



South Douglas News

South Douglas Conservation District

SUMMER 2026

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

CHIPPING DAYS FOLLOW UP

Our tenth season of chipping began at the end of June. Three days of chipping from Waterville to Rock Island helps landowners take care of reducing the amount of fuels on their property. It is the responsibility of the landowner to get the piles ready for the chipping crew and decide what to do with the chips that are produced.

The crew did bypass three piles that did not meet the specs for a “good” pile. Guidelines are available on our website. All trunk ends should be lined up. This is important not only for the ease of chipping, but for the safety of the workers. If they have to try to pull a pile apart, it can be dangerous. And no lumber, nails or wayward bottles or cans. These can damage the chipping machine and possibly throw pieces haphazardly out of the chipper. And if your pile is quite small, consider putting it in your garbage can, maybe for a few weeks in a row to get rid of the sticks you have.

All scolding aside, it was a good event. Watch for our fall event in our next newsletter.



Good pile ready for chipping

Cost Share Dollars

South Douglas CD has cost share dollars for many conservation practices. New funding will be available starting July 1. If you have a project you think may qualify, give the office a call or contact one of the supervisors listed on page 4.

New WSU Educator—Chelsea Trout
Check out Page 2 to meet our new educator.
Welcome, Chelsea!



Cost share—water trough

POSTAL CUSTOMER
LOCAL

Meet Chelsea Trout – Supporting Agriculture in Douglas County

Chelsea Trout was recently hired as the WSU Extension Chelan-Douglas Agriculture Educator in Douglas and Chelan Counties, according to Margaret Viebrock, WSU Extension County Director. The position duties include, but are not limited to, integrated weed management and noxious weed control, grain production and alternative cropping systems, pesticide education, and farm productivity, profitability and sustainability.

From the dairy and soybean fields of the East Coast to the orchards, rangelands, and forage fields of North Central Washington, Chelsea Trout has spent more than a decade working alongside the agricultural communities of our region.

With a career rooted in education, Chelsea has a gift for making science approachable and practical for farmers, land managers, and community members alike. Her background in biology and natural resources - paired with hands-on experience in vegetation management, soils, and habitat restoration - gives her a strong foundation in integrated weed management, pesticide education, grain production and cropping systems.

Chelsea also brings valuable experience working with bilingual communities, recognizing that strong communication with all members of our agricultural community is essential for success. She and her family have made this area their home, and she is deeply committed to the resilience of our farms, rangelands, and the people they sustain.

Now, through her role with WSU Extension, Chelsea is excited to partner with local producers, offering resources, education, and support to help keep Douglas County agriculture thriving for generations to come.



Fire Recovery Support

Foster Creek Conservation District is actively coordinating resources to support recovery efforts following the Chelan Hills Fire of July 2026. To help them identify your specific landscape rehabilitation needs, please complete the resource request form on their website.

FCCD will be focusing its efforts on revegetation and erosion mitigation, but this form also asks questions regarding agricultural losses as well. This information will help them better coordinate assistance and connect you with available recovery services. Please reach out to either district via phone or email if you need assistance completing this form or if you have questions you'd like to discuss.

Go to fostercreekcd.org and look for Programs and Fire Recovery for the form. South Douglas thanks Foster Creel CD for taking the lead in this program, and we will be involved with further recovery.



Start a Compost Pile - Mike Lesky

To set up a home composting system, choose a dry and shady spot, get a bin or container, and layer carbon materials with food scraps.

Choosing Your Setup and Location

Use a plastic bin, a tumbling barrel, or wooden pallets. Make sure it has small holes for air movement.

Place it directly on bare soil outside in a shady or partially sunny spot. This lets bugs and worms crawl in to break down the waste.

Adding Materials

Add dry leaves, twigs, shredded paper, or cardboard. These are the brown, or carbon materials.

Add fruit peels, vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, and grass clippings- this provides energy to the microbes. Green materials.

Use two to three parts brown material for every one part green material.

Do not add meat, dairy, oils, or pet waste, as they smell bad and invite pests.

Maintaining Your Pile

Keep the pile as damp as a wrung-out sponge. Spray it with water if it looks too dry.

Mix or turn the pile with a fork or shovel every few weeks. This adds oxygen so things rot faster.

In two to twelve months, your waste will turn into dark, crumbly soil that smells fresh and earthy.



DOUGLAS COUNTY AGRICULTURE EXHIBIT

South Douglas CD has a class each year at the Fair for students, highlighting agriculture in Douglas County in the agricultural building. It is a poster class with three age groups. \$100 top prize in each age group based on education and presentation. Check out the details on the NCW Fair website—Exhibits—Categories—Open Class Ag Exhibit or call our office for more details.



NCW Fair August 27-30, 2026

Now is the time to get your exhibits ready. Go to the NCW Fair website to see what you can enter. Vegetables, fruits, crafts, sewing and knitting projects, canning, animals—the list is long. For both adults and children. Small county fairs are a rarity anymore but ours is great. You can even drop your exhibits off at Coastal Farm and Ranch August 22 from nine to noon (restrictions apply), but will have to pick it up on Sunday at the Fairgrounds. It is a great place to see what agriculture is about and get together with friends.

Notice of withdrawal for Badger Mountain Solar Project

Description of Action: On July 20, 2026, staff at the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC) received a letter from Aurora Solar LLC requesting withdrawal of their application for site certification (ASC) for the proposed Badger Mountain Solar facility located in Douglas County. Aurora Solar LLC is a wholly owned subsidiary of Avangrid Power, LLC and was formerly known as Avangrid Renewables, LLC.

Per Aurora Solar's request, EFSEC will move forward to process this request by closing out existing financial arrangements and notifying interested and agency partners. No further council action or staff activities will be taken on ASC Docket Number EF-210747.

The notice of withdrawal can be found on the project website here: <https://efsec.wa.gov/facilities/badger-mountain-solar>

Fire Season

We all know of the fires and devastation past and present. Climate change, human carelessness, arson and other factors don't really matter when the landscape is burning everywhere. All the Firewise landscaping and fire prevention is paled when the fire storm blasts through your neighborhood. But you can still do things to keep the damage to a minimum if you have any control at all. What can you do?

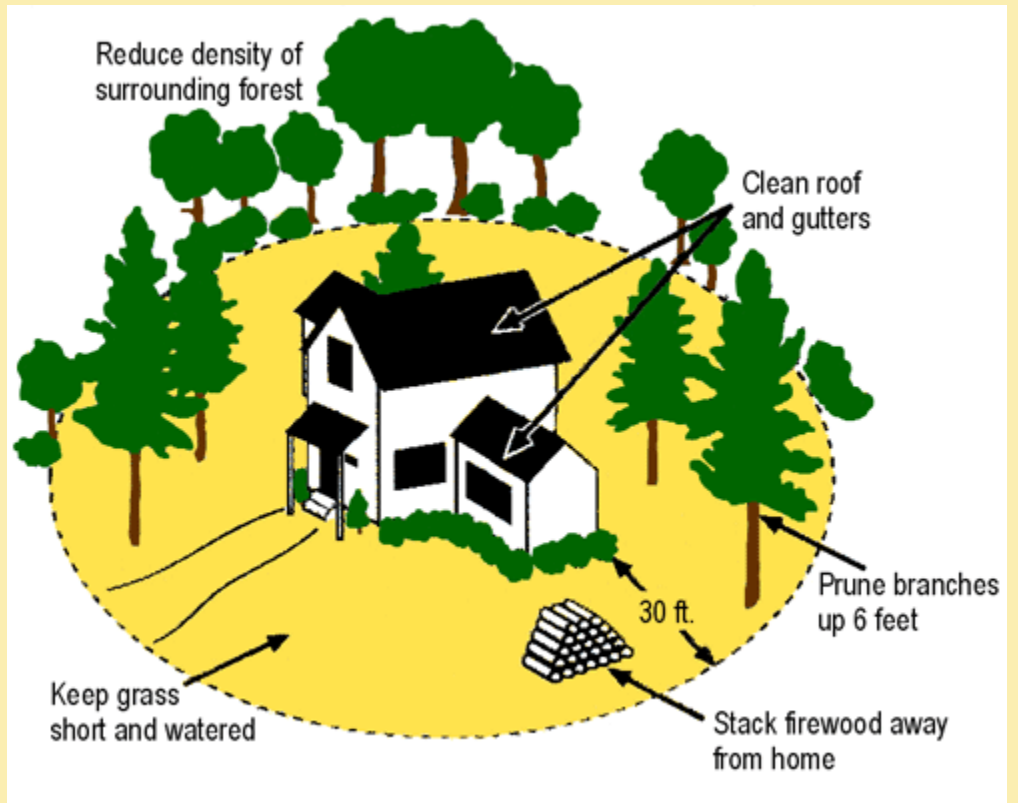
Know your **defensible** space. It is the buffer zone you create between your property and the surrounding wildland area. This space is the key to slowing or stopping wildfire spread and protecting your home from embers, flames or heat. It also gives firefighters a safer area to defend your property.

Zone 1—The first five feet from your home is the most important. Keeping this area clear will prevent embers from igniting materials that can spread to your home. Use hardscape like gravel, pavers or concrete. No combustible bark or mulch.

Zone 2— 5-30 feet away from home. Remove all dead and dying plants, weeds and debris (leaves, needles, etc.) from your roof, gutters, deck and under the stairs. Remove all branches within ten feet of the chimney or stovepipe. Limit combustible items, like outside furniture and planters, on your decks. Relocate firewood and lumber further away from the house (100 feet). Replace combustible fencing, gates and arbors attached to the home with noncombustible alternatives.

Zone 3—within 100 feet of your home. Remove all tree branches at least six feet from the ground. Allow extra vertical space between shrubs and trees so the fire cannot spread like a ladder from tree to tree. Mow before 10 a.m. and never on a hot or windy day. String trimmers are safer than lawnmowers for clearing vegetation.

When watering less during times of drought, be sure to remove all dead or dying vegetation.



Trees are an investment. It will take more time, water and money to replace a tree lost to drought than to keep it alive through careful maintenance. Does it need water? Take a long screw driver and stick it into the ground next to the trunk. If it goes in easily thru moist soil, it is OK. If you can't pierce the soil read on...

What about my trees during a drought?

Young trees, 1 to 3 years, need 5 gallons of water 2-4 times a week. Create a water basin with a berm. Drill a hole in the bottom of a five gallon bucket and fill it with water, letting it slowly drain out.

With older trees, soak under the canopy until it soaks in 12-18". Not too close to the trunk—you can use a soaker hose, sprinkler hose attachment or other watering system.

Now is the time for mulch (away from the house). 4-6" improves vigor and retains moisture, reducing water needs and protecting the tree. Keep the mulch away from the trunk and stems. Mulch does not compete for water like lawn or radiate heat like rocks.

Keep trimming and fertilizing to a minimum during the drought period.

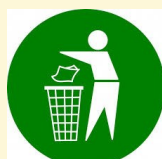


South Douglas Conservation District

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Please recycle.

Remember—we need trees and trees need water.