



# **ASOTIN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT NEWSLETTER**

## **NEW RESOURCE TECHNICIAN AT ACCD**

Hello, My name is Jason Schlee and I am the most recent employee to join the Conservation District team. Most of you have probably known my family and me since before I could walk and others have no doubt worked with me on various community projects.

Some history if you don't know me. I grew up in Asotin County. I was raised on the Smoothing Iron Ranch and in Cloverland. I attended Asotin Schools, played football, raised show steers, and participated in FFA. I fed cattle in the winters, hauled hay, water and wheat in the summers. I spent the majority of my time in the Blue Mountains building and repairing fence and trails from Anatone to Peola in the Umatilla Cattle and Horse allotment. I love the outdoors and enjoy the satisfaction of a hard day's work.

In my late teens I started volunteering with area fire departments and took my first off-the-farm job with the Asotin County Sheriff's Office. I later took a full time position with the City of Clarkston Fire Department and worked part time with Pottlatch Fire and Lewiston Fire Department. I have served on the Asotin City Council, Lewis-Clark Air Quality Advisory Board, the Salmon Recovery Funding Board's (SRFB), regional Citizen Steering Committee, LC Valley Fire Service Advisory Board, Asotin County EMS and Trauma Council, and the City of Asotin Planning and Zoning Commission. I am a member of the Elks club and the Asotin City LIONS club. I am extremely involved with Asotin Days and if you haven't been to our event it is the second full weekend in August!

I will be working on multiple projects at the Conservation District including the SRFB and Fire Wise programs, revegetation, riparian improvements, windbreaks, and livestock watering development. I will be helping with the annual tree sale, spearheading the local Envirothon for the high schoolers and traveling to a farm near you to see how I can help with the design and funding of projects you may have been wanting to get started on.

The Conservation District has such a great variety of projects and services to offer. I have been hired to pick up where Cheryl Sonnen left off and as you know she was working on a lot of great (big) projects around the county. I am sad to see her leave the District but am very happy to have her here in Asotin County as a resource.

I am excited to be working with the dedicated staff at the District. I look forward to being involved in the decisions that affect the local community, seeing projects through to their implementation, and making a difference for our natural resources and our neighbors. I'll have the coffee on, stop in and say hello.

## **Wild Land Urban Interface— What is it?**

The Wild Land Urban Interface is the area where homes and forests or undeveloped lands meet. The Wild Land Urban Interface is a difficult area for firefighters to protect because firefighting efforts in the forest or rangelands vary greatly from the traditional firefighting efforts in residential settings. The types of training, fire attack methods and equipment used are specialized in both settings.

The Conservation District will be continuing to provide education and outreach to Asotin County residents in the outlying areas utilizing the Fire Wise program and calling on the assistance of the USDA Forest Service, local firefighting agencies, FEMA, and the DNR. Through our outreach aimed at developing defensible space around your home and property, we will be involved with the ongoing process of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

Our goal is to provide individual property and area assessments. We will identify situations that require attention such as providing defensible space, developing and documenting water sources, ensuring visible address labeling, and developing a Wild Land Urban Interface plan (WUI).

In upcoming months we will put some specifics in the newsletter such as dates of workshops, planning sessions, tours out to the implementation sites, etc. There is \$15,000 available through October 2009 to develop plans.

## **FROM THE DISTRICT MANAGER**

It's hard to believe that 2009 is right around the corner. We've had a lot of changes here at the District Office that we are really excited about. We have been restructuring job duties in an effort to better serve our cooperators and ensure efficient implementation of District programs. For those of you who do not already know, Cheryl Sonnen is no longer with the District. She has taken the new position of Regional Stormwater Management Coordinator for Asotin County. We thank her for her many years of service and wish her well in her new endeavor. I have been named the District Manager and am really looking forward to working together with the Board of Supervisors and dedicated staff to continue and expand the programs of the District. Megan Stewart is Finance Coordinator/Resource Technician and is also handling the Small Acreage Program. Jason Schlee, who recently joined us, will be working as a Resource Technician primarily for projects funded by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board. He will also coordinate the Fire Wise program. Casey Scott who will be the new CREP Coordinator will be joining us the end of October. Pat Worle is our part-time Office Assistant and has taken over the payroll processing and bill paying. Pat has been invaluable to all of us and we would be lost without her. What all of these changes mean to you, the landowner, is more individualized attention, timely cost-share reimbursements and better overall efficiency in the District office.

Another big change is the temporary increase in cost-share rates recently approved by the Board of Supervisors. The District currently has ample funding available for projects that can be completed by December 31, 2008. Because it is a short window for which to complete projects and due to the increased cost of materials and the poor crop year, the Board substantially increased the rates as an incentive for landowners to use the available funding. If you are interested, contact the District to take advantage of this incredible opportunity.

On behalf of the District Staff and myself, we want to thank all of you for your participation in our programs and your continued support of our efforts to conserve our natural resources for future generations.

*Sandy Cunningham*  
District Manager

## **USDA SUBMITS REQUEST FOR DROUGHT DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

Jim Schroeder, NRCS

After another abnormally dry year pasture production is running short to very short throughout the majority of the county this fall. With the Lewiston Airport weather reporting station showing just around 8" of moisture the past two growing years (Sept 06–Aug 07 and Sept 07 – Aug 08 ) it's hard to envision that things could get much drier. In the Clarkston and Asotin areas raising dryland wheat has become suddenly similar to the climate and challenges of the driest portions of the Columbia basin, such as the Horse Heaven Hills. Summer broadleaf weeds like Russian thistle, Kochia, Jim Hill Mustard, China Lettuce, and Pigweed have proliferated and made chemical treatments difficult during the heat. Producers have taken to mowing to keep seed bank build up to a minimum and avoid future cropping disasters when the rain does return.

USDA-FSA has requested emergency fall grazing of CRP to help cattlemen returning from their higher elevation pastures. Many of the lower pastures have not seen any regrowth following this springs grazing season. Most are suffering from the effects of last year's droughty conditions and grazing use and could use some rest this fall and next spring if permitted. If approved this grazing would not be available until after October 1<sup>st</sup>. It is unknown at this time whether Asotin County will be approved for emergency grazing of the CRP. Several Eastern Washington Counties are submitting disaster declaration requests to the Governors' office. With the Governor's designation request to National there could be additional programs and funding available for drought assistance from USDA. FSA administers emergency loans and producers who are currently insured and have NAP covered crops and rangelands will then be eligible for the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payment Program SURE assistance. Stay tuned.



**2008 Landowner BBQ**

## Board of Supervisors

### **Chairman**

Keith Ausman

### **Vice-Chair**

Dan Sangster

### **Auditor**

Jerry Hendrickson

### **Secretary**

Ron Scheibe

### **Member**

Rich Witters

## Associate Supervisors

Barb Appleford

Brit Ausman

George Brott

Dallas Dodd

Don Dotson

Brad Forgey

Jay Holzmilller

Elaine Nagle

Dan Schlee

Matt Seibly

## District Staff

**Sandy Cunningham**

District Manager

**Megan Stewart**

Financial Coordinator/Resource Tech

**Jason Schlee**

Resource Tech

**Pat Worle**

Office Asst

## NRCS Staff

Jim Schroeder

Courtney B. Smith

## Board Meetings

All District Board meetings are open to the 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.

[www.asolincd.net](http://www.asolincd.net)

We invite you to visit the ACCD Website, address above. It's a work in progress – which includes some familiar District guidelines – new pages and updated program information – a calendar of meetings, events and special occasions – Board Meeting Agendas and Minutes – newsletters – and announcements.

You are encouraged to suggest things you would like to have included on the website or provide news, pictures and calendar updates. The District would like the website to reflect you and your conservation accomplishments, ideas and goals. Please join us in using the website as another great way to stay informed!

Call 758-8012

Email [palaccd@cablone.net](mailto:palaccd@cablone.net)



### ***2008 ENVIROTHON***

The winning team: Lena Miraglio, Brian Johnson, Jeff Johnson, Johnny Wasem, Caleb Dotson from Clarkston High School.

The team competed in the State competition, placing fourth overall and coming in first in Forestry and Soils. Congratulations!

## ***Cultural Resources***

Cultural Resource studies are a requirement when project funding is provided through Federal sources such as the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). We hear of cultural resources and imagine it to be complicated, challenging – and painful. There are no additional costs to the landowners, but the study must be complete prior to the project moving forward.

On public lands and in the construction world this has been a project requirement for some time. The study identifies anything historically significant on or below the surface in the area to be disturbed or impacted by a conservation practice. An Archeologist will come to the work site, look at geological features, take pictures, research historical publications and other data sources. The Archeologist will then compile all the findings, do some additional research and put it all together into a document that explains the history of the area, anything of historical or cultural significance, and then sign off on the forward progress of the project or provide the reasons why changes should be made to the project's implementation.

If you have questions about how this may affect your future projects, please contact the District.

### ***ACCD 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."***

# ACCD BULLETIN BOARD

See The Newsletter Articles On The Following:

**NEW EMPLOYEE - Meet Jason Schlee**  
[www.asotincd.net](http://www.asotincd.net) **CHECK IT OUT!**

**TEMPORARY Increase In Cost-Share %**  
**\$\$ FUNDING AVAILABLE \$\$**

## 2009 TREE SALE



*The District Annual Conservation Tree Sale will be March 27<sup>th</sup> (9 a.m. to 6 p.m.) and 28<sup>th</sup> 9 a.m. to noon) at the District Office. If you are interested in submitting a preorder, please contact our office for an order form.*

***Plant the future!  
See you at the tree sale!  
March 27-28, 2008***



## DON'T FORGET YOUR 2008 FALL AGRICULTURAL BURN PERMIT!

Just a reminder that burning by commercial agricultural operations requires a permit except when burning orchard prunings, natural vegetation along fence lines, irrigation and drainage ditches or natural vegetation blown by the wind. A grower must still comply with their fire protection authority's notification/ approval process prior to igniting any outdoor fire even if an air quality permit is not required.

Two types of commercial agricultural permits are available. Spot burn permits, which are available through the District, allow burning of up to 10 acres total area of unforeseen and unpredictable small areas such as small weed patches, spots of heavy residue, and equipment plugs and dumps. The cost is \$25 and the permit is good for the entire calendar year. Field burn permits are issued for any burning which is definable and predictable.

Any individual burn area, which consists of over 5 contiguous acres, would be considered a field and requires a field permit. Permits are issued by the Dept. of Ecology and cost \$2.25 per acre. Applications are available at the District office.

**Daylight Savings Time Ends  
Sunday – November 2, 2008**  
*"Spring Forward – Fall Back"*



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