

**UNDERWOOD CONSERVATION
DISTRICT**

LONG-RANGE

PLAN

2023-2028



For more information, contact:

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VALUES

UCD Values

flexible flexibility independence inspiration efficiency
education communities wildlife
conservation vision expertise
water nature trust
habitat integrity forest
sustainable stability
forests climate watersheds
balance adaptability plants
streams open-mindedness enthusiasm
reliability salmon lands respect service environment effectiveness order unity soil oak forest

VISION

UCD is a trusted, consistent, innovative and reliable source of sound natural resource support for all landowners and residents in meeting their goals in their enjoyment, use and stewardship of the region's natural environment.

MISSION

UCD engages landowners and land users throughout Skamania and western Klickitat Counties in the voluntary conservation, enhancement, stewardship, and sustainable use of natural resources.



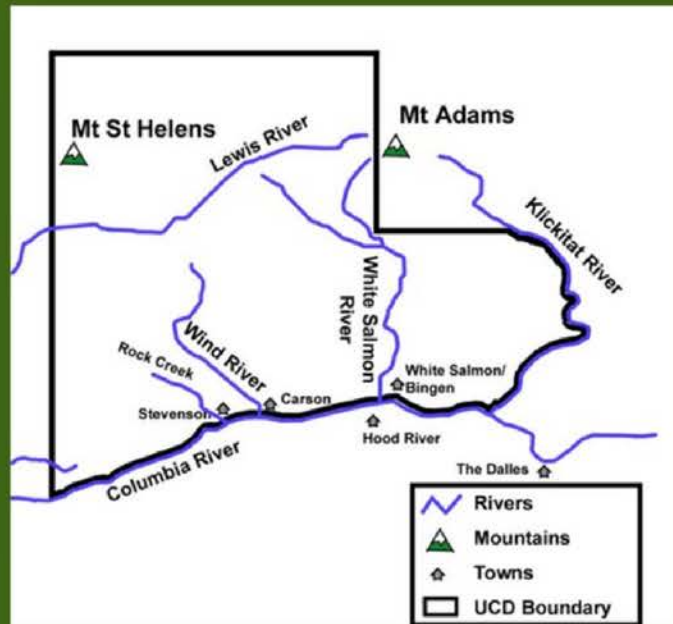
ABOUT UCD

Underwood Conservation District (UCD) is a political subdivision of the State of Washington; its authorities, powers and structure are contained in RCW 89.08. As described in RCW 89.08.010: "there is a pressing need for the conservation of renewable resources... whether urban, suburban, or rural, and... the benefits of resource practices, programs, and projects, as carried out by the state conservation commission and by the conservation districts, should be available to all such areas."

Soon after Washington State passed RCW 89.08 in 1939, UCD was established in July 1940 by a local coalition of landowners and farmers who became UCD's first board of supervisors.

Today, UCD is still governed and guided by a board of supervisors - three are elected locally and two are appointed by the Washington State Conservation Commission. UCD receives some funding from the State Conservation Commission and Klickitat County Rates & Charges, but the majority of the district's funds come from a variety of local, state and federal grants. UCD employs six staff members serving a variety of local and regional natural resource needs. The district office is located in White Salmon, Washington.

GEOGRAPHIC CONTEXT



UCD's service area includes all of Skamania County and Klickitat County west of the Klickitat River. The population of the district is approximately 22,000. UCD was originally formed in 1940 on Underwood Mountain and has since grown to serve landowners and residents throughout the district area.

Today, Underwood Conservation District encompasses a large area – 1,395,819 acres or 2,181 square miles – comprised of a variety of land uses and geographic features. UCD's area includes numerous land ownerships: federal, state, private, and tribal. The district spans both sides of the Cascade mountain range and extends from the north bank of the Columbia River to Mt. St. Helens and the flanks of Mt. Adams. Within the district boundaries are moist westside forests and dry eastside shrub-steppe environments. Several large river systems are included in the district: a 52-mile stretch of the Columbia River, the Klickitat River, the White Salmon River, the Little White Salmon River, the Wind River, and parts of the Washougal River. Agricultural land uses include forestry, livestock, fruit orchards, vineyards, range, hayland, and some dairies. Urban areas in the district include the towns of Stevenson, White Salmon, Bingen, North Bonneville, Carson and Trout Lake.

NATURAL RESOURCE PRIORITIES & PROGRAMS

The natural resource priorities and programs of UCD fall into seven broad categories:

- Forestlands
- Agriculture and Working Lands
- Urban Environments
- Terrestrial and Riparian Habitat, Weeds and Native Plants
- Instream Habitat and Water Quality
- Community Engagement
- Sustainable Operations

In the latter half of 2022, UCD conducted a public survey, interviews, and planning meetings with board members, staff and partners to define the program goals and objectives for the next five years, as described on the following pages.



NATURAL RESOURCE PROGRAM GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Forestlands

This program includes UCD's ongoing wildfire risk reduction program and a variety of landowner technical assistance.

Goal: Increase health, diversity, sustainability and cover of native forestlands while supporting conservation of working lands.

Objectives:

- Reforest fallow agricultural lands on at least three sites in the next two years; grow the Acre by Acre reforestation program.
- Develop a more robust and comprehensive wildfire risk reduction program with multiple types of assistance, including mobile chipping service to at least 40 new landowners each year.
- Build capacity for forestry technical assistance and conduct at least ten small woodland assessments per year.

Agriculture & Working Lands

This program includes a variety of landowner technical assistance, support for best management practices, the Farm Tool Library and efforts to support agricultural viability.

Goal: Increase sustainability of agricultural practices while supporting conservation of working lands.

Objectives:

- Provide technical assistance for at least ten working farm landowners per year.
- Expand Farm Tool Library membership by 30 members per year and establish sustainable operations.
- Develop engineering and technical assistance for five properties' manure management, one conceptual bank stabilization plan, and potential irrigation improvements.
- Update at least one dairy nutrient management plan in Trout Lake.
- Explore and build capacity with partners to support agricultural and conservation easement options.

Urban Environments

This program includes UCD's recently-established Yard by Yard program and support to cities and city residents on a variety of natural resource concerns.

Goal: Promote conservation of natural resources and functional native ecosystems in urban and suburban areas.

Objectives:

- Register 25 new Yard by Yard landowners per year, expanding the program to areas throughout the district.
- Provide technical assistance to support "green infrastructure," water quality protection, stormwater management and water conservation.



Terrestrial & Riparian Habitat, Weeds & Native Plants

This program includes UCD's annual native plant sale, ongoing support for Tree of Heaven control, and other noxious weed projects in urban and rural environments.

Goal: Promote restoration and sustainability of functional native ecosystems throughout the district, prioritizing most-threatening invasives and most-critical habitats.

Objectives:

- Continue the annual native plant sale and TreeFest event and evaluate each year to determine growth and new strategies.
- Explore and pursue potential native plant nursery program.
- Evaluate the Tree of Heaven control pilot project and develop a plan for next five years.
- Promote and support best practices around preservation and management of oak woodlands.
- Provide technical assistance and project support for noxious weed control/eradication and restoration of native terrestrial and riparian habitat.

Instream Habitat & Water Quality

This program includes UCD's ongoing work to enhance instream habitat, correct fish passage barriers, install fish up-to-date screens and restore historic hydrology in urban and rural environments.

Goal: Increase instream habitat quantity, quality and long-term resiliency for critical aquatic species and functional watersheds.

Objectives:

- Identify, evaluate, and provide project support for five instream habitat projects within the district.
- Provide engineering services to five instream habitat or irrigation projects throughout Washington State, as a member of the regional engineering team.
- Evaluate UCD's role in water quality monitoring and determine plans for ongoing work by December 2023.
- Evaluate UCD's role in water resources planning in the White Salmon River watershed by 2025.



Community Engagement

This program is a core part of UCD's success and relates to all other program areas throughout the district. Relevant community outreach, education, information-sharing and participation are integral to improving natural resource conditions on a voluntary basis over the long-term.

Goal: Share information, promote best practices, and recruit increased voluntary participation in natural resource management and stewardship.

Objectives:

- Continue consistent outreach programs, including annual Winter Workshop series, summer Crop Talks, and TreeFest events.
- Provide accessible educational materials, website, landowner technical assistance and volunteer opportunities.
- Expand education and outreach opportunities to Stevenson and westward, with at least one event per year.
- Engage youth throughout the district in natural resource education where possible.
- Expand Spanish education by providing Spanish translations and hosting at least one Spanish-spoken event each year.
- Continue integral support to Center for Technical Development, conducting at least two statewide technician-skills trainings per year.

Sustainable Operations

This area of work is also a core part of UCD's success, relating to the long-term viability of all other program areas. Robust funding, financial accountability, Board of Supervisor and staff development, and long-term district visioning and planning are key components of sustainable operations.

Goal: Sustain and grow a strong foundation of operations through consistent funding, board support and staff capacity.

Objectives:

- Maintain a five-member Board of Supervisors and two Associate Board Members.
- Pursue consistent sources of relevant funding.
- Increase staff capacity and support for technical assistance, district development, grant writing, and administrative/financial management.
- Engage in detailed planning around UCD's Community Conservation Center and potential land acquisition; evaluate progress annually.
- Conduct annual board and staff reflection sessions to review work and upcoming plans.
- Update UCD mission and vision, including a compelling "why" statement and a diversity, equity and inclusion perspective.
- Develop a land acknowledgement statement in collaboration with area tribes.
- Explore a "branding" process for UCD and associated community outreach to increase awareness and participation.

UNITING THEMES OF UCD'S WORK



P

PEOPLE MATTER

UCD is committed to serving all residents of our district, regardless of economic status, race or other status. UCD is also committed to providing equal opportunity and a positive, supportive working environment to employees.

CLIMATE CHANGE

In a changing climate, both globally and regionally, it is increasingly important to prioritize the minimizing of climate impacts in our operations while also helping communities mitigate and adapt to climate change.



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VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

By design, UCD is a non-regulatory agency, and the foundation of successful stewardship is voluntary landowner participation.

THE LONG VIEW

UCD was established in 1940, more than 83 years ago. While UCD's programs and services will adapt and update with time, UCD's overall purpose and mission are timeless and designed to serve generations.



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THE UCD TEAM



UCD BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

CURRENT IN 2023

BARBARA BAILEY, CHAIR
BENGT COFFIN, VICE-CHAIR
RACHEL SUITS, AUDITOR
KRIS SCHAEDEL
JOE KEAR

UCD STAFF

CURRENT IN 2023

TOVA TILLINGHAST
ANN GROSS
DAN RICHARDSON
CARLY LEMON
JAN THOMAS
CORRIE PODOLAK





UNDERWOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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