Farmland Conservation in the Puyallup Watershed

Farmland is a rapidly disappearing resource in Pierce County. Over 10,000 acres of farmland have been lost in the last decade alone, and with the Puget Sound being one of the fastest growing population regions in the country, the challenge only grows more difficult. It’s for these reasons that the District, eight local organizations, and US Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) have pooled resources to permanently conserve ~1,000 acres of local farmland over the next 5-years.

We’re excited to announce that the implementation of these dollars is set to begin for the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP). While applications are accepted year-round, applications must be received by April 30th to be considered for funding this period. Property owners who are interested in putting Agricultural Land Easements (ALE) on their land can reach out to our partners at Forterra, PCC Farmland Trust, or Pierce County Planning and Public Works. Land eligible for agricultural easements includes cropland, rangeland, grassland, pastureland and nonindustrial private forest land.

These easements ensure that farmland stays farmland by providing fair value to the landowner by purchasing the development rights. For farmers who might be looking to retire, this makes it possible to get fair value without having to see the land turned into a housing development. By removing the price associated with potential development, it also makes the land more affordable for new farmers or those looking to expand their business.

(Sidebar photo) Spring planting season is here! Look inside for more info on how to volunteer at one of the District’s upcoming planting events.

(continued on page 14)
Farm Program Work Shifts to Focused Sub Watershed Approach

The District’s Farm Program recently did multi-faceted prioritization process which will be directing 80% of our farm team’s work in these nine sub-watersheds:

- Murray Creek
- South (Muck) Creek
- Fennel Creek
- Clover Creek
- Puyallup River
- South Prairie Creek
- White River
- South Prairie Creek
- Carr and Case Inlet on the Key Peninsula

To bring focus to our farm program’s work and to have a deeper impact on what matters most – our mission of protecting natural resources in Pierce County, the District’s farm program will be prioritizing its efforts in nine sub-watersheds in Pierce County for the remainder of the strategic plan horizon, through 2020. We conducted a nearly year-long prioritization process to align the farm program’s work with our 5-year strategic plan developed in 2016, and to make noticeable natural resource conservation improvements. These sub watersheds are: Murray Creek, South (Muck) Creek, Fennel Creek, Clover Creek, Puyallup River, South Prairie Creek, White River, and Carr and Case Inlet on the Key Peninsula.

What this will mean in regard to landowner assistance, is that we will do focused outreach and direct 80% of our farm program technical assistance in these priority areas; hold all of our farm tours and workshops in these areas; and we will direct 80% or more of our landowner financial assistance (cost share) to implement natural resource protection projects in these areas.

If you do not live in one of these focused areas, you will still receive farm consultation assistance over the phone and via email, and we will be able to conduct a farm visit or take a ‘first one’s free’ soil sample of your commercial crop or pasture/hay field if there is a critical area such a stream, ditch, or wetland on, or directly adjacent to your property. You will also be eligible to apply for cost share assistance to improve the water quality of those critical areas with the implementation of best management practices. And you of course will be able to attend any of our farm tours and workshops and will be able to take advantage of our farm tool loan and rental programs.

At the conclusion of this focus period in 2020, we hope to see marked improvement in water quality in these target areas, and at that time we will re-evaluate this approach and/or determine if there are different sub watersheds that we need to focus our efforts on.

(Sidebar photo) Volunteers help spread mulch at our Yakima and Thompson Y Depave location in Tacoma as part of the MLK Day of Service. (Photo Cr: Jefferson Mok)
Green Partnership Fund Grant Awards

After a two-year break, the District was excited to relaunch our Green Partnership Fund small grants program in the fall of 2017. Gauging by the response we got, it seems like the community was even more excited for us to relaunch the program. We received an all-time high of 28 proposals requesting ~$420,000 and it was awesome to see so many great projects going on in the community. A special thank you to our volunteer ranking committee, who had the unenviable job of selecting the 8 projects that were ultimately awarded funding.

PCC Farmland Trust – Farm To Farmer - $25,000:
Farm to Farmer will enable beginning and expanding farmers to connect with land opportunities so they can grow their businesses. Building and supporting a network of farm businesses in concentration helps farmers succeed. The presence of a strong farming community amplifies the demand for locally grown, sustainable, and organic produce, supports a viable food economy by giving farmers access to markets, and amplifies environmental stewardship efforts.

Citizens for a Healthy Bay – Student Stewards Project - $8,000:
The Student Stewards Project is an immersive, comprehensive environmental education program designed to benefit both students and the natural environments they live in. Through a combination of education, scientific data collection and hands-on habitat restoration, 700 middle school students will work toward the study and protection of critical wetland and riparian habitat within the Puyallup River watershed.

Nisqually Land Trust – Community Based Habitat Restoration in the Nisqually Watershed - $10,000:
A project to support volunteer stewardship activities on Land Trust properties in unincorporated Pierce County. Volunteer stewardship activities will include: monitoring habitat conditions at eight of the Land Trust’s properties; planting and maintaining native tree and shrub seedlings; and removing invasive weed species.

Harbor Wildwatch - Explorer Series: From the Classroom to the Field - $8,000:
An interactive STEM education for K-16 students in Pierce County. Beginning in the classroom, students are exposed to a series of workshops that build upon one another and promote the synthesis of geology, biology, hydrology, and environmental science. Students then travel to a local beach, estuary, or wetland where they have the opportunity to apply the knowledge they learned in the classroom in a real-world setting.

South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group - Crescent Creek Fish Passage-Estuary Feasibility - $9,000:
This project will complete a feasibility study to evaluate alternatives to restore fish passage and estuarine function to Crescent Creek, in Gig Harbor, a ~2 acre estuary and 3-mile watershed. The alternatives analysis will weigh cost, construction impacts, and realized ecosystem and societal benefit of each alternative to select a preferred project alternative to advance to later stages of design to pursue funds for final design and implementation.

Center for Food Preservation Arts – Seed to Shelf and Table - $4,000:
In partnership with Orting Methodist Church and Pt. Defiance-Ruston Senior Center, CFPA will: obtain a WSDA Plant License for each site, producing jams and applesauce for distribution through their food banks; conduct 12 hands-on events teaching basic principles of safe food preservation for participants and volunteers; and reduce food waste from the emergency food system by ~400lbs.

Orting Community Garden – Building a Community Garden - $6,000:
To plan, design, and build of the garden in the City of Orting that will create a collaborative community where people come together to form a social ecosystem of caring, learning, and gardening together. We will ensure its a garden for all people, including those with the fewest resources and greatest need. Together we will learn about and grow a just and healthy food system and relationships that will strengthen our community while removing food inequities.

Tacoma Rainbow Center – Rainbow Conservation Corps - $10,000:
Through this project the Tacoma Rainbow Center will energize the local LGBTQ community to work in partnership with the Pierce Conservation District, Harvest Pierce County, the City of Puyallup, and three local community gardens. Project goals are to plan and implement native tree plantings in the Puyallup Watershed, and fruit tree installation and stewardship in three ethnic community gardens within the City of Tacoma.
Busy Spring Season Ahead for EE Program

The spring season is upon us, and PCD’s Environmental Education team always looks forward to this time of year because it means field trips for local schools. We are excited to get outdoors with students and work with them to test water quality, collect life from the stream, and generally experience the natural surroundings of our area. We have trips planned to Morse Preserve, Kobayashi Park, and the Puyallup Hatchery, as well as some spots on school campuses—you don’t have to go far to find amazing things nature has to offer!

(Spring Fair) The Spring Fair rolls into town April 19th through 22nd, full of the attractions we’ve come to know and love. Come visit the Conservation District in the Expo Hall, as we take part in the “Outdoor Adventure” building. We’ll be alongside recreation organizations and live animal displays.

And if you’d like to volunteer, we’ll toss some free tickets your way as a show of our thanks for your support.

CONTACT

To volunteer at our booth or if you’d like to arrange a field trip or class visit with our EE team, please contact Chris:

(253) 845-9770 x112
christ@piercecd.org

(Sidebar photo) Longtime District volunteers Joyce and Dennis Anderson helped kick off the current phase of restoration planting at the South Prairie Creek Preserve last October. Help us complete another 3.5 acres at the volunteer planting parties scheduled for March 10 & 24.

| Students observe samples of life from the stream during a field trip. |
Students at Work:  
White River High School  
On a beautiful crisp December afternoon, White River High School students and their professor Todd Miller, joined Pierce Conservation District employees for an exploration of the South Prairie Creek Preserve. The students spent the first part of their visit learning about salmon ecology, floodplain restoration and how the current efforts to restore the South Prairie Creek Preserve will improve spawning habitat for Pacific Salmon species. After lunch, the students got their hands dirty as they planted native trees and shrubs, with the intention of restoring the previous cow pastures of the Inglin Dairy farm back to native floodplain habitat.

Spring Planting Opportunities:  
South Prairie Creek Preserve  
Building on the momentum of last fall’s 2.5-acre planting, volunteers are needed to continue planting another 3.5 acres with more than 2200 plants at the South Prairie Creek Preserve, site of a major salmon habitat improvement project soon to get underway. Planting these plants before the construction and earthwork happens with the rest of the project gives us a head start on establishing a diverse vegetative community that will benefit an array of wildlife, as well as the fish that will soon be using the site. Planting parties are scheduled for March 10 and 24, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. each day, rain or shine.

Point Defiance BioBlitz  
MetroParks Tacoma and the Tacoma School District’s Science & Math Institute are partnering together to hold a BioBlitz in Point Defiance Park this spring. Volunteers are needed to be Taxa Team Leaders and Citizen Scientists, for this deep dive into the flora and fauna of Pierce County’s largest urban park. Taxa Team Leads are experts in a specific area (trees, shrubs, insects, fungi, mammals, etc.) that guide small groups of 4-10 BioBlitz participants as they investigate a zone of the park during a defined time. Citizen Scientists are interested in learning more about the natural neighborhood around them, and no experience is required! The 2018 Point Defiance Park BioBlitz will cover the forested park areas, botanical gardens, the beachfront and a portion of the Puget Sound (conducted by kayakers and divers), from 2 p.m. Friday, April 27 until 2 p.m. Saturday, April 28. Data will be collected via the iNaturalist app, and will help reveal the amazing biodiversity in our community’s natural neighborhood, as well as informing park management decisions. We have more information about the event, including a helpful FAQ, at pdza.org/citizen-science.

CONTACT  
To register or for more information, contact Craig Standridge:  
(253) 404-3690  
craig.standridge@pdza.org
Harvest Pierce County, Pierce County Public Works and Franklin Pierce School District are coordinating to host the sixth year of the Edible Gardens Workshop Series. With eight different workshop topics taught in five different locations, you’ll surely be able to find one that suits your goals for this growing season. Want to learn how to grow an amazing garden all in containers? Curious about a pesky bug that’s been eating your vegetables? Take a peak at one of the free Edible Gardens classes near you and chances are you’ll find what you’re looking for. Classes are all designed specifically for Pierce County’s unique garden growing assets and are the perfect boost to seasoned and new gardeners alike.

There is a common misperception that one must be born with a “Green Thumb” to successfully grow vegetables. That couldn’t be farther from the truth. Everyone has the capacity to garden and grow a healthy and productive vegetable garden; but we could all use a little help.

A great big shout out to LRI who continue to sponsor these classes. These wouldn’t be possible without their contribution.

Locations:
Graham (GRA), 6–8 p.m. Graham Library, 9202 224th St. E
Midland (MID), 6–8 p.m. Franklin Pierce Farm (NRSC) 9516 Waller Rd. E
Parkland (PAR), 6–8 p.m. Parkland/Spanaway Library 13718 Pacific Ave. S
Puyallup (PUY), 6–8 p.m. WSU Puyallup (Victoria Room at the Master Gardener Demonstration Garden), 2607 W Pioneer
Tacoma (TAC), 10 a.m.–12 p.m. Metro Parks Tacoma, 4702 S 19th St.

(Sidebar photo) Harvest Pierce County also has a Fruit Tree Education Series with classes spread out over the next six months. Email Aaron at AaronG@piercecd.org if you’d like more info!

Grace Elgar-Wood enjoying the fruit trees Franklin Park Community Garden.
**Classes & Dates**

**Fruit, Nuts & Berries**
Best practices for pruning, planting and maintenance of your edible, perennial trees & shrubs. Taught by local perennial expert, Pamela Draper.
- February 8, Tuesday, PAR
- May 19, Saturday, TAC
- June 13, Wednesday, MID
- July 10, Tuesday, PUY
- Sept. 18, Tuesday, GRA

**Starting From Seed**
Save money, increase variety, and jump start your yield by starting your plants from seed. Taught by the horticulture teacher at Franklin Pierce School District, Matt Price.
- February 6, Tuesday, PUY
- March 8, Thursday, PAR
- March 15, Thursday, MID
- March 17, Saturday, TAC
- March 20, Tuesday, GRA

**Garden Soil 101**
Happy healthy soil is about balance and is teeming with micro-organisms. Learn how to build your soil for a truly successful garden for years to come.
- March 28, Wednesday, GRA
- April 3, Tuesday, PUY
- April 19, Thursday, MID
- April 21, Saturday, TAC
- May 10, Thursday, PAR

**Your Summer Garden: Vegetables & Herbs**
Maximize your harvest by learning the basics of garden planning and harvesting to get the most out of your crops.
- April 17, Tuesday, GRA
- May 1, Tuesday, PUY
- May 9, Wednesday, MID
- June 2, Saturday, TAC
- June 14, Thursday, PAR

**Garden Bugs, Diseases & Non-Toxic Alternatives**
Something been bugging you at the garden? Plants not looking as healthy as they could? Come down to the Garden Bugs class to learn how to keep your garden healthy and diseases free.
- April 24, Tuesday, MID
- May 15, Tuesday, PUY
- June 16, Saturday, TAC
- June 19, Tuesday, GRA
- July 12, Thursday, PAR

**Composting Basics & Putting the Garden to Bed**
Tips and Tricks for closing out your season to maximize your next as well as some composting 101.
- Sept. 12, Wednesday, MID
- Sept. 15, Saturday, TAC
- October 2, Tuesday, PUY
- October 11, Thursday, PAR
- November 20, Tuesday, GRA

**Fall & Winter Gardening**
There are many awesome things about growing vegetables in the PNW and year-round gardening is top among them.
- June 5, Tuesday, PUY
- July 11, Wednesday, MID
- July 17, Tuesday, GRA
- July 21, Saturday, TAC
- Sept. 13, Thursday, PAR

**Container Gardening *NEW!***
You don’t need an expansive property to grow a prolific garden. In fact, some pots on your windowsill or small porch can grow quite the bounty! Learn how in our first ever container gardening class from local gardening expert, LaPria Bonner.
- February 15, Thursday, MID
- February 24, Saturday, TAC
- March 6, Tuesday, PUY
- April 12, Thursday, PAR
- May 15, Tuesday, GRA

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**CONTACT**

To register for these classes, please visit the link below or call:
(253) 798-4133
piercecountywa.org/ediblegardens
If you are interested in forest carbon assessment opportunities, participating in carbon markets, or safeguarding the climate impact of your forest, please contact:

Andy Chittick  
NNRG’s Project Forester  
(425) 502-0548  
andy@nnrg.org

Northwest Natural Resource Group (NNRG) is working with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service’s Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) to help unlock carbon markets for family forest owners. They recently completed a forest carbon assessment for our FSC-certified member Clyde Tree Farm. Prepared with data from this unique forest, the assessment offers a rough estimate of the current level of forest carbon storage in the tree farm, the amount of CO2 to be captured over 100 years, and the influence forest management may have on carbon storage going forward. The ability for trees and forests to sequester and store carbon for extended periods of time provides an opportunity for forest management that can reduce the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and mitigate the impacts of climate change. Whether or not forest carbon is monetized through programs such as carbon crediting, this ecosystem service offers a distinct value that can be incorporated alongside other management goals and objectives. The assessment they completed for Clyde Tree Farm not only estimated current carbon storage but also modeled the amount of carbon sequestered in live trees under different management scenarios: a 40-year rotation, a no-harvest scenario, and a selective uneven-age harvest scenario.

• 40-year rotation scenario:  
The forestry model of clearcutting offers low long-term carbon sequestration, with carbon storage gradually increasing to a peak at 40 years, then dropping after every cutting before gradually increasing again.

• 100-year average in Clyde Tree Farm: about 53 metric tons of CO2 per acre

• No-harvest scenario: Left undisturbed, the forest will gradually increase carbon storage until maximum sequestration in about one century.

• 100-year average in Clyde Tree Farm: about 580 metric tons of CO2 per acre

• Selective uneven age harvest scenario: Management with selective harvest offers more stable carbon sequestration while allowing for multiple benefits like landowner income, improved wildlife habitat, and decreased fire risk.

• 100-year average in Clyde Tree Farm: about 227 metric tons of CO2 per acre

While carbon storage and sequestration are increasingly seen as a valued service provided by ecosystems, forest stewardship reflects the thoughtful consideration of many diverse, often conflicting, forest values. Forest management involves navigating tradeoffs and identifying which outcomes best meet the forest owner’s goals and vision while ensuring the ongoing integrity and resilience of the forest.
Farming with Native Bee Pollinators

Pierce Conservation District, Puyallup
Tuesday, MARCH 13, 5-7 p.m.

Hive-less solitary bees, like the mason and leafcutter bee, are gentle, easy to raise and are amazing pollinators. Dave Hunter of Crown Bees (https://crownbees.com), will share about the yield-boosting potential of introducing native bee pollinators on your farm and the role these bees play in addressing the current honey bee pollinator crisis.

The Difference a Good Liming and Calcium Nutrition Program Can Make

Part One: Liming and Crop Productivity (5-7 p.m.)
Part Two: Liming and Pasture Productivity (7-8 p.m.)

Pierce Conservation District, Puyallup
Thursday, MARCH 29, 5-8 p.m.

Gudrun Mart of Columbia River Carbonates will walk through developing a liming program for your farm to boost productivity and improve your bottom line. Better and more predictable results can be achieved by knowing the right material, right amount, right place and right time when it comes to liming. Gudrun will illustrate her recommendations with examples of studies, observed crop responses and experiences from her years advising farmers.

WSU Cover Crop Workshop and Field Day – PLUS no-till drill training

Part One: Cover Crop and Reduced Tillage Program (1:00–3:15 p.m.)
Part Two: No-Till Drill Training (3:30-4:30 p.m.)

Monday, APRIL 17, 1-4:30 p.m.
WSU Puyallup Research and Extension Center

Cover crops improve soil fertility and organic matter, keep soil in place, are useful in managing field moisture, and can help manage weeds, pests and diseases. Come find out what researchers at WSU Puyallup are learning about integrating cover crops in PNW farming systems, tour the trial plots and take advantage of the opportunity to join the dialog around adapting cover crops for Pierce County farm operations. Interested in using PCD’s new no-till seed drill for seeding cover crops and pasture in 2018? The field day will conclude with a first opportunity to complete the training session for operating the drill required to rent the drill.

Farm Tour

Wednesday, MAY 23, 6-7:30 p.m.

Visit this almost 5-acre farm that has done an amazing job of improving the forage production of their pastures on challenging prairie soils over the past four years through careful rotational grazing using their mini Dexter cattle, application of composted manure, and application of fertilizer and lime based on results obtained through the District’s ‘first one’s free’ soil sampling program. Come tour the farm, pet the cows, and get some ideas to try on your own farm!

CONTACT

Please visit the website or contact René or Alison to register for any of these classes:
(253) 845-9770 renes@piercecd.org alisonn@piercecd.org www.piercecd.org

Christine and Rodney Bynum, seen here with their mini-Dexter bull, will be hosting a farm tour this May to highlight the improvements they’ve made to their pastures to help increase production for their herd.
Water Quality Improvement

Lake Monitoring Season 2018

The arrival of spring always means lake monitoring season can’t be far behind! Pierce Conservation District partners with Cities of Lakewood, Bonney Lake, and Milton to manage their volunteer lake monitoring programs. This year, lake monitoring season for Bonney Lake and Milton will begin Sunday, May 6th; while the monitoring season for Lakewood will begin on Sunday, April 8th. A lake monitor refresher training will be scheduled in March for lake volunteers in Lakewood, and a refresher training for Bonney Lake and Milton lake volunteers will be scheduled in April. As always, additional volunteers are welcome, please let us know if you are interested in joining us. If you are a resident of American, Gravelly, Louise, Steilacoom, Carp, Surprise, Bonney or Debra Jane Lakes and would like more information, please contact Isabel.

Spring Stream Monitoring Schedules

- **Quarterly monitors** may schedule their spring monitoring between March 21, 2018 and June 14, 2018.
- **Bimonthly monitors** are scheduled to monitor their streams in March and May.
- Early spring stream flows tend to be higher and faster than during summer and early fall, so be careful when entering streams to collect samples and take stream measurements.
- Volunteers are also encouraged to run replicate tests once or twice a year. The replicate testing includes the dissolved oxygen, pH, and nitrate tests. We can provide extra sample bottles if you are planning on doing replicates.

Water Quality Reports

Stream Team has recently created water quality reports of our currently monitored stream sites. They are organized by jurisdiction (city or county) in which the sites are located. We are pleased to offer these reports to the public to communicate our water quality data. The reports can be accessed on the PCD website here: piercecd.org/248/Stream-Monitoring

For questions about the reports, please contact: Belinda at belindap@piercecd.org

○
Local Water Quality Data

Featuring Creek Sites from the Nisqually Watershed

“The Nisqually Watershed drains land from the Nisqually River and includes the communities of Ashford, Elbe, Mineral, Eatonville, McKenna, Roy, Yelm, Fort Lewis, and portions of Graham, Lacey, DuPont, and Rainier.”

(Quote from the Nisqually River Council website)

Mashel River Stream Monitor: Charlie Butler
Ohop Creek Stream Monitors: Brad and Julia Nickel

The Mashel River is the largest tributary to the Nisqually River. It flows approximately 32 miles from its headwaters near Mt. Rainier to the Nisqually River. The Mashel supports runs of fall Chinook, coho, pink salmon, and winter steelhead. The Mashel River is designated as char spawning/rearing and according to state water quality standards, water temperature should be $\leq 12^\circ$C and dissolved oxygen should be $\geq 9.5$ mg/l.

Ohop Creek flows approximately 12 miles from its headwaters to the confluence with the Nisqually River. Coho, fall Chinook, and pink salmon are all known to use Ohop Creek and its tributaries. Ohop Creek is designated as core summer habitat and according to state water quality standards, water temperature should be $\leq 16^\circ$C and dissolved oxygen should be $\geq 9.5$ mg/l.

2017 volunteer collected data for dissolved oxygen and water temperature is shown.

Both the Mashel River and Ohop Creek had a couple of high water temperature readings and one occurrence where dissolved oxygen did not meet the state standard. The low dissolved oxygen and high water temperature correspond to data collected during the summer months when water levels are lower, flow is much slower, and air temperatures are warmer.

One possible solution to mitigate low dissolved oxygen and high water temperatures is to increase shade in the riparian zone by planting trees.
**MLK Day of Caring 2018:**  
**Thompson & Yakima “Y” Depave Site**

Thanks to a hardworking group of UPS Students, Lincoln High school students, and community members, we were able to apply 4 yards of wood chips, pick up trash, and provide a thorough clean-up to Fallen Rider’s Memorial Park on South Yakima Ave & South 46th St in Tacoma. Huge thanks to Beta Theta Pi Fraternity, and Lincoln High School’s JROTC.

**Rain Garden Workshops**
Join us in an informative workshop all about rain gardens! Learn about rain garden benefits, how to create and maintain your own, and how Pierce Conservation District can help you along the way. This workshop will cover:

- Importance of rain gardens
- Building a rain garden
- Rain garden design
- Plant selection
- Maintenance
- PCD’s rain garden program

Workshops will be held throughout Pierce County. Upcoming dates include:

- March 7, 6:00 p.m., Tacoma
- March 28, 6:00 p.m., Tacoma
- April 18, 6:00 p.m., Gig Harbor
- April 28, 6:00 p.m., Tacoma
- May 2, 6:00 p.m., Steilacoom

To sign up or for any questions email HannahL@piercecd.org.

**Citizen Science Day Workshop**

To honor Citizen Science Day on April 14, the PCD Stream Team and King CD Stream Stewards are partnering to hold an invasive/native plant ID workshop. We will visit two sites, one in Pierce County and one in King County with speakers discussing tips to identify plants. The workshop will be 9 am – 12 pm on Saturday, April 14 and is open to anyone as capacity allows. To sign up for the workshop and event details, please contact Belinda at belindap@piercecd.org.

With the annual help of the Kappa Alpha Theta sorority from the University of Puget Sound, we cleared close to 1000 square feet of invasive blackberry and ivy at Thelma Gilmur Park on MLK Day!
Volunteer Opportunities this Spring!

Fircrest and University Place Habitat Stewardship

Thelma Gilmur habitat stewards meet:
**FIRST MONDAYS of the month**
9 a.m.–12 p.m.

Adriana Hess habitat stewards meet:
**FIRST SATURDAYS of the month**
9 a.m.–12 p.m.

Both habitat stewardship groups at Thelma Gilmur Park in Fircrest and Adriana Hess Wetland Park in University Place have been established for one year and have been making great progress. Between both groups over 7000 square feet of invasive material has been cleared!

Both groups are looking for interested volunteers to continue clearing invasive blackberry and ivy from the parks.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact **Belinda at belindap@piercecd.org**.

Meeker Minions Work Parties

Saturday, MARCH 31
9 a.m.–12 p.m.
Saturday, APRIL 28
9 a.m.–12 p.m.
Saturday, MAY 26
9 a.m.–12 p.m.

The (self-named) Meeker Minions continue to plug away at the Meeker Creek Restoration site in Puyallup. The Minions work the last Saturday of every month, (excluding November and December).

If you are interested in attending a Meeker Minions work party, please contact **Caleb at calebm@piercecd.org**.

Whittier Park Work Parties

Saturday, APRIL 21 • EARTH DAY!
9 a.m.–12 p.m.

Join the Whittier Park Habitat Stewardship group on Earth Day! The group is making progress removing the invasives, and replacing them with natives. Work parties are held quarterly at Whittier Park.

If you are interested in attending a Whittier Park work party, please contact **Caleb at calebm@piercecd.org**.

Silver Creek Work Parties

Saturday, APRIL 21 • EARTH DAY!
9 a.m.–12 p.m.

The Silver Creek Habitat Stewards will also be holding a work party on Earth Day! Join us in providing care to the trees and shrubs that were installed during January’s work party. Work parties are held quarterly at Silver Creek

If you are interested in attending a Silver Creek work party, please contact **Caleb at calebm@piercecd.org**.

Meeker Minion volunteers find time every month to help the establishment of over 10,000 native trees and shrubs.
How does the public benefit from all of this, you might ask? Farmland not only helps ensure that we have fresh, healthy, and local food, but it’s an important part of our local economy and culture. Without it, we’re less secure, we’re less healthy, and we lose a part of our Pacific Northwest culture. Farmland also provides important ecosystem value, helping reduce stormwater runoff to our local streams and by providing important habitat to wildlife. Roughly $900,000 of the total funding will be used to implement best management practices (BMPs) through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) on local farms, which will improve soil health, wildlife habitat, and water quality, and help bridge the gap between farmland conservation and the work we’re doing to restore endangered salmon species. The program will co-invest with landowners seeking to implement best practices such as cover cropping, buffer and pollinator plantings, rotational grazing, manure management and much more. PCD staff are available to work one-on-one with you to identify best practices to meet your goals for your land and submit an application for cost-share funding. Applications are ranked, and funded landowners receive a contract for financial assistance for the cost of implementing best practices.

Property owners interested in the funding can contact our farm team here at the District or may apply to NRCS directly. Application cut-off periods for these projects are the same as our District cost-share program, March 1 and July 1, 2018.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).
March

Mar 2-3 Pierce Native Plant Sale, Pre-orders can be picked up Friday or Saturday: Walk-up Sale Saturday only. For more info contact Kate at katet@piercecd.org.

Mar 3 Adriana Hess Work Party, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. For more info contact Belinda at belindap@piercecd.org.

Mar 5 Gilmur Grubbers Work Party, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. For more info contact Belinda at belindap@piercecd.org.

Mar 7 Rain Garden Workshop, 6-7:30 p.m. For more info contact Hannah at hannah@piercecd.org.

Mar 10 South Prairie Creek Preserve Planting Party, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. For more info contact Jayme at jaymeg@piercecd.org.

Mar 13 Farming With Native Bee Pollinators, 5-7 p.m. For more info contact Alison at alisonn@piercecd.org.

Mar 15 Community Gardener Orientation, 6-7:30 p.m. For more info contact Micaela at micaelac@piercecd.org.

Mar 17 Fruit Tree Education Class: Grafting, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. For more info contact Aaron at aarong@piercecd.org.

Mar 24 South Prairie Creek Preserve Planting Party, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. For more info contact Jayme at jaymeg@piercecd.org.

Mar 24 Community Gardener Orientation, 10:30-11:30 a.m. For more info contact Micaela at micaelac@piercecd.org.

Mar 28 Rain Garden Workshop, 6-7:30 p.m. For more info contact Hannah at hannah@piercecd.org.

Mar 29 Crop & Pasture Liming Workshop, 5-8 p.m. For more info contact Alison at alisonn@piercecd.org.

Mar 31 Meeker Minions Work Party, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. For more info contact Caleb at caleb@piercecd.org.

April

Apr 2 Community Gardener Orientation, 6-7:30 p.m. For more info contact Micaela at micaelac@piercecd.org.

Apr 2 Gilmur Grubbers Work Party, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. For more info contact Belinda at belindap@piercecd.org.

Apr 7 Adriana Hess Work Party, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. For more info contact Belinda at belindap@piercecd.org.

Apr 14 Citizen Science Day Workshop, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. For more info contact Belinda at belindap@piercecd.org.

Apr 17 WSU Cover Crop and No-Till Drill Workshop, 12:30-4:30 p.m. For more info contact Alison at alisonn@piercecd.org.

Apr 18 Rain Garden Workshop, 6-7:30 p.m. For more info contact Hannah at hannah@piercecd.org.

Apr 19-22 Spring Fair, 9 a.m.-8 p.m. For more info contact Christ at christ@piercecd.org.

Apr 21 Silver Creek Work Party, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. For more info contact Caleb at caleb@piercecd.org.

Apr 21 Whittier Park Work Party, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. For more info contact Caleb at caleb@piercecd.org.

Apr 21 Point Defiance BioBlitz, 2 p.m.-2 p.m. For more info contact Craig at craig.stan.dridge@pdza.org.

Apr 28 Meeker Minions Work Party, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. For more info contact Caleb at caleb@piercecd.org.

Apr 28 Rain Garden Workshop, 6-7:30 p.m. For more info contact Hannah at hannah@piercecd.org.

Our Edible Garden Series is Back! See pages 6-7 for topics, dates, and times or visit: piercecountywa.org/1558/Edible-Gardens-Workshops.

May

May 2 Rain Garden Workshop, 6-7:30 p.m. For more info contact Hannah at hannah@piercecd.org.

May 5 Adriana Hess Work Party, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. For more info contact Belinda at belindap@piercecd.org.

May 7 Gilmur Grubbers Work Party, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. For more info contact Belinda at belindap@piercecd.org.

May 19 Fruit Tree Education Class: Pest & Disease Control, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. For more info contact Aaron at aarong@piercecd.org.

May 23 Farm Tour, 6-7:30 p.m. For more info contact René at renes@piercecd.org.

May 26 Meeker Minions Work Party, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. For more info contact Caleb at caleb@piercecd.org.

Who We Are:
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Dave Seago, Member
Sheila Wynn, Member

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Krames Canup, Habitat Improvement Technician
Chissy Cooley, Agriculture Community of Interest Coordinator
Micaela Cooley, Urban Agriculture, Education and Outreach Coordinator
Selena Corwin, Senior Finance and Administrative Director
Aaron Gibson, AmeriCorps Service Member
Jayme Gordon, Habitat Improvement and Environmental Education Program Director
Sam Hains, AmeriCorps Service Member
Hannah Liungman, AmeriCorps Service Member
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Renée McNichol, Program Specialist
Caleb Mott, Water Quality Assistant
Alison Nichols, Crop Farm Specialist
Belinda Paterino, Water Quality Technician
Isabel Raslaid, Water Quality, Monitoring Program Manager
Cynthia Ross, Finance Coordinator
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Chris Towe, Habitat Improvement and Environmental Education Program Coordinator
Allan Warren, Communications & Development Manager

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
Puyallup Field Office
(253) 845-9272