



State Legislative District #8, 16  
Congressional District #4

# Benton Conservation District

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Board Chair: Jack Clark

## Other Accomplishments



A diver retrieves temperature probes from the bottom of the Yakima River as part of monitoring for a potential fish habitat improvement project.



Yakima Basin Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board presented Benton Conservation District with the 2015 "Project of the Year" award in recognition of the district's Salmon Summit.



With funding from the Department of Ecology, and in partnership with the Benton-Franklin Master Gardeners, Benton Conservation District completed a Heritage Garden demonstration.

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Yakima River shoreline stabilization project, Prosser



Motorists on Prosser Bridge can see the native shrubs and trees planted along the Yakima River shoreline to reduce erosion on private land.

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Bank erosion is a common problem along the Yakima River and can contribute to poor water quality by allowing soil into the river. Landowners become alarmed as the river seems to eat away at their valuable property. One of these landowners was aware of Benton Conservation District's agricultural programs and asked if the district could also help with residential property. A previous riparian planting at this site was partially washed out during a highly unusual flood event, so bank erosion continued.

## PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Benton Conservation District worked with landowners to design 500 feet of shoreline stabilization that included planting over 1,200 native shrubs and trees while preserving river views from the houses. Other components included stabilizing an upland slope with native bunch grasses and converting lawn into native plantings that will require less irrigation water and will attract wildlife. This project has great demonstration value as it is visible from the bridge into the county seat. Landowner Mrs. Martinez looks forward to giving tours of the project. She said with enthusiasm, "I'll tell everybody Benton Conservation District is great to work with!"



Blocks of native plants were installed to convert lawn into wildlife habitat. This property will serve as a demonstration site to other landowners.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Nancy Martinez; Brad Klingele; Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group

## More Work to Do!

- The district is building a program designed to help operators of small farms plan and implement conservation practices. The program will also include a new lecture series.
- The drought has caused massive growth of water stargrass, an aquatic weed, in the Yakima River. Benton Conservation District will be submitting a funding request to the Department of Ecology to look at potential management actions.