



South Douglas News

South Douglas Conservation District

Fall 2019

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

GET READY FOR WINTER

Some parts of the County have already had snow. A bit early perhaps, but it reminds us it is time to get ready for cold weather ahead. Several random thoughts:

- ◆ Do not stack your firewood right next to the house. A small pile might be handy but the big pile should be away from the house to diminish fire risk.
- ◆ Clean out your birdhouses. Old nesting material can be put in the compost pile. One part bleach to nine parts H₂O and scrub the house itself. Some birds (wrens and sparrows) can use the houses in the winter to shield themselves from cold and snow.
- ◆ Rake up your leaves. Or not. Leaves in the compost pile or on the garden can be good for soil health in the spring. Or leave them be and let the ground bees, moths, spiders and other insects use those leaves for winter protection and habitat.
- ◆ South Douglas/Foster Creek/Douglas County Crop Improvement meeting — February 12, Mansfield



FALL CHIPPING DAY

Fall chipping is planned for the second week in November. This free event is available for those living in South Douglas CD. Go to our website for specifics for stacking the piles. They should be orderly, with all cut ends facing the road, not like a pile of Pick-up Sticks. Call the office to get on the list. In the past we have started in Waterville and worked our way down to Rock Island.

LOCAL
POSTAL CUSTOMER

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.



The Soil Your Undies Challenge

Remember the last newsletter encouraged you to take a cotton pair of underwear and bury it for ninety days and then dig them up to see the effects of microbes?

Noah Christman, age 5, buried underwear June 13, dug up September 6, at 202 South Rainier Street, Waterville. Not much left but the elastic.

Martha de Desroschers lives a couple of blocks below the Wenatchee Golf Club. The first one (A) was in a garden with no amendments. The one on the right (C) is from a compost pile. (No B) The underwear did have some polyester in the fabric, which the microbes did not like. Quite a difference.



Have you dug up yours yet?



SOUTH DOUGLAS ELECTIONS IN FEBRUARY

South Douglas CD will hold an election for a board member in February, 2020. Each Conservation District in Washington State is governed by a five member board of supervisors. Two are appointed by the Washington Conservation Commission and three are elected by qualified voters within the district. These local residents help identify natural resource concerns in the District and help develop programs to provide solutions. They also help educate and inform landowners, farmers, general public and local and state legislators on conservation issues.

The three year term involves attending monthly supervisor meetings as well as committee meetings and other special events for a total of 15-20 days each year. While uncompensated, the supervisors are able to provide guidance for local conservation issues.

The deadline for filing isn't until January 15, 2020. Watch our website for more information.

You could also apply for an associate supervisor if you don't want to devote that much time but are interested in natural resource conservation at the local level. Contact the office.

**"I'm aware not everyone feels the way I do about trees, but I have no idea why not."
(Rules for Visiting by Jessica F Kane)**

WHAT IS YOUR WILDFIRE RISK?



WILDFIRE

If you own 1/4 acre to 5000 acres, there may be funding available to assist you in making your property safer. Call the WA State Department of

Natural Resources for a free consultation. 509-889-0298.

If you don't qualify for the DNR program, South Douglas has a cost share program for fuels reduction. Reducing the fuels on your property doesn't mean cutting down all your trees or eliminating wildfire risk.

It is about reducing the intensity of the fire by removing debris, diseased trees and ladder fuels that cause fires to burh out of control. Improving forest health, reducing overcrowding and reducing ground vegetation will allow the remaining trees to grow stronger without competition for water and nutrients.



ALL ABOUT APPLES

Lindsey Morrison

Washington State produces 65% of all fresh apples on the U.S. market and continues to grow safe, healthy and flavorful fruit that helps you lead a balanced and nutritious life.

- Red Delicious, Granny Smith, Gala, Fuji, Honey Crisp, Cripps Pink, Golden Delicious, and now Cosmic Crisp are grown commercially both organically and conventionally in Washington State. Many other varieties are grown as proprietary varieties with exclusive rights required to produce and pack them.
- Washington state grows 125 million boxes of apples per year, on average. At 40 lbs. per box, that's 2.5 million TONS of apples.
- It takes the energy from 50 apple tree leaves to produce one apple.
- Washington apple growers produce 6 out of every 10 apples consumed in the United States.
- At room temperature, apples soften 10 times faster than if they were refrigerated.
- Washington apples are exported to 60 different countries around the world.
- There are more than 7,500 different varieties of apples grown around the world. You'll find only a handful of them at your local supermarket.
- Apples are fat free and sodium free.
- A medium-sized apple contains 20% the daily recommended allowance of fiber.

The United States is the leading organic apple producer in the world, with Washington growing more than 90% of U.S. certified organic apples. This is in part due to our dry climate which make organic production more feasible.

Washington State is a wonderful place to grow apples. We are lucky to live in an area abundant with so much fresh local food available! Eat more apples for your health! Apples are a key component to the economy in Washington State. Eating more apples will help keep jobs and agriculture in the communities we love.

Visit the Washington Apple Commission website : <https://bestapples.com> for more information.



RAVENS AND JAYS

Carol Cowling

We live south of Douglas along Douglas Creek. A congress of ravens frequents the cliffs down by the creek spring and fall. Although they do not migrate, they are smart enough to fly to warmer temperatures in the fall to overwinter in the Wenatchee Valley or Grant County.

A couple of weeks ago, I spotted a couple of ravens in our small orchard. Grabbing the camera I went out to see if I could get a couple of pictures. Never have I seen fifty plus ravens silently circling the orchard and landing in our windbreak of poplars and douglas fir. Not quite like The Birds movie, they weren't creepy or noisy, but soundlessly riding the wind current.

Suddenly, a Stellar's Jay called out a hawk impression. These clever birds can sound like hawks, chickens or a number of other birds.

The hawk cry did it. All of the ravens took off and, in a matter of seconds, were gone. One jay scared off 50 ravens. The mysteries of the bird world.

Do you have a special bird story? Let us know and we can share it in a future newsletter.



NEXT NEWSLETTER

Tree and Shrub Sale
Conservation Practices

What to Plant
Firewise Community Meetings

South Douglas Conservation District

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The South Douglas News is published on a quarterly basis by South Douglas Conservation District. This newsletter is funded in part by grants from the Washington State Conservation Commission, and the Bureau of Land Management, and other public and private granting entities.



Please Remember to Recycle

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, designed for veterans transitioning back into civilian life. Areas of interest include but are not limited to small scale production agriculture, livestock management, equipment maintenance and custom farm work.

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. Look for information on our website.

