



JEFFERSON COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

WINTER 2022/2023 NEWSLETTER

A WORD FROM OUR CHAIR

Well, we were able to get through this past year without any serious COVID-19 illnesses among our board, staff, and families. Nevertheless, the pandemic continues to interfere with our lives and the ways we go about conducting business. It has disrupted supply chains and made it difficult to find contractors to bid on projects. This has created challenges for estimating project costs, but we're working through it.

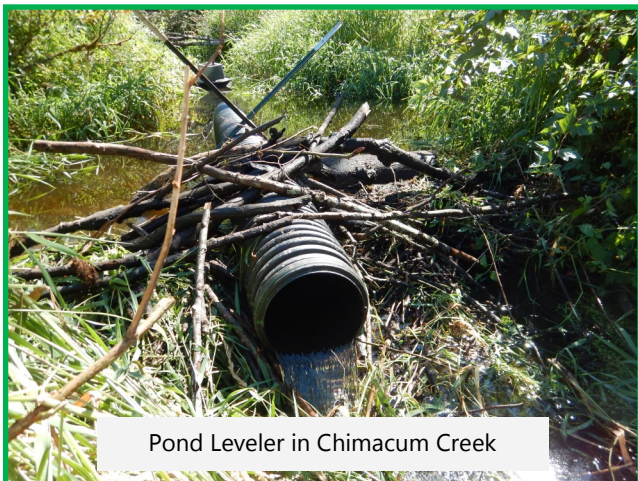
In February, we adopted our long-range plan ([available HERE](#)). This plan, which is mandated by state statute, provides our operational roadmap for the next five years.

In case you haven't heard, flooding and drainage management in the Chimacum watershed continue to be issues, impacting farmland and riparian restoration sites alike. During this past summer we worked with stakeholders to prepare a summary of the Chimacum Drainage District, its history, past and present issues, challenges, and opportunities. The report is available [HERE](#). The intent of the report is to inform an upcoming decision-making process regarding potential reactivation of the Drainage District. The County Commissioners are expected to form a focus group of stakeholders to examine possible next steps.

On a related note, this past summer we partnered with the North Olympic Salmon Coalition, utilizing some grant funding they had and their Washington Conservation Corps crew to install pond leveling devices on nine beaver dams. These devices allow the beaver dams to remain but prevent pond flooding from doing excessive damage to surrounding land and infrastructure by maintaining a certain pond elevation.

Looking forward to 2023, through a Department of Ecology water quality grant to Jefferson County Public & Environmental Health, we will be leading an effort to develop a strategic plan for Chimacum watershed drainage system maintenance, water quality improvement, and habitat enhancement. Our long-running water quality monitoring program will continue, funded in part through this same grant. And, we have several cost-share projects to complete before the end of June. Let's put 2022 behind us and hope 2023 lives up to our expectations.

— Al Latham



Pond Leveler in Chimacum Creek



Washington Conservation Corps Crew

Chimacum Creek Temperature Monitoring

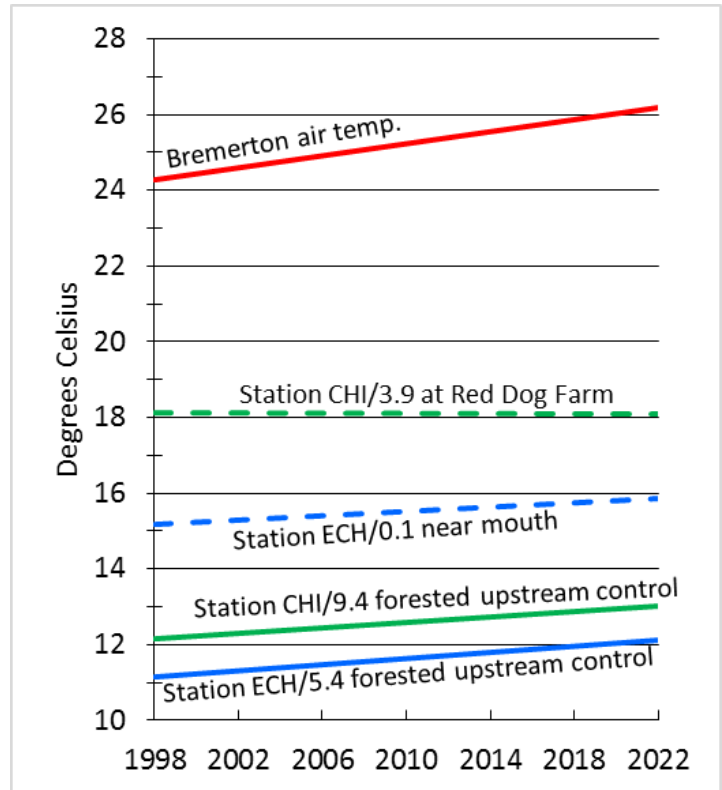
Temperature is one of the most important environmental influences on salmonid biology. The ambient water temperature determines the salmon's internal temperature and salmon thrive in cold water. If water temperature is too high, salmon become more susceptible to disease and such things as feeding rate, growth, metabolism, development of embryos and alevins, and timing of life history events such as upstream migration of adults, spawning, and downstream migration of smolts, can be adversely affected. The Washington Department of Ecology uses a 7-day average maximum water temperature of 16 degrees Celsius as the upper limit for safe salmonid habitat.

By the early part of the last century most of the lowlands in the Chimacum watershed were cleared of the historical old growth coniferous forest and converted to open farmland, thus exposing streams to sunlight. Beginning in the 1980's, the Conservation District began working with willing landowners to re-establish forested riparian buffers along the creek. In 2002, the establishment of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) gave tree-planting a boost. Under this voluntary program, landowners are compensated for converting agricultural lands along streams back to riparian forest with annual rental payments. The North Olympic Salmon Coalition and the Jefferson Land Trust have also replanted acres of forested riparian habitat along the creek.

The District began monitoring stream water temperature in 1998 with data loggers that record the water temperature every hour. In 2022, nineteen of the 25 stations monitored on Chimacum Creek and its tributaries exceeded the 16°C standard on an average of 57 days (range 4-96 days). The six stations that did not exceed the standard were in upstream forested areas.

As reported in the [2015 Chimacum Comprehensive Report](#), the average daily high temperature for the months of July and August decreased about 1°C from 1998 to 2013 at Station CHI/3.9, which is downstream of over five miles of open agricultural land. Over the same time period on East Chimacum Creek, temperature decreased about 2°C at downstream station ECH/0.1. Unfortunately, the data collected from 2013 to 2022 show a less encouraging trend. The graph shows that the 23-year trend at Station CHI/3.9, which had been decreasing, is now flat; and the trend at Station ECH/0.1 on East Chimacum Creek is no longer decreasing, but is now increasing. Of the 25 stations monitored in 2022, 22 have increasing trends, one is flat, and two are decreasing.

What has made the difference? Rising air temperature. The average July/August maximum daily air temperature was 1.5°C higher for the 2014-2022 period than for the 1998-2013 period. The graph below shows that the Bremerton air temperature (average daily highs for July and August) increased about 2°C from 1998 to 2022. It is notable that from 1991 to 2022 the Bremerton July/August maximum temperature increased at a rate of 0.7°C per decade, a seven-fold increase from the 0.1°C per decade rate of increase from 1952 to 1990.



As in much of our world, temperatures are rising in the Chimacum watershed. Many efforts are underway to combat global climate change, but these are long-term strategies. We know that planting more trees will help by taking more carbon out of the atmosphere.

We also know that shade produced by woody riparian vegetation has a cooling effect and helps mitigate rising air temperatures. This is a short-term action that can benefit Chimacum Creek's salmon and trout. Let's plant more trees!

The Conservation District has programs to help establish riparian buffers. If you are interested, please contact us at info@jeffersoncd.org or 360-385-4105 to learn more.

NATIVE PLANT SALE

Through our plant sale last year, we got 12,000 native trees and shrubs into the community where they will provide wildlife habitat and carbon sequestration, while adding beauty to our landscape.

Our online store opens **December 2nd** for this year's sale. In an effort to reduce our labor requirements, we're still paying to have the wholesale nursery supply us with bundles of ten plants per species. We will be doing all online sales with a credit or debit card. There will be no in-person sales on pick-up day. Just drive up and we'll put your order right into your car. Details about plant offerings and pricing are posted on our [website](#). We have over 30 species to choose from, including a handful of new species in stock this year! Be sure to place your order early to ensure the best species selection. We will accept online orders through January 27th, while supplies last.



Vaccinium ovatum

NATIVE PLANT SALE WORKSHOPS

To help you plan out your plant order and prepare for proper bare-root plant care, we're offering a two-part workshop series on native plants. Workshop #1 focuses on how to select the right plants for your site. Workshop #2 is about how to care for and plant bare-root trees and shrubs. There is no cost to attend.

Workshop #1: Selecting the Right Plants for Your Site

When: December 8, 2022 from 4:00pm to 5:30pm

Where: Jefferson County Library, 620 Cedar Avenue, Port Hadlock.

Workshop #2: Bare-Root Plant Care and Planting

When: January 11, 2023 from 4:00pm to 5:30pm

Where: Jefferson County Library, 620 Cedar Avenue, Port Hadlock.

SPRING NATURAL LANDSCAPING COURSE

For more in-depth instruction about how to design, install, and maintain a sustainable landscape, consider signing up for our Spring Natural Landscaping Course. Two separate courses will be offered. A course with classes in Port Hadlock will emphasize large lot landscaping, while one in Port Townsend will have a more urban focus.

Urban/Small Lot Focused Course

When: classes: April 11, 18, 25 4:00-5:30pm

field trips: April 13 and 20 4:00pm-5:30pm

Where: Port of Port Townsend Pavilion Building in Port Townsend

Large Lot Focused Course

When: classes: April 12, 19, 26 4:00-5:30pm

field trips: April 14 and 21 4:00pm-5:30pm

Where: WSU Extension Classroom in Port Hadlock

Conservation district manager Joe Holtrop will teach participants how to analyze the unique ecological conditions of their properties and develop site-specific landscape plans designed to meet homeowner needs while being in harmony with the environment. Holtrop, who holds master's degrees in landscape architecture and adult education, has been teaching about sustainable landscaping for over 30 years. In addition to his formal education, he draws on his permaculture design training and experience, emphasizing the principle of working with rather than against nature.

Through three classes and two field trips, each 1 ½ hours in length, course participants are coached through the steps necessary to prepare individualized landscape plans that will save time and money while also enhancing wildlife habitat and biodiversity. Emphasis is on native plants and sustainable landscape design and maintenance practices.

A \$15 registration fee covers the cost of the book *Grow Your Own Native Landscape*, access to downloadable reference materials, and facility rental. The cost for couples that share one book is \$20. Registration information will be available online in early 2023. Space is limited, so early registration is encouraged.

Registration for Jefferson County Conservation District educational events is online at <http://www.jeffersoncd.org/news-events/>. For more information, contact us by email at jholtrop@jeffersoncd.org or by phone at 360-554-8066.



Course Field Trip

CONSERVATION DISTRICT SUPERVISOR ELECTIONS and APPOINTMENTS

Each conservation district in Washington is governed by a five-member Board of Supervisors, as set forth under [RCW 89.08](#). Three supervisors are elected by registered voters in the conservation district, and two are appointed by the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC). Supervisors serve without compensation and set policy and direction for the conservation district.

Jefferson County Conservation District (District) has one elected and one appointed Board position open in 2023. [Click here](#) to learn more about conservation district supervisor responsibilities.

2023 ELECTION

A **mail-in only election** will be held on March 8, 2023 for the District's full-term elected position. The elected position whose term is expiring in May 2023 is currently held by Julie Boggs.

ELECTION PROCEDURES AND ASSISTANCE

All election-related forms, correspondence, inquiries, and requests for assistance or special accommodations should be directed to the District's Elections Supervisor, Tracy Kier, by email at tkier@jeffersoncd.org, by telephone at 360-385-4105, or by mail to 205C W Patison Street, Port Hadlock, Washington, 98339. The District office is currently open to the public by appointment only. Additional information can also be found on the [District's website](#), on the [WSCC website](#), and under the [Washington Administrative Code \(WAC\) Chapter 135-110](#), or by contacting Bill Eller of the WSCC Elections Office at beller@scc.wa.gov or 509-385-7512.

INTERESTED CANDIDATES – FILING DEADLINE 5:00 P.M., FEBRUARY 6, 2023

Candidates must be registered voters who reside within the boundaries of the District, which includes all of Jefferson County, including the City of Port Townsend. For more information, please see the [WSCC Guide to Elections for Conservation District Candidates](#). Interested Candidates must file the required [Candidate Information for the Office of Elected Supervisor](#) form with the District office on or before 5:00 p.m. (PT) on February 6, 2023. Candidate forms submitted by mail postmarked no later than February 6, 2023, will also be accepted.

ELIGIBLE VOTERS AND BALLOTS

Eligible voters are Jefferson County registered voters. The deadline to request a ballot is 5:00 p.m. (PT) on February 16, 2023. [Click here for a ballot request form](#). Requests can be submitted by mail, postmarked on or before February 16, 2023; by phone; or by [email](#). Ballots will be mailed to requestors during the week of February 20, 2023. Completed ballots must be returned to the District office either by mail, postmarked on or before March 8, 2023; or by placing the ballot in the ballot drop-off box located outside the District office on or before 7:00 p.m. (PT) on March 8, 2023.

2023 APPOINTMENT

A full-term, appointed position on the District Board of Supervisors is available for appointment by the WSCC in 2023. The appointed position whose term is expiring in May, 2023 is currently held by Al Latham. Follow this [link](#) for more information on conservation district appointments. An applicant must be a registered voter in Washington State. Applicants for appointed positions do not have to live within the District to apply. For more information, or to complete and submit an application, applicants can visit the [WSCC website](#). Applications for appointed positions must be received by the WSCC on or before **March 31, 2023**.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Al Latham, Chair
Julie Boggs, Vice-Chair
Lige Christian, Auditor
Laurie Hannan, Member
Vacant, Member

ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR

Erik Kingfisher

DISTRICT STAFF

District Manager: Joe Holtrop
Office Manager/Financial Specialist: Tracy Kier
Fisheries Biologist/Habitat Specialist: Glenn Gately
Conservation Planner: Sierra Young

Contact Us

Please email: info@jeffersoncd.org
or Call: 360-385-4105

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Find us at Jefferson
County Conservation
District.