



Conservation CONNECTION

WHIDBEY ISLAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

ISSUE

#3

apr
2013

Time to Develop Next Year's Work Plan and Budget

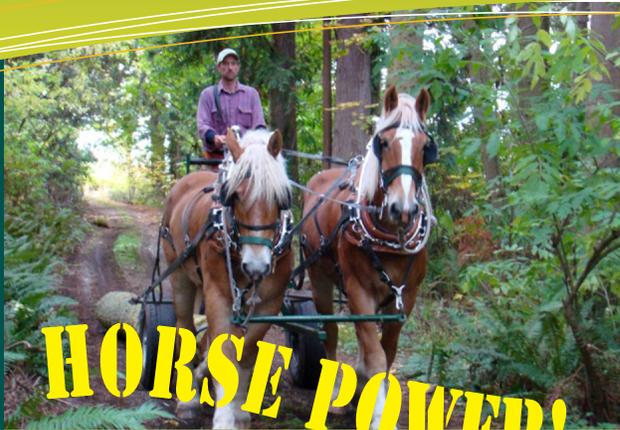
WICD is currently developing our plan of work and budget for FY2014 (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014). On May 8, a draft will be available on our website for public review and comment. We value your input as part of this process! Comment period will end May 22nd and will be considered by the WICD Board of Supervisors at their May 23 Board meeting.

Annual Open House and Awards Event – May 9

We invite you to join us on May 9, 4:00 – 6:00 pm for



our annual Open House to be held at the Coupeville Library. The draft FY14 WICD budget and work plan overview will be presented. The District will be recognizing outstanding cooperators, volunteers and partners. Please come out and meet the District staff, board and your neighbors.



HORSE POWER! FOR

LOGGING AND FARMING

A Workshop for Landowners Interested in the Use of Draft Animals for their Operations
Saturday, May 11, 10:30 am – 2:30 pm

Have you ever considered using draft animals for logging or farming? While it may seem like a romantic idea from bygone days, in the right situations, the benefits of draft animals may exceed those of their mechanical counterparts. For example, economics can favor the use of draft animals at the right scale, such as for small farms, small forest tracts, or for custom work such as selective harvesting of trees on a sensitive site. The use of animals is likely to cause significantly less soil compaction and damage to remaining vegetation than large equipment. And speaking of romantic elements, who wouldn't enjoy listening to the birds and the rustling breeze while plowing a field or harvesting logs from the forest?

Join the WICD at the Jenne Farm in Coupeville to learn about the modern use of draft animals as a viable source of power in forestry and farming practices. The workshop will consist of a forest session in the morning and a farming session in the afternoon. Both sessions will include a presentation of benefits and considerations by WICD staff and guest speakers, followed by a demonstration of forest and farm practices by Greg Lange and his two-horse team of Draftworks Horse Logging and Custom Farming.

Attendance will be limited and registration is required. The cost is \$15 and includes light refreshments. Lunch is on your own from 12:00 – 1:00 pm. You are welcome to enjoy your lunch on the farm or make the short 1-mile trip to Coupeville. For registration, please go to www.whidbeycd.org. For more information, please call 360-678-4708.

Earth Day! WICD and Volunteers Spruce up the Freeland Park Rain Gardens

On April 22nd, in recognition of Earth Day, an enthusiastic group of volunteers met at Freeland Park to learn more about the rain gardens that filter the parking lot runoff, and to lend a hand in maintaining the rain garden area. The weather was beautiful! WICD, The Dept of Ecology, and Island County partnered to install the rain gardens in 2010. *Thanks to our hard-working volunteers!*



this issue

Horse Power Workshop P.1

Annual Open House P.1

Pasture Management P.2

New FSA Microloan Program P.2

Visit our website at
www.whidbeycd.org

Congratulations to WICD's New NRCS Certified Conservation Planners!

This past year Sarah Cassatt and Rob Hallbauer were awarded NRCS Conservation Planner Certification. Through the Natural Resources Conservation Service's year-long training, they learned to apply a nationally-recognized planning process, including methods to identify a broad range of natural resource concerns, develop planning alternatives, support landowner actions, and monitor plan success.

Other WICD staff members who completed NRCS Conservation Planner Certification include Ken Drecksel, Bruce Gordon, and Karen Bishop. To learn more about WICD Farm Planning services, [click here](#) to go to our website.



Sarah Cassatt



Rob Hallbauer

Please visit our website [Calendar page](#) for details on upcoming events.

Spring Farm Calendar: Pature Management April - May

Spring has made it to Whidbey Island and the grasses are growing faster every week. It is time to begin fertilizing and implementing rotational grazing to keep pastures healthy and productive. To keep our waters healthy, remember to wait until the soil is no longer saturated and to keep fertilizers, especially composted manure, away from surface waters and ditches.

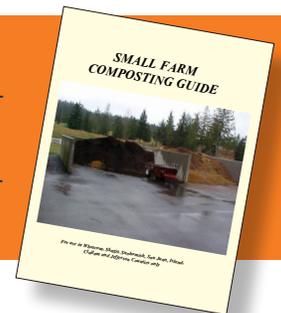


- In April, apply up to 35% of total amount of fertilizer recommended by soil tests.
- In May, apply up to 40% of total amount of fertilizer recommended by soil tests.
- Reseed or overseed pastures.
- Reseed bare soils that can be rested.
- Begin grazing pastures when soil isn't saturated and grasses are 6" or taller.
- Rotate pasture grazing as soon as grass is grazed to 3" - 4" tall.
- Follow grazing with mowing to 3" - 4" to encourage even grazing and prevent plants from going to seed.
- Keep vegetation from shorting out hotwire fencing.



want to make compost?

To learn about composting manure, as well as sizing and building bins, click this copy of the **Small Farm Composting Guide**. This guide was developed specifically for use in Western Washington.



New FSA Microloan Program

FSA now offers more flexible access to credit through the new Microloan program. The program is an attractive loan alternative for smaller farming operations such as specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSA).

Microloans can be used for all approved operating expenses including but not limited to:

- Initial start-up expenses
- Annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents
- Marketing and distribution expenses
- Purchase of livestock,

equipment, and other materials essential to farm operations

- Minor farm improvements
- Hoop houses

The application process for microloans is simpler, requiring less paperwork to fill out. Requirements for managerial experience and loan security have been modified to accommodate smaller farm operations, beginning farmers, and those with no farm management experience. However applicants will need to have some farm experience. FSA will consider an applicant's small business experience as well as any experience with a self-guided apprenticeship as a

means to meet the farm management requirement.

Eligible applicants may obtain a microloan for up to \$35,000. The repayment term may vary and will not exceed seven years. Annual operating loans are repaid within 12 months or when the agricultural commodities produced are sold. Interest rates are based on the regular OL rates that are in effect at the time of the microloan approval or microloan closing, whichever is less. Currently the rate is 1.25%. Contact the county office for more information: 360-428-7758 or [click here](#) to visit their web page.