

# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



**PIERCE  
CONSERVATION  
DISTRICT**

*Over 70 Years of Conservation*

# WHAT WE DO

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WINNERS

*Cover Photo: A fern planted at a PCD  
depave event in 2024.*

## WHAT IS A CONSERVATION DISTRICT?

Conservation districts are community-based hubs of natural resource expertise and funding. They are led and staffed by locals who have first-hand knowledge of the landscapes and fellow community members they serve. They are also providers of non-regulatory services tailored to meet the needs of local people, local properties, and natural resources.

## WHAT DO WE DO?

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, people with low income, immigrants, and refugees are disproportionately impacted by ecological decline.

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 2021-2025 Strategic Plan. You can download the plan at our website,

[www.PierceCD.org/353/Strategic-Plan](http://www.PierceCD.org/353/Strategic-Plan)



# LETTER FROM OUR LEADERS

From the summit to our shorelines, Pierce Conservation District plays a critical part in securing an ecologically healthy and economically viable county. Our programs cover forest health to shoreline vitality and we work with rural farmers and city planners to ensure land and water quality can support future generations. We work together with members of our community to invest in our region's future. The work that we do at PCD helps support our Farmers, our Foresters, our food distributors, fish habitat, and urban spaces.

PCD is committed to working with our communities to provide boots on the ground services. We strive to bring the best science to the unique challenges in our region while working with stewards to be innovative in our approach. The work Pierce Conservation District does today will impact the health and wellbeing of our communities for generations to come. Each of our programs plays a key part in our economy from our wildfire resilience team to our shoreline team and the spaces in-between.

We recognize that the success of our work is due to the connections we make in personal and ecological communities and we are excited to share the work that we have done over the last year with you. We look forward to keeping our lands and waters vibrant and healthy with you.



Jeanette Dorner, Board Chair



Dana Coggon, Executive Director

**In Partnership,**

Handwritten signatures of Jeanette Dorner and Dana Coggon.

**2024 Board of Supervisors**

Jeanette Dorner, Chair  
John Hopkins, Auditor  
Julie Ammann, Member  
Mark Mauren, Member  
Amy Moreno-Sills, Member  
Jim Grob, Associate Supervisor  
Stu Tefry, Associate Supervisor



# PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS & COMMUNITIES WE WORKED WITH IN 2024

## PARTNER JURISDICTIONS

Pierce County  
City of Bonney Lake  
City of Buckley  
City of Dupont  
City of Eatonville  
City of Edgewood  
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

## 2024-2025 FUNDING PARTNERS

Army National Guard - Camp Murray  
Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed Council  
Environmental Protection Agency  
Greater Tacoma Community Foundation  
KGI Watershed Council  
Metro Parks Tacoma  
Natural Resource Conservation Service  
Nisqually Indian Tribe  
Pierce County  
Pierce County Flood Control Zone District  
Puget Sound Energy  
Puyallup Tribe of Indians  
Russell Family Foundation  
Snohomish Conservation District  
Tacoma Garden Club  
Tacoma/Pierce County Health Department  
The Nature Conservancy  
Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program)

Washington State Department of Agriculture  
Washington State Conservation Commission  
Washington State Department of Ecology  
Washington State Department of Health  
Washington State Recreation & Conservation Office  
Western SARE  
Whatcom Conservation District

## SPONSORS

Bonneville Environmental Foundation  
American Water Works Association  
Coordinated Care  
Land Recovery Inc. (LRI)  
Multicare Health System  
Puget Sound Energy  
Puyallup Tribe of Indians

## KEY PROJECT PARTNERS

AmeriCorps  
Carbon Capture Foundation  
Chambers - Clover Watershed Council  
City Forest Credit  
Colored Woman's Club  
Communities for a Healthy Bay  
Defenders of Wildlife  
EarthCorps  
Emergency Food Network  
Forest Health Watch  
Forterra  
FOSS Waterway/SeaPort Alliance  
Franklin Pierce School District  
Green Puyallup Partnership  
Great Peninsula Conservancy  
Harbor WildWatch  
Institute for Black Justice  
KGI Watershed Council  
Mason Conservation District  
Metro Parks Tacoma  
Muckleshoot Indian Tribe  
National Assoc of Conservation Districts  
National Civilian Community Corps  
Nisqually Indian Tribe

Nisqually River Council  
Northwest Agriculture Business Center  
Peninsula Metropolitan Park District  
Pierce County AIDS Foundation  
Pierce County Agriculture Commission  
Pierce County Fire District # 26  
Pierce County Parks  
Pierce County Planning and Public Works  
Puget Sound Processing, LLC  
Puyallup River Watershed Council  
Puyallup Tribe of Indians  
Salishan Association  
Snohomish Conservation District  
South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group  
Sow Therapeutic  
Spark Northwest  
Tacoma School District  
Tacoma Food is Free  
Tacoma Downtown on the Go  
Tacoma Tree Foundation  
Thurston Conservation District  
Veterans Conservation Corps  
US Department of Agriculture  
VT Radio  
Washington Conservation Corps  
Washington Environmental Council  
Washington Farmland Trust  
Washington Native Plant Society  
WSU Puyallup Research & Extension  
WA Department of Natural Resource  
WA Department of Transportation  
Washington Service Corps  
White River School District



# PROGRESS ON OUR FIVE YEAR PLAN



In 2021, the District created a 5-year strategic plan that serves as a roadmap for strategies and actions through 2025. As a Conservation District, we work collaboratively with community members to plant the seed for actions that will benefit the environment for years to come.

Four years into our Strategic Plan, we are continuing to innovate with our programs to reach more Puget Sound community members. By focusing on outreach pathways and educational resources, we have activated more individuals into a more sustainable lifestyle in Pierce County. As we head into the strategic plan's fifth year we plan to build on the good work completed in the prior four years, and see our Strategic Plan to its end.

A volunteer gleaning excess produce, which was delivered to local hunger relief organizations and businesses through the Closed Loop Community Project.

## 2024 BY THE NUMBERS

**15,667**

TREES AND SHRUBS PLANTED

180 Acres in Active Restoration

**16**

ACRES OF INVASIVE PLANTS TREATED

Across Pierce County

**2,689**

VOLUNTEERS

Across All Programs

**1,950**

INDIVIDUALS ATTENDED

District Educational Events

**43,938**

POUNDS OF FOOD HARVESTED

By Volunteers & Donated to Local Food

Hunger Organizations

**129**

CONSERVATION IMPROVEMENTS

Installed on Farms

**2,066**

K-12 STUDENTS ENGAGED

In Environmental Education Programming

**4.65**

ACRES OF CANOPY COVER

Installed in Urban Spaces

# ON THE FARM

*The Farm Planning & Agricultural Assistance program aims to build a robust local agricultural and forestry community and reduce negative impacts on soil, water, air, plants, animals, and human resources. We provide technical assistance to help land users improve their stewardship practices, be economically sustainable, and navigate an ever-changing economic, regulatory, and ecological landscape.*



## Prioritizing Pollinators

Through funding from Western Sustainable Agriculture and Research (SARE) and in collaboration with local crop farmers, PCD developed twelve new pollinator-friendly hedgerow planting guides. Through SARE funding, PCD also helped install 800 feet of demonstration hedgerows and hosted a hands-on hedgerow installation workshop for farmers.



## Upgrading Farm Equipment Rentals

Pierce Conservation District rented farm and gardening equipment 90 times to community members in 2024. 25% of these rentals were for no-till drills, which enable landowners to establish cover crops and renovate pastures and hayland. We also secured \$10,000 for equipment investments, including market garden tools and additional implements for a walk-behind tractor.



## Investing in Local Farms

PCD awarded six farmers Sustainable Farms and Fields funding to purchase new equipment for their operations that help implement Best Management Practices. These farmers purchased three no-till drills, a field aerator, a manure spreader and a biochar kiln. We are pleased to partner with these landowners as they implement conservation practices.

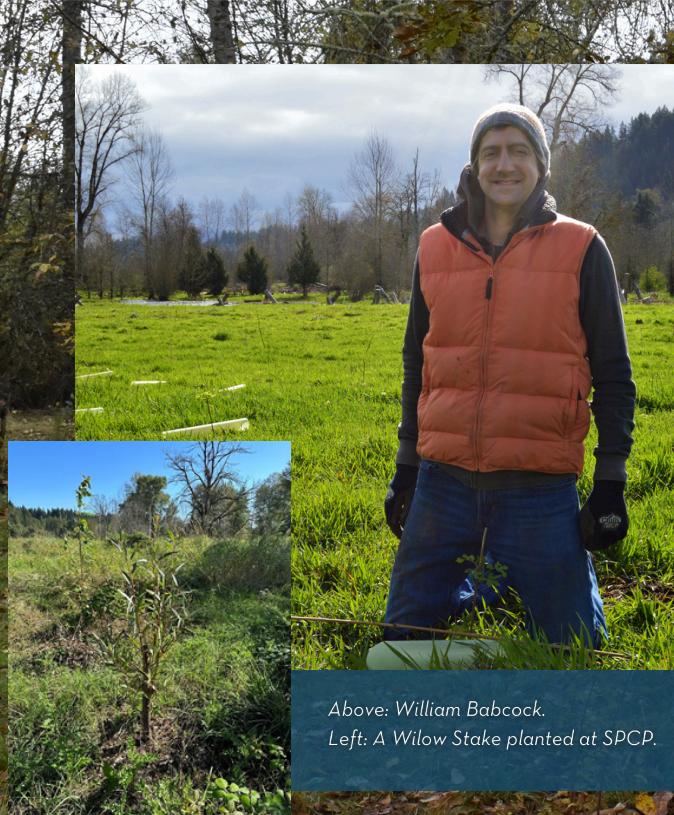
## FARM PROJECTS BY THE NUMBERS

- \$440,001.74 in financial assistance to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs).
- 156 Farms received PCD assistance
- 129 BMPs installed on local farms
- 702 metric tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> sequestered through BMPs
- 17 Farm Education events



# HABITAT IMPROVEMENT

The Habitat Improvement program focuses on improving the riparian, floodplain, and marine nearshore habitats of Pierce County along with other rare and endangered plant communities unique to our region. We implement projects to recover native salmon and orca populations, remove invasive species, replant native trees and shrubs, and restore other ecosystem processes.



Above: William Babcock.  
Left: A Willow Stake planted at SPCP.

## COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

William Babcock joined Pierce CD's commitment to improving salmon habitat, volunteering at South Prairie Creek Preserve (SPCP) in 2022. William Babcock has allowed Pierce Conservation District access to his land to harvest black cottonwood and red alder livestakes. Approximately 912 livestakes were installed throughout fifty acres of SPCP within the last two years.

*"It's a privilege to be involved in such a great project and I'm happy I can contribute" - William Babcock*



## Ranking #1 in Shore Friendly Support

The Shore Friendly South Sound program has reached over 4,300 participants, with 356 properties receiving customized stewardship recommendations through site visits. In 2024, the collaborative between Pierce, Mason, and Thurston Conservation District ranked #1 out of 6 Shore Friendly programs in Puget Sound and was awarded an additional \$1,475,000 in funding to continue the program through 2027.



## Funding Salmon Restoration Projects

Pierce Conservation District received over 2 million dollars in grant funding for habitat restoration projects that benefit salmon. These projects include shoreline armor removal to restore natural sediment processes, establishment of fully functioning riparian habitats along two miles of South Prairie Creek, and technical assistance for landowners to implement riparian improvements in the South Prairie Creek Watershed.

Above: A Shore Friendly site assessment. Below: A volunteer near critical salmon habitat at South Prairie Creek Preserve.

# HARVEST PIERCE COUNTY

*Harvest Pierce County reconnects communities to each other and to their environment by cultivating community-based food systems. With a focus on education, connection and equity, we strive to center historically underserved populations and prioritize projects that work to increase food sovereignty in Pierce County.*



## Supporting Community Gardens

HPC's Community Garden program shared a record number of physical materials with Pierce County gardeners in need. We helped 26 community gardens by utilizing repurposed materials. 110 pieces of lumber for garden bed construction, 1,060 burlap bags and 30,000 square feet of cardboard for mulching were distributed to gardeners in need.



## Bolstering Beginning Farmers

Our Farm Foundations program had its largest cohort to-date. Participants learned and shared knowledge through classes, field work, and farm tours. The group spent a total of 142 program hours together from March to October. 21 beginning-farmers completed the program and are ready to farm sustainably.



## Developing Resilient Infrastructure

HPC received nearly \$150,000 from the WSDA Local Food Infrastructure grant and the Russell Family Foundation to complete infrastructure development at our Incubator Farm and our new Urban Farm Site. Both sites now have water and electricity, functional coolers, and secure storage. We are thrilled to be in a better position to support new and emerging farmers.



## HARVEST PIERCE COUNTY BY THE NUMBERS

- 1,408 volunteer hours at produce harvesting events
- 40,000 native plants sold at our annual sale
- 54 small businesses supported through programming
- 672 Edible Gardens workshop attendees

# WATER QUALITY

The Water Quality Improvement program focuses on creating an informed public about water and helping local communities meet Clean Water Act standards. We engage community volunteers in green stormwater programming and habitat stewardship, facilitate action projects like installing rain gardens, depaving, replacing grass with urban habitat landscaping, planting trees along streams, and installing native plants along streams to filter out pollutants and reduce stormwater runoff.



## COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Heather Shadko has volunteered with PCD's Habitat Stewardship program for almost two decades. This year she retires from stewardship and passes on her mantle. Her dedication and partnership with PCD has shaped acres of critical stream-side habitat.

*"When I started at Silver Creek it was almost completely open, just the trees along the creek. Now it is such an amazing place full of life ... I always tell first-timers to remember the first plant they put in and to come back to watch it grow."*

- Heather Shadko



## Removing Pavement in Urban Spaces

Neighbors in Tacoma came together to depave and plant a large concrete area as part of PCD's Green Stormwater Mini Grant program. Over a period of five months, a total of forty volunteers gathered together to remove the concrete, plant, and mulch the space. Instead of a grey, lifeless area, the north end of Grant Park is now a thriving habitat for pollinators that also captures and filters stormwater.



## Restoring Habitat in New Places

Pierce Conservation District added four new restoration sites into our Habitat Stewardship program, bringing our total up to eleven sites across Pierce County. Nine new Habitat Steward volunteers joined us in removing invasive plants and installing native plants to create wildlife habitat and increase water infiltration.

Above: Volunteers removing pavement at a depave event. Below: Invasive plant species removed by a volunteer family.

# ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Our Environmental Education program inspires meaningful connections between K-16 students and their ecosystems. We focus on reaching students who have been traditionally excluded from high-quality curriculum and environmental education learning opportunities. In coordination with local school districts and community partners, we implement in-person and remote learning activities that include classroom lessons, workshops, outdoor and experiential learning, and community events focused on ecological stewardship.



## Launching a New Field Trip Program

Building on our experience with the Tacoma Salmon in the Classroom program, Pierce Conservation District partnered with the White River School District to create a new field trip program. Over 300 3rd graders traveled to South Prairie Creek Preserve to plant trees, hike through nature, and observe spawning salmon.



## Partnering with Local Hatcheries

Together with the Puyallup Historical Hatchery Foundation, Pierce Conservation District hosted students at Clarks Creek Hatchery. Students learned how salmon are raised, the cultural importance of salmon and how humans can better steward this species. None of this work is possible without our Environmental Education volunteer docents.



## Hosting Summer Outdoor Camps

Education staff spent the summer in Tacoma's Salishan neighborhood, exploring Swan Creek Park with day-camping students. Campers' favorite parts of this year's camp was playing the camouflage game on the trails, hiking down to the creek, and last but not least, the afternoon snack break.



### COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Sharon Conroy is a volunteer Environmental Education docent. Since retiring she has helped lead fourth grade field trips at the Puyallup Fish Hatchery with PCD.

*"I felt lucky to step into a smooth-running, effective program ... It's important to see kids outside, exploring." - Sharon Conroy*

## ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION BY THE NUMBERS

- 4,117 students served
- 5,443 contact hours
- 33 schools raising salmon in their classrooms
- 1,600 students engaging with their local fish hatchery

# CLIMATE RESILIENCY

The Climate Resiliency program is committed to developing broad, diverse, and inclusive partnerships to guarantee that our efforts are effective, equitable, and carry us towards a more climate-resilient future. Our work involves supporting rural communities in transitioning to clean and renewable energy sources, which helps in reducing carbon emissions, lowering costs, and preserving natural resources. In addition, we collaborate closely with local partners to put in place practical actions to prepare our communities for the risk of wildfire.



## Increasing Emergency Access

Following a free wildfire community assessment, a neighborhood association in Gig Harbor partnered with Pierce Conservation District to create a 100+ foot long firebreak in partnership alongside a crew of Washington Conservation Corps members. Firebreaks keep wildfire from traveling uphill, providing firefighting teams with critical response time.



## Creating Resilient Communities

In partnership with the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, Pierce Conservation District educated over 1,240 community members about wildfire prevention and home resiliency. We also provided vital information about health impacts due to wildfire at 19 events in Eatonville, Buckley, and Longbranch.



## Supporting Local Farms & Small Businesses

Pierce Conservation District assisted 13 farms and small businesses across Washington applying for the USDA REAP program, which provides grants for solar and energy efficiency upgrades. These grants, typically between \$50k and \$100k, help businesses lower costs, reduce resource usage, and open up new opportunities.

## CLIMATE RESILIENCY BY THE NUMBERS

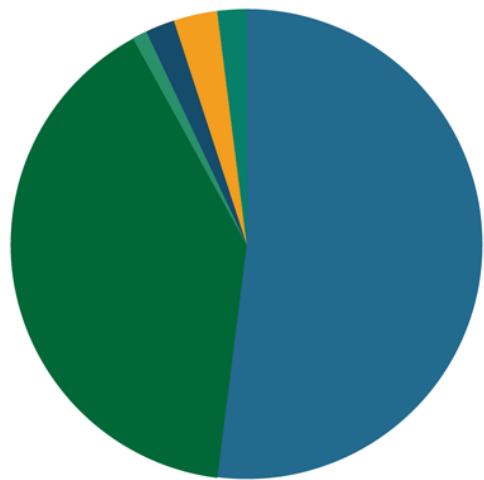
- 55 Wildfire Ready Neighbors site assessments
- 19 Wildfire outreach events
- 1,240 Community members educated about wildfire
- 13 REAP Grant applicants received PCD assistance



Washington Conservation Corps members clearing a trail in Gig Harbor. 11

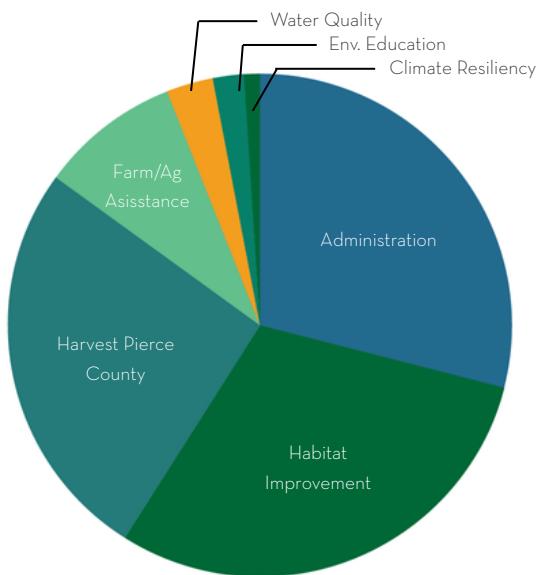
# FINANCIALS

## 2024 REVENUES + SPENDING



### Revenue by Source

- 52.2% Rates + Charges
- 40.5% Grants
- 0.9% Indirect Revenue
- 2.4% Bank Interest
- 1.9% Native Plant Sale
- 1.9% Donations
- 0.2% Rents & Leases
- 0.0% Misc



### Spending By Program

- 24.6% Administration
- 21.4% Habitat Improvement
- 19.2% Harvest Pierce County
- 17.8% Farm/Agricultural Assistance
- 8.9% Water Quality
- 4.3% Environmental Education
- 3.9% Climate Resiliency

### REVENUE BY SOURCE

Rates + Charges	\$ 3,016,672	52.2%
Grants	\$ 2,343,495	40.5%
Native Plant Sale	\$ 109,408	1.9%
Indirect Revenue	\$ 52,949	0.9%
Bank Interest	\$ 140,270	2.4%
Rents & Leases	\$ 10,148	0.2%
Misc	\$ 180	0.2%
Donations	\$ 110,378	1.9%
	<hr/>	
	\$ 5,225,990	

### SPENDING BY PROGRAM

Farm/Agricultural Assistance	\$ 1,023,033	
Environmental Education	\$ 245,444	
Habitat Improvement	\$ 1,228,107	
Harvest Pierce County	\$ 1,105,231	
Water Quality	\$ 509,440	
Climate Resiliency	\$ 224,930	
Administration	\$ 1,412,463	
	<hr/>	
	\$ 5,225,990	

### BALANCE SHEET AS OF 12/31/2024

Current assets	\$ 3,138,079.	
Total Assets	\$ 4,289,197	
Current liabilities	\$ 20,631	
Total liabilities	\$ 122,834	
	<hr/>	
Total Equity	\$ 4,166,363	
	<hr/>	

### TOTAL LIABILITIES AND ASSETS \$ 4,412,032.

For every dollar of rates funding the District leveraged \$0.91 in external funding.

# 2024 CONSERVATION AWARD WINNERS

Every year we recognize outstanding individuals and organizations at our Annual Celebration with Conservation Awards. These individuals and organizations go above and beyond to support Pierce Conservation District's mission in Pierce County.



## Ernie Bay Lifetime Achievement Award

### **Ken and Nell Batker**

Outstanding Pacific Northwest residents who lead a conservation-centered lifestyle.



## Conservation Practice Implementer of the Year

### **Emily Tzeng**

Food and fiber farmer that puts sustainability first, and readily shares her experiences with others.



## Partner of the Year

### **Diane Evans**

Our partner at TPCHD, who continuously supported our mission of equity and food justice by amplifying community voices.



## Educator of the Year

### **Laura Young**

An educator from Emerald Hills Elementary with a commitment to raising thoughtful land stewards of the future.



## Public Agency of the Year

### **Robby Wright (City of Sumner)**

The City of Sumner has done outstanding work to ensure their river floodplains are healthy and protected.



## Volunteer of the Year

### **Jessica Hannity**

A volunteer that helped us launch the Closed Loop program through her generous outpouring of time and community connections.



## Community Food Project of the Year

### **Mother Earth Farm**

An 8-acre farm that distributed over 85,000 pounds of produce to Pierce County food pantries and meal sites.



*The Pierce Conservation District community celebrating our 2024 Conservation Award Winners.*



*Habitat Steward Devon Fell shoveling mulch to apply to newly planted plants at Whittier Park in Fircrest on Earth Day.*

# CONTACT US

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