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# Press Release

## Growing Support for Palouse River Watershed Conservation Programs

*Farmers and landowners are leading the way to implement conservation practices on their working lands*

LOCATION – Pullman, WA. The Palouse River Watershed Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is a collaborative effort between local, state, and federal groups to help landowners establish voluntary incentive-based conservation practices on their working lands that enhance producer operations, while improving soil and water health and increasing wildlife habitat. Whether producers and landowners are interested in no-till or minimum till practices, filter strips, riparian buffers, soil sampling, or offsite water or fencing for livestock, RCPP partners can help find financial assistance to address their resource concerns.

Applications are being accepted now until June 30<sup>th</sup> for the third RCPP signup to fund top-ranked projects in 2018 and 2019. Funds are available for landowners and producers in Whitman, Adams, Lincoln, and Spokane Counties in Washington, and parts of Latah County in Idaho that are within the Palouse River Watershed. In the first two years of the RCPP program, landowners and operators have received cost-share funding to implement 22,314 acres of residue management (minimum till seeding); 150 acres of filter strips, field borders or riparian buffers; 12,460 acres of precision nutrient management; and 42 acres of conservation easements. Across the nation, there is growing support for collaborative programs like RCPP, and the on-the-ground resource impacts for landowners, farmers and ranchers that would otherwise be difficult to implement without support from multiple conservation partners. Washington State Representative Mary Dye says, “The efforts of the RCPP are indicative of a deep respect for the values of landowners whose lives exemplify a long-term commitment to the health of their land.”

The RCPP Partners will be also hosting a tour of the Palouse on July 10<sup>th</sup> to see first-hand examples of funded projects, including a direct seeded farm with riparian buffers, fencing and off-site watering for livestock producers, riparian buffers, a Farmed Smart certified farm, and live-stream data from monitoring efforts that have tracked impacts to soil and water health from implementation of conservation practices like these.

Doug Schuster, a Whitman County farmer, says, “the conservation district has provided guidance on minimum till practices for me, helped fund a no till drill, and provides financial incentives to continue using best management practices on my farm. The word I would use to describe the district is: approachable. There is always a mountain of paperwork involved in the programs offered, but Dan - Palouse Rock-Lake Conservation District Manager - helps to manage the load. These people don’t want to ‘tell you how to farm’, they want to encourage farmers to try different practices.”

To apply for RCPP conservation cost-share assistance, to learn more about the program, or to sign up for the tour, call or visit your local Conservation District or NRCS office, Pacific Northwest Direct Seed Association, the Palouse Land Trust, or call the Palouse Conservation District at 509-332-4101.

### **About the Palouse Conservation District**

[The Palouse Conservation District works through voluntary, incentive-based programs to assist landowners and agricultural operators with the conservation of natural resources throughout the district. A volunteer five-member Board of Supervisors along with Associate Supervisors, staff and volunteers carry out District programs and services that benefit both landowners and the environment. The district's mission is to actively assist current and future generations of land managers (rural and urban) in implementing conservation practices by providing educational, technical, and financial assistance. To learn more, visit <http://www.palousecd.org/>, or call us at 509-332-4101.]

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