeting - 6:30 pm*  
 1/17/11 *MLK Day - Office Closed*  
 2/21/11 *Presidents' Day - Office Closed*  
 3/3/11 *ACCD Annual Meeting*  
 3/13/11 *Daylight Saving Time Begins*  
 3/25-26/11 *ACCD Annual Tree Sale*

## AG-BURN PERMITS

New fees expected to take effect January 1, 2011  
 Spot Burning - \$30 for 10 acres or less.  
 Field burning - \$30 for the first 10 acres.  
 And \$3 for each additional acre.

Please contact Casey Scott with any questions at  
 (509) 758-8012 or [caseyaccd@cablone.net](mailto:caseyaccd@cablone.net).

ACCD Website [www.asotincd.net](http://www.asotincd.net)  
 is "under construction."

Please watch for a new look coming soon!



## SMALL ACREAGE PROGRAM

The Asotin County Conservation District has been offering a cost-share program to assist landowners with addressing resource concerns on properties with 1 to 20 acres. The District's goal is to provide cost-share based on cost rates set by the board of supervisors. Recently the District increased the rate for fencing in order to be reflective of actual implementation costs.

Financial assistance is available for water developments, cross fence, heavy use area protection, windbreaks, roof runoff systems and pasture planting. The small acreage program is still limited to \$8,000 per landowner and is available on a first come first served basis.