



Thurston Conservation District  
(360) 754-3588  
2918 Ferguson St SW Ste A Tumwater WA 98512  
[www.ThurstonCD.com](http://www.ThurstonCD.com)

**Cover Photo Captions**

(from left to right)

Back:

Culvert replacement FFFPP on Scatter Creek.

Timber management plan on Rochester property.

Mycelium bag from mycoberm nutrient filtration project at Oyster Bay Farm.

TCD's poultry processing equipment in action.

Front:

SSGREEN students plant natives along Woodard Creek in partnership with TC Stream Team.

BMP implementation: Construction of heavy use area and cross fencing.

Riparian restoration project in the Deschutes watershed.

BMP implementation: New manure storage facility replaces uncovered manure piles.

# The Changing Face of Conservation

**Publication Sponsored by:**



## Steps Toward Conservation

Silver Springs Organics has big plans in term of conservation for their facility! The 5-acre composting area will undergo construction to include a covered roof to keep rainwater from mixing with the compost. Leachate generated by the compost will be stored in above-ground tanks and recycled back into the compost when more moisture is needed. The current storm water pond is to be cleaned out and used only for rainwater collection from the roof runoff. In addition, a new composting floor will feature a built-in aeration system that can add and reduce air flows as the food, yard and wood waste heats up and decomposes. With these improvements, Silver Springs Organics will be able to meet current and future capacities, while protecting their surrounding resources.

## Silver Springs Organics





# Our History



The Thurston Conservation District opened its doors in 1948 as the Thurston County Soil and Water Conservation District. Much has changed at the district over the years and so has the face of conservation in Thurston County.

Beginning mainly as providers of technical assistance to rural farmers, the Thurston Conservation District has diversified its interest in conservation and shaped its focus around the community it serves.

Keeping up with the times, Thurston Conservation District now boasts a large variety of

programs, relating to the conservation of a multitude of natural resources. The district has delved into habitat restoration, nutrient management, planting plans, soil sampling, crop advisement, livestock care, riparian restoration, fish passage projects, organic farming and so much more.

Due to TCD's *voluntary, non-regulatory* nature, the district has always been held in high review with the landowners in Thurston County. This helps put conservation on the ground. This unique characteristic allows the district to adapt with the changing trends and demographics of the area to meet the needs of the residents it serves.

Through strong partnerships, Thurston Conservation District ensures that conservation needs are met.



# Partnerships

**Thurston Conservation District believes in the importance of strong community partnerships. Working cooperatively with partnering conservation organizations helps to get conservation on the ground and adequately meet the needs of the landowner. Partnerships allow entities to pool together resources and make bigger impact on the conservation of Thurston County's natural resources.**



Above is a selection of TCD's featured partnerships.



# Programs

## Agricultural Plastics Recycling



Located throughout Lewis, Mason, Pierce and Thurston Counties. Recycles large quantities of haylage wrap, shrink wrap, net wrap, nursery pots, twine and bailing straps on farms and at local feed stores.

## Clear Choices For Clean Water

Designed to improve water quality in Puget Sound by providing incentives such as native plants to residents of the Shellfish Protection District in exchange for doing simple actions such as picking up pet waste.



## Conservation Planning



Site specific management plans to help landowners implement Best Management Practices to solve natural resource issues.

## Equipment Rentals

Rental equipment provided to the community: Featherman Pro Poultry Processing System, Manure Spreader, Spin Spreader, Weed Wrench, Backpack Sprayer, miscellaneous hand tools.

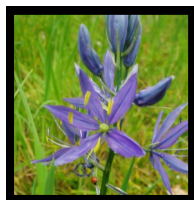


## WRIA 13 Salmon Habitat Lead Entity



Stakeholder citizens, Tribes, municipalities, NGO's, agencies and citizens all working in collaboration towards the restoration and conservation of the most beneficial habitat for salmon in Deep South Sound.

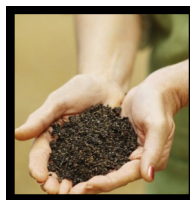
## Native Plant Sale



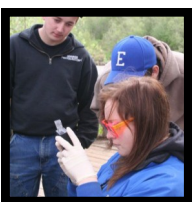
Occurring in February, this native-only plant sale features a wide variety of bare root trees, shrubs and groundcovers.

## Soil Sampling

Soil samples are processed and analyzed at a lab for variety of circumstances: nutrient levels for vegetable gardens to manure sampling for dairy farmers.



## South Puget Sound Regional Envirothon



Happening in May of each year at the Nisqually Wildlife Refuge, this natural resources competition for high school students tests their knowledge in: aquatics, fish and wildlife, forestry, soils and a current environmental issue.

## South Sound GREEN

Partnering with local schools to bring students into the field for water quality monitoring, Nearshore field trips and service learning projects. Students show off their knowledge at the annual GREEN Congress.



## Technical Assistance



Landowners in Thurston County request a variety of technical assistance: native plant consultations, pasture management, weed identification, livestock care, erosion control, crop advice, habitat management and riparian restoration.

# Kirsop Farms

**Location: (Littlerock, WA) - Chehalis Watershed**

**Partnerships: Thurston Conservation District, Natural Resources Conservation Service**



Kirsop Farm's organic lettuce.

Colin Barricklow and Genine Bradwin own Kirsop Farms, a medium-scale organic produce farm that is beginning to diversify into poultry, grain, seed and mushroom production. "Kirsop Farms began as a one acre farm, with a commitment to marketing produce locally through farmers markets, the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, and direct local wholesale deliveries. Now managing 30 acres, Kirsop is still committed to local marketing of fresh high quality produce!" says Genine Bradwin.

**"The most valuable technical assistance that TCD staff has provided has been their knowledgeable advice on harvesting seed and grain crops. It's nice to be able to call people who have the expertise to help!"**

**Genine Bradwin**



Kirsop Farms, Littlerock Rd.

CSAs rely on community support and commitment to local farming operations. Individuals purchase a "share" of that season's crop and receive weekly deliveries of fresh produce.

Thurston Conservation District has provided a great deal of technical assistance over the years to the farm through soil testing, nutrient management, poultry processing equipment rentals and cover crop advice. Last year, Kirsop Farms continued their trend of sound conservation practices by receiving an NRCS EQIP grant for soil nutrient management. TCD staff continue to provide services to the farm by assisting with the completion of the EQIP project.



# Circle Hawk Farm

**“It takes a community. TCD is truly a community resource.”**

***Shelly Bentley***

**Location: Spurgeon Creek (Olympia, WA) - Deschutes Watershed**

**Partnerships: Thurston Conservation District, Thurston County Stream Team, Capitol Land Trust, South Sound GREEN, WRIA 13 Salmon Habitat Recovery Lead Entity, Wild Fish Conservancy, South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group, Washington Conservation Corps**



Circle Hawk Farm  
2008 TCD Wildlife Steward of the Year

**“TCD has been a great resource, living library of sorts, of people I could call and discuss my ideas with. The initial planting in 2008 really provided a boost to get a lot of restoration work started.”**  
***Shelly Bentley***

Owner Shelly Bentley purchased Circle Hawk Farm with her late husband, Mark Bentley, in June of 2002. “I have been a willing partner yet I owe all the physical restoration work accomplished here to TCD for also seeing the potential and making it happen.” says Shelly.

Plans for the restoration of Circle Hawk Farm began in 2004, when owner Shelly Bentley met with members of the **Wild Fish Conservancy (WFC)** and the **South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group (SPSSEG)** to discuss the riparian issues present on her farm. In the Fall of 2005, staff at the **Thurston Conservation District (TCD)** met with Shelley to begin move forward with a Riparian Planting Plan for Circle Hawk Farm. This restoration project was implemented in partnership with WFC, SPSSEG and volunteers



WCC crew begins restoration project (2008).



TCD restoration planting (2010).

from the **Washington Conservation Corps (WCC)**. Over 1,000 native plants were planted during this project. TCD implemented a second restoration planting in 2010.

In the Fall of 2008, the **South Sound GREEN (SSGREEN)** program began using this site for semi-annual water quality monitoring of Spurgeon Creek. **Komachin Middle School** students continue to monitor the water quality at this site. In addition, SSGREEN partnered with Komachin Middle School and **Thurston County Stream Team (TCST)** in 2009 to kick off their annual event: Riparian Restoration “Day of Caring”. On this day of service, youth volunteer their time removing invasive plant species and planting native trees and shrubs.



Komachin Students testing dissolved oxygen levels in Spurgeon Creek.

TCST continues to host work parties at Circle Hawk Farm to keep up on the efforts to remove invasive plant species. Work party volunteers have included students from the **New Market Skills Center** and the **Washington Home-school Association**. Circle Hawk Farm is further involved in the community by offering an internship program through **The Evergreen State College** for students interested in learning about riparian restoration and habitat conservation. Recent focus has been paid to the Bentley property by another TCD partner, **Capitol Land Trust (Capitol)**. Through the **WRIA 13 Salmon Habitat Recovery Lead Entity** (housed at TCD), Capitol has obtained grant funds from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) to acquire a 14-acre conservation easement over the property. This easement includes 1800 linear feet of Spurgeon Creek riparian habitat and associated uplands. Additionally, the grant funds will replace a pair of failing culverts that are restricting fish passage with a bridge, providing 5.2 miles of unimpeded spawning and rearing habitat for salmonids in this critical cold water refugia.



TC Stream Team riparian restoration planting.



Dense riparian cover on Spurgeon Creek.