



Thurston Conservation District

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Board Chair: Eric Johnson

State Legislative District #2,20,22,35
Congressional District #3,10

Other Accomplishments



A 100-foot section of riparian buffer fence installed on a small farm along McLane Creek in the Eld Inlet Watershed.

Photo: Robin Buckingham



South Sound GREEN students engage in water quality testing, plankton sampling, GPS/radiotelemetry, and adaptation assessments of marine plants and animals. Photo: Kathleen Whalen



The South Sound GREEN program coordinated more than 15 partner agencies and 40 volunteers to bring over 1,000 youth to the beaches of Puget Sound.

Photo: Stephanie Bishop

2016 Feature Accomplishment Skookumchuck River restoration

RESOURCE CHALLENGE

Located along a half mile of the Skookumchuck River, this property offers critical habitat value for wildlife. Since purchasing the land, landowners Geoff and Lorna Mueller have been working to improve wildlife value. By participating in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), they elected to install native trees and shrubs along the river bank to improve habitat conditions for fish, birds, small mammals, amphibians, and reptiles. This native plant buffer will improve habitat and water quality throughout the watershed.



CREP planting along the Skookumchuck River in Thurston County
Photo: Sarah Moorehead



Landowner Geoff Mueller and CREP Coordinator Kathleen Berger discuss plant health and maintenance
Photo: Sarah Moorehead

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

To meet landowner needs and increase salmon habitat, Thurston Conservation District installed a native buffer through CREP at the maximum width of 180 feet, covering 2,362 linear feet of the Skookumchuck River! 3,700 trees and shrubs, covering 9.2 acres on both sides of the river were planted on the Mueller's property. Over the next several decades, this planting will grow into a thick, diverse riparian buffer that will provide food, shelter, water and space for wildlife. This buffer will reduce surface run-off into the river and help stabilize the streambanks to reduce erosion.

KEY PARTNERS: Geoff and Lorna Mueller - Skookumchuck River Landowners; Nikki Atkins - Lewis County Conservation District

More work to do!

- Develop site-specific, incentive-based Voluntary Stewardship Program plans for protecting critical areas on agricultural lands.
- Support new and beginning farmers, along with the transition of farmland from retiring farmers to the next generation, through operation of the South Sound FarmLink.
- Collaborate with landowners and stakeholders in the Chehalis River Basin to reduce flooding and improve salmon habitat.