
Salmon Creek Clean Water Grant (G0200287)
Final Report
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Ecology

Submitted by Clark Conservation District

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INTRODUCTION

In partnership with Washington State University Extension, Clark County Public Works, and Clark Public Utilities, Clark Conservation District began implementing the Salmon Creek Clean Water Project (No. G0200287). The project was funded through the State of Washington Department of Ecology Centennial Clean Water Fund.

This project addressed the need for water quality programs to reduce fecal coliform and sediment from entering Salmon Creek. We assisted livestock owners in improving management practices and landowners in identifying and correcting domestic septic system problems. The focus of this project was on education and technical assistance to provide tools for landowners to plan and implement conservation plans and practices for improved water quality.

SCOPE OF WORK SUMMARY

Task 1 – Project Administration/Management

We administered and managed this project effectively by maintaining project records, submitting vouchers and progress reports in a timely manner, and carrying out this project in accordance with the required performance items and completion dates.

Task 2 – Contact Landowners/Develop Database

We developed a mailing database using our updated GIS system for rural agriculture and agri-forest zoned lands within the Salmon Creek basin. We were able to distribute letters and information to 1747 landowners within the watershed. We created information sheets, brochures, and letters (sample letter Appendix A) describing best management practices for livestock and explained the assistance we had available. The mailings were very successful. Over 71 calls to the office were results of two separate letters mailed to landowners in the Salmon Creek watershed.

We created the Manure Exchange List and acquired a manure spreader and trailer for use by county residents. The Manure Exchange List is a database of landowners who have excess livestock manure. We outreached and advertised this list to connect people who are looking for manure fertilizer with sources of manure around the community. There are currently 63 people on the Manure Exchange List. Appendix B is the information sheet we use for the Manure Exchange. Appendix C is a sample of the advertising for the program.



We conducted meetings with various stakeholders to discuss creating a Regional Manure Composting Facility. Our staff attended a seminar and field trip on commercial composting. We investigated the feasibility of a facility in our community that would accept manure from landowners to produce commercial grade compost. The two largest roadblocks to the facility are the amount of land it would take and the amount of people needed to operate it. We are also undecided about the economical viability of a composting facility. We determined that there is a need for such a facility in this county, but unfortunately, we could not find anyone interested in developing one.

Task 3 – Technical and Financial Assistance for Landowners

Staff provided support and technical assistance to over 80 cooperator farms and completed 21 Conservation Management Plans. Financial assistance to landowners resulted in 6,053 native trees and shrubs planted in riparian areas to protect water quality and enhance fish and wildlife habitat. We also installed 1,851 linear feet of livestock exclusion fence to keep livestock from entering the waterways.



All the Best Management Practices constructed under the terms of this grant are consistent with the current USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) standards. Cooperators provided financial assistance have approved farm plans and signed landowner agreements. Appendix D is a sample of the Landowner Agreement. Appendix E is a map showing location of the Conservation Plans and installed BMPs.



Task 4 – Workshops and Seminars

We conducted workshops in cooperation with WSU Extension and Clark County Health Department to provide technical assistance to the community. Workshops provided information and assistance on BMPs, such as fencing, pasture management and mud and manure management. We also conducted workshops on proper septic operation and maintenance, including information on wellhead protection.



Over 800 cooperators attended our 25 free informational workshops. They learned to care and maintain their septic systems, build fence for livestock, manage the piles of animal manure, and develop their pastures for increased productivity. The workshops were advertised through local newspapers, businesses, and events. Appendix F is samples of the advertising for the workshops.

Participants in the workshops were given evaluation forms (sample form Appendix G) to find out if the information met their needs and what other information might be valuable to them. The results of the evaluations showed the information presented met or exceeded the participant's expectations with all of the workshops.

Task 5 – Water Quality Monitoring on Salmon Creek

The District partnered with Clark County and Clark Public Utilities to conduct water quality monitoring on Salmon Creek. The Ecology-approved Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) had been approved prior to any monitoring activities and sampling was in accordance to the QAPP. The final Annual Report of the collected data, summary, and conclusions was included in the August 2003 and September 2004 grant vouchers.

Task 6 – Information Dissemination

District staff assisted in organizing and participated in outreach activities such as the Home and Garden Fair, Clark County Fair, Watershed Stewards, and the Horse Symposium. We served over 2,000 cooperators through workshops, displays, and presentations.



The display at the Clark County Fair was a partnership with WSU Small Farm Advisors, Clark County Clean Water Program, and Clark County Cattleman's Association. The display won the Best Educational Exhibit award.

Fact sheets were created and distributed through our educational displays and workshops to provide small farm owners with information on BMPs. The fact sheets included Managing Horses on Pastures, Organic and Inorganic Heavy Use Area Protection, Footing Options, Pasture Systems and Grazing Methods, and a Manure Composting brochure. The Organic Heavy Use Area Protection fact sheet is attached as Appendix H. We also printed more of the Streamside Planting Guide for distribution at small farm events and with other organizations in the community.



Farm Tours were organized to show successful implementation of conservation BMPs on small acreage farms. We conducted four farm tours and had 81 participants. Three of the four tours were horse facilities, and one was a llama farm. The tours were advertised through the local newspapers and educational workshops. Appendix I is a sample of the advertising for the farm tours.

The WSU Extension conducted and completed a follow-up survey to evaluate the effectiveness of the outreach program. The Small Acreage Landholder Outreach Program Draft Impact Analysis report is attached as Appendix J.

This project has allowed Clark Conservation District to assist cooperators making land use decisions to encourage proper use and treatment of natural resources and make available the necessary assistance for restoration, enhancement, and recovery activities. Clark Conservation District looks forward to working with Ecology in collaborative efforts to bring about restored water quality in Clark County.



LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A : Sample landowner contact letter

Appendix B : Information/questionnaire sheet used with the Manure Exchange Program

Appendix C : Sample of the advertisements for the Manure Exchange

Appendix D : Sample Landowner Cost-Share Agreement

Appendix E : Map of the Salmon Creek watershed with Farm Plan locations

Appendix F : Sample workshop advertisements (3 pages)

Appendix G : Sample workshop evaluation form

Appendix H : Sample BMP Fact Sheet

Appendix I : Sample farm tour advertisements

Appendix J : WSU Extension Small Acreage Landholder Outreach Program Draft Impact
Analysis report