



5-Year Plan (2022-2027)

South Yakima Conservation District

For More Information Contact: Rodney Heit, 509.829.9025, rh@syacd.us

Organization of the South Yakima Conservation District

A political subdivision of the State of Washington – authorities, powers and structure contained in RCW 89.08. In 1944 the Rosa CD was formed and later merged (1961) with the Lower Yakima Valley CD, which was formed in 1947. The Wapato CD formed in 1949 and in 1967 changed their name to the Toppenish CD. The Lower Yakima Valley and Toppenish merged to become the South Yakima CD on 09/19/1974.

Function of the South Yakima Conservation District

To take available technical, financial and educational resources, whatever their source, and focus or coordinate them so that they meet the needs of the local land manager with conservation of soil, water and related natural resources.

We Serve & Why

We strive to serve all landowners, the Yakama Nation, and others (public or private) interested in conservation to facilitate a standard of living and protecting natural resources of concern for our land and to conserve our land and water in a common sense, practical way to address and reduce potential liabilities.

Mission of the South Yakima Conservation District

Our mission is to promote; and assist land owners with implementation, development, and conservation of our renewable natural resources by providing education, technical and financial resources and to work in partnership with local, state, and federal agencies, and private and professional organizations.

Vision of the South Yakima Conservation District

The South Yakima Conservation District is recognized by landowners as the source of technical, educational and financial assistance in this District; and by private entities; local, state and federal authorities as the organization of choice to assist with implementing on-the-ground stewardship activities.

Values of the South Yakima Conservation District

- Education and outreach
 - Local control of resource management
 - Community oriented
 - Self-governance
 - Integrity
 - Working lands
 - Resourcefulness
 - Acceptable local practices
 - Sustainable agriculture
 - Economic viability
 - Voluntary/non-regulatory approaches
 - Assist producers to address resource issues including planning implementation of best management practices
 - Inclusivity
-

Natural Resource & Community Data and Information:

South Yakima Conservation District is a very diverse agricultural area with a total of approximately 1,350,568 acres, with the majority in Federal Lands.

Land use consists of irrigated land, dry-land, rangeland, woodland, and wildlife. Irrigated crops include alfalfa, asparagus, barley, corn, triticale, grapes, hops, fruits, vegetables, and pasture.

- The Lower Yakima Valley Ground Water Management Area (GWMA) encompasses the entire district except the acres on Yakama Reservation.
- Provide technical and financial (when available) assistance to irrigators – 260,023 irrigated acres*.
- **Pastureland** (all types including rangeland)* – 1,413,011 acres
- **Forage land*** – 44,008 acres (29,115 acres Alfalfa)
- **Dairies*** – 58
- **Beef Feedlots*** – Approximately 20
- **Irrigation Districts** – 2 large & 8 small districts and companies
- **Orchards and Fruit*** – 97,719 acres
 - Apples (58,670 acres), Grapes (18,769 acres), Cherries (12,078 acres), Pears (6,166 acres)
- **Wineries** – 17 in Zillah/Rattlesnake Hills Area (www.visityakima.com)
- **Corn*** – 37,545 acres corn silage and 16,550 acres corn grain
- **Wheat*** – 19,626 acres
- **Asparagus*** – 1,955 acres
- **Hops*** – 29,115 acres
- **Mint*** – 8,312 acres
- **Port of Sunnyside** - “The primary objective of the Port is to enhance the economic development within the boundaries of the Port of Sunnyside.”
- **Cities, towns, and communities within our District**

* Values for Yakima County from USDA NASS 2017 Census of Agriculture

Criteria for Selecting Conservation Priorities:

- NRCS Local Natural Resource Concerns.
- NRCS State Resource Assessment – Local Priority Resource Concerns.
- Yearly Priorities set by the Local Work Group.
- Public Health & Safety
- Funding Availability
- NRCS Best Management Practice Checklist

Natural Resource Conservation, Education, and District Operations- Priority Needs, Geographic Areas, Measures of Success, and Goals:

1. Irrigation Water Management (surface to sprinkler conversions, irrigation scheduling)
2. Nutrient Management (improve water quality by managing soil nutrients to meet crop needs,)
3. Soils Health (soil testing, cover crops, soil moisture monitoring, biology, organic manner)
4. Education (producers & consumers, youth: K-12)
5. Habitat Restoration (while maintaining ag viability, salmon recovery)
6. Wildfire Resiliency
7. District Operations

Priority Natural Resource Conservation Need	Geographic Area
Irrigation Water Management (water quantity, conversions)	LYV GWMA (currently excluding Yakama Nation lands)
Nutrient Management (water quality)	See above
Soils Health (soil testing, cover crop, soil moisture monitoring, biology, organic manner)	All district
Education (producers & consumers, youth)	All district
Habitat Restoration	All district
Wildfire Recovery	All district

Natural Resource Conservation Need	Measures of Success	Goals
		Landowner visits, promotional literature, demonstration field day, workshops, advertisements, word-of-mouth and other activities.

<p>Irrigation Water Management (water quantity, conversions)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of systems & acres of irrigation systems under IWM, converted ▪ Number of acres under irrigation water management system ▪ Number of moisture monitoring systems installed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 30 systems & 1200 acres of irrigation systems under IWM, converted by 2027 ▪ 2000 acres under irrigation water management systems by 2027 ▪ 50 moisture monitoring systems installed by 2027
<p>Nutrient Management (water quality)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of producers with nutrient management systems planned and implemented and related acreage ▪ Number of acres under nutrient management system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 140 producers with nutrient management systems planned and implemented and related acreage by 2027 ▪ 1100 acres under nutrient management system by 2027
<p>Soils Health (soil testing, cover crops, soil moisture monitoring, biology, organic matter)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of producers soil testing and related acres ▪ Number of producers participating in soil health program and related acres ▪ Numbers of direct seed acreage ▪ Increase in soil organic matter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 50 producers soil testing and 1000 related acres by 2027 ▪ 50 producers participating in soil health program, and 1000 related acres by 2027 ▪ 5,000 acres direct seed by 2027 ▪ 1% increase in soil organic matter in 1000 related acres
<p>Education (producers, consumers, and youth)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of education events & related participation (meetings, demonstrations) ▪ Number of students & teachers participating in district offered classroom instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annually host/co-host four education events & 80 related participation events (meetings, demonstrations) by 2027 ▪ Continue education partnerships to provide 1,000's of student & teachers with Salmon in the Classroom, field trips, Wheat Week, and Water on Wheels, and new opportunities through 2027 ▪ Focus on production agricultural education for producers and consumers and provide information on best management practices for natural resource conservation
<p>Habitat Restoration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of habitat restoration projects completed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3-4 restoration projects (shrubsteppe, riparian, etc.) completed in partnership with others ▪ Work with landowners and others in plan development and implementation
<p>Wildfire Resiliency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Miles/acres of green strip installed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 100 miles of green strip installed in the shrubsteppe/rangeland ▪ Continue cooperation and partnership with other agencies and organizations in the Community Wildfire Protection Plan
<p>District Operations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strong and accurate financial administration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Through 2027 have strong and accurate financial administration, have all required Conservation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All required Conservation Accountability and Performance elements met ▪ Trained & experienced staff to match program needs ▪ Active Supervisors 	<p>Accountability and Performance elements met, have trained & experienced staff to match program needs and active Supervisors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to provide staff and Supervisors with appropriate training via webinars and/or workshops ▪ Minimum of 1 training session for supervisors per year. ▪ Continue to seek new educational opportunities and funding ▪ Implement long range plan and annual plan of work ▪ Provide assistance to producers and stakeholders with resource issues ▪ Seek involvement from cities, towns, and communities ▪ Continue to work with Dairy Federation, Cattleman's Association, Farm Bureau, and other agriculture- and conservation-related entities ▪ Update and expand web page and other electronic information systems.
--	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Land Manager Needs

- Cost share programs for irrigation conversion and education
- Cost effective Irrigation Water Management (IWM) monitoring program
- Modern technology and systems
- Engineering assistance
- Technical assistance
- Financial assistance
- Nutrient Management record keeping system for private land owners...functional, user friendly
- Soil testing program – equipment, soil moisture monitoring, testimonials, nutrient balance
- Soils and nutrient management technical assistance
- Demonstration of successful practices for the local area
- Noxious weed control

Staffing Needs

- Full-Time District Manager
- 2 Full-Time Technical Resource Technicians/Conservation Planners
- Full-Time Nutrient Management Planner
- Part-Time Bookkeeper/Secretary

Annual Budget Needs

Assessment Administration Fee	8,900
Education/Outreach	10,000
Employee Wages	110,000
Employee Benefits	4,563.72
Administration	35,000

Property Tax	6,051
Dues	3,489
Operational Expenses	59,000
GWMA	80,000
Inter-Seed Drill Program Maintenance/Repairs	7,000
ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES	\$324,003.72

Key Decision Makers

- SYCD Board of Supervisors
- Conservation Commission
- NRCS
- WSDA
- Partnering Agencies
- District Landowners
- County Commissioners
- County Government
- City Governments
- State, Federal and Tribal Governments
- Non-governmental organizations

Washington Conservation Districts assisting land managers with their conservation choices

