

IRRIGATORS REQUEST VOLUNTARY CONSERVATION

Anticipated drought conditions have prompted the Sequim-Dungeness Valley Water Users Association to initiate their drought response program. Current stream flow projections indicate that mandatory reductions in irrigation water withdrawals from the Dungeness River will likely occur in late summer.

As the irrigation season progresses, irrigation water users will be asked to cease any unnecessary uses of irrigation water and where possible, use well water for livestock and essential residential needs. More details on WUA rules can be found at on the Conservation District website: <http://www.clallamcd.org/storage/WUA-RulesRegulations.pdf>.

Funds are available to lease irrigation water from commercial irrigators during the last month of the irrigation season. Contact Washington Water Trust at 206-675-1585 ext. 100 or Amanda@washingtonwatertrust.org for more information.

PREPARE NOW FOR SUMMER DROUGHT

The warm winter we've experienced has been disappointing for skiers and snowboarders and more than a little depressing for ski resort operators, but it could be disastrous for farmers.

The almost non-existent snowpack in the Olympic Mountains (our form of water storage on the Peninsula) signals water shortages this summer. Stream flows are projected to be less than 50 percent of normal, thus Governor Inslee has officially declared a drought emergency.



Rainfall has been at or slightly above normal, so aquifers, thus wells, are not expected to have any serious problems. However, those relying on irrigation ditches and pipelines will very likely run short of water come late summer. Farmers don't have many options when it comes to preparing for drought, but there are plenty of things homeowners can do to conserve limited water supplies.

Please turn to page two for a list of things you can do to reduce your water use in your landscape. Anything you can do to conserve water will lessen the impact on those whose livelihoods depend on irrigation water.

HATLER RE-ELECTED

Sequim-area resident Don Hatler has been re-elected to the Clallam Conservation District board of supervisors. Hatler was the only candidate to file for the position.

According to state conservation district elections rules (WAC 135-110-320), if the incumbent is the only eligible candidate to file for the position, no election is required. Therefore, no polling was conducted.

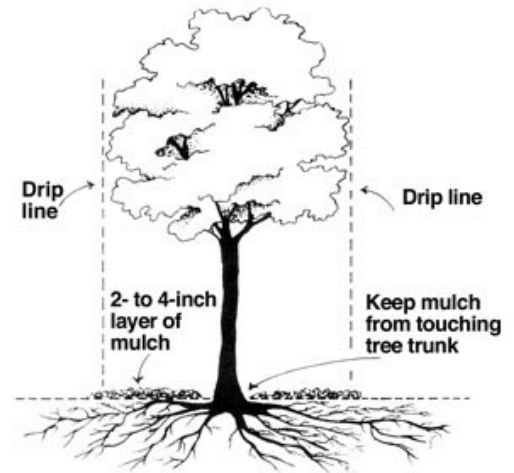
Clallam Conservation District OFFICE HOURS

Our office is staffed Tues. through Thurs.
from 9:00am to 4:00pm.

Mondays and Fridays we are often out doing
field work so please call ahead to make an
appointment if you plan to stop in.

TIPS to PREPARE YOUR YARD and GARDEN for DROUGHT

1. **Forego irrigating the lawn.** Turf grass naturally goes dormant in summer, so consider giving in to a golden lawn instead of a lush green lawn this summer. To help maintain the health of your turf through the dry summer, mow high, 2 ½ inches or more and use a mulching blade. Taller plants equal deeper roots, which means healthier plants. A mulching blade will leave the finely chopped clippings in place to insulate the soil and add water-holding organic matter.
2. **Mulch around perennials, trees and shrubs.** If you apply mulch now while soil moisture levels are high, you'll retain moisture much later into the growing season. Furthermore, mulch inhibits weeds that compete with desirable plants for moisture and nutrients. Mulch is the best insurance you can buy for a healthy landscape.
3. **Prioritize irrigation needs** when things get really dry. Consider what is essential for survival rather than striving for optimum growth. Most well established plants should be able to survive without any irrigation and many others will get by with a good soaking just once per month in June, July and August. Turf grass will bounce back fine in the fall if you apply just one inch of water for each month without rain.
4. **Convert some lawn** into a less water-demanding landscape. Instead of struggling to keep that lawn green this summer, transform it into a carefree bed of drought-tolerant groundcovers, shrubs and perennials. You can start by simply covering the lawn with a foot of mulch this spring or summer. Consider adding deck areas, patios and pathways as alternatives to a thirsty lawn.
5. **Check out our *Conservation Around the House* webpage** for our *Water-Wise Plants for Landscaping* fact sheet and other resources about water conservation in the landscape.
6. **Sign up for our Natural Landscaping course** (see page 3) to learn more about how to design and install a sustainable landscape.



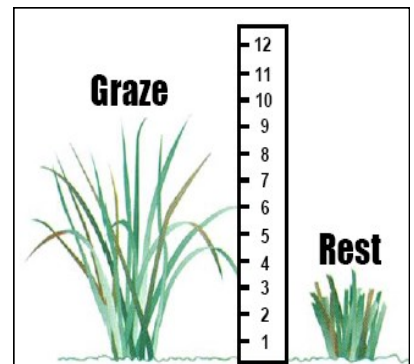
TIPS to PREPARE YOUR FARM for DROUGHT



Install a cistern to capture roof runoff. A half inch of rainwater collected from 1,000 square feet of roof area provides 312 gallons of water. Rainwater collected off large barn roofs can supply water for stock when other water isn't available.

The photos on the left are of a system installed in Clallam Bay. An elevated 1,100 gallon cistern collects roof runoff water and gravity feeds it to a stock tank with a float valve. The water tank straddled by a fence serves two pastures, facilitating rotational grazing.

Rotate animals through pastures, adhering to the take half, leave half rule of thumb. Allow pasture grasses to reach a height of 6" to 8" before grazing and remove animals when the stubble height is no shorter than 3" to 4". This will encourage deeper roots, lessen plant stress and help shorten plant recovery time. More forage will result and healthy plants can deal better with dry periods.



SPRING SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPING CLASSES

Natural Landscaping Course

WHEN: 6:00PM on April 9, 16, and 23 and three Saturday field trips

WHERE: Evening classes at Dungeness River Audubon River Center, field trips TBA

COST: \$25 materials fee, call 360-775-3747 x 5 or email: info@clallamcd.org to register

Learn how to design and install a sustainable landscape that will work for you and the environment. Using Permaculture design principles, you will learn how to evaluate the unique site conditions of your property, prepare a landscape plan suited to those conditions, and develop an implementation strategy.



Mock Orange

Landscaping with Native Plants Field Workshop

WHEN: Saturday, April 25 at 1:00PM

WHERE: Dungeness Recreation Area

COST: FREE, but pre-registration is required, call 360-775-3747 x 5 or email:

info@clallamcd.org

Learn to identify over 25 native trees and shrubs and how to incorporate them into your landscape while hiking two miles of trails near the Dungeness Wildlife Refuge.



Red Flowering Current

WORKSHOPS FOR HORSE & LIVESTOCK OWNERS

Manure Management and Parasite Control

WHEN: April 29 (Wednesday) from 3:00 to 4:30 pm

WHERE: Trailside Ranch (a horse boarding facility near Robin Hill Farm Park)

COST: FREE, but pre-registration is required, call 360-775-3747 x 5 or email: info@clallamcd.org

Join Conservation District staff and veterinarian Dr. Tara Black for a talk on developing a parasite management plan for your farm, followed by a tour of Trailside Ranch to learn about their manure management system and mud-free paddocks.

WEED WATCH: TANSY RAGWORT

- ◆ Invasive, biennial weed found in pastures, roadsides, vacant land
- ◆ 1st year plant has rosette of lacy (ruffled), bright green leaves
- ◆ 2nd year plant sends up flower head, multiple spikelets of bright yellow flowers
- ◆ Mature plant grows 1-4 feet.
- ◆ Toxic to livestock both in pasture and dried in hay.
- ◆ Call Clallam County Noxious Weed Control at 360-417-2442 to learn more about controlling this, and other pasture weeds.



Less Weeds, More Feed

WHEN: May 20, 5:30-7:30pm

WHERE: Robin Hill Farm Park (meet in Pinnell Road parking lot)

COST: FREE, but pre-registration is required, call 360-775-3747 x 5 or email:

info@clallamcd.org

Presenters include Clallam Conservation District staff and Clallam County Noxious Weeds Coordinator Cathy Lucero. Feel free to bring weed samples for identification and advice on control.

- Identification and control of poisonous and noxious weeds in pastures (feel free to bring weeds from your pasture for identification)
- Pasture management tips, including rotational grazing/fencing options, stock water, winter confinement areas, and when and how to overseed/seed
- Taking soil tests to determine fertilizer and lime needs

MANURE SHARE PROGRAM – “SHARE THE WEALTH”

If you have more manure than you can use on your farm, consider sharing. The Clallam Conservation District *Manure Share Program* connects people who have extra manure with people who want manure. If you have extra horse or livestock manure, call us and ask to be added to the “Supplier List.” If you are seeking manure, call us to request a copy of the Supplier List.”

It’s a good idea to inquire about the type and quality of feed the animals are fed and the bedding used before getting manure. Be sure to properly compost manure before adding to your soil to help ensure weed seeds that may be in the manure are killed. For tips on composting manure, visit our website at www.clallamcd.org/manure-share/.



Cover manure piles with a tarp or roof to help ensure nutrients are retained in the manure/compost rather than leaching out with rainwater.

WSU Clallam County Extension has recently trained Master Composters (similar to the Master Gardeners program) available for hands-on help with composting. They are also in the process of installing compost demonstration areas in Sequim and Port Angeles for the public to view working compost systems and learn more about how to compost. Visit their website to learn more about how WSU Clallam County Extension can help you with composting <http://ext100.wsu.edu/clallam/waste-reduction-program/> or contact Meggan Uecker at 360-417-2279 or muecker@co.clallam.wa.us.

SOIL TESTING AVAILABLE



It’s a good idea to get a soil test for your gardens, lawns and pastures before adding manure, compost or fertilizer.

For \$20, Clallam Conservation District will ship your soil sample to a lab to test the nutrients your soil may need (nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, sulfur) and the soil pH to help you achieve optimum growing conditions.

We also loan out soil probes for easy collection of soil samples. For more information, call the District office or visit our website at www.clallamcd.org/soil-testing. Soil tests are accepted on the first and third Wednesday of the month and results take two to three weeks to get back from the lab. We’ll help you interpret your test results, too.

Planning the Future of Your Farm Workbook Available

The Office of Farmland Preservation has prepared a workbook about keeping farmland in production and/or “in the family” as it passes to the next generation. The workbook can be downloaded at ofp.scc.wa.gov/succession-planning/. Hard copies can be requested by email at ofp@scc.wa.gov or by phone at 360-407-6200.

2015 PLANT SALE

Thank you to everyone who ordered native plants from us this year. We are pleased to report over 12,200 plants found homes with about 180 Clallam County families.

A special word of appreciation goes out to our volunteers. Seventeen amazing folks donated a total of 107 hours of their time to make our plant sale a success. We couldn’t have done it without them! A thank you also goes out to Merrill & Ring Tree Farm for donating tree bags used for bundling orders and Steve Johnson for the use of his facilities at Lazy J Tree Farm.

2014 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Completion of a Pollution Identification & Correction (PIC) Plan for the Sequim-Dungeness Clean Water District was the highlight of 2014. The PIC plan, developed by a group of stakeholders and led by the Conservation District serves as the guide for prioritizing water quality cleanup project areas and targeting water pollution sources. Pilot implementation of the plan will occur in the Meadowbrook Creek/Cooper Creek basins starting this spring.

We initiated an onsite septic system repair cost sharing program in 2014, the first of its kind in the state. Through this new program, we provided technical and financial assistance to three homeowners to replace failing septic systems that impacted water quality. We're expecting this cost-sharing program to be a key to the success of the PIC program.

Additional accomplishments include the following:

- ✓ Technical assistance to 51 horse and livestock operators
- ✓ 3 heavy use areas and 2 waste storage structures installed
- ✓ 64 participants in four horse and livestock water quality workshops and presentations
- ✓ 212 participants in 11 sustainable landscaping workshops, courses and presentations
- ✓ Completion of the Dungeness Irrigation Group ditch piping
- ✓ Designs completed for 2 more irrigation ditch piping projects
- ✓ Design work completed for 1 aquifer recharge project
- ✓ Correction of fish-blocking culverts on Tumwater Creek and Field Creek utilizing funds from the Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFFPP)
- ✓ Environmental education activities conducted with 478 elementary students
- ✓ 10,000 native trees and shrubs were sold
- ✓ 91 soil tests taken



Waste storage structure with ecology blocks and concrete slab.

Expenditures for 2014 totaled over \$1.7 million. Grants – primarily state – comprised over 97 percent of our revenues. Funding of conservation practice implementation accounted for 81 percent of all expenditures, and over 65 percent of the expenditures were for irrigation water conservation projects.



Young assistants helping out at a horse and livestock farm tour.



Before: Five foot diameter undersized culvert on Field Creek impeding fish passage.



After: 50 foot span bridge to allow proper fish passage.



Enviroscape watershed demonstration being given to students.

Conservation Sponsors

Conservation News sponsorships cost \$50 a year for business names printed every issue or \$100 for a name every issue and a business card once a year.

Sponsorships help us offset costs associated with distributing the Conservation News, which now reaches 3,500 readers four times a year.

Thank you sponsors!!!



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Clallam Conservation District is a sub-division of state government created to promote the stewardship and conservation of natural resources in Clallam County. Public meetings are held at 3:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month at the Clallam Conservation District office, 228 W First St., Suite H in Port Angeles (top floor of the Armory Square Building).

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Joe Murray, Chair
Ben Smith, Vice-Chair
Don Hatler, Auditor
Matt Heins, Member
Robert Beebe, Member

DISTRICT STAFF

(360) 775-3747

Executive Director: Joe Holtrop
Admin. Assistant: Beth Loveridge
Conservation Planners:
Meghan Adamire & Jennifer Bond

Office Hours

Mon. & Fri. - by appointment
Tues. - Thurs. - 9:00am to 4:00pm

Join over 950 folks who are now receiving their newsletter by email. Call us at (360) 775-3747 or send an email to: info@clallamcd.org to start receiving your newsletter electronically.

WANT TO HELP US SAVE A TREE?

- ⇐ Drought Preparation
- ⇐ 2014 Accomplishments
- ⇐ Natural Landscaping Classes
- ⇐ Horse and Livestock Workshops

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**CLALLAM CONSERVATION DISTRICT
228 W. First St., Suite H
PORT ANGELES, WA 98362**

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