



# Thurston Conservation District

(360) 754-3588 x136 | tcdadmin@thurstoncd.com | www.thurstoncd.com  
Legislative District: 2, 20, 22, 35 Congressional District: 3, 10

## Other Accomplishments



Thurston CD led the implementation of our Voluntary Stewardship Program to increase agricultural viability and assist local farmers.



Attendees of a Grazing and Fencing Systems Workshop at Riverbend Ranch learn about range management and native prairie conservation. Photo by Nora White



Students learn about ocean acidification on field trips lead by South Sound GREEN as part of climate literacy and monitoring efforts. Photo by Stephanie Bishop

### 2019 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

## Building a Bridge Between Farms and Fish

### Resource Challenge

Degraded culverts on a Delphi Valley farmer's driveway blocked fish passage and stream flow on the East Fork of McLane Creek in the Eld Inlet watershed.

The creek ran the risk of over-topping the driveway, washing out, and further limiting fish passage. The East Fork of McLane Creek supports Cutthroat Trout, Olympic Mud Minnow, Coho and Chum Salmon, and steelhead. The blocked culverts prevented fish from accessing habitat, and jeopardized access to half of the farm property.



A clear before and after of the blockage, and resulting open flow of the creek. Photo by Nora White

### Project Summary and Results

The project removed the deteriorating culverts and replaced them with a bridge that fully spans the creek. The bridge allows for fish to move freely while also letting trees and debris move down the creek during winter storm events. The removal of these culverts opened up an additional 1.2 miles of McLane Creek for salmon spawning and rearing of juvenile salmon. Additionally, this small farm has a safe crossing for

equipment and vehicles. Livestock exclusion fencing preceded the bridge installation, while youth field trips to plant a native riparian buffer along the creek followed.

### Key Partners

Salmon Recovery Funding Board; Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Fund (administered by the Recreation and Conservation Office); Puget Sound Partnership



An Olympia Mud Minnow is found during the "fish-out" where fish are removed from the creek during the bridge installation. Photo by Mara Healy

## Priorities for 2020...

- ▶ Help 150 producers currently on waiting list for technical assistance, conservation planning and/or cost-share.
- ▶ Apply for and leverage funding to facilitate working lands easement program in Thurston County area, while protecting Endangered Species Act-listed species.
- ▶ Launch local riparian planting landowner incentive program in partnership with Thurston County.