

Clark *Conservation News*

A Collaboration of Clark Conservation District, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and USDA Farm Service Agency

Planting by a Stream

Riparian areas include the trees, shrubs, and other plants that live and grow near water on the banks of streams, rivers, and lakes. A healthy riparian area provides many benefits to people, wildlife, and the community.

Improved Water Quality

When floodwaters overflow the stream banks, riparian area vegetation can slow the floodwater so the sediment in the water can settle out. Riparian area vegetation also filters runoff and sediment from slopes next to the stream. Excess nutrients draining from lawns and pastures can be absorbed by the plants.

Water Storage & Flood Reduction

Healthy riparian areas with abundant trees and shrubs act like a sponge and absorb excess water during flood periods. Some of the water slowed by riparian areas enters the groundwater and is released later, thereby increasing late summer and fall stream flow. Groundwater is a vital resource we rely on for our water supply.

Improved Fish and Wildlife Habitat

Fish depend on healthy riparian areas for food, shelter, and clean, cool water. Overhanging vegetation provides a home for insects which are a key food source for fish and other aquatic life.

Many birds and mammals depend on riparian areas for food, cover, and nesting sites. A multi-storied riparian habitat produces an abundance of cover and shade. Streambanks also offer an excellent travel corridor for wildlife.

Enhanced Aesthetics

Riparian areas offer cool shade, pleasant scenery, and wildlife viewing. Fishing and water activities are also major attractions. People often seek riparian environments for activities such as picnicking, hiking, and camping.



"The true meaning of life is to plant trees under whose shade you do not expect to sit."

- Nelson Henderson

Funding Opportunities for Forestland

Small forest landowners own 4.2 million acres of Washington's forests, which is about half the private forestland in the state. There are programs available through local, state, and federal agencies to assist small forest landowners with conservation of their resources. Two assistance programs are detailed below.

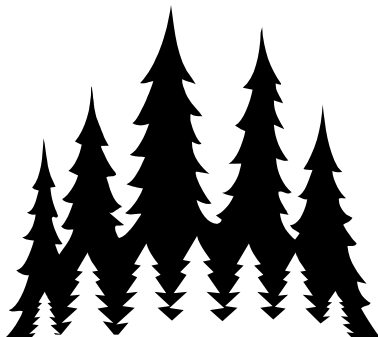


Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFFPP)

FFFPP provides financial and technical assistance to family forest landowners who have fish passage barriers on their forestland. This program pays 75 to 100 percent of the cost to replace a fish barrier with a fully passable structure. FFFPP is a partnership between Dept. of Natural Resources, WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, and the Recreation and Conservation Office.

How it Works: The landowner submits a completed Application for Fish Passage Evaluation to the DNR Small Forest Landowner Office (visit the DNR website listed below or contact the Clark CD office). A field technician visits your property to assess the barrier. Your barrier is ranked in the watershed. If it ranks as a high priority, you'll be eligible for funding to replace or repair it.

Qualifying barriers must be on a fish-bearing stream and human made, such as culverts, dams, weirs, puncheons, and spillways.



Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

EQIP provides financial and technical assistance to landowners who face threats to soil, water, air, and related natural resources on their land. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) administers EQIP. The EQIP focus is on protecting water quality, conserving ground & surface water, and reducing soil erosion.

Forestland practices eligible through EQIP can include roads and the related erosion, forest health and density stand issues (like pre-commercial thinning), and forest riparian buffer enhancement practices. In SW Washington, the emphasis on forestland is given to road related erosion and sedimentation to streams. Secondary resource concerns include improving forest health, wildlife habitat, and forest stand productivity.

Persons interested in entering into a cost-share agreement for EQIP assistance may file an application at any time. Applications can be obtained by contacting the NRCS office or visiting the website www.nrcs.gov/PROGRAMS/EQIP/.



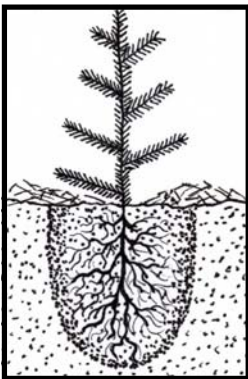
Culvert replaced through the Family Forest Fish Passage Program

Planting Bare-root

Spring planting season is right around the corner. Many plants are sold as bare-root, meaning they have no pot or soil around the roots and the plant is dormant. Here are some tips for keeping the plants and planting them.

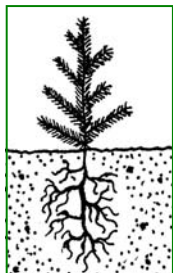
- Store the plants in a cool, dark place until you are ready to plant.
- Protect seedlings from freezing temperatures, wind, and sun before and during planting.
- Mend tears to seedling bags to keep the plant roots from drying out.
- Plant seedlings within 5 days of receiving them.

How to Plant



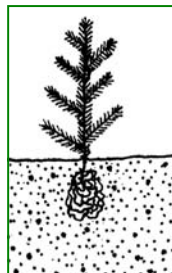
1. Dig a large enough hole for roots to dangle, making sure roots are not bent, twisted, or bundled.
2. Slowly fill around roots with loose soil avoiding large soil clumps, rocks and air pockets.
3. Very lightly compact soil around tree checking to see that you haven't made any "planting mistakes".
4. Water deeply if possible to settle soil and moisture.
5. Mulching helps reduce weeds and water loss.
6. Tree protectors help with wildlife browse.

Planting Mistakes



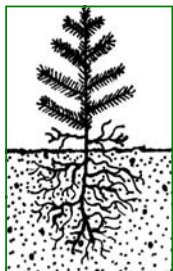
AIR POCKET

- Dries out
- Creates extreme moisture stress
- Less anchor



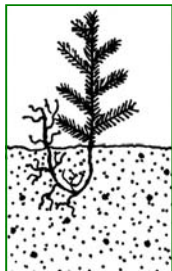
ROOT BOUND

- Decrease in proper rooting
- Limited moisture & nutrient uptake



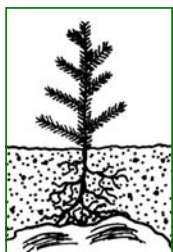
TOO SHALLOW

- Dries out
- Susceptible to frost heave
- Less anchor



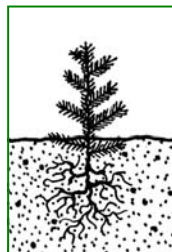
"J" ROOT

- Dries out
- Reduced moisture and nutrient uptake
- Less anchor



ON ROCK

- Decrease in proper rooting
- Limited moisture & nutrient uptake



TOO DEEP

- Suffocates plant
- Prone to collar rot



Bare-root Douglas fir seedlings

The Value of a “Dead Tree”

Dead or partially dead trees left standing are often referred to as snags. These snags, along with downed woody material such as stumps, root wads, bark, limbs and logs in various stages of decay provide an important component in wildlife habitat, from the ground all the way up to the tree canopy.

Wildlife Habitat from the Ground Up

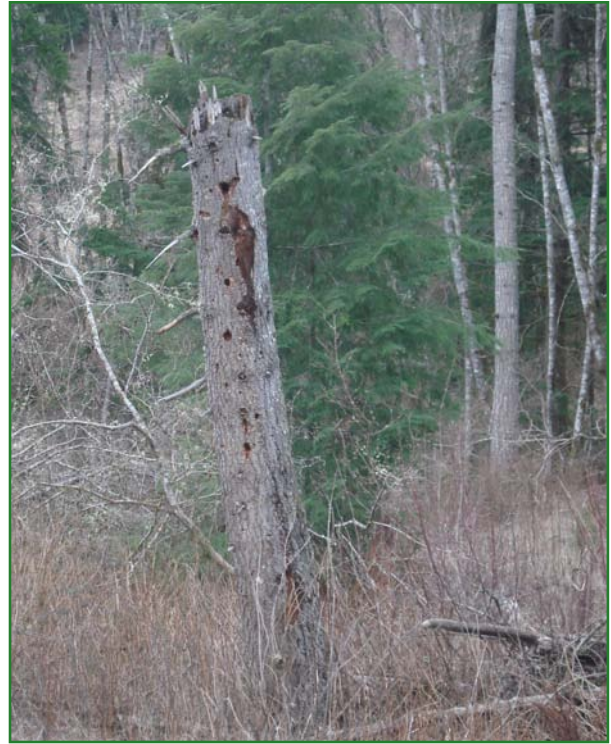
The wet, temperate climate of western Washington provides an ideal environment not only for wood fiber production, but also material decomposition. When wood decays, valuable nutrients are returned to soil that will help new life thrive.

Furthermore, the process of woody decomposition also includes a variety of insects, fungi, and other organisms that are a food source for a vast number of birds, mammals, amphibians and aquatic life. These insect-eating critters act as natural biological regulators to dampen the effects of insect outbreaks, thereby performing an important ecosystem function.

Woody material also creates hiding spaces and shelter from the elements for an array of terrestrial and aquatic life.

One of the key features of snags is their decomposing woody material hosting an array of insects and organisms that are a rich food source for birds and mammals. Woodpeckers and creepers feast on the wood eating insects and provide “sawdust” for ants to process. The soft wood fiber is also easy to hollow out for species that use the space to build their nests, known as cavities. There are only thirty bird species that are capable of making their own nest cavities in trees and are known as primary cavity nesters. Eighty other animal species depend on previously excavated or natural tree holes for their nests, and are referred to as secondary cavity nesters. Moreover, a number of small other mammals use abandoned cavities and loose bark not just for nesting and shelter, but also as a cache for food storage. Lichen growing on the trunks is browsed by deer and elk.

Snags are also an important structure to raptors as the bare branches provide an unobstructed view to perch and hunt for small mammals such as mice, rabbits, and gophers which are often destroyers of young trees.



Over 500 species of birds, 300 species of mammals, 400 species of reptiles and amphibians, and nearly all aquatic life benefit from snags and woody material.

Dead Wood and their hazards

It is an irony that dead and dying trees are key ingredients to a healthy wildlife habitat and yet generate potential hazards to humans. Snags in the home landscape should be kept short enough so not to create a safety hazard if they fall.

Downed wood provides a valuable structure to wildlife habitat, however wood also burns. As people increasingly take responsibility for reducing wildfire hazards around homes, the question arises “How much dead wood is too much?” The objective of fuel reduction in forests is to mimic the effects of once frequent wildfires, and increasing the odds that the overstory trees will survive a blaze. Furthermore, snags and down logs are usually not a fire hazard unless they are within 30 feet of the house.

Although snags and downed wood does present some degree of a fire hazard, management guidelines must be tailored to fit the local needs of the particular kind of wildlife found in the area.

FoodHub: Where food people connect

FoodHub (<http://food-hub.org>) is a new online marketplace to connect Pacific Northwest food buyers and sellers. Food buyers can walk to their computers, type in the product they want- raspberries, organic beef, wild salmon- and quickly access a list of local and regional producers. Food sellers can research market opportunities, promote their products, and create a list of buyers who might be interested in their products. "Foodhub is designed to be a one-stop-shop for the chef who needs six dozen artichokes for a menu special, the baker looking for a local source for flour, or the institutional food buyer whose purchasing power could significantly stabilize a family farm," said Deborah Kane, vice president of Ecotrust's Food & Farms program. Check out this new social venture for the nonprofit Ecotrust and support local agriculture.

Dates to Remember



February 26, Clark CD Board supervisor election, 9 am-1 pm at the District office - Come vote!

- **February 25, 26, & 27**, Clark Conservation District Annual Native Plant Sale order pick-up, 9 am-1 pm at the District office
- **February 27**, Small Farms Conference, OSU Extension, Oregon State University, <http://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu>
- **March 4**, Clark CD Board Meeting, , 7 am- 9 am, at the Cameo Cafe, Vancouver
- **March 13**, Clark County Farm Forestry Assoc. Tree Sale, Battle Ground, contact the District office for more information
- **March 23**, Sustainable Living on Small Acreage workshop, Brush Prairie, WSU Clark County Extension, 397-6060
- **April 1**, Clark CD Board Meeting, , 7 am- 9 am, at the Cameo Cafe, Vancouver
- **April 17**, Small Acreage Expo, WSU Clark County Extension, 397-6060
- **April 17**, Earth Day Celebration: Plant It for the Planet, Clark Public Utilities, www.clarkpublicutilities.com
- **April 22**, Earth Day
- **April 23-25**, Home & Garden Idea Fair, Clark Public Utilities, www.clarkpublicutilities.com

Contact Information

Location:

11104 NE 149th St.
Building C
Brush Prairie, WA 98606



Clark Conservation District

(360) 883-1987 x 5
www.clarkcd.org



USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

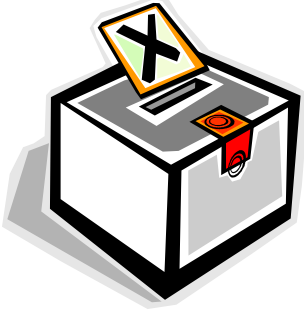
(360) 883-1987 x 3
www.wa.nrcs.usda.gov



USDA Farm Service Agency

(360) 883-1987 x 2
www.fsa.usda.gov

Clark Conservation District Board of Supervisors Election



Come out and vote! *An election will be held February 26 from 9a.m. to 1 p.m. at the District Office at 11104 NE 149th Street, Bldg C, Brush Prairie, Washington.* Any registered voters who reside inside the District boundary may vote for district board member candidates.

The Clark Conservation District offers unique opportunities for citizens to help serve our community and advance conservation practices as a board member of the District. Board members are known as conservation district supervisors and serve without compensation.

The District

The Clark Conservation District was formed in 1942 as a non-regulatory natural resource assistance organization, led by a local volunteer board. The District promotes conservation, protection, and restoration of renewable natural resources within Clark County. This work is conducted through a direct, voluntary working relationship with private landowners. Clark Conservation District Board of Supervisors meetings are the first Thursday of each month at the Cameo Cafe, 7703 N.E. 72nd Avenue in Vancouver.

- In this issue of Clark Conservation News:
- *Planting By a Stream*
 - *Funding for Forestland*
 - *Planting Bare-root*
 - *The value of a "Dead Tree"*
 - *Board election*