

Memorandum to: AACD/DNR

From: Wasilla Soil & Water Conservation District

Subject: Annual Report of Accomplishments

Date: September, 2010

This represents the annual report of the Wasilla District for fiscal year 2010, as required by DNR, and as specified in cooperative agreements with DNR and the Alaska Association of Conservation Districts.

### **Programs & Projects**

The Wasilla District has conducted its annual assessment of progress toward completion of the 2010 plan of work.

Goal 1: Provide Nutrient Management Plan to cooperators to ensure high quality, productive soils

Assessment: Goal accomplished, with satisfactory results. 41 soil samples were submitted; fertilizer and lime recommendations were provided to 9 landowners. Existing nutrient management plans covering 1,028 acres are on file with NRCS.

Goal 2: Provide Nutrient Management and Forage Management Plans to cooperators, promoting best management practices for production of high quality crops

Assessment: Goal accomplished. Submitted 2 hay samples to lab for one cooperator with plan covering 38 acres on file.

Goal 3: Promote composting as a means to manage animal waste storage and use the composted product for soil enrichment.

Assessment: Goal accomplished. Sent 1 manure sample to lab for one cooperator. Fertilizer rates were recommended for use of manure on hay fields.

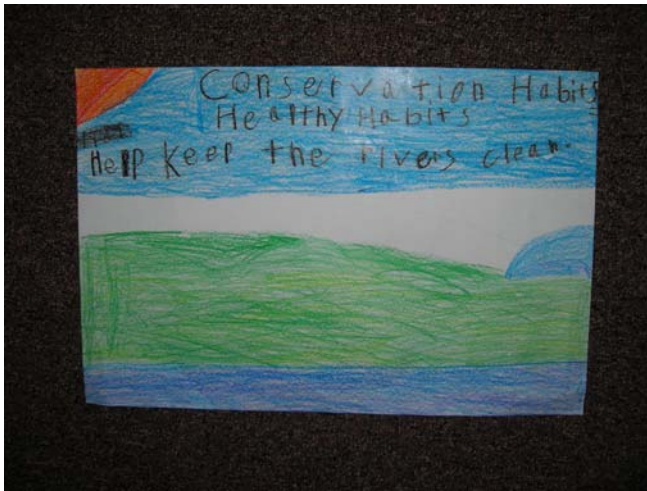
Goal 4: Coordinate poster contest, with information being distributed to 18 schools, with approximately 200 students participating

Assessment: Goal accomplished. Information was distributed to 24 schools, with each school receiving a copy of the PowerPoint prepared by District staff. District employees gave interactive presentations to 8 schools. 180 posters were judged, with awards

presented for each category and winners were entered in the State competition. Winning posters were featured in a District newsletter. Additional conservation presentations were given to classes when the awards were distributed. Many of the 7<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade students enjoy participating in the poster contest, but there are no awards for that category. District staff selected outstanding poster and presented a certificate of honorable mention.

FIRST PLACE WINNERS:

K-1<sup>st</sup> grade  
Michael Scudder



2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> grade  
Annalise Byrd



4<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> grade  
Shyanne Massie



7<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade Honorable Mention  
Sarah Walker



Goal 5: Provide general office support for Conservation District activities

Assessment: Goal accomplished. The District Manager maintains a professional office that is efficient and well-organized, creating a pleasant atmosphere for employees and visitors. Bookkeeping activities, work plans, and reports were completed in a timely manner.

Goal 6: Implement outreach activities to raise awareness of the Conservation District's services and achievements to encourage new cooperators and to strengthen relationships with existing cooperators

Assessment: Goal accomplished. The Wasilla District contacted 4 prospective cooperators in FY10. About 200 newsletters were mailed each quarter, and are accessible from the District's website. District Manager re-designed website and updated it monthly, including a calendar which lists board meeting dates. Monthly board meetings are open to the public and public notice is given prior to each meeting. The District's Christmas Open House saw a smaller attendance this year, due to extremely cold weather. Cooperators and volunteers who braved the elements enjoyed visiting one-on-one with District staff and Board Members about various conservation projects.

Goal 7: Attend Conservation District and agency conferences to disseminate information and to gather valuable input and expertise

Assessment: Goal accomplished. The Wasilla District was represented at both the Spring and the Fall Conference, hosted by AACD. Board members felt that information exchanged among the various districts was beneficial.

Goal 8: Pay dues

Assessment: Goal accomplished. Dues were promptly paid to AACD, NACD, and the Wasilla Chamber of Commerce.

### Invasive Plant Program

Objective: Continue promotion of weed-free areas and public education about invasive plants.

Assessment: Wasilla High School's annual vetch pull produced 350 bags of vetch and the annual Hatcher Pass weed pull field trip with Teeland Middle School students was also a huge success. The white sweet clover is contained on Hatcher Pass. The Cottonwood Slough trailhead restoration site has vetch and white sweet clover which is being contained with continual monitoring.

## 2008 Salmon Partnership

Objective: Continue streambank restoration and education projects

Assessment: This grant was finished in May, 2010, with all grant activities completed. The National award presented to the Wasilla SWCD for “Outreach and Educational Achievement in Support of Fish Habitat Conservation” is a testament to the success of projects completed under this grant.

District employee Catherine Inman (2<sup>nd</sup> from left) accepted the award on the District’s behalf.



Finger Lake Elementary held its annual Finger Lake/Cottonwood Creek field day in May. 180 Teeland Middle School students cut willows at the Plant Materials Center on March 18 - 19. Willows are used for streambank restoration projects throughout the summer. 20 students from Big Lake Elementary had a field day on Coho Creek with fish traps, studying water chemistry, macro invertebrates, and identifying salmon fry species. Studies on the Little Susitna River at Schrock Road with 240 students of Colony Middle School were completed over a four-day period. Fish traps were set and retrieved in various locations of Colter Creek, Coho Creek and Upper Wasilla Creek, with previously undocumented rearing and spawning of Coho and Chinook salmon in Coho and Wasilla Creeks being registered in the State’s Anadromous Water Bodies Catalog.



Five ATV crossings in the Matanuska Moose Range were improved with the help of the Division of Forestry’s intern crew. Spruce revetments, coir logs, live willow stakes, trail re-routing and two new bridges were completed.



450' of the Little Susitna River streambank at Sushana Road was restored. Cottonwood rounds were placed to curb ATV travel.



Students of Cottonwood Creek Elementary completed a rain garden on school grounds near Cottonwood Creek to minimize parking lot runoff. The garden was dedicated to honor Steve Duncan and his contributions to watershed health.



Five classes of Knik Elementary spent a field day at the Palmer Hay Flats.



#### Additional Activities

Wasilla District Board Members are active in a variety of organizations that support their interests and their desire to promote conservation in Alaska, including, but not limited to, Mat-Su Resource Conservation & Development Council, Farm Bureau, AACD Board, Matanuska Creamery, Mat-Su Borough Planning Commission, Alaska Diversified Livestock Association, and the Board of Agriculture and Conservation.