



Whidbey Island Conservation District

www.whidbeycd.org

Summary Report of Accomplishments FY2017

This report reflects highlights from work accomplished between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017 utilizing revenue from all district funding sources.

For 50 years, Whidbey Island Conservation District (WICD) has helped landowners with natural resource challenges. Since 1967, WICD's programming has evolved to provide a diverse array of professional expertise to residents.

Farm & Forest Conservation Planning • Engineering • Alt. Stormwater Management • Backyard Conservation

Project funding is derived from many sources, including organizational partnerships and landowner cost-share. WICD staff deliver significant amounts of outreach and education to help Whidbey Island residents. FY2017 highlights included below.

Technical Assistance –

- WICD worked one-on-one with 170 cooperators, representing 1,733 acres. Conservation planning and technical assistance were provided, recommending 280 Best Management Practices (BMP's). 68 were implemented in FY17.



WICD Resource Planner, Ken Drecksel, evaluates soil suitability and shares recommendations for growing vegetables crops at the Coupeville School District campus.

Events and Education –

- WICD delivered 35 workshops and coordinated 32 collaborative meetings and events that reached 1,548 direct contacts. Topics included backyard conservation, farm business transition, firewise, forestry, native plant landscaping, local food and farming, on-site septic maintenance, rain garden design, soils, vermicomposting, waste storage and application, and water quality.



WICD Farm Planner Bruce Gordon (2nd from left) hosts a day-long interactive tour of 3 waste storage facilities on Whidbey Island. Participants see first-hand how to prevent nutrient loss, protect water quality, and improve agricultural production.

WICD Ignites Locally-Tailored FIREWISE™ Program on Whidbey Island

In FY2017, with a grant from the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC), WICD partnered with the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Central Whidbey Island Fire & Rescue (CWIFR) to launch a Firewise Program directed at central Whidbey. Central Whidbey properties along the western forested bluff zones were targeted because they receive significantly less rainfall due to the rain shadow presence and are more at risk to

wildfire. The program encouraged participants to learn about wildfire science, assess home and community wildfire risk, and create action plans for community education and mitigation projects. Accomplishments included:

- Completing a collaborative GIS-based assessment matrix with DNR and CWIFR to rank residential communities most at-risk to wildfire on central Whidbey's west-side.
- Providing outreach to 9 Homeowner's Association leaders in 6 out of the 7 most-at-risk residential communities, and coordinating 5 Firewise community meetings to connect DNR and CWIFR to central west-side residential communities.
- Creating a Whidbey Island Firewise website as a "go-to resource" for landowners.
- Distributing a Whidbey Firewise mailer to 5,230 residential addresses informing them of the Firewise program and services.

Forestry

Forest management plans remain a high priority for WICD staff. In FY17:

- 5 Forest Conservation Plans were completed covering 23.5 acres.
- Assisted in implementing 8 BMPs.



WICD Resource Planner Ken Drecksel measures the diameter of a tree while preparing a stand description for a forest management plan. This plan will enable an elderly couple to transition their property from Open Space Ag to Designated Forest, thus making it financially possible to keep the land from development. Forest management assistance includes integrated Firewise best management practices.



WICD Outreach & Education Coordinator Kelsi Mottet (center) conducted Whidbey Island Firewise Day, convening 5 partner agencies to provide hands-on workshops and expertise on wildfire science and Firewise practices during Washington's Wildfire Awareness Month.

Cost Share Program Addresses Water Quality

In addition to assisting livestock farms of all sizes with conservation planning and technical assistance, District staff worked with eight landowners to identify high quality best management practices, develop designs, and implement projects using cost share funding that might otherwise have been unaffordable.

These projects included waste storage facilities, livestock fencing, hoof-grid, rainwater diversion systems, and pervious pavement. WICD's cost-share program simultaneously reduced nutrient runoff, improved surface water quality, and managed drainage more effectively in several sensitive watersheds. Here are three highlights:

• Roof runoff diversion & outlet

Completed french drain system diverts surface water to existing swale onsite at the Burk farm.



• Waste storage facility roof

Covered waste storage facility with 28 feet of gutters collects rainwater while reducing nutrient runoff.



• Pervious paver installation

ADA parking space at the WICD office (owned by Fourth Street Coupeville, LLC) uses Stabiligrd to mimic natural hydrology and showcase Low Impact Development.



WICD Resource Planner, Matt Zupich, measures water levels at Greenbank Marsh.

Engineering

- **Greenbank Marsh** - Completed an evaluation of the feasibility of restoring tidal connectivity to a marsh with a deteriorating tidegate system owned by Greenbank Beach & Boat Club (GBBC). This resulted in development of a conceptual engineering design and a report which describes the basis for the open-channel restoration design selected by GBBC membership, which will mitigate flooding and enhance

fish passage. Subsequently, this project has encouraged GBBC members and neighboring landowners to collaboratively identify solutions for local flooding issues beyond the scope of the proposed restoration project.

- **Maxwelton Creek Culvert Replacement** - WICD provided engineering designs and permitting assistance for a Maxwelton Creek fish passage barrier project to remove two culvert crossings on private property and replace with channel-spanning bridges.
- **Cornet Bay** – WICD completed the post construction monitoring for the project.

Outreach Creates Connection

- **Publications & Resources** – WICD connected 19,236 members of the public to WICD resources (which included the Whidbey Island Area Fair with an attendance of 15,000). 6,392 pieces of educational material were handed out at WICD workshops, collaborative meetings and events, and through outreach assistance to community partners and cooperators. Additionally, WICD staff is seen as the “go-to-resource” for community partners on natural resource education materials, and satisfied 13 community partner requests with materials assistance.

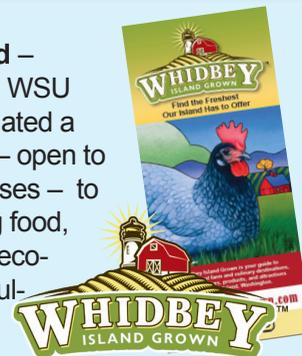


- **WICD Annual Native Plant Sale** – Over 10,000 native plants were sold this year, serving 285 customers. Four native plant workshops drew 60 attendees. While the primary goal of the sale is to promote native planting, WICD collected \$22,854 in total revenues and netted \$2,015 to return to District services.



WICD's Sandy Welch led over 35 plant sale volunteers.

- **Whidbey Island Grown Brand** – Since October 2015, WICD and WSU Ext. Island County have coordinated a monthly “farmer potluck group” – open to all Whidbey agricultural businesses – to convene key partners in sharing food, networking, and discussing the economic future of Whidbey's agriculture. Evolving out of this group, now known as Whidbey Island Growers Association (WIGA), the Whidbey Island Grown brand was relaunched in 2017. As part of the effort, WICD developed a printed marketing rack card to compliment an existing interactive website – whidbeyislandgrown.com.

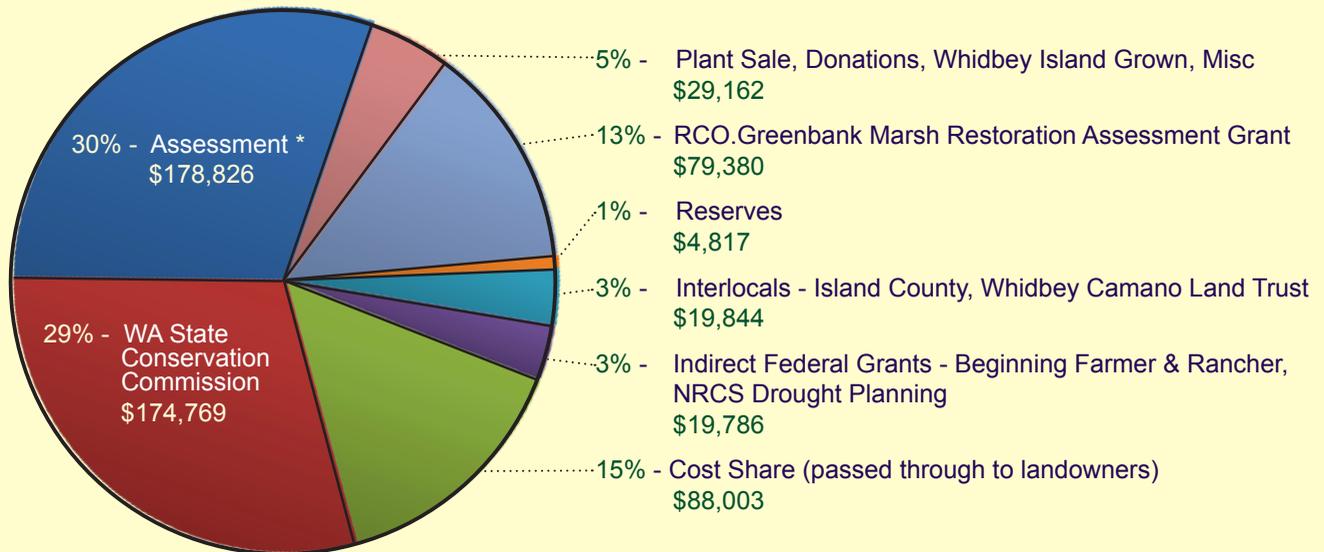


- **Partnerships** – WICD staff regularly attended and contributed to discussions held by collaborative partners, including the Island County's Local Integrating Organization (ILIO), Salmon Recovery Technical and Citizen Committee (SRTCC), Water Resource Advisory Committee (WRAC), and other water quality coordination efforts, as well as with the Maxwelton Steering Committee, Whidbey Eco Net, Whidbey Island Grown Steering Committee, and Lone Lake partnership building efforts.

Whidbey Island Conservation District

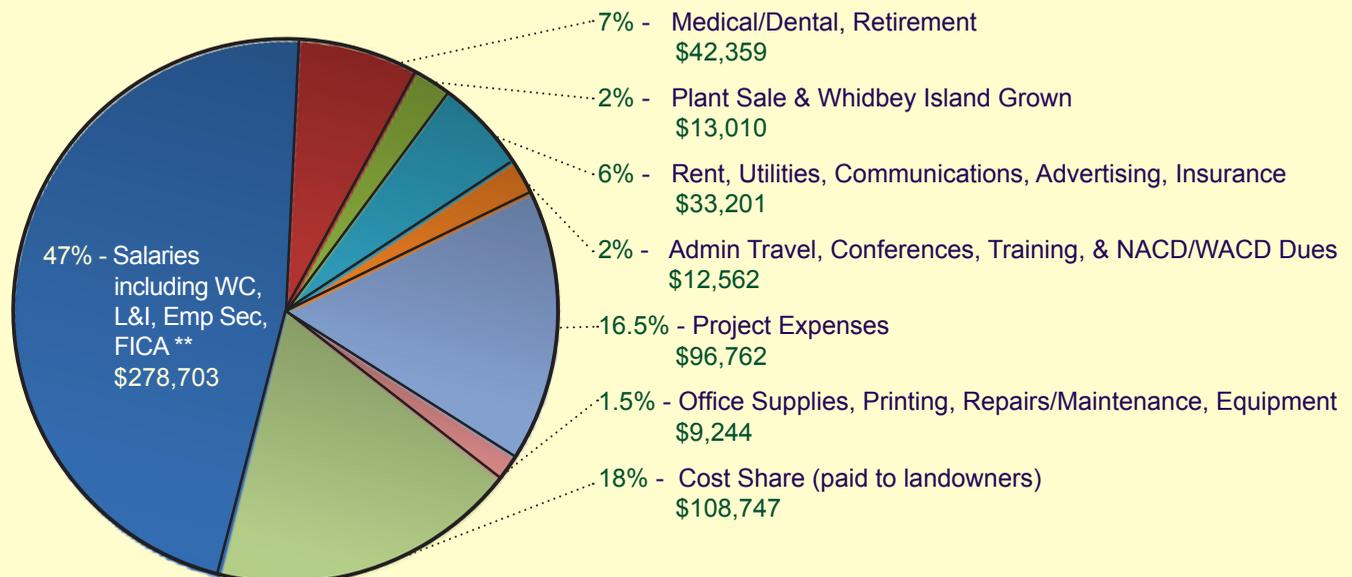
Final Reporting FY2017
July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017

FY 2017 Revenues Total \$ 594,588



* The Special Assessment revenue collected on Whidbey Island June 1, 2016 - May 31, 2017 is included in this FY2017 report.

FY 2017 Expenses Total \$ 594,588



** To be consistent with WA State Auditor's Office reporting, payroll liabilities are included with salaries.