

Pend Oreille Conservation District *Fall Newsletter*



GREETINGS FROM POCD!

As the crisp fall air settles in, we are excited to share updates on our current projects and upcoming events in Pend Oreille County. This season has been full of educational workshops in forestry and agriculture, habitat restoration projects, and agricultural technical assistance, all focused on practical land management and supporting resource resiliency in our local community.

FORESTRY COMPETITION

The Pend Oreille Forestry Competition will be held tomorrow, October 24, at the Indian Creek Community Forest! Co-hosted by the Kalispel Natural Resource Department and POCD, this event is designed to promote the FFA regional Spring competition in Stevens County and hopefully provide Pend Oreille County representation at the official competition.

ENGAGING COMMUNITIES IN AGRICULTURE EDUCATION

By Stephen Allen, POCD Communications Manager

On a crisp fall day, local educators gathered at Vetter Demonstration Farm & Forest for the first of three Engaging Communities in Agriculture Education Workshops, hosted by the Pend Oreille Conservation District & Pacific Education Institute with support from WSU Extension and Stevens County Conservation District. Participants engaged in hands-on activities and insightful discussions about soil health, silvopasture practices, and regenerative agriculture—key topics centered on Soil Science and Soil Health Practices. One of the workshop's highlights was a live demonstration of an



all-purpose seeder, illustrating the use of innovative tools to improve crop production while maintaining soil integrity. This workshop, the first in a series funded through the NRCS Equity and Outreach in Conservation Grant Program, provided an invaluable opportunity for local educators to explore how these practices can be integrated into their teaching and support the next generation of farmers.

CONNECTING RIPARIAN HABITAT ON THE LITTLE SPOKANE RIVER

By Corey Brenner, POCD Riparian Program Manager

The Pend Oreille Conservation District is proud to announce the successful completion of a key project under the Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFFPP), aimed at restoring fish passage and enhancing riparian habitat along the west branch of the Little Spokane River between the falls at Horseshoe Lake and Trout Lake. This project is a crucial step toward reconnecting fragmented aquatic habitats, improving water quality, and supporting the biodiversity of this important watershed.

By removing three culverts that served as

substantial barriers to fish passage and reconnecting the river to its original channel, we have opened significant stream mileage, enabling fish species such as rainbow and eastern brook trout to access critical spawning and rearing areas. These improvements benefit not only the aquatic ecosystem but also contribute to broader riparian zone restoration efforts, addressing habitat connectivity and degradation caused by past land use changes.

The project highlights the ongoing commitment of the Pend Oreille Conservation District to promote sustainable land use and conservation practices. The FFFPP's collaborative approach, involving private landowners and government agencies, demonstrates the importance of working together to protect and restore Washington's natural resources. We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the Helm Family and Paradigm Industries for their swift collaboration with POCD, making it possible to get this important conservation effort on the ground in such a short time frame. Their dedication was key to the project's success, and we appreciate their shared commitment to restoring and preserving this vital habitat. FFFPP is funded through the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), and we appreciate the guidance and flexibility in this grant funding that allowed us to complete this project in a timely and efficient manner.



Washington DNR, POCD and local landowners collaborated on the recent Family Forest Fish Passage Project completion.

In tandem with other riparian conservation efforts, this project plays a pivotal role in revitalizing the Little Spokane River watershed, ensuring healthier ecosystems for future generations.


If you are interested in this program and believe it may apply to your situation, please reach out to the Pend Oreille Conservation District. We look forward to continuing our work in restoring vital fish habitats and enhancing riparian ecosystems across the region.

Pend Oreille Conservation District: Dedicated to preserving our natural resources for future generations.

SOIL HEALTH PLAYS VITAL ROLE IN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

By Amanda Cullin
POCD Conservation Ag Coordinator

This year, the Pend Oreille Conservation District has successfully provided 23 soil tests, empowering local landowners and farmers to understand the vital role soil health plays in sustainable agriculture. Healthy soil is the foundation of a productive ecosystem, supporting plant growth, improving water retention, and fostering beneficial microorganisms. By analyzing soil composition, we can make informed decisions about nutrient management, ensuring our crops thrive while minimizing environmental impact. Building soil health is a continuous process that involves practices such as incorporating organic matter, rotating crops, and minimizing soil disturbance. Adding compost or mulch enhances nutrient availability and improves soil structure, while crop rotation helps prevent pest and disease buildup. As we move forward, let's commit to nurturing our soil, fostering a vibrant and sustainable community that supports both our food systems and the environment. Thank you to everyone who participated in our soil testing program this year!

 Stay Connected with POCD!

Be sure to follow us on social media for real-time updates, event announcements, and conservation tips!

Facebook: @PendOreilleConservation

Instagram: @POCD_Conservation

Website: www.pocd.org

Thank you for your continued support of conservation in our community. We look forward to seeing you at upcoming events and working together for a sustainable future!



Our native plant sale held this past spring was an overall success and we look forward to doing it again, even better!

NATIVE PLANT PRE-SALE COMING SOON!

Looking to add some native plants to your landscape next Spring? Our annual POCD Native Plant Sale Pre-Order is just around the corner, and pre-orders will be available soon at our e-commerce store found on our homepage at pocd.org. From trees and shrubs to ground covers and riparian vegetation, our selection includes species that thrive in the local environment, providing essential habitat for wildlife and helping to restore ecosystems.

This is the perfect opportunity to enhance your yard or property with plants that support pollinators, improve soil health, and contribute to a more resilient environment at affordable prices. Quantities are limited, so be sure to place your order early. Visit pocd.org to stay updated on when the pre-order will open so you can view the full catalog and secure your plants.