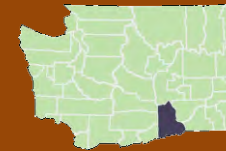


Benton Conservation District



State Legislative District #8, 16
Congressional District #4

Other Accomplishments

Spring 2012 Air Quality Tour

The Benton and Franklin Conservation District's Air Quality Tour in April brought together air quality regulators, conservation organizations and the agricultural community. Participants learned about and viewed proactive measures being implemented in Benton County to address windblown dust and other air quality issues.



Yakima River Restoration a Success for Salmon

The Benton Conservation District with funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation has been conducting a water stargrass removal project in the Yakima River. Over 30 fall Chinook salmon redds were photographed in the project site this past year.



2012 Feature Accomplishment

Heritage Gardens Promote Urban Water Conservation

Resource Challenge

Benton Conservation District (BCD) wanted to promote urban water conservation by encouraging landowners to use native, low-water use plants in landscaping but the concept never really took off until BCD partnered with their local chapter of the Native Plant Society to re-tool and re-branded the concept into what we now call the Heritage Garden Program.

Project Summary and Results

Heritage Gardens are landscaped areas designed to honor the cultural and natural heritage of the Columbia River Basin while utilizing sustainable gardening practices. The program provides technical assistance, an interactive native plant database and spring and fall workshops to assist landowners with designing and implementing Heritage Gardens. Gardens that meet program criteria can be certified by the district. Certified gardens receive a yard sign acknowledging their accomplishment. Since the program launched in the spring of 2012 five gardens have been certified by the district as meeting the Heritage Garden criteria. Workshops on Heritage Garden topics have been extremely popular with 80+ residents in attendance at each workshop.

Key Project Partners – Columbia Basin Chapter Washington Native Plant Society, Xerces, Franklin Conservation District, Umatilla County Soil and Water Conservation District, Wildhorse Foundation, Washington State Conservation Commission.

Certified Heritage Gardens in Benton County, WA



Contact Information

Mark Nielson, District Manager
mark-nielson@conservewa.net
415 Wine Country Road
Prosser, WA 99350
(509) 786-1923 ext. 3
www.bentoncd.org

Board of Supervisors:

Jack Clark, Chair
Dan Downs, Vice-Chair
Mike Sackschewsky, Auditor
Michael Crowder, Member
Nicole Berg, Member

More Work To Do

The South Central RC&D in partnership with the Benton Conservation District was recently awarded an NRCS Washington Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG). The grant will look at the feasibility of calibrating the Nutrient Tracking Tool (NTT) for use in the Yakima Valley. NTT will be tested to see if it will fit into the framework for the new ecosystems marketing program for central Washington.

Benton CD is also actively participating in the Lower Yakima Valley Groundwater Management Area Advisory Committee.