

# CONSERVATION CONNECTION

Summer, 2016



## FERRY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Our mission is to safeguard the rural lifestyle and sustainable use of natural resources of Ferry County for present and future landowners, residents, and visitors by offering technical and financial assistance, outreach, and education through partnerships.

### Mark Your Calendar

- Our Board of Supervisors meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 5:30 pm. Please join us.
- Interested in becoming a Board member? (see below) Apply by June 28.
- State Fire Recovery Funds available —Contact the Conservation District by July 25 regarding your eligibility. (See page 4)



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## The Benefits and Hazards of Bees and Wasps

We all know how important bees are. Honeybees as well as thousands of species of native bees provide pollination services for much of the plant world. Gathering pollen and nectar to take back to their hives, bees move some of the pollen from anther to pistil, effectively fertilizing the plant so that a seed may form. At this time of year, our gardens are filled with the buzzing of bees visiting the flowers



Honeybee gathering pollen and nectar.

of raspberry plants, strawberry plants, tomato plants and others, doing their good work. As beneficial as bees are to the plant world and to humans, they do have stingers to protect themselves and can inflict pain on unsuspecting hu-

mans. Fortunately, bees are not very aggressive, unless they are protecting their nests. Left unbothered, they will peacefully share the garden with us.

Wasps, on the other hand, can be very aggressive and are able to sting multiple times. Though wasps do provide benefits (they are important predators of pest insects, laying their eggs inside them, or preying on them and bringing them back to their nests for their young), they can also create a great inconvenience to humans. The most common and probably the most annoying wasp is the yellow jacket (hornets, yellow jackets and other wasps are all grouped together as wasps, differentiated from bees by a skinny waist and lack of hair). As summer progresses, the yellow jacket's interests turn from preying on other insects to finding protein and sugars inside garbage cans, on picnic plates and in soda cans. These wasps can also wreak havoc on garden fruit and berries.

Bee and wasp stings both may cause tremendous discomfort. Much worse, if the person stung has an allergy to the toxin in the stinger, anaphylactic shock may result, causing a restriction of the airway.



Yellow jacket: harmful or beneficial?

If untreated with an epinephrine (Epi-pen) injection, death could result. What should you do about this potential hazard? First maintain an awareness of the risks. If you are allergic, carry an Epi-pen. Antihistamines kept on hand could alleviate mild symptoms. Be aware of a progressing reaction and head to the emergency room quickly if necessary. In the event of a bee sting, scrape off or pinch off the stinger (wasps generally do not lose their stinger). (continued on pg. 3)

### District Board of Supervisors Seat Opening

A seat on the Ferry Conservation District Board of Supervisors is available for appointment by the Washington State Conservation Commission. Conservation district board supervisors are public officials who serve without compensation, and set policy and direction for the conservation district. An applicant must be a registered voter in Washington State, and is required to own land or operate a farm in the district. Applicants for appointed positions do not have to live within the district to apply. For more information, or to obtain an application form, please contact the Ferry Conservation District or visit the Conservation Commission website at <http://www.scc.wa.gov/>. Applications and supporting materials must be received by the Commission no later than June 28, 2016.

## 2016 Spring Plant Sale a Resounding Success!

Another successful Plant Sale is behind us. Over 60 satisfied customers took home hundreds of fruit trees, berry plants, and native and ornamental trees and shrubs.

Over several decades the Ferry Conservation District has sold thousands of plants to county residents to beautify their property, to provide habitat for pollinators, to provide food for themselves and to



*Natives—Oregon Grape*

reforest areas in order to reduce weeds, and prevent weed growth and soil erosion. Over 60 Ferry County residents bought hundreds of plants this year, including Red Gravenstein and Honeycrisp Apples, Albion Strawberries, Oregon Grape and Western Larch, among others.



*Reforestation—Ponderosa Pine*

This year the Conservation District added a seed exchange to the plant sale. Residents with unused seeds brought them to the sale and re-

turned home with seeds brought by others. We are already thinking about next year's sale and gathering ideas for plants to carry. If you have any requests, please let us know. We will take all suggestions into consideration.



*Edibles—Italian Prune Plum*

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*“Riparian areas act as buffers, moderating flow, temperature and the amount of nutrients and sediment transported to the water from the surrounding landscape.”*

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## Cost Share Assistance Available for Riparian Conservation Projects

The Ferry Conservation District has received a grant through the Washington State Department of Ecology, Centennial Water to improve the health of riparian areas in the Sanpoil, Kettle, and Curlew Lake watersheds through implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs).

Riparian areas are transitional zones that exist between a body of water and the surrounding drier upland. These areas occupy only a small part of the total watershed area, 2% - 4% of Washington's land base, yet they play a substantial role in regulating many hydrologic processes. Riparian areas act as buffers, moderating flow, temperature, and the amount of nutrients and sediment transported to the water from the surrounding landscape. As such, their influence extends well beyond the small area they occupy, providing numerous social, economic, and ecological benefits.

Through this grant, cost share funds are available to eligible property owners to make riparian improvements through BMPs such as in-

stalling fencing and off-stream stock watering facilities to reduce livestock impacts to the riparian area. If your shoreline is eroding funds are available for stream bank stabilization projects such as structural bank protection (engineered log jams, riprap, anchor points), plant restoration, and seeding.

Landowners are generally reimbursed up to 50% of the costs of implementation up to a pre-determined amount. If you are interested and would like to deter-

mine your eligibility, contact Liz Carr at [509\) 775-3473 ext: 105](tel:5097753473) or come into our office at 84 Delaware Ave East above the Credit Union.

Another component of the grant is to monitor sites on the Kettle River and Sanpoil River where BMPs have been implemented to see if water quality improves over time. This monitoring effort started in May and will continue through October of this year and will be repeated in 2017.



*Large woody debris is often used to stabilize eroded streambanks.*

## Ferry Conservation District Supports “Lunches to Lunches” at Republic School

The Ferry Conservation District has been a proud supporter of the Republic School’s “Lunches to Lunches” project, successfully completed during the 2015-16 school year. Initiated by the students of Ms. Casey Harris’s Environmental Studies class, the project entailed renovating a former school greenhouse, composting food waste from the school cafeteria, and growing vegetables using the compost as a soil amendment.

Discovering that the school had a greenhouse which had been used as a storehouse for years, Harris’s students decided that returning it to original



in composters, donated to the program by Ferry County’s Waste Management Department. The Environmental Science students worked with students in all grades, educating them about waste reduction while collecting and weighing the food scraps each day. This composted food was used to amend

the soil in which lettuce, spinach and radishes was grown. 4<sup>th</sup> grade students helped the high schoolers harvest these delicious vegetables which were served to Republic School students and their families at an end-of-the-year school-wide barbecue.



Environmental Studies students reported that the elementary children were very interested and enthusiastic about the operation.

The Ferry Conservation District secured a grant from the Washington Conservation Society which helped pay for supplies used for rebuilding the old greenhouse. Support has also been received from the WSU Ferry County Extension and their Master Gardeners Program.

Ms. Harris plans to continue incorporating greenhouse and composting activities in her classes and will be offering a horticulture class next year. A similar project will be initiated at the Curlew School in the 2016-17 school year.

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*“The Ferry Conservation District has been a proud supporter of the “Lunches to Lunches” project.*

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use and growing food would be a great service project which would benefit the school community.

Waste food from cafeteria lunches, previously sent to the landfill, was diverted and processed



## The Benefits and Hazards of Bees and Wasps

*(cont. from front page)*

Ice the sting area. Some say that applying meat tenderizer will alleviate the effects.

To reduce the risk of yellow jacket problems, use preventative techniques. Make sure that you cover trash cans tightly, don’t leave garbage where it can be accessed by the yellow jackets. Be careful when you set down a partially full pop can. When you pick it up, it may have a yellow jacket in it. Rinse out empty pop cans before disposing of them.

Find the nest. Yellow jackets often

nest in the ground and may be seen flying in and out of a hole. You may inadvertently find the nest while mowing or weed-whacking. If you can cover the entrance (tightly) with a glass bowl for several days, you may be successful in killing them. The internet is awash with ideas for taking out nests. Some methods are non-toxic, while other more toxic.

Hang traps to catch them. Use a store bought trap or, to make your own. Cut off the top third of a plastic water bottle, invert it and

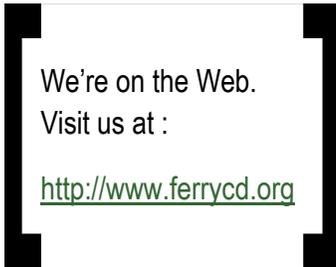
reattach it to the bottom part, fill with 2 inches of water and bait with a small amount of meat in spring and early summer, switching to sugar later in summer. The wasps will fly in through the small opening and not be able to leave. Most bees will leave these traps alone.

Bees and wasps both provide benefits to us. It is important to keep that in mind as we learn to live with them. However, as the sting of these insects can cause us discomfort and even lethal danger, we must balance the need for the benefits they provide with the need to stay safe and comfortable.

# Ferry Conservation District

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## Conserving Natural Resources since 1947



## Fire Recovery Funds Available from State

On April 18, Governor Jay Inslee signed the 2016 Supplemental Budget for the State of Washington. This budget includes fire recovery funding for Eastern Washington landowners who suffered losses as a result of the 2015 wildfires and the 2014 Carlton Complex fire. \$2.9 million has been divided between eleven Eastern Washington counties, with the total available to each county based on the number of acres burned. Ferry County has been allocated \$88,320 for landowners to protect water quality, stabilize soil, prevent crop damage, replace fencing and help recover from losses sustained from wildfires.

If you sustained damage from last summer's fires, contact us soon to see if you might be eligible for cost-share assistance (you would be responsible for 50% of the contracted cost of the project.) First priority will be given to those needing assistance for recovery on private lands (including leased private land), then state and federal lands, then tribal lands.

The District must apply for the funds by the end of July, 2016. Funds for each project must be spent before June 30, 2017.



Smoke Plume from Stickpin Fire, Summer 2015



### Board of Supervisors

- Eric Bracken, *Chair*
- Randall Hansen, *Vice Chair*
- Charlotte Coombes, *Auditor*
- Dave Konz, *Member*
- Bowe Brown, *Associate*
- John Hamilton, *Associate*
- Carol Fugit, *Associate*

### Staff Members

- Lloyd Odell, *Manager*
- Liz Carr, *Water Quality Specialist*
- Candy Lammon, *Financial Administrator*
- Bill Chamberlin, *Resource Assistant*
- Patrice Beckwith, *NRCS Resource Conservationist*



Late summer on the Kettle River

Ferry Conservation District is a non-regulatory agency. Our services are available to all without discrimination.