

In Touch with Conservation



Fall Tree Planting

Fall is a great time to plant trees. Planting in the fall allows the tree to establish and grow its roots this year as well as next spring so that they are better able to survive their first hot summer. The Forestry

Department has several projects planned this fall to plant trees in the urban environments and forests of Spokane County.

In partnership with the City of Spokane Urban Forestry and Engineering Services the District will be planting replacement trees that have come down due to recent road construction. The District is also creating tree lined streets by populating tree strips along upgraded roads such as

Broadway east of Freya and Five Mile just north of Francis.

SCCD is also working with the Downtown Spokane Partnership, Spokane Urban Forestry and the Public Works Department to replace dead trees in the downtown core to make Spokane's center a more vibrant community.

Avista Utilities has become a valuable player in the effort to increase the tree canopy in Spokane County. The District is currently working with Avista on two different projects to increase the amount of trees in the county as well as their health. The Avista Shade Tree Program helps plant trees that will reduce residential energy costs and the Avista Tree

Replacement Program targets hazard trees under power lines for removal and replacement with utility compatible species.

The Feryn Conservation Futures property in north Spokane County will be receiving approximately 500 new tree seedlings this fall as part of an Eagle Scout Project that has been planned by the District in a joint venture with the Spokane County Parks Department.

With all of this planting going on there are many opportunities for volunteers. If you are interested in helping plant trees this fall or in the future, please contact Garth Davis at Garth-davis@sccd.org or 509-535-7274.

Spokane County
Conservation District

: Fall 2009 :



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Teacher Practices What He Preaches

“Earth and sky, woods and fields, lakes and rivers, the mountain and the sea, are excellent schoolmasters, and teach some of us more than we can ever learn from books.” – John Lubbock

The students of West Valley's City School are some very lucky kids! The seventh and eighth graders taking science from Matthew Phillipy get much more than a teacher. They get someone who teaches by example, living his personal life in concert with what he brings to the classroom – wherever that may be.

Phillipy's philosophy of teaching both inside and outside of the classroom, has introduced students to real-world experiences and issues. He has challenged all of his students to think beyond their own personal needs and “backyard.” Using a science-based curriculum, Phillipy takes his students to out of the classroom

and into the real world where they focus on an ecosystem including in-depth scientific field investigations, data collection, and report preparation. Additionally, these kids become involved in service-learning projects, physical education, and instilling a sense of place in their community.

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Students of West Valley City School complete four years of science. During these four years students have the unique opportunity to explore and investigate natural areas such as the Dishman Hills, Spokane River, Mount Spokane, Yellowstone Park, Orcas Island and Mount Rainier to name just a few. Students also study a wide variety of topics facing our world from climate change to sustainable agriculture.

All students at City School participate in at least three service learning projects per year. Most of these service learning projects deal with natural resource management such as hiking trail maintenance and native tree plantings.

Phillippy's students are respectful, engaged, and they come away with hands-on, real-world experience. Phillippy serves as a role model for them to become the leaders of tomorrow that can think globally, and act locally. Spokane will be well served to have any of his students in a community leadership capacity due to his influence as their science teacher. Phillippy believes that by exposing his students to this style of education and giving kids that might not otherwise have the opportunity to get outside, he is helping to build future generations that will serve and protect our unique natural areas and resources. We think so, too.



Matthew Phillippy, a remarkable teacher, mentor, and citizen has been proudly nominated by the Spokane County Conservation District as our WACD Teacher of the Year to be awarded in December 2009.

WRIA 56 - 10 year project compilation

In 1999, the Spokane Conservation District undertook a process on the behalf of Spokane County residents; watershed planning in the Hangman (Latah) Creek Watershed. Now, ten years later, we look back to better understand what we have accomplished and whether or not we have been successful. Has our time, money and effort been worth it?

The planning process has produced a myriad of scientific reports, studies, and assessments describing the quantity and quality of water, habitat, and opportunities that exist in the watershed. Although these reports are significant to making decisions in the watershed, it is equally, if not more important that we have worked with people in the watershed; the small towns, councils, agricultural producers, and schools. We realize that without the community that works, lives

and recreates in the watershed, there is no watershed planning. Without the watershed residents, the plan becomes another document collecting dust on a shelf. We are proud to say that watershed planning has been working for you. Below are a few of the success stories.

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 The Tekoa Golf Course worked with the planning unit to change their use of surface water for golf course irrigation to a ground water source. This has provided a much more efficient and reliable source of water. The removal of the surface water pumping has improved flow and habitat in the creek.
- +
 The Town of Rockford utilized the planning process to request an upgrade to their aging drinking water reservoir. They were successful in receiving an \$800,000 grant. In addition, they received an additional grant to stabilize 1500' of eroding stream banks.

- +
 The Planning unit received funding to establish, operate, and maintain a stream gauging network in the basin. A new USGS station was installed at the Washington/Idaho border.

- +
 A Direct Seed Mentoring Cost-Share Program was established to assist agricultural producers make the transition from traditional operations to conservation tillage methods to save time and input costs.

Interested in becoming involved in watershed planning and reaping its benefits? Whether you want to resolve a water use issue, agricultural concerns, or restore some habitat, the planning unit would like to hear from you. Please contact Walt Edelen at walt-edelen@sccd.org or 509-535-7274.



Conservation Focus:

ENERGY



Electric Transportation

While fuel prices have come down from the record high prices of 2008, nobody really believes that they will stay down. With the financial sting of those high fuel prices still quite fresh in our memories, most people have looked for modes of transportation that don't use as much fuel. The movement toward smaller vehicles is evident with the trucks and SUV's less popular. Motorcycles are becoming a more common mode of transportation as are bicycles.

There are some relatively new choices for the fuel conscience

commuter wanting to save money.

Neighborhood Electric Vehicles (NEV's)

started gaining popularity in the late 90's, especially in warm

climates like Arizona, Florida and California. In 2003, the Spokane County Conservation District helped write legislation that allowed NEV's to be classified as "street legal" in Washington State. Even though that made them legal, there are some restrictions that keep

them from becoming popular for commuters. First, they are limited to roads with posted speed limits of 30 mph and less and the vehicles themselves cannot go any faster than 30. Secondly, they have limited range, usually 30-40 miles depending on the terrain and driving styles. And because they are electric, winter driving can be problematic with the additional power load for heat and window de-frosting seriously reducing their range further. But throughout the country, the average daily commute is still

In 2003, the Spokane County Conservation District helped write legislation that allowed NEV's to be classified as "street legal" in Washington State.

only 24 miles, making NEV's a very viable option for most of the nation, especially during good weather. Some of the models available include the Columbia ParCar, Chrysler GEM, Tiger Truck and the E-Z-Go. In 2003, I made a trip to Delta, British Columbia just south of

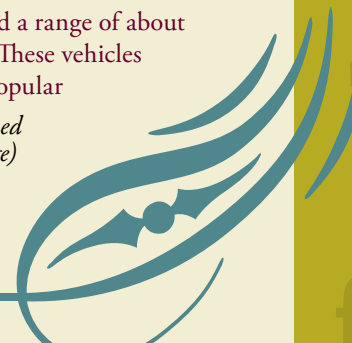


Vancouver to tour the Dynasty NEV factory and drive their popular model, the IT. Looking a bit like a VW Bug, the IT was pretty "bare bones" and yet was

comfortable and a lot of fun to drive. It had a "Northwest Package" package available that included a heater and de-froster. The range was approximately 40 miles even with the heater going.

And like all NEV's it would recharge from any 110 volt outlet in about three hours making it an excellent urban commuter. Later that year we invited Tiger Truck to bring one of their vehicles to our office so we could test drive it. Several of the staff drove it around the office and then I drove from our office to the Spokane City Hall. While it was a bit cramped for me, the vehicle performed well and like the IT, had a range of about 40 miles. These vehicles are very popular

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with colleges, city parks and city utility departments. The cost of street legal NEV's can range from \$10,000 to \$20,000 depending on the make and model. For more information on NEV's visit nevportal.com.

Another option growing in popularity around the country are PEV's or "Personal Electric Vehicles". PEV's, as the name would indicate, are smaller and carry one person. Looking much like small scooters or mopeds, these electric two-wheelers are relatively inexpensive and are a lot of fun to ride. Julie Olsen,

owner of *ecoTECH*, a local distributor of *eGO* vehicles, brought one to the office in September for the staff to try out. This model has an effective range of 18-24 miles depending on the terrain, weight of the rider and the choice to go fast or go far. A couple other makes are also available in the U.S. like the *EVTAMERICA Z-35* that looks like many other small gasoline powered scooters and the *Veloteq Ranger* that looks like a bicycle with a small electric motor attached. Prices for these street legal electric two-wheelers range from \$1500 to around \$3000.

While they may not be the choice of transportation for everyone, the PEV's are an excellent option for the economy minded commuter who would like to put a bit of fun into their daily commute. For more information visit egovehicles.com or contact Jim Armstrong at jim-armstrong@sccd.org or 509-535-7274.



AVISTA Energy Saving Trees

That's right trees aren't just pretty to look at they can reduce your energy bill, too! In an effort to increase the urban tree canopy within the city of Spokane, and reduce the cost of cooling homes, the Spokane Conservation District and Avista Utilities have partnered on a project to strategically plant shade trees in order to reduce residential energy costs.

customer, and have room for a large tree. The tree needs to be planted at least 15 feet from the home, but no more than 30 feet from west side of the house. There can be no overhead power lines at the site, or other large growing tree species within 35 feet of the planting site. The tree will be planted free of charge with the understanding that the

planting season have been spoken for. We are currently performing site visits to determine eligibility for our spring 2010 planting. The species that will be used in 2010 are green ash trees and London plane trees.

Spokane Conservation District and Avista Utilities have partnered on a project to strategically plant shade trees in order to reduce residential energy costs.

Large growing deciduous trees planted on the southwest corner or west side of a home shade the house from the hot summer sun and decrease the cost of cooling a home. Since deciduous trees drop their leaves in the fall they don't block the warming rays of the winter sun.

To be eligible you must be a homeowner in the City of Spokane, an Avista Utilities

homeowner will care for the tree as directed. The trees are one inch of caliper at the time of planting.

An initial site visit will determine if there is room for a tree, and the exact location. Follow up planting will take place the following spring or fall.

The first plantings for this program will take place fall of 2009. All of the trees for this



If you are interested contact Garth Davis at garth-davis@sccd.org or 509-535-7274.



New Education Coordinator

Environmental Education has finally returned to the Spokane County Conservation District! Thanks to the support of people at SCCD and Spokane County Utilities, a grant from the Department of Ecology was acquired by Kara Kaelber, Education Outreach Specialist for Franklin Conservation District. Stacey Selcho was hired in September to fill the EE position. She received her B.S. in Biology from Eastern Washington University and recently returned to get her Masters in Education after teaching environmental education

to compliment the science kits already used in the classroom. She will also be attending special educational events and making the education the conservation



and important for the students in our area. The enthusiasm and support from everyone at the FCD and SCCD has been really appreciated. Hopefully, we can continue to provide these educational opportunities to the community for years to come.” Having grown up in Ritzville, Stacey takes her community here in Eastern Washington very seriously. When she is not in various schools around the area she is volunteering for several environmental and children’s organizations in Spokane. We are happy to have her as part of our team – welcome Stacey!

“Water on Wheels” and “Wheat Week” will be taught to any classroom at no cost; these lessons are designed to compliment the science kits already used in the classroom.

around the country. Stacey will be implementing educational programs in schools within Spokane, Stevens, Ferry and Pend O’Reille counties. “Water on Wheels” and “Wheat Week” will be taught to any classroom at no cost; these lessons are designed

district has to offer available to everyone in the area. When asked about her arrival, Stacey said, “I am excited to see education return to the SCCD, and this is the exactly the kind of teaching position I wanted. The lessons are fun, educational

For more information on the educational programs being offered please refer to the Franklin Conservation District’s website at www.franklincd.org or feel free to contact Stacey at stacey-selcho@sccd.org or 509-535-7274





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