

# The Conservation CONNECTION



KING CONSERVATION DISTRICT

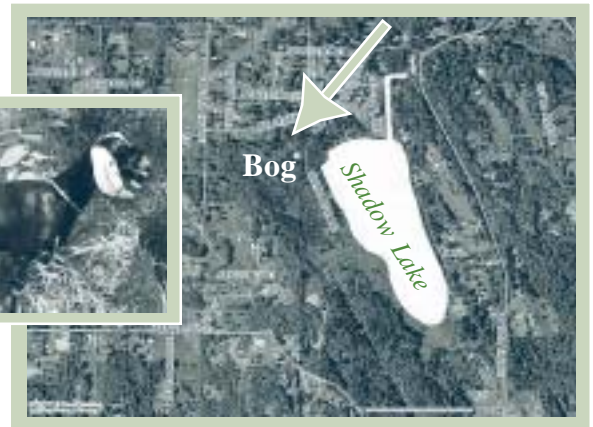
SUMMER 2005

*Promoting sustainable uses of natural resources through responsible stewardship.*

## King CD Annual Meeting and Frog Frolic!

The District annual meeting will be held Sunday August 14<sup>th</sup> from 1 PM until 4 PM in conjunction with the "Frog Frolic" to benefit the Shadow Lake Bog Project. The event is located at 21818 – 184<sup>th</sup> Ave SE Renton WA. Food, live music, awards, door prizes, nature walks and information booths are all on the agenda so make plans to join us. It is open to all and family friendly so mark your calendars and join us.

A special appearance will be made by Violet, the conservation district goat, who will demonstrate her noxious weed eating ability. No registration necessary, but for more info or questions call 425-277-5581 x. 103 or geoff.reed@kingcd.org.



*Come to see who will receive the District 'rock' award for best partnering organization, best conservation landowner, local government, and more!*



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Change Service Requested

KING CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
935 Powell Avenue S.W.  
Renton, WA 98055

# Volunteer Opportunities



The staff of the King Conservation District invites you to participate in a variety of projects where you will learn about restoring streams and wetlands, using native plants to restore local ecosystems, and techniques to enhance fish and wildlife habitat. These projects are both fun and educational! When you choose a volunteer date that suits your schedule, make sure to connect with the volunteer coordinator at least three days in advance to confirm your participation and get directions. Contact Amy, (425) 277-5581 ext 129, amy.tippery@kingcd.org, for more information on these and other volunteer opportunities.

## Garden of Goo

Native plants grown from locally collected seed are the cornerstone of conservation and ecological restoration. Learn about and actively participate in growing native plants for stream and wetland restoration and enhancement projects. Activities include starting plants from seed and cuttings, and transplanting and maintaining nursery stock. Activities will occur at the King Conservation District nursery facility in Renton from **9am– 12pm**.

### Scheduled volunteer dates include:

**August:** 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> , 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>

**September:** 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>



*Northwood Junior High School Volunteers*



*Please take a moment to fill out the following form if you would like to be added to our mailing list, receive notice of upcoming issues to view on-line, or if your address is changing.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to King Conservation District, 935 Powell Avenue. S.W., Renton, WA 98055 or call (425) 277-5581.

Thanks for participating! Your reply will ensure that the **Conservation Connection** will be delivered promptly.

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**Editor:** Geoff Reed

**Design Layout:** Roseanne Campagna

**Contributors:** Debbie Meisinger, Brandy Reed, Amy Tippery, Clare Flanagan, Sarah Ogen

**King Conservation District** is a subdivision of state government created to promote the wise use of natural resources. A five-member board of supervisors, representing local interests, hold meetings on the second Wednesday of each month at our office in Renton. The public is encouraged to attend.

# Cooperator Profile



## Case Study: The Binghams

Steve and Leslie Bingham recently purchased a five and one-half acre piece of property just outside of Enumclaw, and called the KCD for assistance in developing a Farm Plan. They have five horses that they would like to keep on the property and would also like to relocate a barn from their old property to the new parcel. I met with Steve for our initial visit, and we walked the property discussing his plans for the place while I took note of problem areas that will benefit from implementing some Best Management Practices.

### Existing Conditions:

- **Manure** – the current system for dealing with manure and used bedding is to pile it outside the old barn door. A system such as this invites a myriad of problems including pests, nutrient laden run-off, and unstable footing.

*Manure piles left uncovered do not compost properly and waste nutrients that leach into the soil.*



- **Mud** – the horses on the property are being confined behind the barn in several small runs which are very muddy. Inadequate gutters and downspouts only add to the problem by allowing rainwater to gather in puddles in the confinement areas. Not only does this system make for an unpleasant chore time, it may also lead to health problems for the horses.



*Muddy paddocks increase breeding of unwanted insects, and can cause hoof problems.*

*Inadequate downspouts and gutters add to the mud problems in the paddocks and around the barn. A solution with a good drainage system will help keep the roof water runoff clean, and will go a long way to help the groundwater stay clean too.*



- **Pasture** – the pasture contains a good deal of undesirable forage species and several different moisture zones. Overuse of the wetter areas will result in muddy pastures and an increase of weed species, soil erosion problems, and groundwater contamination. The buttercup and velvetgrass present are not good sources of nutrients and the buttercup can be toxic if taken in high amounts.



*Toxic weeds reduce the amount of useful forage for the horses. Creeping buttercup can cause blisters if the horses graze it.*

After our tour we discussed the areas that need improvement and came up with some solutions that will work for the Binghams and for their new property.

In our next issue we will go over these solutions in more detail.

# Upcoming Events



*These businesses support conservation practices. Thank you sponsors for supporting us in our ongoing programs. To become a sponsor, contact Roseanne Campagna at 425-277-5581 ex 125.*



## Free! Educational Horse Farm Tours

Take time this summer to learn about new updates in horse farm management by visiting farms that demonstrate ways to make your horse life easier and more chore-efficient. Join fellow horse owners for these FREE educational events at horse farms that have done an excellent job at managing manure, reducing mud and making life better for their horses, neighborhood AND the environment!

**Wild & Woolly - North Bend, WA**  
**Thursday, August 4th - 6:30 to 8:30 pm**

**Simpatico Stables - Redmond, WA**  
**Thursday, August 25<sup>th</sup> - 6:30 to 8:30 pm**

To register and receive a map contact the King Conservation District at 425-277-5581, ext. 125 or [Roseanne.Campagna@kingcd.org](mailto:Roseanne.Campagna@kingcd.org).

### *Upcoming "Down on the Farm" Bio-Diesel Workshops*

*- dates and locations to be determined-  
Contact [roseanne.campagna@kingcd.org](mailto:roseanne.campagna@kingcd.org) to get on the announcement list.*

Tom Hanson  
**International Forestry  
CONSULTANTS, INC.**  
11232 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE #201  
Kirkland, WA 98033  
(425) 822-5915  
Fax (425) 822-5975  
tom@infoforestry.com  
www.infoforestry.com  
**American Tree Farm Certifying Body**

206-949-9867  
**www.EquineTractor.com**



## Protecting Water Quality and Fish & Wildlife Habitat One Stream - One Wetland at a Time

Do you have a stream or wetland on your property? Does your Farm Management Plan prescribe a buffer of native trees and shrubs adjacent to an aquatic area on your property? If so, the District is interested in working with you on a buffer enhancement project.

Each year the District designs and installs up to 10 planting projects on private and public property. Projects vary in size and scope based on the natural resource management concerns associated with the property and the goals of the individual landowner. In addition to planning projects, the

District also offers free site visits to provide general pointers on protecting water quality, and enhancing fish and wildlife habitat.

If you're interested in learning more about the District buffer enhancement program, or would like help implementing a project on your property, contact Debbie Meisinger at (425) 277-5581 ext. 119 or [debbie.meisinger@kingcd.org](mailto:debbie.meisinger@kingcd.org), or Brandy Reed at ext. 120 or [brandy.reed@kingcd.org](mailto:brandy.reed@kingcd.org).

# Upcoming Events



## Envirothon Results!

This year's regional Envirothon event was a great success! The event was held March 17<sup>th</sup> at Whatcom County's Camp Lutherwood, near Bellingham. Thirteen teams participated and the winners from each county became eligible for the State competition. Following are the winning teams from the Envirothon regional event and went on to the State competition!



*Tahoma's Team  
3 accepting 1st  
place award at  
regionals!*

King County: **1st Place Tahoma HS Team 3**  
Snohomish County: **1st Place Sky Valley HS Team 2**  
Whatcom County: **1st Place Lynden Christian HS**

The State competition, first 1) place trophy went to Clarkston High School from Asotin County CD - and will go on to compete at the **National Canon Envirothon July 18-24, 2005, in Springfield, Missouri**. Second 2) place went to Asotin High School, Asotin County CD, and Third 3) place went to CASEE - Clark County CD. It was held at Camp Roganunda near Naches in Yakima County. The event included a visit to Boulder Cave which became the topic for the environmental issue on Cultural Landscapes.

Our King County team from Tahoma HS took 4<sup>th</sup> place at the state competition. There were 22 teams at State this year. Good going Tahoma!

For more information on the Envirothon, you can visit the website at [www.envirothon.org](http://www.envirothon.org). Contact Roseanne Campagna, [roseanne.campagna@kingcd.org](mailto:roseanne.campagna@kingcd.org), at the King Conservation District at 206-764-3410 ext 125 to answer questions or request assistance.

*The Envirothon is the largest Natural Resources Environmental Competition in North America. It is a problem solving competition for high school students, grades 9 through 12. Students are challenged to use critical thinking skills and conduct a hands-on investigation of environmental topics in five categories: Water, Soil, Forestry, Wildlife and a Current Environmental Issue. This year's theme is "Managing Cultural Landscapes".*

## Summer Landowner Forums in Enumclaw

Do you own streamside property and / or livestock and are faced with recent developments such as the CAO and special management problems? Do you have problems such as eroding banks, flooding due to narrow culverts, or overtake by invasive weeds?

Then you might want to join one of the three free Summer Landowner Forums hosted jointly by Mid-Puget Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group (Mid-Sound) and King Conservation District (KCD) and hear about the different options that we might have to offer to you.

Streamside landowners and everybody who is interested in habitat conservation and restoration is invited to attend a short presentation about our organization and the work we do, and a following van tour to different restoration sites on the Enumclaw Plateau.

The Forums are scheduled for

**Wednesday, August 17th, 2005 - 6:30 pm til 8:30 pm**  
**Wednesday, Sept. 14th, 2005 - 6:30 pm til 8:30 pm.**

Meeting point is the Enumclaw Public Library at 1700 First Street in Enumclaw. The Forums serve to provide a room for landowners to express their concerns, and for KCD and Mid-Sound to present options and alternatives, to engage in communication and discussion, and to show local restoration sites.

The Summer Landowner Forums are part of Mid-Sounds Outreach activities on the Enumclaw Plateau *to make the salmon part of the Enumclaw community.*

Most people associate the Plateau with farming and logging—after all, it is not only one of King County's most important dairy lands, but also one of the State's largest horse farming areas. Many people don't know that Coho and Chinook salmon are still naturally spawning and rearing in Newaukum Creek, making it one of the most productive tributaries to the Green River.

This Outreach campaign aims to raise awareness of salmon and salmon habitat and to conserve and restore healthy salmonid populations in Newaukum Creek, while preserving the character and the beauty of the Plateau.

Hear more about salmon and salmon habitat needs, and learn what YOU can do, at KCD's and Mid-Sound's Summer Landowner Forums!

For more information, and to RSVP for the date of your choice, please contact *Nathalie Stamey* with the *Mid Puget Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group* at (206) 529-9467 or [nat@midsoundfisheries.org](mailto:nat@midsoundfisheries.org).

# New Programs



## Get ready. Get set. Get in CSP.

Thanks to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's new Conservation Security Program (CSP), meeting the highest levels of conservation stewardship can be a very rewarding experience. That's good news for producers who have a history of investing in stewardship activities, and who currently meet the requirements for the CSP program.

### Eligibility Criteria for CSP:

Currently, the minimum requirements for entering into the program are addressing soil and water quality concerns – on all or part of the operation – depending on the tier for which a producer wants to qualify. To meet the soil quality concerns producers will need current soil tests that are no more than five years old from each field. NRCS soil sampling intensity is based on the Pacific Northwest land grant university guidance (PNW-570-E) <http://eesc.oregonstate.edu>. Soil quality minimums on cropland are considered achieved when the soil conditioning index value as determined by NRCS is positive. A copy of the soil conditioning index can be found at <http://soils.usda.gov/sqi/files/SCIguide.pdf>.

Water quality minimums on cropland are achieved if the benchmark inventory indicates current levels of treatment meets or exceeds NRCS technical guides. These specific resource considerations are nutrient application, pesticides, salinity, and sedimentation in ground and surface water. Water quantity concerns need to

be addressed on irrigated cropland through moisture sensing/monitoring devices and soil tests.

### Other Eligibility Criteria for CSP:

- The applicant must be able to document their stewardship work, including conservation practices installed on the farm by land use. This will also include prescribed grazing records, manure application records, soil and manure test results, plant tissue tests and irrigation management records, depending on your operation

- The applicant must be in compliance with highly erodible and wetland compliance provisions.
- The applicant must have an active interest in the agricultural operation, have control of the land for the life of the contract and be a food and fiber producer.
- The applicant must share in the risk of producing any crop or livestock and be entitled to a share in the crop or livestock marketed from the operation.

### CSP Payments:

Payments for the program can include four components:

1. An annual stewardship component for the benchmark conservation treatment;
2. An annual existing practice component for maintaining existing conservation practices;
3. A one-time new practice component for specific additional needed practices; and
4. An enhancement component for exceptional conservation effort.

The three CSP tiers are capped at \$20,000, \$35,000 and \$45,000 annually with contract lengths of five years for Tier I and 5-10 years for Tier II and Tier III.

**CSP Watershed for 2006 funding will be announced later this year.**

If you think you qualify for CSP program or are interested in future participation visit: [www.wa.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.wa.nrcs.usda.gov) or contact the local **NRCS Renton Field office:** (425) 277 5580 ext 124



- The agricultural operation must be privately owned land or Tribal land, the majority of which must be located within a selected watershed.

# Features



## “Drip and Splat”

By Tami Pokorny  
Jefferson County Natural Resources

There were once two raindrops, each searching for a pool of friends. One raindrop, *Drip*, preferred the slower pace of the country life. He descended through the sky towards an expansive forest of older trees. The second raindrop, *Splat*, rode the nearest breeze toward a suburban rooftop.

*Drip* landed on the bough of a cedar, dropped from one branch to another, trickled down the tree's trunk and onto a pillow of moss. He stayed with the moss for quite some time. Then more rain fell and *Drip* washed out of the moss and into the soil. He meandered slowly downward through decaying leaves, forest duff, and into a thick layer of organic soil called humus.

Time passed and then there was an even bigger storm. *Drip* joined other raindrops making their way to the water table. Together they percolated through the gritty remains of a glacier's passing until they reached the aquifer. They occupied countless tiny spaces between pieces of sand and gravel and permeated the bedrock in little cracks and crevices. Many wonderful years passed cavorting with the other raindrops until one day *Drip* emerged into a beautiful river and flowed into the sea, to begin his next journey in the great water cycle.

In established forests like the one *Drip* landed in, there's no natural fast lane for water—except rocky outcrops or cliffs. Slick, non-porous surfaces are rare otherwise, so *Drip's* route through the soil was anything but a straight line. He was coaxed along by gravity and, alternately, held back by plants and decaying vegetation. In forests, the rich layer of decaying leaf litter, duff, and humus acts like a very large and very absorbent sponge.

When this forest sponge captures rain, surface runoff is reduced—at least until the sponge becomes completely saturated. In areas of extensive native forest, flooding is less frequent and less severe than in developed areas.

Our second raindrop, *Splat*, collided with a rooftop and took a wild, fast ride from there. He could have hit a road, driveway, parking lot, highway, or sidewalk, but his story would be pretty much the same. Even lawns wouldn't have slowed his pace much because they're not very sponge-like compared to forest soils. And lawns and landscaping also frequently contain animal wastes and pesticides.

Almost from the moment he hit the roof, *Splat* was practically run over by countless other raindrops, all rushing downhill. There was no time to talk.

Gravity was in complete control. *Splat* sped on, via gutters, storm drains, and pipes to the nearest stream and then, in a rushing torrent, into Puget Sound. Along the way he and the other raindrops dislodged soil particles and rushed them along, causing erosion and sedimentation. They also picked up gangs of pollutants. Pesticides, heavy metals, motor oil, and animal waste: it all came along for the ride. *Splat* swirled around with countless raindrops, but hardly had a moment with any of them. Besides, they were all painfully aware of how dirty they all were.

Did you ever think about how water gets clean? A shower, for a raindrop, is a trip through plants, roots, bacteria and soil. Impurities get bound up or broken down into less harmful constituents. In developed areas, raindrops stay dirty because they aren't filtered through the soils that would clean them up. Instead they're forced into rivers and streams in a great pulse that can become a costly and dangerous flood. Stormwater, laced with pollution and laden with sediments eroded enroute, degrades the spawning and rearing habitat available to salmon and is one reason why several species are threatened with extinction.

By the way, raindrops that never touch soil don't feed aquifers. That's unfortunate because aquifers supply groundwater to wells, and “baseflow” to rivers or streams, during late summer and early fall when salmon and people need water the most. So, when native soils are damaged or removed, there are often two consequences for nearby rivers: flooding and, perhaps surprisingly, drought.

Fortunately, low impact development (LID) practices can help reduce pollution and flooding by protecting natural watershed hydrology. Permeable pavement, green roofs, rooftop rainwater harvesting, and innovative foundations reduce surface runoff. But the best answer to flooding and stormwater pollution is leaving the native vegetation and soils undisturbed. To the degree that they're left in place during development, they'll do an excellent job of managing your stormwater and helping to keep water clean and pure.

The moral of the story: *Drip, don't Splat!* The forest soils of Puget Sound continue to be scraped up and compacted by pavement or lawns. For a future of clean water, a better water supply, more salmon, fewer shellfish closures, reduced danger of flooding and landslides, maintain as much natural forest and undisturbed soils as you possibly can on your lot or acreage.

For more information on low impact development, visit the Puget Sound Action Team website: <http://www.psat.wa.gov/Programs/LID.htm> and download *Natural Approaches to Stormwater Management* at [http://www.psat.wa.gov/Publications/LID\\_studies/LID\\_approaches.htm](http://www.psat.wa.gov/Publications/LID_studies/LID_approaches.htm)

# Spotlight on Conservation



## War of the Weeds! Totem Lake Wetland Revival Week a Solid Success

Thanks to the dedication of a group of teens, Totem Lake Wetland is on its way to winning the war of the weeds. For a week in late June, 8 teens from around the county hacked and extracted hundreds of pounds of invasive Himalayan Blackberry, Deadly Nightshade and trash from Totem Lakes native plant buffer. These young stewards were participating in the Youth Volunteer Corps (YVC), a summer program designed to empower teenagers in making a difference in their communities.

Some students participate in volunteer efforts like these to fulfill the service learning requirements of their high schools. Some, like Zoe Vartanian, do it because they like it. "I've pulled blackberries for a week before, in the previous summer, and I thought it would be fun to make (Totem Lake) look prettier. Well, you know clear the blackberries to make it look better. Its better for the earth"



*2005 YVC crew at the Totem Lake Overlook, from left to right (top): Andrew Smyth, Zoe Vartanian, Amy Tippery (KCD Volunteer Coordinator), Berit Erickson, Sabina Altus, Randy-Scott Lokus, Patrick Turner. (bottom): Erik Tichenor, Alex Fricke.*

Parents play a huge role in encouraging and supporting their kids when doing YVC projects like the one at Totem Lake. Zoe's mom, Marie, liked the fact "They had a bird specialist from the Audubon society and learned a lot about birds, (Zoe) made a chickadee box, it seemed to be really educational". She was also "so impressed with the YVC in how they put all the groups together and get such a wide variety of projects and variety of locations my kids can go to".

Why is this Totem Lake place such a big deal? And why would eight teenagers spend their summer vacation pulling spiny weeds to save it? If you haven't already heard, wetlands help improve water quality and provide valuable habitat for fish and wildlife. The King Conservation District has been planting and maintaining buffers of native plants around the lake for over a decade. These buffers help preserve and enhance the important features wetlands give our community. For example, our unique and little known wet spot in the heart of Kirkland is an oasis where amazing wetland functions take place right under our noses. Floods are absorbed, water is magically cleaned from the pollution of streets and parking lots, Mountain Beavers raise families and migratory birds stop to feed and rest on their thousand-mile long journeys up and down the Pacific Flyway. Though its name sparks images of a suburban strip mall, it is much more than its reputation. Totem

Lake is an important asset to the Kirkland area and the whole Lake Washington Watershed.

Just as volunteers like our outstanding young YVC participants work to keep it healthy, you too can be a part of the Totem Lake Wetland Revival! Volunteers are welcome throughout the year to make a difference in this wild and urban sanctuary by joining us in our stewardship efforts. For more information, please contact the Amy Tippery, the Volunteer Coordinator at (425) 277-5581 ext. 129. For information on YVC programs look for them on the web at <http://www.campfire-usa.org/YVC>.



*Alex Fricke, Zoe Vartanian and Erik Tichenor removing blackberries from a native rose patch.*

## King Conservation District Contacts

Office Phone:

425-277-5581 Ext 105

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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Vice-Chair: Scott Wallace

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### KCD E-MAIL ADDRESS:

district @kingcd.org

WEB SITE: <http://www.kingcd.org>