



South Douglas News

South Douglas Conservation District

FALL 2018

Assisting cooperators to adopt, implement and promote conservation practices which encourage good land stewardship and the protection of natural resources.

WHAT HAVE WE BEEN DOING?

2018 Cost Share Projects



Livestock waterer—Moses Coulee
Concrete pad to stabilize soil while cows are drinking.

Repairing fencing at Trusting Spirit Horse Rescue—Orondo



Fuels reduction—East Wenatchee

Do you have a project that would improve the environment? Prevent soil erosion, or improve water quality? Do you have a conservation plan ready to go, but no funding? We may be able to provide cost share dollars. Call or email this office if you are within the South Douglas boundary.

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2018 Fall Chipping Day

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PROGRAMS AVAILABLE FOR YOU

FALL CHIPPING DAY



We have chipped from Waterville over Badger Mountain to Rock Island. This will be the fourth chipping day. We can chip in northern Douglas County as well, if enough landowners sign up.

We are planning a FREE chipping day, early November. We can do 5-7 landowners a day, depending on the size of the piles. This project will help promote community wildfire protection. This project is funded by a Bureau of Land Management Grant.

While the pictures show the before and after results, this is **not** what your pile should look like. Go to South Douglas website to see the requirements. Click on the Chipping Days tab. Let us know if you are interested.

LAST CALL FOR ADDRESS SIGNS

Fire and Emergency Crews can have a hard time locating your home if it is not well marked.



A grant from Bureau of Land Management allows us to offer these signs to you for FREE. Call with your number. Horizontal or vertical is available. (If you ordered a sign last spring, you should receive yours shortly.)

DON'T FORGET OUR WEBSITE

Www.southdouglascd.org has information about our other seasonal programs. Board minutes and agenda, 20 Weeds to Know in Douglas County, weather and district history are available for a quick read. We are still looking for good pictures for the home page. Have you taken any photos in South Douglas that show our landscape and people involved? Let Carol know.

Free Firewise Assessments

We can come to your property and evaluate your fire risks and strengths. The 15-30 minute review can alert you to simple things you can do to reduce fire hazards. Call us and we can schedule an appointment.

Reusable Produce bags

You probably already take reusable shopping bags to the store. Why not go one step further and whip together some of your own reusable produce bags. Take them to the store, put your veggies or fruit in them, rinse and repeat.

To make 4 bags you will need:

1 yard 54" wide mosquito netting (available at most fabric stores – wait for a JoAnns 50% coupon!)

Basic sewing supplies: Rotary cutter, mat, ruler (or scissors and ruler)

1. Cut four pieces of the netting, 13" x 36"
2. Fold one piece of the netting in half lengthwise, and stitch long sides together with a ¼" seam, backstitching at ends.
3. Turn bag inside out. Stitch long sides together again, using a ¼" seam, encasing the raw edges, making a French seam.
4. Turn bag right side out. Fold top down ¼" twice to the inside and stitch.
5. Done! Make several for gifts.

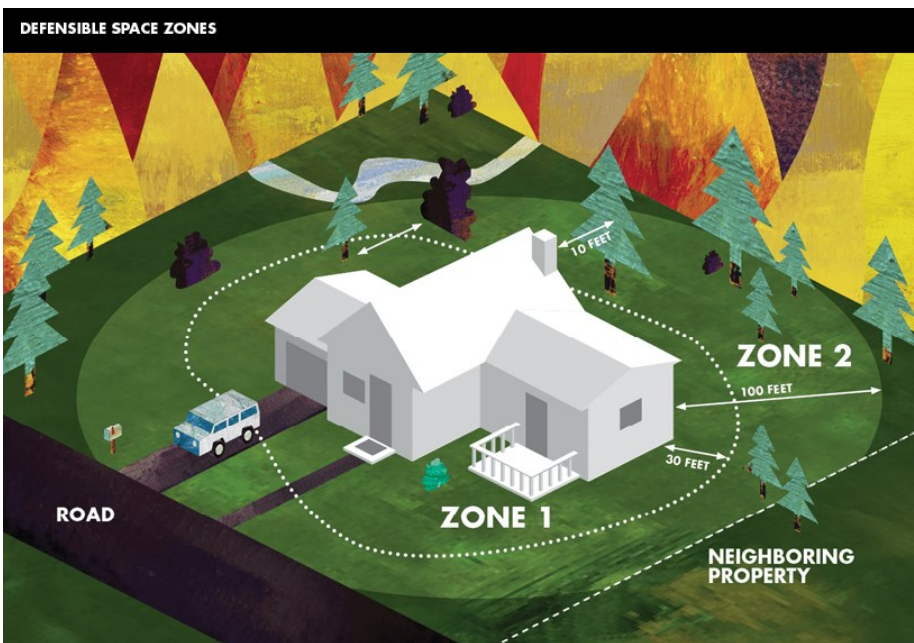
Most plastic bags and film packaging can be recycled even if your local recycle facility cannot handle them. Visit PlasticFilmRecycling.org for details. Many local stores will take your plastic. You might want to call or visit first to be sure.



DEFENSIBLE SPACE

Fire has been in the news again this summer. With fires from Grand Coulee down to East Wenatchee, we know how quickly a fire can spread and the damage that can take years to repair. We need to provide a defensible space around our homes and property.

But what is defensible space? It's the buffer you create between any buildings on your property and the grass, trees, shrubs, or any wildland area that surrounds it. This space is needed to slow or stop the spread of wildfire and it protects your home from catching fire—either from direct flame contact or radiant heat.



Zone 1-within 30 feet of your home.

- ◆ Remove all dead weeds, grass and vegetation.
- ◆ Remove dry leaves and pine needles from your yard, roof and gutters.
- ◆ Trim trees to keep branches 10 feet from other trees.
- ◆ Remove branches that overhang the roof.
- ◆ Remove or prune flammable plants and shrub near windows.
- ◆ Remove vegetation and other items that could catch fire around and under decks (take those boxes to recycle!)

Zone 2-more than 100 feet from buildings (Greater space may be needed if area is on a slope. Fire travels fast uphill)

- ◆ Cut or mow grass to a maximum of 4 inches.
- ◆ Remove fallen leaves, needles, twigs and other combustibles.
- ◆ Trees should be planted about ten feet apart and shrubs twice their height away from each other. Remember seedlings planted ten feet apart will be much closer at maturity.

What's wrong with this photo?

Wood piles located right next to the house on a wood deck next to wood siding. Move it out into Zone 2 and bring only a small pile up to the house. Walk out to the pile with your dog—good exercise for you both!



South Douglas CD has an annual tree and shrub sale. Native and adapted plants are available early spring. Fire resistant plants are available for sale. No plant is completely fire proof. Watch for trees with a high sap content, low moisture, or a high percentage of dead limbs or under stress. Conifers such as pine or fir should be planted away from the house (Zone 2) and limbed up. Arborvitae and junipers can burn quickly. Plant hardwoods such as maple, poplar and cherry trees that are less flammable. Cotoneaster, sumac, roses and other fire resistant shrubs resist ignition. Strange as it may be, many native plants are more fire prone than non native. The land has relied on fires for millions of years to promote health and growth of the native plants. Plants with higher moisture content—annual flowers, iris, willow, ash— are all good choices.

VETS ON THE FARM

How do we get the word out? You may know a veteran who is looking for work. You may be a farmer, looking to semi retire. Maybe your farm mechanic has more work than he can complete alone and needs help.

The Vets on the Farm program works to pair farmers who need help with veterans who are looking for work. The average age of the American farmer at 58, steadily increasing over the last 30 years. The number of farms has decreased from 2.48 million in 2008 to 2.11 million in 2012. By bringing veterans into agriculture, perhaps this trend can be reversed. Vets on the Farm is designed for veterans transitioning back into civilian life. This program can provide veterans in our community an opportunity to combine their skills with an education in conservation that can lead to farming or agriculture based employment.

Local farms and other Ag based industries act as mentors and the veterans are interns learning on the job. Areas of interest include but are not limited to small scale production agriculture, livestock management, equipment maintenance and custom farm work. In Douglas County opportunities exist in orchard work, wheat farming, cattle ranching, machine maintenance and agriculture based businesses.



As with any program, getting the word out can be difficult at the beginning. We had one introduction meeting a year ago in Waterville. We hope to have Vicki Carter, Spokane Conservation District, come this spring for another meeting in East Wenatchee to spread the word. South Douglas Conservation District is starting a new program in Douglas County. Spokane CD has a strong growing program. All Conservation Districts in Washington State hope to develop the program.



LEAVE THE LEAVES

If you planted flowers and shrubs to attract pollinators, you may want to think about leaving the fall leaves for them to winter over in your garden. Butterflies, bumblebees and other insects use the leaf litter to wait until spring. The leaves not only provide shelter for the pollinators, they also act as mulch for tender plants. The bright fall leaves are attractive in the garden and free. When you do decide the leaves must go, wait until late spring when the insects have hatched or flown to your flowers to begin pollinating them once more.

Wait a minute—didn't it say on page 3 to get rid of dead leaves? While a pile of dead leaves can readily catch fire, the mulch for the pollinators are normally available in late fall, when most fire danger is gone. And if you remove the leaves in late spring, or move to your compost pile, fire danger will be minimal.

Check out xerces.org for more information. It is a great site.

You might want to check out these websites:

Foster Creek Conservation District—fostercreekcd.org

Cascadia Conservation District—cascadiacd.org

Okanogan Conservation District—okanogancd.org

These districts are adjacent to South Douglas and have conservation programs and information you might find useful. If you find something you want to try in Douglas County, give us a call.

OUR NEWEST ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR

Carolyn Kelly has been accepted as an associate supervisor. Associate supervisors cannot vote on issues and cannot participate in cost share projects. But they can do everything else the supervisors can. Carolyn was the manager at Skagit Conservation District. Her knowledge of conservation districts within the state, budgets, programs, personnel and policies will be a valuable asset to South Douglas. We are lucky to have her. Welcome, Carolyn.

INTERESTED IN BEING A SUPERVISOR?

We will have an elected and appointed position open late this year for selection early in 2019. If you are interested, let us know. You could also be an associate supervisor now. We normally meet first Mondays of the month in Waterville.



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