

# BENTON CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## 2024-25 Featured accomplishment



### BEFORE

*Benton Conservation District and Central Klickitat Conservation District staff installing posts for beaver dam analogues. Photo by Kristy Pentico, Benton Conservation District.*



### AFTER

*Newly Created wetland habitat in Dead Canyon after project installation Photo by Kristy Pentico, Benton Conservation District.*

### Resource concern

In South Benton County's arid sagebrush-steppe, riparian and wetland habitats are rare, making their protection vital. Dead Canyon features an unnamed creek that drains into the Columbia River. Surrounded by farmland, grazed canyonland, and sagebrush, the creek has significant potential for conservation and restoration. Improvements to the riparian function of the creek improve water quality and create essential forage, nesting, and resting lands for wildlife.

### Featured project

A degraded wetland in Dead Canyon has been restored, benefiting fish and wildlife. Benton Conservation District teamed up with Central Klickitat Conservation District and Eastern Klickitat Conservation District to install 14 beaver dam analogs along several miles of stream. Constructed of conifer branches, brush, and slash woven into wooden posts, the analogs mimic natural functions of beaver dams, increasing wetland areas and improving water quality. Native riparian vegetation, from North Yakima Conservation District's Riparian Plant Propagation Program, stabilize the banks. Game cameras capture many wildlife visitors exploring the 3.5 acres of revitalized habitat.

### Costs & partners

This project cost \$49,000. BNSF Railway Mitigation Funds provided \$14,000, and the State Conservation Commission provided \$35,000. Partners included Central Klickitat, Eastern Klickitat, Franklin, and North Yakima conservation districts. Native plants came from the State Conservation Commission's Riparian Plant Propagation Program.

## Other accomplishments



The Heritage Garden Program supported 106 homeowners and certified nine gardens, saving an estimated 131,478 gallons of water per year compared to traditional landscapes.



The Salmon in the Classroom program served 55 schools with 111 salmon presentations and dissections, reaching over 2,800 fourth and fifth grade students.



The District held its 27th Annual Salmon Summit, the largest yet. Over two days, 35 partner agencies taught 5,000 students about fisheries, wildlife, habitat, and conservation.

📍 Congressional district 4    📍 Legislative districts 8, 14, 15 & 16

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