

2019 ANNUALREPORT



PIERCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

— Over 70 Years of Conservation —

WHAT WE DO

WHAT'S INSIDE

- 1 WHAT WE DO
- 3 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR +
BOARD CHAIR MESSAGE
- 4 RECOGNITION OF PARTNERS
- 5 2019 BY THE NUMBERS
- 7 PROGRESS ON OUR
5 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN
- 9 ON THE FARM
- 11 WATER QUALITY
- 13 HABITAT IMPROVEMENT
- 15 HARVEST PIERCE COUNTY
- 17 ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION
- 18 FINANCIAL REPORT

Pierce Conservation District works with the community to improve water quality, promote sustainable agriculture, create thriving habitat, and build a just and healthy food system for all, through education, community engagement, and financial and technical assistance. Our vision is that everyone in the region is engaged in creating a healthy environment and thriving community. We practice equity and inclusion to achieve this vision, recognizing that people of color, indigenous communities, low income people, immigrants, and refugees are disproportionately impacted by ecological decline.

Our district's roots run deep in our community. Created in 1949 as part of a national response to the ecological disaster of the 1930s known as the Dust Bowl, we have worked for 70 years to help local farmers, cities, and citizens address numerous sustainability challenges. Conserving our natural resources for future generations gets more difficult with each year, making the work of Pierce Conservation District more important than ever.

To learn more about the District's efforts to improve the natural resources of Pierce County, explore our 2016–2020 Strategic Plan.

You can download the plan at our website,
www.PierceCD.org/353/Strategic-Plan

“The work of the Pierce Conservation District strikes the right balance between growth and development and conserving natural resources and farmland. Farmers who employ sustainable agricultural practices are ensuring that our communities remain fed with healthy foods while also creating a safe and supportive habitat for fish and other animals. As the only PNW member on the House Committee on Agriculture, I am proud to partner with the Pierce Conservation District in the continued recovery of Puget Sound and our state's natural treasures.”

Congresswoman Kim Schrier

Cover Photo: Brandon and Lynnox help plant trees at Demolay Sandspit Nature Preserve, two of over 2,300 volunteers who came out to help restore habitat for Orca Recovery Day. All told, 109 organizations partnered to host 65 events throughout the Pacific Northwest. Compared to 2018, Orca Recovery Day grew exponentially in 2019 and we look forward to your help keeping that momentum going.

Left Photo: As the sole Washington delegate on the House Agriculture Committee, Rep. Kim Schrier has been a vocal proponent of our efforts. Rep. Schrier is seen here on a tour of the Mountain View Dairy with farmer Ryan Mensonides, our Board Chair Jeanette Dörner, Executive Director Ryan Mello, and Associate Supervisor Bill Schiller.



OUR FIVE MAIN PROGRAMS

FARM PLANNING & AGRICULTURAL ASSISTANCE

The district provides local farmers with financial and technical assistance that allows them to voluntarily improve their farm practices. This support makes farms more economically sustainable while helping reduce negative impacts on soil and water resources. The “Best Management Practices” that we help farmers employ serve to control soil erosion and water runoff, which can contaminate streams and the marine environment of Puget Sound. Additionally, the district’s support through programs such as our mobile meat unit and poultry processing unit create a shared infrastructure, which reduces production costs and increases access to local markets.

WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT & MONITORING

The district works with citizen volunteers to monitor the health of our streams and rivers to educate the public about how our daily lives impact our local water. The data collected through our Water Monitoring Program helps promote low-impact development practices, informs public agencies of problem areas, and inspires citizen action to improve our water quality. We engage citizens in action initiatives through our rain garden, Depave, urban tree, and streamside planting programs. These programs directly improve the water quality of our region by filtering out pollutants and reducing stormwater runoff. Collectively, the efforts create an informed public and help local communities meet Clean Water Act standards.

HABITAT IMPROVEMENT

Our work focuses on restoring endangered salmon populations by improving riparian habitat through the removal of invasive weeds and replanting with native trees and shrubs. Streamside planting events engage hundreds of volunteers each year, connecting people to this vital work. Beginning in 2019, we will be expanding the program to include marine shoreline habitat improvement with a new Shore Friendly Program.

HARVEST PIERCE COUNTY

Harvest Pierce County is our urban agriculture and food access program. Harvest creates a community of abundance through gardening, gleaning, and educating Pierce County about their food and food systems. Our Veggie Co-Op, Gleaning Project, and Community Gardens produce bountiful harvests of locally grown food for volunteers and local food banks alike. Besides growing crops for their own tables, participants gain a greater sense of community and connect with their local food system.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Our Environmental Education program includes classroom lessons, workshops, and field trips for K-16 students. We also coordinate educational events such as the Children’s Water Festival and Envirothon. These efforts reach thousands of young people throughout Pierce County each year and emphasize the importance of stewardship and conservation.

LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR + BOARD CHAIR



Ryan Mello
Executive Director



Jeanette Dorner
Board Chair

Putting conservation on-the-ground, into action, is at the heart of what we do. We say often that we are where the hard sciences and social sciences meet – working with people to implement the best practices, proven to protect our water, soil, air, habitat for fish and wildlife and to improve our access to local food. For over 70 years, this is exactly what we have been doing. This report shares some of the impact of that commitment to our part of the world in 2019.

While the quantitative measures of the work shared in this report are high and we continue to meet many of the goals we have set for ourselves, the stories of the people and places we impact are the true inspirations. You will read about rural property owners making way for both salmon recovery and crop production. You will read about people in our cities transforming their neighborhoods to ensure that when rainwater falls, it doesn't pollute Puget Sound. You will read about the diverse communities we serve and how we are engaging them in learning about conservation and growing food with them, in community. These are a few of the stories we share in this report, but there are so many more.

We take the work of serving everyone in Pierce County very seriously. Approximately 15% of Pierce County residents speak a language other than English or consider themselves low-English proficient (LEP). Because of intentional relationship-building with immigrant and refugee communities and our efforts to develop a team we call “Cultural Ambassadors”, our Urban Agriculture and Local Food Access programming has experienced participation of at least 15% of LEP individuals. This is just one indicator that tells us that our programming is working to serve everyone in Pierce County, not just those with financial means, spare time or who speak the dominant language.

Thank you for taking the time to read about the impact we had in 2019. We look forward to your continued partnership in conserving the natural resources of Pierce County and improving local food access.

In service,

Ryan W. Mello *Jeanette Dorner*

PARTNERS

ORGANIZATIONS & COMMUNITIES WE WORKED WITH IN 2019

PARTNER JURISDICTIONS

Pierce County
City of Bonney Lake
City of Buckley
City of Dupont
City of Fircrest
City of Gig Harbor
City of Lakewood
City of Milton
City of Orting
City of Puyallup
Town of Steilacoom
City of Sumner
City of Tacoma
City of University Place

2019 FUNDING PARTNERS

Army National Guard - Camp Murray
Chambers-Clover Creek
Watershed Council
Environmental Protection Agency
Greater Tacoma Community
Foundation
Metro Parks Tacoma
Milgard Foundation
Natural Resources Conservation
Service
Pierce County
Pierce County Flood Control District
Port of Tacoma
Puget Sound Energy
Puyallup Tribe of Indians
Puyallup Watershed Initiative
Regional Water Cooperative of
Pierce County
Tacoma Garden Club
Tacoma/Pierce County Health
Department
The Nature Conservancy
The Russell Family Foundation
US Department of Agriculture

Washington State Department of
Agriculture
Washington State Conservation
Commission
Washington State Department of
Ecology
Washington State Department of
Fish and Wildlife
Washington State Department of
Health
Washington State Recreation and
Conservation Office
Whatcom Conservation District
City of Tacoma Make a Splash Grant

SPONSORS

American Water Works Association
The Boeing Company
Bonneville Environmental Foundation
Coordinated Care
Land Recovery Inc. (LRI)
Multicare Health System
Puget Sound Energy
Whole Foods

IN-KIND SUPPORTERS

19 C Lions Club
Boy Scouts
Cascade Compost
City of Tacoma Environmental
Services
Clover Park Technical College
Girl Scouts
First United Methodist Church
Master Gardeners
Peninsula Metropolitan Parks District
TAGRO
University of Puget Sound
Washington Department of Natural
Resources

KEY PROJECT PARTNERS

AmeriCorps/Washington Service
Corps
Washington Conservation Corps
Chambers - Clover Watershed
Council
EarthCorps
Forterra
Franklin Pierce School District
Green Puyallup Partnership
KGI Watershed Council
Nisqually River Council
PCC Farmland Trust

Pierce County Surface Water
Management
Pierce County Planning and Public
Works
Puyallup River Watershed Council
Salishan Association
South Puget Sound Salmon
Enhancement Group
South Sound Clean Water Partners
WSU Puyallup Research and
Extension
Washington Environmental Council
Defenders of Wildlife
Snohomish CD/Veterans Corps

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Jeanette Dorner, Chair
Scott Gruber, Vice-Chair
John Hopkins, Auditor
Dr. Brian Sullivan, Member
Cindy Haverkamp, Member
Sheila Wynn, Associate Supervisor
Don Gourlie, Associate Supervisor
Hannah Febach, Associate Supervisor
Bill Schiller, Associate Supervisor

BY THE NUMBERS

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2019

15,747

PLANTS PLANTED

• Restoring 78.74 Acres and 10.63 Stream Miles

1,040

ACRES OF KNOTWEED TREATED

44 Stream Miles

3,564

VOLUNTEERS ACROSS ALL PROGRAMS

• Worked a Total of 13,059 Hours
• Valued at \$332,090.37

3,529

INDIVIDUALS ATTENDED

District Educational Workshops

112,790

POUNDS OF FOOD HARVESTED

By Volunteers and Donated
to Local Food Banks and Those in Need

250,000

GALLONS

Stormwater Infiltrated

7,015

INDIVIDUALS ENGAGED

In Harvest Pierce County Programming

1,327,551

KILOWATT HOURS OF ENERGY SAVED

For Farms and Rural Businesses

3,279

K-12 STUDENTS* ENGAGED

In Environmental Education Programming
*includes Green Partnership Fund

212

IMPROVEMENTS

Installed on Farms

GREEN PARTNERSHIP FUND

GREEN PARTNERSHIP FUND GRANT RECIPIENTS

In addition to all the great work you hear about throughout the year that our programs and staff are delivering to the community, each year the District also works to support many of our wonderful partners who are also helping make our communities better. Our Green Partnership Fund allocates \$75,000 in small grants each year through a competitive process and we are excited to announce the great projects being funded this year.

Before we announce this year's awards, let's take a minute to celebrate last year's successes. Seven projects were funded last year, impacting everything from habitat restoration to farmland conservation, environmental education to food preservation. Congratulations to Center for Food Preservation Arts, Forterra, Puyallup Watershed Initiative Forestry COI, Great Peninsula Conservancy, PCC Farmland Trust, The Farm at Franklin Pierce, and Nisqually Land Trust on a job well done. Collectively, your impacts really added up:

520

K-12 students were provided Environmental Education with a total of 1,025 contact hours

134

educational or restoration events reached 1,039 people

31+

acres of habitat were restored

3,474

native plants were installed

2,590

pounds of produce was removed from the waste stream and preserved

19

farmers were connected to farmland opportunities

702

volunteers came out to support all this great work



In 2020, we can look forward to an even bigger impact with eight great projects. Visit the Green Partnership Fund page of our website to learn more about these great initiatives.

- \$25,000: Jason Lee Middle School - Solar 2020
- \$10,000: Defenders of Wildlife - Orcas Love Raingardens
- \$10,000: Harbor WildWatch - Explorer Series
- \$7,500: Glacier Middle School - Student Steward Conservation Project
- \$6,981: Center For Food Preservation Arts - Seed to Shelf to Table
- \$5,690: City of Sumner - Sumner Free Fruit Tree Harvesting Hubs
- \$5,000: Tahoma Audubon - Connecting Our Watersheds
- \$5,000: Citizens for a Healthy Bay - Environmental Justice Camps

Help us congratulate these great partners and wish them luck as they help make our communities a better place to live, work, and play.

ABOVE: Students help plant trees at The Farm at Franklin Pierce, part of wetland restoration project to improve habitat and water quality in Swan Creek, an important salmon stream.

PROGRESS ON OUR 5 YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN



Progress on our 5-year Strategic Plan

In 2015, the District finalized an ambitious 5-year strategic plan that has served as a roadmap of strategies and actions, guiding our growth toward achieving lofty conservation goals. This plan was the start of a more strategic approach to our efforts, not the end, and in the years since we've fine-tuned the plan through additional prioritization studies and adaptive management.

Planning is only worth the effort if it leads to effective implementation though. Since 2015, this plan has helped guide our efforts, but it has also helped us secure additional resources, allowing us to more than double our number of staff and deliver significantly more technical assistance to the community. With such a

great team of passionate and dedicated staff, our impact continues to grow each and every year.

As we enter 2020, the final year of our current plan and the start of a new strategic planning process, we're proud to look back and realize we're achieving most of our goals. Delivering on our targets is helping create a healthier, more vibrant community for the people of Pierce County.

By 2021, the District will reduce energy consumption on farms and rural businesses by 1.2 M kWh.

Our Climate Resiliency Program is another new addition since 2015. This goal was aspirational at the time, pointing at something we would like to do if we

had the resources. By receiving 4-rounds of a Renewable Energy Development Assistance grants, we secured the resource. Now, not only have we created the program, in only 3-years it has led to annual reductions in energy use of 3,098,293 kWh. That's the equivalent of taking 310 homes completely off the grid!

ABOVE: Our Climate Resiliency Program has more than doubled our goal of reducing energy consumption on farms and rural business by helping install solar, both in Pierce County and around the state. With support from a USDA's Renewable Energy Development Assistance grant, we helped get this new array installed at Probably Shouldn't Distillery and organic farm up in Everson, WA. Learn more about this project and other successful solar installations at <https://pierced.org/485/Renewable-Energy-and-Energy-Efficiency>.

By 2021, the number of volunteers across all District programs will increase by 30%.

In 2015, we had just over 1,400 volunteers support our efforts. In 2019, 3,564 volunteers helped us plant trees, reduce food waste, remove invasive weeds, monitor water quality and much, much more. The value of that support would be like receiving a grant for over \$330,000! We've increased our volunteer numbers by 153%, which makes our time, energy, and dollars go so much farther. We are blessed to work in such a dedicated community and proud to work with you all to make it even better.

By 2021, PCD will have a program in place to provide education and outreach, and technical and/or financial assistance to landowners interested in pursuing green marine shoreline projects in the KGI watershed and will implement one pilot project.

We are excited to say that in June of 2019, we hired our new Shoreline Program Manager, Mary Krauszer. By securing grants from the National Estuary Program and the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program, we now have a program in place to provide technical and financial assistance to shoreline landowners, filling a much-needed service gap in Pierce County. You can read more about the new Shore Friendly program in the habitat section of this report.

By 2021, K-12 youth engagement in the District's environmental education programs will increase by 30%.

In 2015, we engaged 823 students in our Environmental Education program. Last year, we reached 3,279 students, a nearly 300% increase! Each year, we're building relationships with more schools and more teachers, surpassing our goals to inspire the next generation of conservationists. The quality of our programming continues to improve too, whether in the Envirothon workshop series, the Children's Water Festival, or the custom curriculums we deliver in the classroom or in the field.

RIGHT: Our Environmental Education Program continues to exceed the goals we laid out for it in our last strategic plan, by roughly ten times! Seen here, a fifth grade student learns about fish biology from a Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife biologist at last year's Children's Water Festival. The growth in this program wouldn't be possible without the gracious support of partner organizations such as the University of Puget Sound, the Port of Tacoma, the City of Tacoma's Make a Splash grant, and many others.





PIERCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S COVER CROP INITIATIVE

Traditional tilling practices and lack of cover crops in Pierce County have created a situation where stormwater carries soil off of farmland and into surface water. The loss of topsoil from the farmland reduces soil quality and farm productivity. The soil runoff into streams also impacts water quality and results in decreased salmon survival rates. Reducing tillage through direct seeding improves soil quality, controls weeds, increases soil carbon, and reduces fuel usage. Cover crop practices can provide a weed suppressing mulch, add organic matter to the soil, and increase soil fertility. Taken together, these practices result in lower costs and better productivity for farmers, while also creating better conditions for endangered salmon, a

multi-benefit approach we're working to implement across the county.

All of these reasons are why in 2018, Pierce Conservation District (PCD) embarked on a cover crop initiative using a multi-pronged approach. That year, a Crop Farm Program Manager was hired to lead the initiative. With funding provided by the Agriculture Community of Interest (AgCOI), which is part of the Russell Family Foundation's Puyallup Watershed Initiative, a direct seed drill and flail mower were purchased to loan to farmers in lieu of them purchasing their own equipment. Cover crop seed varieties and planting methods were tested through trials led by researchers at WSU Puyallup-Research and Extension (WSU Puyallup) in collaboration with PCD and local farmers willing to provide land. Funding was obtained through a WA State Department of Ecology Centennial Clean Water Fund Grant to provide cost sharing financial assistance to farmers willing to try direct drill seeding and cover crop installation. That grant also funded the drill borrower's instruction video, a forthcoming cover

crop promotional video, and producer educational workshops.

In 2019 we expanded those efforts through additional cover crop trials with WSU Puyallup, continuation of cover crop and direct drill seeding financial assistance to producers, leading to 25 number of farmers implementing the practice over 371 acres. Also, in partnership with WSU Puyallup, we created the annual Cover Crop Round Table. The Round Table's goals have been to network with regional growers and researchers, share information on local cover crop successes, and coordinate research interests and needs. The Round Table was well attended by both Pierce County farmers and by producers from around the region. A second annual event is already scheduled for early 2020 and we're excited to see this initiative continue to grow.

Above: Through a grant from the Department of Ecology and support from the Puyallup Watershed Initiative, we have partnered with WSU to conduct field trials of cover crops and the use of our new Direct Seed-Drill. 163 local farmers have attended these workshops to learn more about how these practices can improve both soil health and local water quality.

ON THE FARM

BY THE NUMBERS

212 BMPs installed on agricultural properties

34 workshop/outreach events

713 attendees to District workshops

13 manure spreader rentals

8 farm plans completed

65 poultry processing rentals

84 soil samples

160 farm site visits

470 landowners received technical assistance

5 cost share projects

\$18,314.66 in financial assistance to implement projects

3 electric fence tool loans

2 hay probe loans

16 no-till drill rentals

0 flail mower loans



ABOVE: Pierce Conservation District (PCD) was able to secure 50% cost share funding through the WA State Conservation Commission's Shellfish Program to replace a failing septic system on a farm approximately 1,000' upstream from Vaughn Bay in Case Inlet. Vaughn Bay has been identified by the WA Department of Health as a shellfish growing area that does not meet health standards. A Shellfish Protection District formed by Pierce County (see RCW 90.72.045), of which PCD is a member, oversees the efforts to correct the problems created by nonpoint fecal pollution in this area. This project will be followed-up with ag best management practices slated to be installed on the farm in 2020 with Near Term Action funds from Pierce County Surface Water Management via WA Department of Health. These projects are part of a targeted approach to invest in improvements voluntarily installed by conservation districts and landowners that will build cumulative results for shellfish recovery.

WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT



HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

Silver Creek

Jurisdiction:
City of Puyallup

Habitat Steward:
Heather Shadko

2019 was another great year for the Silver Creek Restoration site led by Habitat Steward Heather Shadko. The site is getting very close to full vegetation and establishment, no small feat. Thanks to Heather the site has an incredibly dedicated, knowledgeable, and hard-working Habitat Steward with an ever-growing volunteer base.

Silver Creek Restoration site is located along the 4.2 mile Puyallup Loop Trail, and receives a lot of attention from the various groups and community members that use the trail daily. Heather recognizes that and has been a huge advocate for beautiful flowering plants to attract pollinating insects, and educational signage. Her goal is to get passersby to stop and take a minute to enjoy the scenery that she has worked so hard to create for her community.

Restoration by the Numbers - 2019:

SqFt Invasive Removal: 2,000

Plants Installed: 232

Volunteers: 47

Volunteer Hours: 140

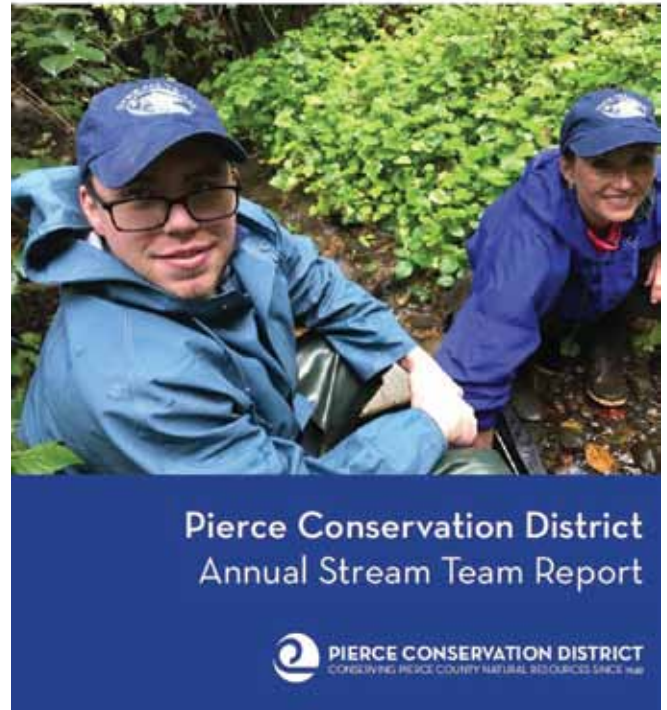
WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

2019 | BONNEY LAKE

STREAM TEAM ANNUAL REPORT REFRESH

Last year we highlighted Stream Team's 25th Anniversary and our many accomplishments over the years. Within the past few years we have introduced annual Stream Team reports produced for jurisdictions and Stream Team monitors. The reports have been helpful to communicate data collection on prioritized sites within jurisdictions and to show how our data fits within larger water quality data collection efforts. This past year we refreshed the look of our reports to give them a more professional presentation. We are looking forward to more improvements and changes within the Stream Team program as we evolve over the next 25 years!

2019 Stream Team reports can be found on the PCD Stream Team website: <https://pierced.org/248/Stream-Monitoring>



RIGHT: Stream Team monitors are the “eyes and ears” of our watersheds. Besides recording vital water quality data, they make observations about land use and stream conditions that are helpful for PCD’s jurisdictional partners. Pictured here is a Stream Team monitor on Crystal Springs Creek in Tacoma.



HABITAT



KNOTWEED PROGRAM BY THE NUMBERS

AREA	ACRES TREATED	PARCELS TREATED	RIVER MILES
UPPER NISQUALLY	731	50	12
SOUTH PRAIRIE/ WILKESON	291	79	10
TOWN OF STEILACOOM	18	17	N/A
TOTAL	1,040	146	22



Members of the knotweed treatment crew - Tricia (left), Kaytlyn (right) working on Mineral Creek in the Nisqually Watershed.



Dead canes show previous knotweed treatment on town property in Steilacoom. Small sprouts in the foreground underscore the importance of annual treatment.

ABOVE: In 2019, PCD's Habitat Improvement team worked with landowners, partners, and citizen volunteers to improve just under 4.5 acres of habitat from the shores of American Lake and Hales Pass to the communities of Orting and South Prairie in east Pierce County. Almost 5100 native trees and shrubs were installed at 8 different locations. Thanks to our Washington Conservation Corps crews and the many volunteers who made all this planting possible!



SHORE FRIENDLY PIERCE AIDS LANDOWNERS AND MARINE ENVIRONMENT

In Fall 2019 Pierce Conservation District launched the Shore Friendly Pierce program to address the restoration and protection of our local shorelines. With funding through the WA Department of Fish & Wildlife's Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program, our Shore Friendly program joins forces with Thurston and Mason CDs for an approach that coordinates messaging, outreach, and development of shoreline recovery projects. Our three South Sound CDs join a regional effort to implement Shore Friendly programs across the entire sound, from the San Juan Islands to Olympia.

The Shore Friendly Pierce program kicked off outreach efforts at PCD's 2019 Orca Recovery Day event on Fox Island, to emphasize the connection between healthy nearshore habitats and orca

recovery. After hands-on restoration work on with a hillside planting and scattering native gumweed seeds on the beach, participants took a shoreline tour to see the contrasts between a failing concrete bulkhead and healthy "natural bulkheads" formed by shoreline trees and shrubs that stabilize sediment while maintaining the connection between terrestrial and marine environments.

Our continuing outreach to shoreline landowners in the county has focused in the Key Peninsula and Gig Harbor areas where the majority of the Pierce County's residential shoreline parcels are located. Our new Shorelines Program Manager is providing marine shoreline landowners with technical assistance on a spectrum of natural resource concerns, from using native plants for erosion control, to healthy tree pruning to provide view corridors. Ultimately, the goal of the Shore Friendly program is to utilize soft shore techniques in lieu of hard armored bulkheads in

an effort to return natural process to the nearshore environment, aid in salmon and orca recovery efforts, and improve landowners' enjoyment of their shorelines.

According to a WDFW report*, in Pierce County we have over 70 miles of shoreline with hard armoring, representing 17% of the total residential armoring in Puget Sound. PCD sees this as an opportunity to reach a wide audience of landowners and make a big impact on the health of the Sound along with our communities and ecosystems that rely on it. *citation?

ABOVE: Failing seawalls, such as this one at Demolay Sandspit Nature Preserve on Fox Island, present tremendous opportunity to raise the grade of shoreline habitat throughout Puget Sound. Through support from the Pierce County Flood Control District, National Estuary Program, and Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program, we are working to remove this ~700 foot seawall and working with willing shoreline landowners throughout the county to do the same.

HARVEST PIERCE COUNTY

HARVEST PIERCE COUNTY - CELEBRATING ONE DECADE

It all started with Community Gardens:

Harvest Pierce County celebrates a decade of success in urban agriculture since 2010, increasing the County's total community garden count from 8 to 83. Though some of our County's 83 gardens are on municipal land, there are nearly 50 different property owners that have community gardens. Each garden is a unique entity with its own leadership structure, its own set of agreements with the property owner, and its own set of relationships in the community. As such, community gardens are powerful points of connection in today's society. With ever increasing ways to connect remotely in online groups and social media networks, gardens remain a place where people connect side-by-side and face-to-face. Having seen these connections proliferate throughout the past decade, we at Harvest Pierce County know that our work wouldn't be possible without strong partnerships.

Gleaning:

Another example of how we work through partnerships is our Gleaning Project, which saves backyard orchard fruit from entering the waste stream and landfills by bringing it to food banks and community food projects. Of the hundreds of gleans that happen in a season, every single one is in partnership with homeowners, landowners, or farmers who trust our Branch Leaders to respectfully glean produce that can't make it to market from their properties.

Many of our County's fruit trees were planted long before you could do your grocery shopping online and have it sent straight to your front door. Likewise, many people moving to our County inherit a backyard of fruit trees they did not plant themselves, so they don't have caring for the trees and preserving their bounty as a part of their seasonal routine. Our volunteers fill in these blanks, and in partnership with property owners, the County becomes not a patchwork of individually owned trees so much as a community orchard that can come together and feed the whole community.

Through the Gleaning Project, the relationship between people and fruit trees is available even to volunteers who do not own their own land. In this way, people can expand their feeling of connection to our County through food, transcending the boundaries of their own yard or community garden plot.

Looking Ahead:

As local government, we consider it especially important to be responsive to everyone in the County. We know that the best solutions are in partnership with the community, because people affected by the problem know best how to solve it. From a conservation perspective, we also know that people will defend what they love. Growing food and medicine is a reciprocal act of care that nourishes oneself, one's family, and one's community, and as such is a way of falling in love with the land around us.

Engaging everyone across our diverse County is always going to be a challenge - but it is a challenge that makes our programming better. The more we try to reach out to our community across differences, the more we make sure our programming directly reflects and serves our constituents.

In 2016, we received support from the National Association of Conservation Districts to make sure our programming is more inclusive to people who have Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Today, we maintain a robust Cultural Ambassador program that has transformed our programming to include Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Khmer, Russian, Ukrainian, and Moldovan communities. Through developing a system that supports multiple languages, we have grown a network of important and trusting relationships with community members who were previously unable to connect with us, and getting to know their lives and priorities has allowed us to develop much more relevant programming. In 2016, there were only 5 gardens in our program where LEP participants were gardening.

HARVEST PIERCE COUNTY

Continued from page 15...

We've nearly tripled the number of gardens with LEP community members to 14 in 2019. We have not only institutionalized the program within our urban agriculture program but have also supported the spread to other District teams. Our Pierce Conservation District Farm team has recently launched a Cultural Navigator program to engage and support Latino farmworkers in implementing sustainable farming practices.

This year, we have once again received support from the National Association of Conservation Districts to build upon this original work by expanding upon new relationships with local indigenous communities, including Northwest Tribes and other immigrant indigenous communities from South and Central America that live in our County. We have been building relationships for several years now and are connecting to develop a new urban agriculture site that will serve as a place for local indigenous communities to come together and connect to each other and to the land through sustainable agriculture and land stewardship.

In many ways, these projects represent the flowering of deep-rooted relationships we have built over the past decade that involve both institutional and community partners, and we are excited for what lies ahead.

RIGHT: Du Ly, seen here at our annual Volunteer Appreciation Potluck, is a dedicated member of the Chùa Phước Huệ Vietnamese Buddhist Temple and the host of our County's newest community garden. Ly has helped at many different events and cross-cultural experiences that Harvest Pierce County has partnered on.



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

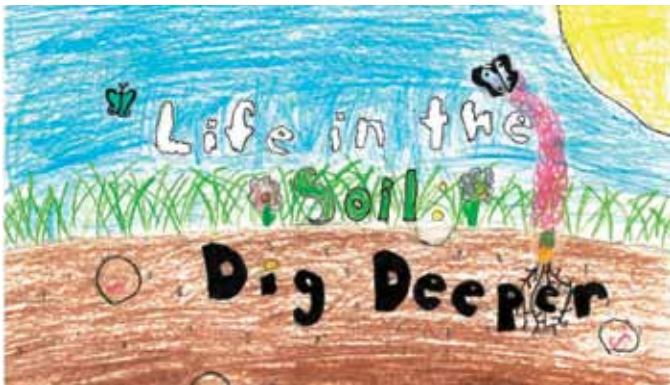


GROWING ENVIROTHON!

PCD took on a larger role in the Envirothon competition this year, coordinating the regional event and partnering with other districts to organize the state competition in Carnation. Envirothon is a natural resources competition for high schoolers, covering topics such as

forestry, soil, aquatic ecology, wildlife and a topic that rotates every year. The teams (18 this year!) tested their knowledge on those topics against other high schools from around the region for the right to attend the state competition. To help them prepare, we recruited partners to host educational

workshops on the various topics. Tacoma's Science and Math Institute took home the regional title, and Ingraham High School from Seattle won 1st place at state. We look forward to supporting Envirothon and cultivating the next generation of natural resource professionals!



SOIL POSTER COMPETITION

As a fun addition to our environmental education program, we promoted a soil poster contest during our lessons and events this year. The 2019 theme was life in the soil, encouraging students to think of the wealth of living organisms under our feet and the important roles they play. A 3rd grade student from Emerald Hills Elementary in Bonney Lake placed 2nd in the state competition. Check out the poster!

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION BY THE NUMBERS

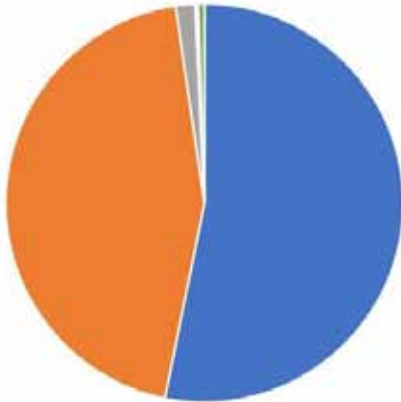
2,715 students

4,178 contact hours

We ended the year with a focus on salmon, visiting Swan Creek Park with local middle schools to see the salmon returning to spawn. Two of the field trips were in partnership with UW-Tacoma and their pre-spawn mortality research. It was an opportunity for students to practice collecting data to see salmon up close, and to learn about human impacts in their local watershed.

FINANCIALS

2019 REVENUES + SPENDING



REVENUE BY SOURCE

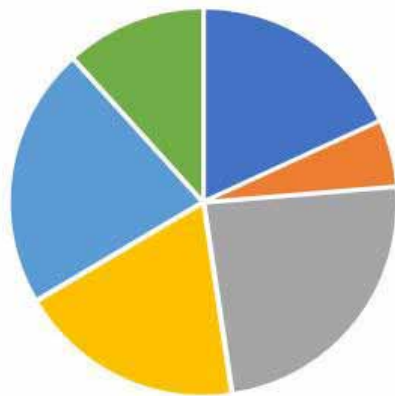
- Rates + Charges 53.2%
- Grants + Contracts 44.5%
- Native Plant + Tree Sale 1.6%
- Misc 0.3%
- Donations 0.5%

REVENUE BY SOURCE

RATES + CHARGES	\$2,383,012.00	53.2%
GRANT + CONTRACTS	\$1,992,046.00	44.5%
NATIVE PLANT + TREE SALE	\$70,360.00	1.6%
MISCELLANEOUS	\$11,690.00	0.3%
DONATIONS	\$22,086.00	0.5%
	<hr/>	
	\$4,479,194.00	

SPENDING BY PROGRAM

FARM/AG ASSISTANCE	\$771,207.31	18.2%
ENVIRONMENTAL EDU.	\$234,914.56	5.5%
HABITAT IMPROVEMENT	\$1,017,518.71	24.0%
HARVEST PIERCE COUNTY	\$800,747.77	18.9%
WATER QUALITY	\$925,439.13	21.8%
ADMINISTRATION	\$497,650.41	11.7%
	<hr/>	
	\$4,247,477.70	



SPENDING BY PROGRAM

- Farm/AG Assistance 18.2%
- Environmental Ed 5.5%
- Habitat Improvement 24%
- Harvest Pierce County 18.9%
- Water Quality 21.8%
- Administration 11.7%

BALANCE SHEET AS OF 12/31/2019

CURRENT ASSETS	\$2,589,654.00
----------------	----------------

TOTAL ASSETS	\$2,589,654.00
--------------	----------------

CURRENT LIABILITIES	(\$47,378.00)
---------------------	---------------

TOTAL LIABILITIES	(\$47,378.00)
-------------------	---------------

NET ASSETS	\$2,219,440.00
------------	----------------

NET INCOME	\$322,836.00
------------	--------------

TOTAL EQUITY	\$2,542,836.00
--------------	----------------

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$2,589,654.00
---------------------------------------	-----------------------

Leveraged Funds:

For every dollar of rates funding the District leveraged \$0.89 in external funding.

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



ABOVE: Emily Tzeng, owner/operator of Local Color Farm and Fiber, is an example of how each of us can do our part to improve the quality of life for our community. Not only does Emily produce naturally dyed fibers and grass fed lamb for our community, she has also worked with our Farm Team to develop a farm plan to reduce the impacts of her farm. Emily is implementing best practices such as cover cropping and no-till seeding. These practices not only improve soil quality for better production at her farm, they reduce stormwater runoff, improve local water quality, and sequester carbon from the atmosphere into the soil to reduce climate change impacts.



**OVER 70 YEARS of
CONSERVATION**

Since 1949

CONTACT US

PIERCE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
308 Stewart Avenue | Puyallup, WA 98371
P: (253) 845-9770 | TF: (866) 845-9485

EMAIL: info@pierced.org
MAIL: PO BOX 1057 | Puyallup, WA 98371



Printed on paper containing 50% recycled fiber content with 20% post consumer recovered fiber. Please recycle when you are done, or pass it on to a friend.