



State Legislative District #9
Congressional District #4

Franklin Conservation District

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Board Chair: Chris Herron

Other Accomplishments



Implemented irrigation water management on 72 irrigated fields and 34 orchard sites, treating 22,225 acres.



Worked with 13 growers to treat noxious weeds on 4,479 acres.



Finalized construction of Franklin Conservation District's new, district-owned office in Pasco.

2015 Feature Accomplishment: Installing cover crops to protect water quality



Before - cover crop installation.
Credit: Lenwood Farms

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Franklin County has been a member of the Columbia Basin Ground Water Management Area (CBGWMA) since 1998. The CBGWMA was originally formed to address nitrate contamination in drinking water in Franklin, Grant, Adams, and a portion of Lincoln County. Since its inception, agricultural producers have looked for innovative ways to ensure that nitrogen in the soil profile is put to beneficial use and is not leached out into the groundwater.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

One best management practice used to capture excess nitrogen in the soil profile is cover crops. Cover crops refer to herbaceous vegetation planted after a farmer's primary crop is harvested. With funding from the Washington State Conservation Commission, the Franklin Conservation District was able to offer cost-share assistance to eight producers to implement cover crops on 3,353 acres during the 2014 growing season. In addition to recycling excess nitrogen in the soil profile, cover crops have the added benefit of reducing soil erosion from wind and water, increasing soil organic matter, and minimizing and reducing soil compaction.



After - established cover crop.
Credit: Lenwood Farms

KEY PARTNERS: Washington State Conservation Commission; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; Providence Farms LLC; Lenwood Farms; Middleton Six Farms; T & R Farms; Roundy Farms; Riley Farms; Mullen Farms; and Sagebrush Farms.

More Work to Do!

- Implement \$350,000 appropriated by the State Legislature to bring a deep furrow conservation drill to the manufacturing level.
- Utilize Non-Shellfish funds from the Washington State Conservation Commission to convert inefficient irrigation systems to efficient ones.
- Wheat Week educational program expansion continues with eight educators serving the west side of the state, four serving central Washington, and four providing services to eastern Washington.