



2022 Annual Work Plan (1/1/22 – 12/31/22)

Thurston Conservation District

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Mission of the Thurston Conservation District

We educate and assist the citizens of Thurston County in the management of natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations, inspiring voluntary, incentive-based conservation practices.

This Thurston Conservation District 2022 Annual Work Plan links directly to the content and format of the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan and aligns with the adopted annual budget.

Natural Resource Priorities, Goals and Actions

1. Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation

To help producers and community members understand and adapt to the changing climate, we continue to engage in and relay the best available science through education and technical assistance services. We seek to support our community in proactive climate change adaptation measures such as flood and fire prevention, drought, ocean acidification in local marine waters, suitable crops, and forest regeneration incorporating climate adaptability, and alternative pest and plant disease control. We are committed to work with our community to conserve and protect our natural resources in response to climate change. In addition, we strive as an organization to demonstrate sustainable practices in our work and office culture.

GOALS	ACTIONS
1) Assist with drought mitigation.	A. Provide water use technical recommendations to 10 urban and suburban community members.
2) Enhance fire safety for land and homeowners.	A. Develop fire safety strategies and recommendations at 10 sites.
3) Mitigate flood impacts on residents in the Chehalis Basin.	A. Host 2 community meetings focused on the Chehalis Basin Strategy to keep residents informed. B. Develop 1 floodplain restoration guidance document for

	landowners.
	C. Participate in Chehalis Basin Strategy and protect landowner involvement in the process.
4) Assist farms in mitigating and adapting to climate change.	A. Host 2 workshops to help farmers adapt to climate change. B. Work with 2 farms to implement carbon sequestration practices. C. Develop carbon farming sections for conservation plans. D. Improve emergency readiness for 10 community members.
5) Improve community resilience to climate change.	A. Host 2 professional development opportunities for teachers.

2. Local Food Production & Consumption

By increasing engagement in the local food system, Thurston Conservation District is supporting working lands, rural economic development, reduction of pollution caused by product processing and transportation, equitable access to healthy local food, and the economic viability of our agricultural community and geographic region. Locally produced food connects people to the land, improves our region’s food security, creates more informed land stewards, and fosters support for resource conservation, the agricultural community and farmland preservation.

GOALS	ACTIONS
6) Support urban and suburban food production.	A. Provide technical assistance to 2 community gardens, tribal gardens, school gardens or garden clubs. B. Provide technical assistance to 60 urban and suburban community members. C. Implement conservation BMPs on 1 farm within urban or urban growth areas. D. Host 2 workshops on backyard food production.
7) Increase accessibility to healthy local food for community members of Thurston County.	A. Partner with local food banks to connect at least 1 community that lacks sufficient support with fresh local food. B. Strengthen partnerships with 2 local organizations to support community gardens, school gardens, and home-based food production (could name Bounty for Families and TCFB). C. Partner to host 1 workshop for families on cooking with fresh food. D. Participate in regional and local food system networks and partnerships (South Sound Food System Network, Regional Food System Partnership, TCAT Regenerative Ag & Food

3. Producer Support & Preservation of Working Lands

In an effort to continue to support the preservation of working lands, Thurston Conservation District will continue offering technical assistance and conservation planning services to community members (supported through measures and goals in *Rural and Urban Stewardship*). We are the technical provider for the [Voluntary Stewardship Program \(VSP\)](#). The VSP is an alternative approach for counties to meet critical areas ordinance goals on private lands, while maintaining agricultural viability. In addition, we will work to educate new and beginning stewards of working lands. We assist small and large producers and commercial and non-commercial operations. We will continue to work with existing land stewards to implement Conservation Practice Standards and Best Management Practices and assist with planning for their future and beyond retirement. We will continue to partner with key organizations and individuals to provide quality technical, financial and educational resources. We promote regenerative agriculture and [sustainable forestry](#) encouraging conservation of natural resources, and economic viability of the operation.

GOALS	ACTIONS
8) Work with partners to protect critical working lands through easements and acquisitions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Facilitate 1 new easement through the Chehalis Basin Strategy. B. Develop a community-wide plan to facilitate working lands easements through partnerships (RCP, Sentinel Landscape Partnership, Conservation Grazing Partnership).
9) Increase voluntary stewardship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Increase participation in the Voluntary Stewardship Program by 30 participants. B. Develop 30 Individual Stewardship Plans. C. Support community members through regulatory processes such as inspections and referrals.
10) Support viable farms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Connect 5 producers to business planning and training courses and/or resources. B. Connect local producers to consumers through online tools and marketing support. C. Support streamlined application and permitting processes for community members.
11) Increase support for forest stewardship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Facilitate the development of 4 forest management plans (FMP's). B. Support efforts to preserve working forest land.
12) Increase technical assistance to producers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Facilitate 200 site visits with producers. B. Provide technical recommendations on 300 BMPs.

13) Bridge the gap between retiring and beginning producers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Offer 1 successional planning training course. B. Seek sustainable funding for South Sound FarmLink program. C. Provide resources to 10 new farmers. D. Increase outreach to landowners to share leasing opportunities via South Sound FarmLink E. Collaborate with existing land matching programs.
14) Support sustainable shellfish production.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Work with 1 shellfish operation to implement conservation BMPs. B. Conduct a needs assessment for local shellfish producers to identify areas to support and innovative ideas. C. Support recovery of Olympia Oyster.
15) Increase inventory and use of equipment rental service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Identify additional pieces of equipment needed by the community to expand TCD's rental program. B. Ensure appropriate use of the equipment by creating technically sound guidance documents for all equipment. C. Increase marketing and outreach to maximize appropriate equipment usage.

4. Protect and Restore Ecosystems

Thurston Conservation District recognizes the quantity and diversity of critical ecosystems within our region and strives to protect intact habitat, while also working to restore degraded areas. Thurston County is home to state and federally listed endangered species, prairie ecosystems, vital marine and estuarine habitat, forestland, sensitive riparian areas and shellfish beds. Flood mitigation projects are complex and combine elements of river restoration, floodplain reconnection, and flood harm reduction strategies. Education is the first step to resource conservation on private lands and the District will continue to engage the community to raise awareness of the vital role of our critical ecosystems and their processes. We will also continue to coordinate financial resources and facilitate ecosystem recovery at the local level.

GOALS	ACTIONS
16) Work with partners to protect critical habitat through restoration easements and habitat enhancement contracts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Facilitate 2 conservation easements (termed or permanent) through TCD and partner programs. B. Strengthen partnerships with local accredited land trusts.
17) Increase restoration of degraded habitat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Create 2 site-specific pollinator habitat projects. B. Complete 1 wetland habitat enhancement project. C. Treat 15 acres of invasive species. D. Develop 5 planting plans.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E. Provide habitat restoration technical assistance to 50 community members. F. Facilitate 100 site visits with community members focused on habitat restoration.
18) Restore marine and freshwater habitat to support healthy aquatic species populations and functional floodplains.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Plant 4 acres of riparian habitat to support salmon recovery. B. Develop 2 restoration projects in freshwater systems with salmon runs. C. Support 30 shoreline community members to improve shoreline habitat.
19) Enhance ESA listed species habitat (plant & animal).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Work with 1 community member to improve Oregon Spotted Frog habitat. B. Host 1 Orca Recovery Day event to bring awareness to endangered salmon and orca populations. C. Work with 10 community members through VSP to support on-farm management and recovery of listed species.
20) Develop local riparian restoration cost-share program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Work with local and state partners to secure funding for local riparian restoration program.

5. Soil Conservation and Health

Thurston Conservation District recognizes that soil is a living and life-giving natural resource. As world population and food production demands rise, keeping our soil healthy and productive is of paramount importance. By farming using soil health principles and systems that include no-till, cover cropping and diverse rotations, more and more farmers are actually increasing their soil's organic matter and improving microbial activity. As a result, farmers are sequestering more carbon, increasing water infiltration, improving wildlife and pollinator habitat—all while harvesting better profits and often better yields.¹

GOALS	ACTIONS
21) Establish a soil health management program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Provide soil analysis recommendations to 100 community members. B. Host 2 soil health focused workshops. C. Develop cost share opportunities focused on soil health practices, including: cover cropping, reduced tillage, permanent groundcover integrated into production fields, etc.

¹ <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/soils/health/>

- D. Develop guidance resources for farm equipment use to protect soil health.
- E. Seek additional funding to support a soil health program.

6. Water Quality and Quantity

As a valuable and vital resource, water quality and quantity impact every sector of life. We will continue to provide education and technical assistance to all community members within our district that aims to inform and mitigate the individual’s impact to water quality and quantity. We strive for clean and plentiful drinking water, the upgrade of 303(d) listed stream segments to meet Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) pollution reduction targets and in-stream flow targets, and upgrades to commercial and recreational shellfish harvesting areas. To achieve these goals we partner with community members and local organizations to implement Best Management Practices, green stormwater infrastructure strategies, and other innovative actions to meet water quality and quantity goals. We also provide ongoing education to community members in our sensitive shellfish producing areas across Thurston County.

GOALS	ACTIONS
22) Improved shoreline conditions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Work with partners to facilitate the repair/upgrade of 1 septic system in a shellfish production area. B. Support healthy shellfish growing areas by providing education and guidance on shoreline BMPs for 20 homeowners.
23) Reduce surface & groundwater impacts from urban and rural land uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Implement 2 conservation BMPs to reduce nutrient runoff.
24) Improve water use efficiencies and water conservation strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Implement 2 conservation projects to support in stream flow targets. B. Develop 4 Irrigation Management Plans for local agricultural operations. C. Develop written irrigation guidance resources for backyard gardeners.

District Operations Priorities: Information / Education Priorities and District Operations

1. Community Outreach and Engagement

It is of foundational importance to the Thurston Conservation District to engage the community in active conservation and the regenerative use of natural resources. Through volunteer projects and participation in district programs and services, we seek to facilitate a strong relationship with community members in our area. By increasing our presence and continuously adapting to meet the communities' needs, the Thurston Conservation District can provide effective conservation programs for working lands and community members.

GOALS	ACTIONS
25) Build robust volunteer program to increase organizational impact and engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Engage 30 community volunteers. B. Host 8 restoration work parties. C. Initiate 120 hours of community service to conservation. D. Support a youth volunteer network, consistently engaging group of 10 youth in TCD volunteer opportunities.
26) Build relationships with elected officials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Host 3 virtual or field tours for elected officials. B. Present CD information and updates at 5 local jurisdiction meetings (ex. BOCC, City Councils, Port, School Boards). C. Connect with legislators twice annually.
27) Improve accessibility of CD information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Develop relevant multi-lingual resources. B. Host 5 events appropriate for families and people of all ages. C. Showcase CD projects and programs on 3 local and TCD-owned media platforms.
28) Demonstrate the impact of our work to our community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> D. Host annual gathering to showcase our community impact, our strong partnerships, and to recognize the stewardship accomplishments of community members and partners. E. Create 2 new story maps to showcase TCD projects and partnerships.

2. Adult and Youth Conservation Education

The Thurston Conservation District seeks to provide in-depth natural resource conservation education to both youth and adults. Education is the first step to conservation. In collaboration with our partners, we provide workshops, on-site tours, training courses, and other events that help individuals become stewards of our shared natural resources.

Providing education to youth education opportunities helps to create a lifelong stewardship ethic. Education fosters a strong connection with - and understanding of - natural resource conservation issues that can create future stewards of our local natural resources. We also strive to inform Thurston County community members about training and education opportunities by acting as a clearing house for information about natural resources and related topics.

GOALS	ACTIONS
29) Support the implementation of South Sound GREEN's Vision for the Future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Engage 1500students in water quality testing B. Educate 500 students through watershed and water quality related classroom lessons C. Host 3 professional development opportunities for teachers to strengthen their knowledge of water quality, climate impacts, and local conservation issues. D. Increase involvement in the South Sound GREEN program by 2 percent.
30) Promote careers in natural resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Provide instruction to 1 secondary or college class. B. Offer alternative service opportunities for local AmeriCorps/service corps volunteers. C. Participate in Career Technical Educators Advisory Group
31) Educate our community about natural resources conservation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Participate in 30 educational opportunities for our community (workshops, tours, trainings, tabling etc.). B. Engage 400 community members through our Annual Native Plant Festival.

3. District Operations

As an organization, Thurston Conservation District operates in a transparent and ethical manner. We leverage funding from multiple sources to increase our conservation impact on the ground. We pride ourselves in accountable financial processes, diligent and wise use of public and private dollars, and clean audits. In addition, we will continue to find sustainable avenues to grow as an organization and increase our positive impact in Thurston County.

GOALS	ACTIONS
32) Sustainable and consistent funding to achieve our mission.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Demonstrate impact of current Rates and Charges funding in the community.
33) Design and plan for TCD's Conservation and Education Center.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Set aside funding annually. B. Develop conceptual designs. C. Locate and engage in securing land by 2024

<p>34) Thurston CD Board and Staff represent our community and have the capacity to support its needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Ensure on-going professional development for all staff positions. B. Continue to practice inclusive recruitment strategies. C. Continue to support partnerships with Veterans organizations such as Vets on the Farm program, Veteran’s Conservation Corps, and Resilient Veterans. D. Hire to meet staffing needs identified in 2020-2025 Strategic Plan as funding becomes available. E. Implement communications plan to encourage all cities in Thurston County to become part of the district boundaries.
<p>35) Improve data management and internal tracking systems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Continue to develop SmartSheet platform for programmatic and financial data tracking.
<p>36) Improve office sustainability and lower TCD’s carbon footprint.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Move towards paperless practices (where feasible). B. Purchase goods and services from local businesses first. C. Purchase/lease hybrid vehicles for District use. D. Facilitate and support staff working from home to reduce carbon impacts from commuting.
<p>37) Conduct transparent, accountable, and ethical operations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Update Policies and Procedures Manual to reflect current practices and changes to governing laws. B. Timely responses to Public Disclosure Requests. C. Include opportunities for public involvement in organizational planning and budget processes. D. Maintain clean audits from the State Auditor’s Office. E. Establish a citizen advisory committee to provide input on TCD priorities and activities

Thurston Conservation District: 2022 Budget

Unrestricted Income Total	\$924,491	Unrestricted Expense Total	\$924,491
<u>Unrestricted Income</u>	<u>\$733,124</u>	<u>Operational Expenses</u>	<u>\$440,766</u>
District Services	\$55,200	Administrative Salaries & Benefits	\$231,725
WSCC Implementation	\$117,823	Professional Services	\$60,000

Rates and Charges	\$554,668	Facility, Vehicles & Maintenance	\$99,000
Overhead	\$31,500	Supplies	\$11,750
		Conferences, Training & Travel	\$10,971
		Insurance & Banking	\$27,320

Program Allocations \$408,725

Local Food Production & Consumption	\$16,500
Producer Support & Preservation and Expansion of Working Lands	\$22,300
Water Quality & Quantity and Protection & Restoration of Ecosystems	\$5,000
Soil Conservation & Health	\$46,600
Community Outreach & Engagement	\$157,700
Adult & Youth Conservation Education	\$52,500
Climate Change Adaptation & Mitigation and Other Strategic Plan Priorities	\$108,125

Savings \$75,000

Conservation & Education Center	\$37,500
Reserve Fund	\$37,500

Restricted Income	\$1,725,778	Restricted Expense	\$1,725,778
ESRP Shore Friendly	\$172,478	Salaries & Benefits	\$860,147
ASRP Independence	\$16,389	Overhead	\$155,800
ASRP Riverbend	\$22,188	Travel	\$14,093
SRFB Cozy Valley	\$112,551	Goods & Services	\$241,122
Zangle Cove	\$32,144	Construction & Landscaping	\$231,019
Livestock Technical Assistance	\$10,000	Cost Share	\$223,598

Skookumchuck Restoration	\$193,146
Chehalis Flood Plain	\$94,848
Chehalis Team Lead	\$47,711
Chehalis Early Action Reach	\$2,500
Shellfish Cost Share	\$178,729
CREP	\$10,382
NRI Cost Share	\$59,112
Western SARE Grassland Grazing	\$10,099
WCRRI Prairie Habitat	\$20,314
SLP Landowner Outreach & TA	\$354,274
One Tree Planted	\$3,870
South Puget Sound Envirothon	\$1,000
Voluntary Stewardship Program	\$76,692
Riparian Streamside Restoration	\$32,064
Puget Sound Partnership NTA	\$107,325
Frogs on Farm	\$18,094
Dept. of Ecology	\$34,169
South Sound GREEN	\$115,700

2022 Income Total
\$2,650,269

2022 Expense Total
\$2,650,269