



## **5-Year Plan (2022 to 2027)**

# **Jefferson County Conservation District**

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### **Purpose of the Five-Year Plan**

As required by state statute, this plan outlines the goals and priorities for renewable natural resource conservation that Jefferson County Conservation District has identified to pursue over the next five years. Most of the actions listed are those that are within the authority and current or anticipated capacity of Jefferson County Conservation District. However, several proposed actions fall under the purview of other agencies and organizations. Where this is the case, Jefferson County Conservation District has identified the action as a priority that will be promoted through outreach, advocated for, or otherwise supported.

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### **Organization of the Jefferson County Conservation District**

A political subdivision of the State of Washington – authorities, powers and structure contained in RCW 89.08.

- Created in 1946 to help Jefferson County residents achieve sustainable land use goals, while protecting and enhancing natural resources.
- Territory includes all of Jefferson County, including the City of Port Townsend.

### **Function of the Jefferson County Conservation District**

To make available technical, educational, and financial resources, whatever their source, and coordinate them to meet the needs of local land users and managers while conserving soil, water, and related natural resources.

### **Who We Serve & Why**

The District provides programs and services to District residents and land users in order to maintain and restore a healthy, functioning environment that will continue providing benefits for all of society, including future generations, while also helping current land users realize their land-use objectives. We strive to serve all residents of the District, recognizing that people of color, indigenous communities, low income individuals, immigrants and refugees are disproportionately impacted by ecological decline. We strive to practice equity and inclusion by listening and learning from our valued and diverse communities and being ready to adapt and design more intentional programs and services or providing additional support in order to be more equitable in our program and service delivery.

### **Mission of the Jefferson County Conservation District**

Jefferson County Conservation District strives to maintain and expand economically viable agriculture and forestry operations, while protecting and improving the natural resources of Jefferson County by providing technical assistance to District land users, residents, community groups, and agencies.

### **Vision of the Jefferson County Conservation District**

- A community that has a balanced approach to protecting and utilizing its unique natural resources.
- Economically viable and environmentally sustainable working lands (farms and forests).
- Healthy watersheds with free-flowing and unpolluted waterbodies that support the people, fish, and wildlife of the area.

### **Values of the Jefferson County Conservation District**

- Commitment to promoting natural resource conservation through local voluntary efforts.
- Productive working lands and their contributions to our local community and society.
- Recognition as an accountable, available, trusted, and collaborative partner in local conservation efforts.
- The rights of all people, present and future, to live in a healthy environment.
- The rights of all land users to realize the diversity of values from the lands they manage.
- Community-based cost-effective common-sense solutions.
- Voluntary participation in District programs.

- The role of scientific data as a basis for decision making.
- Education and understanding as essential for management of renewable natural resources.
- Our role as a non-regulatory liaison between private land managers and other government agencies.
- Collaborative partnerships with land managers, and other agencies and organizations.

### Land Manager Needs

- Programs and technical assistance from JCCD staff.
- Chimacum Creek agricultural drainage management assistance.
- Assistance in managing beaver activity that impacts agricultural lands.
- Regulatory certainty – e.g., water supply.
- Assistance with understanding and addressing issues brought by regulatory agencies.
- Clarity on who to contact for conservation work.
- Recognition of the legal framework for voluntary conservation work and landowner stewardship.
- District education programs that bring greater knowledge to residents about natural resources and funding for those programs.

### Natural Resource Data & Information:

Geographic Area: 1804 square miles of land (83%) and 379 square miles of water (17%). The county is divided into three parts by landform:

- East Jefferson is along the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Admiralty Inlet, and Hood Canal and is where most of the development is and the population resides.
- Central Jefferson is uninhabited and includes Olympic National Forest and Olympic National Park;
- West Jefferson along the Pacific Coast.

Approximately 60 percent of the county comprises the Olympic National Park and Olympic National Forest. The Hoh Reservation and a small corner of the Quinault Reservation are in the western portion of the County.

Population: The year-round resident population is approximately 33,000. Over the last decade, the County has experienced annual growth just over one percent. The vast majority of the population resides in East Jefferson. Over 91 percent of the population is white (compared with 78.5% statewide), and 38 percent is age 65 or older (compared with 16% statewide).

Guiding Data: The District’s water quality database, including the *2015 Chimacum Creek Comprehensive Report* and the *2020 Discovery Bay Watershed Water Quality and Fishes Comprehensive Review* have guided decision making about water quality improvement and habitat enhancement priorities. The District has been collecting water quality data for streams in eastern Jefferson County since 1993 and has been sharing it with agricultural and other interested landowners.

- [Department of Ecology impaired waters listings.](#)
- [Federal Endangered Species Act \(ESA\).](#)
- Washington State listings of [Threatened & Endangered Animal & Plant Species](#)
- [Puget Sound Partnership Action Agenda](#)
- [Jefferson County Department of Environmental Health](#)
- [Washington Department of Health Shellfish Growing Areas Annual Reports](#)

### Criteria for Selecting Conservation Priorities:

- Documented research and local knowledge and experience, including over 25 years of water quality data collected by the District and shared with partners
- Partner organization needs and opportunities, including the potential to leverage resources to address multiple needs and concerns
- Funding availability

## **Climate Change and Adaptive Management**

Jefferson County Conservation District acknowledges the impacts of climate change and endeavors to pursue and implement programs that reduce or mitigate climate change, as well as the programs that help land users and residents adapt to unavoidable changes. Among the many existing and ongoing programs that address this issue are farmland and forestland protection, riparian restoration, forest stewardship and health, wildfire protection/preparedness, promoting the planting of native trees and shrubs, waterwise landscaping, water conservation, rainwater harvesting, water quality protection and improvement, and research.

## **Geographic Priority Areas**

Geographic priority areas (GPAs) are areas of focus identified because of their documented resource concerns, particular vulnerability, or special significance to the community. Generally, but not always, GPAs are recognized beyond the local community, such as regionally (e.g., Puget Sound), state or nationally. With such recognition, these areas are high priorities for grant funding. GPAs are target areas for programs and services; however, unless restricted by funding limitations, programs and services are available to everyone in the District.

## **Goals and Measures of Success**

Achievement of goals is ultimately measured in terms of environmental outcomes, such as water quality improvements, more sustainable water supply, and greater biodiversity. Work toward accomplishing environmental outcomes, which may take decades to realize, can be measured through outputs, or steps taken to achieve outcomes. For example, workshops are held in order to promote certain environmentally sustainable behaviors; however, it is very difficult to determine if or when the desired behaviors are adopted. Therefore, the number of participants in the workshops – outputs – serves as a metric for evaluating the success of the activity in lieu of the actual behavior. Similarly, although a goal may be the implementation of conservation practices that benefit water quality, actions taken toward achievement of that goal, such as technical assistance provided or conservation plans prepared, both of which are outputs, serve as measures of success toward achieving the desired outcomes.

## Natural Resource Conservation Goals and Priorities to Achieve by 2027

**Goal: Economically and environmentally sustainable working lands.**

**Desired Outcome: Agricultural producers have long-term economic viability and natural resources are managed for environmental benefits and future generations.**

**Geographic Priority Area: WRIA 17 (Quilcene-Snow Watershed)**

### Priority Actions:

- 1. Assist with reactivation of Chimacum Drainage Improvement District (DID) and development of management plan.**

Measures of Success:

- See proposed **Milestones, Timeline and Actions** following goals section.

- 2. Provide technical, and, when necessary, financial assistance to farm operators.**

Measures of Success:

- Number of farm operators receiving technical assistance annually.
- Number of conservation plans prepared annually.
- Number of farm soil samples processed and tests interpreted annually.
- Number of conservation practices implemented/acres benefited annually.

- 3. Conduct workshops/farm tours to showcase sustainable farming operations and facilitate farmer to farmer contacts.**

Measures of Success:

- Number of tours held annually.
- Number of tour participants.

- 4. Promote and support weed control by partnering with Jefferson County Noxious Weed Control Board and WSU Extension.**

Measures of Success:

- Number of individuals assisted/referred annually.

- 5. Help support sustainable local food production through participation in Jefferson County LandWorks Collaborative.**

Measures of Success:

- Number of programs and projects assisted.
- Number of individuals assisted.

- 6. Help protect farmland from development through participation in Jefferson County LandWorks Collaborative.**

Measures of Success:

- Number of projects assisted.
- Acres of farmland protected.

**Desired Outcome: Forestland owners have long-term economic viability and natural resources are managed for environmental benefits and future generations.**

**Geographic Priority Area: WRIA 17 (Quilcene-Snow Watershed)**

### Priority Actions:

- 1. Assist forestland owners with forest stewardship and wildfire prevention/preparedness planning.**

Measures of Success:

- Number of forestland owners receiving technical assistance or referred for technical assistance to others annually.
  - Number of stewardship plans prepared annually.
- 2. Conduct forestry workshops/tours to showcase forest stewardship.**
- Measures of Success:
- Number of workshops/tours held annually.
  - Number of workshop/tour participants annually.
- 3. Assist forestland owners with implementation of practices that promote forest health.**
- Measures of Success:
- Number of forestland owners assisted annually.
  - Number of forest health practices implemented/acres benefited annually.
- 4. Help prevent protect forestland from development through participation in Jefferson County LandWorks Collaborative.**
- Measures of Success:
- Number of projects assisted.
  - Acres for forestland protected.

**Goal: Abundant and clean water.**

**Desired Outcome: Water supplies meet quantity and quality requirements for human needs and healthy aquatic habitat.**

**Geographic Priority Area:** Chimacum watershed

**Priority Actions:**

- 1. Improve and protect water quality following pollution identification and correction (PIC) procedures.** PIC procedures include identification of potential pollution sources through sound water quality monitoring, livestock inventories, and collaboration with Jefferson County Environmental Health. Corrective actions are achieved through public outreach and education, and technical and financial assistance to land managers to implement appropriate conservation practices.  
Measures of Success:
  - Water quality data collected, analyzed, and summarized.
  - Number of farm operators receiving water quality related technical assistance annually.
  - Number of practices implemented annually that address water quality concerns.
- 2. Assist with the management of runoff, including roof runoff collection and storage, onsite runoff retention, and irrigation water management.**  
Measures of Success:
  - Number of roof runoff systems installed annually.
  - Number of cisterns installed annually.
  - Number of other projects/practices implemented to better manage and retain runoff.
  - Number of irrigation water management plans prepared annually.

**Goal: Thriving aquatic and upland habitat.**

**Desired Outcome: Ecological functions and habitat are restored for species listed as threatened, endangered or of concern, and biodiversity is enhanced.**

**Geographic Priority Area:** Jefferson County-designated critical areas and Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife priority habitats.

**Priority Actions:**

**1. Restore ecological functions to riparian buffers.**

Measures of Success:

- Number of annual CREP enrollments.
- Miles of riparian buffer restored annually.

**2. Restore ecological functions to channelized streams.**

Measures of Success:

- Number of projects planned.
- Number of projects/practices implemented.
- Miles of stream channel re-meandered.

**3. Correct fish passage barriers.**

Measures of Success:

- Number of barriers corrected.
- Miles of habitat made accessible.

**4. Promote and assist with habitat enhancement and wildlife damage control, including beaver management.**

Measures of Success:

- Number of individuals assisted annually.
- Number of habitat projects/practices implemented annually.

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## **Outreach & Education and District Operations Goals and Priorities**

**Goal:** Empower Jefferson County residents to be good stewards by instilling a conservation ethic.

**Desired Outcome:** Residents are good stewards of natural resources and look to the District as a reliable, valued and trusted source of conservation information and assistance.

**Priority Actions** (see Milestones, Timeline and Actions below for more details):

**1. Utilize various media and partner with other organizations to inform the public about District programs, services, and education opportunities.** Media include, but are not limited to, the District website, Puget Sound CDs Better Ground website, newsletter, press releases, community events, and social media.

Measures of Success (more details are listed under **Milestones, Timeline and Actions** section):

- Number of annual inquiries tracked by topic.
- Newsletter distribution numbers.
- Number of press releases submitted annually.
- Number of community events held or partnered with annually.

**2. Educate residents about sustainable landscaping and benefits of native plants.**

Measures of Success:

- Number of plants sold during annual native plant sale.
- Number of customers purchasing native plants annually.
- Number of sustainable landscaping workshops conducted annually.
- Number of participants in sustainable landscaping workshops.

- 3. Develop, adapt, and distribute natural resource conservation and best management practice publications for land managers.** Publications may include BMP technical guides obtained from other sources.

Measures of Success:

- Number of publications developed/adapted.
- Number of publications distributed annually.

- 4. Inform key decision makers about District accomplishments and needs.** Key decision makers include, but are not limited to, legislators, county commissioners, Washington State Conservation Commission, Washington Association of Conservation Districts, and others.

Measures of Success:

- Number of annual contacts with key decision makers.

**Goal: Implemented five-year plan.**

**Desired Outcome: District operations are adequately funded and District complies with all laws and regulations.**

**Priority Actions:**

- 1. Effectively and efficiently leverage Rates & Charges and obtain new revenues to implement five-year plan.**

Measures of Success:

- Number of grants applied for.
- Number of grants awarded and funding amounts.
- Reports of accomplishments resulting from Rates & Charges.

- 2. Employ, develop, and retain staff necessary to implement five-year plan.**

Measures of Success:

- Development and implementation of individual employee training plans.
- Cross-training of staff on essential skills and tasks.
- Annual employee performance reviews.
- Monthly reports to the board of supervisors.

- 3. Maintain effective and efficient operations.**

Measures of Success (see Milestones, Timeline and Actions below for details):

- Timely adoption of policies necessary to guide all programs, activities, and personnel management.
- Preparation of comprehensive Policies & Procedures Manual.
- Preparation and adoption of annual plans and budgets.
- Timely preparation and submittal of annual State Auditor's Office report.
- Timely preparation and submittal of grant and other progress reports.
- Compliance with Conservation Commission Conservation Accountability and Performance Program standards.
- Satisfactory audits.
- Properly conducted board of supervisor elections.
- Properly conducted board of supervisor appointments.

## **Milestones, Timeline & Actions**

**Goal: Economically and environmentally sustainable working lands.**

**Desired Outcome: Agricultural producers have long-term economic viability and natural resources are managed for environmental benefits and future generations.**

**Measurable Goal: Reactivation of Chimacum Drainage Improvement District by end of 2022 and development of management plan by end of 2024.**

Milestones	Timeline	Actions
Define issues, needs and barriers	July 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Form Drainage Improvement District advisory group. Recruitment for advisory group will include, at a minimum, key landowners, Jefferson County Conservation District, Jefferson County Environmental Health and Public Works, Jefferson Land Trust, North Olympic Salmon Coalition, WSU Extension, Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe, Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe, Skokomish Tribe, Washington Departments of Fish &amp; Wildlife and Ecology, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and be chaired by County Commissioner whose district encompasses most of the watershed.</li> <li>2. Assemble resources from other Puget Sound drainage improvement districts (DID) and interview key personnel to further define DID activities, budgets and funding options/structures.</li> <li>3. Prepare white paper summarizing issues, proposed activities and budgets, funding options, and barriers.</li> </ol>
Engagement community	Ongoing  December 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct outreach, including development of website page dedicated to Chimacum DID, preparation of press releases, and social media outreach.</li> <li>2. Prepare landowner/stakeholder survey with input from advisory group.</li> <li>3. Survey/interview landowners.</li> <li>4. Summarize survey results.</li> <li>5. Hold public meeting.</li> <li>6. County Commissioners appoint DID board (assuming approval of DID reactivation from community).</li> </ol>
Prepare plan	July 2024	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Prepare draft DID management plan (following steps in the <i>Drainage Management Guide for Whatcom County Drainage Improvement Districts</i> as a template). Proposed content includes: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Overview of Chimacum DID, including history, purpose, powers and duties, and relevant regulations</li> <li>b. Descriptions and maps of watercourses, including current conditions and impacts to adjacent upland areas</li> <li>c. Inventory and map of other infrastructure</li> <li>d. Map of significant natural features</li> <li>e. Identification and description of routine maintenance activities</li> <li>f. Identification and description of special maintenance projects</li> <li>g. Identification of permitting requirements and descriptions of associated best management practices</li> <li>h. Description and map of water quality impairment reaches and improvement opportunities</li> <li>i. Descriptions and maps of habitat improvement opportunities</li> <li>j. Monitoring, reporting and adaptive management</li> <li>k. Technical guides for routine maintenance activities</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Seek community and regulatory input on draft plan.</li> <li>3. Revise and finalize plan.</li> </ol>

**Goal: Empower Jefferson County residents to be good stewards by instilling a conservation ethic.**

**Desired Outcome: Residents are good stewards of natural resources and look to the District as a reliable, valued and trusted source of conservation information and assistance.**

<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Actions</b>
Presence at city and county planning meetings	At least quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager regularly attends meetings</li> <li>• Manager ensures quarterly check-ins with County Commissioners, County and City staff</li> </ul>
Host workshops	Ongoing  Spring and Fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue meeting with WSU small farms coordinator and LandWorks Collaborative to plan events</li> <li>• Plan and deliver regularly scheduled workshops of general public interest, including sustainable landscaping workshops and classes</li> </ul>
Update JCCD Brand	December 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design new logo and letterhead</li> <li>• Update all education and outreach materials with unified logo and design</li> <li>• Take advantage of 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary as an outreach opportunity</li> <li>• Update website</li> <li>• Utilize social media</li> <li>• Partner with Better Ground and Orca Recovery Day for outreach</li> </ul>
Tech Guides and Fact Sheets	December 2022 Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further build and develop resource library of local technical guides and fact sheets for Jefferson County residents</li> </ul>

**Goal: Implemented five-year plan.**

**Desired Outcome: District operations are adequately funded and District complies with all laws and regulations.**

**Measurable Goal: By December 2022, prepare a Policies and Procedures Manual with adopted policies and procedures to guide all programs, activities, and personnel management.**

<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Actions</b>
Policies and Procedures gaps identified	March 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. District Manager and Office Manager compile, categorize and review existing policies and procedures to identify gaps</li> <li>2. District Manager prepares draft Policies and Procedures Manual table of contents for staff and board review and approval</li> </ol>
Draft Policies and Procedures Manual prepared	December 2022  June 2023	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. District Manager prepares draft Policies and Procedures Manual for staff and board review and approval</li> <li>2. Draft Policies and Procedures Manual revised and adopted</li> </ol>

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