

# THE WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

## **Agricultural Pilots Project**

### *Interim Report*

December 2008



**The William D. Ruckelshaus Center**

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## ***Introduction***

The dual goals of the Agricultural Pilots Project are to “promote innovative ways to enhance farm income” while at the same time “improve natural resource protection”.<sup>1</sup> The Project also seeks to build bridges among the agriculture and environmental communities.

The Agriculture Pilots Project draws upon the practical problem solving skills, imagination, commitment, and collaborative capabilities of Washington State agricultural producers, members of the environmental community and others. At the same time, the Project draws upon well established agricultural and environmental research in order to help translate innovative ideas into reality by evaluating their feasibility, effectiveness and potential for dissemination.

In the 2007, the Governor and Legislature provided \$500,000 for a proof of concept phase for the Agricultural Pilots Project. The funding was provided to fund and evaluate four pilots that best demonstrate the dual goals of the Project.

## ***Purpose of Interim Report***

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the status of the Project. The report will also:

- outline the overall pilot evaluation approach and timeline.
- furnish a progress update on each of the four selected pilot projects.

This is the second interim report required by the interagency agreement between the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM), and Washington State University (WSU). The next interim report will be issued on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009, followed by a final report on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009. If you wish a copy of the first interim report (August 2008), it is available from the William D. Ruckelshaus Center.

## ***The Ag Pilots***

At the request of the Governor’s Office, the Ruckelshaus Center developed the Agriculture Pilots Project to encourage innovative demonstration projects that promote a vital agricultural economy as well as produce benefits for the environment. The four pilots are: ***Farming for Wildlife***; a project that seeks to support wildlife and agriculture in the Skagit Delta through a voluntary, science based, conservation strategy that includes creating farmland habitat for shorebirds; ***Transition of Insect Pest Management to New Pest Control Technology***, a pilot that seeks to enhance understanding and encourage the wider adoption of environmentally friendly integrated pest management strategies while maintaining acceptable crop protection and profitability, and increasing worker safety; ***G&L Farms-Transition to a Sustainable Future***, a project that seeks to test the feasibility and replicability of converting land coming out of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) into a vertically integrated grass-fed beef production system; and ***Direct Seed Mentor Program***, a project that seeks to increase the use of direct seeding methods in Spokane County through the use of mentors and side-by-side on-farm demonstrations.

### ***Agriculture Pilot Evaluation Process***

The Center is responsible for the evaluation of the pilots and an overall assessment of the value of the Ag Pilots Project. To meet these responsibilities the Center has employed Dr. William Budd and Kara Whitman, Research Assistant.

Each pilot proposal was required to put forward an evaluation approach. The proposed evaluation methods were reviewed by Center staff and technical experts for “appropriateness and feasibility” as part of the pilot selection process. While these evaluations will measure the success of each individual pilot, further evaluation is needed to discern the success of the Ag Pilots Project as a whole and to make recommendations for the future of the project.

### **Methodology for Assessing the Overall Value of the Ag Pilot Project**

To evaluate the success, value, and overall merits of the Ag Pilots Project, a *cluster evaluation* will be used. Cluster evaluations or knowledge-generating evaluations, are used when there are multiple projects or programs, of similar scope that have been implemented in varied ways; in order to “identify general patterns of effectiveness.” A cluster evaluation groups projects of similar intent into ‘clusters’ and synthesizes the findings from each. Cluster evaluation has been extensively used in the evaluation of grant programs.

The project selection criteria will be used to assess the overall success of the Ag Pilots Project. The evaluation will be a combination of the reviews of project update meetings, interviews, surveys, and a synthesis of each pilots’ outcomes. The interviews and surveys will look at the less tangible outcomes of the Ag Pilots Project, including: sustainability beyond the pilot stage, pilot replicability to other places in Washington State, and conditions by which trust, collaborative relationships, synergy, and leadership are fostered and whether those conditions exist in the Ag Pilot Projects and its link, if any, to project outcomes. Agricultural viability and environmental stewardship will be addressed by synthesizing the results of the individual pilot outcomes. See Appendices.

### **Timeline:**

- June 2008 – December 2009: Project updates with project leads and affiliated partners. **(In Progress)**
- June 2008 – January 2009: Evaluation materials production, including interview questions, and survey tools. **(In Progress)**

Note: Need to get consent from WSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the use of interview questions and survey tool.

- January 2009 – April 2009: Conduct interviews and surveys, and synthesize results of individual evaluations. **(Future)**

## **The Pilots**

The Agriculture Pilots Project has been in progress since the allocation of the initial funds in June of 2008. The pilots have made significant progress and are currently in the implementation stage of the overall Project. Below is an update on each pilot.

## ***1. Farming for Wildlife, Skagit Delta: The Nature Conservancy***

### **Pilot Description**

The Farming for Wildlife (FfW) pilot is investigating the ecological, economic, and agronomic effects of three farm management practices: flooding, sod harvest, and grazing. The primary goal of this project is to determine whether certain crop rotation practices may benefit soils and farmers while also providing temporary wetland habitat for shorebirds and other wetland dependent species. Experimental treatments have been implemented on over 200 acres at three privately owned farms in the Skagit Delta: the Hedlin Farm, the Mesman Farm, and the Thulen Farm. Baseline monitoring was completed in the Spring of 2007, and the habitat rotation (flooding) and the two crop rotations (sod harvest and grazing) were applied beginning in June 2007.

### **Pilot Progress**

Preliminary results suggest that flooding of agricultural lands can rapidly create wetland habitats that are beneficial to shorebirds and other wetland dependent species. At the Hedlin and Mesman farms, wetland plant species - primarily cattails and rushes - have extensively colonized the flooded sites. At the Hedlin farm, reed canary grass is also a dominant species. Little vegetation has become established in the flooded field at the Thulen farm, likely due to the lack of consistent water on the field over the course of the year.

On all the farms, shorebirds have been most abundant on the flooded sites during the fall migration period. The fall sampling period coincides with the driest period of the year in the Skagit Valley when non-estuarine wetlands are likely to be completely unavailable to shorebirds. In contrast, during the winter, shorebird use of flooded fields was lowest. Many fields in the region have saturated soils and standing water, thereby providing numerous habitat options. Peeps (*Calidrus* sp.) yellowlegs, and dowitchers comprise the primary groups of shorebirds observed on the flooded fields



Mesman Farm Flooded site August 2007.



Mesman Farm flooded Site August 2008.

### **Future Work**

In May 2009, following the spring migration of shorebirds, experimental treatments will be completed and farms will return to production. Plans are currently being developed to determine what crops and the timing of planting that might best maximize the productivity of the sites following the experimental treatments. Soil fertility and microbiology, and weed abundance will continue to be monitored through the 2010 growing season.

The economic feasibility analysis of habitat rotations will be completed in June 2009. This research will include enterprise budgets for three rotations, namely, flooding, a typical sod cover crop, and potatoes. In addition, this research will evaluate the net benefits of land conservation tools and a system of payments for ecological services that could support habitat rotation efforts.



Researchers measure the growth of cattails in flooded agricultural fields.



Yellowlegs and dowitchers are the most common shorebirds on the flooded agricultural fields during fall migration.

**Contact Information:** The Nature Conservancy Kevin Morse, Skagit Delta Project Manager [kmorse@tnc.org](mailto:kmorse@tnc.org)

## ***2. Transition of Insect Pest Management to New Pest Control Technology***

### **Pilot Description**

The Transition of Insect Pest Management to New Pest Control Technology (PMTP) project is an endeavor to proactively move the apple industry in the State of Washington towards new technologies that will decrease or eliminate the use of harmful substances such as the organophosphate (OP) called azinphos-methyl (AZM, which is commonly use to control the codling moth). Regulations from the EPA will phase out the use of AZM by the year 2012, increasing the need for Washington apple growers to find better ways to control the codling moth and other pests. PMTP seeks to increase use and awareness of the pest control strategy called



*The codling moth, photo courtesy of the PMTP project*

integrated pest management (IPM). The goals of this pilot are threefold. First, the pilot seeks to understand the barriers to the adoption of new IPM practices and develop educational and training strategies to encourage IPM adoption. Second, the project seeks to develop metrics to assess new technology adoption, economic viability, and environmental impacts. The final goal of the pilot is to understand perceptions of the environmental and farm labor sectors to more effectively develop education, communication and outreach programs that engage these groups. It is this final goal that forms the Ag Pilots Project pilot.

PMTP received \$500K from the legislature for the project for the FY07-09 biennium. Ag Pilots funding of \$149,296.00 was provided to enhance the project. The Ag Pilots funding is enhancing the projects capacity to engage the farm labor and environmental communities and to assess and document these efforts.

### **Pilot Progress**

The Pest Management Transition Project (PMTP) continues to meet established benchmarks in extending research-based knowledge to Washington's tree fruit industry. The primary direct delivery mechanism has been through implementation units (IUs). Fourteen IUs were established in 2008. These IUs were geographically distributed throughout the apple production region and influenced changes in pest management practices on 42,600 acres. Some participants in the IUs made dramatic changes in their apple pest management programs due to the PMTP while others made smaller changes as they became more comfortable with new technologies that have been registered to replace organophosphate insecticides. Education was delivered via meetings, a PMTP handbook (460 produced and distributed in 2008), newsletters (10 published in 2008), field days (5), a session at the annual Washington State Horticultural Association (WSHA) annual meeting in Yakima (250 participants), and a fruit school organized with WSU Extension (183 participants). The PMTP web site (<http://pmp.wsu.edu/>) continues to be the best site for up to date and archived information about the project.

Outreach to broader stakeholder groups focused on contacting farm workers to assess perceptions and needs. In summer/fall 2008, twenty-five meetings were held with individuals and organizations that work with farm workers. These meetings identified the need for educational materials on the risks and benefits of new insecticides. The PMTP will work to develop these resources. In addition, thirty meetings were held with individuals and organizations working in the areas of environmental conservation and sustainable/bio-agriculture. These groups generally praised and supported the PMTP efforts, and opportunities to work on areas of common interest have been identified.

Assessment and documentation efforts focused on baseline surveys of fruit industry consultants and growers/managers, and evaluations of IU impacts. We used a new assessment tool, TurningPoint, for gathering information and stimulating discussion. This technology, which integrates with a Power Point presentation, allows an audience to interact with and provide anonymous feedback to a presenter through use of “clickers.” This technology was used with IUs at the end of the growing season to assess the impact of PMTP. Results indicated a high level of satisfaction with the IUs and success using new insecticides in IPM programs. In addition, a consultant survey was sent out in 2008 and had a 52% response rate. Results will be shared in a complete report in January. A second consultant survey will be sent out this winter and results compared with the previous survey. A grower survey took longer to develop and will be sent out this winter after it is trial tested. This grower survey will serve as a baseline to measure future impacts of PMTP.

The administration of PMTP has changed due to the retirement of Jim Hazen (Executive Director of WSHA) and Dr. Chris Feise (Director of the WSU Center for Sustaining Agriculture and Natural Resources). Bruce Grim has replaced Jim Hazen and Dr. Marcia Ostrom has replaced Dr. Feise on the Executive Committee. The PMTP Advisory Committee (AC) met in October in Ellensburg, WA. Three new members have been added to the AC in order to broaden the base of input and influence of PMTP.

**Contact Information: pilot email:** [pmtip.info@wsu.edu](mailto:pmtip.info@wsu.edu) or visit the project website at <http://pmtip.wsu.edu/>

**Keith Granger, PMTP Manager**

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### ***3. Beefing Up the Palouse – an Alternative to the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)***

#### **Pilot Description**

The Beefing Up the Palouse pilot is exploring several aspects of converting land managed in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to a holistically managed resource using livestock as the principle tool to move towards sustainability. Many lands will be coming out of the CRP program in the next few years, and how these lands are managed will have severe impacts on farming as well as on environmental concerns such as erosion and habitat protection. While no land enrolled in the CRP program was grazed in this study, property adjacent to CRP land with similar biologic communities was used to duplicate the affects of grazing and rest. Some CRP land was used to test different fertilizer affects and inter-seeding techniques. This pilot “seeks to test this holistic management with the implementation of the profitable production of vertically integrated value-added natural or organic, grass-fed beef by becoming part of a production chain based on cooperation of the segments from conception to consumption”<sup>1</sup>. This pilot also seeks to assess the economic feasibility as well as the environmental benefits and or impacts of utilizing land that is coming out of the CRP programs. This is a highly collaborative pilot including partners from production to consumption in the grass-fed beef industry as well as partnerships with WSU Extension and the WSU BIOAg program.

This pilot seeks to reach 5 goals:

1. Assess the economic feasibility of CRP conversion to a grass-fed natural or organic beef production system
2. Assess and demonstrate agronomic strategies, including over-seeding for enhancing degraded CRP stands into productive pasture in the low-to intermediate rainfall areas of Washington
3. Evaluated the environmental effects of transition of CRP using Land EKG
4. Assess the replicability of the pilot by describing the place-dependent factors likely to affect feasibility by mapping these factors utilizing known parameters as well as GIS (Geographic Information Systems)
5. Demonstrate that fundamental underlying principles and pilot results can be applied in different environments and situations

#### **Pilot Progress**

- Developing an economic feasibility study, enterprise budget model and a business plan to evaluate various management strategies designed to produce annual revenue per acre equal to, or greater, than the revenue produced by land under CRP contract. (Shannon Neibergs and Chris Densmore)
- The second annual BIOAg Tour took place on May 28, 2008 and included a stop at the Ag Pilots Project site (G & L Farms, Benge) that is also a WSU Center for Sustaining Agriculture and Natural Resources BIOAg Learning Site. Over 65 people learned about this Ag Pilots project. (Lynne Carpenter-Boggs)

- Over 30 varieties of grasses and legumes are being evaluated via test plots. (John Kugler and Steve Van Vleet)
- Various methods of inter-seeding alfalfa into existing CRP grass stands were evaluated. (Gregg Beckley, Steve Van Vleet and John Kugler)
- Several unsuccessful attempts were made to obtain permission from NRCS to graze land currently under CRP contract as part of this project without incurring the 25% reduction in contract payment (Gregg Beckley and Steve Van Vleet)
- Infrastructure projects were initiated and partially completed to facilitate cattle management. This included battery powered temporary and permanent high tensile wire electric fence, portable corrals and loading facilities and some water lines were installed. More work is needed for additional corral facilities, water access and perimeter fencing to complete the minimum requirements for cattle management. (Dick Coon, Gregg Beckley and Maurice Robinette)
- Out of a total of 500 acres of seeded grass-legume pasture: 393 acres were grazed by 196 yearling cattle from April 19 until July 29, 2008 (102 days of grazing) and the remaining 107 acres were mowed and baled for hay. (Dick Coon, Joel Huesby and Maurice Robinette)
- Established four permanent Land EKG monitoring transects throughout the grazing area to assess the impact of planned grazing on these sites. Baseline information was collected prior to grazing. Post grazing impacts were assessed in Fall 2008. (Maurice Robinette)
- Soil tests were conducted using standard collection and analysis techniques. Several forage samples were analyzed to compare the nutritional characteristics of the improved grass-legume pasture to the CRP grass mixes. (Maurice Robinette, Gregg Beckley, Steve Van Vleet, Lynne Carpenter-Boggs and Grant Morton)
- Using GIS mapping to estimate the area in Central and Eastern Washington where the strategies being developed in this project might be replicated as an economically feasible option. The primary predictable environmental factors determining profitability of this system are soil type and precipitation (i.e., effective rainfall). NRCS maps will be combined with data from this study to make production estimates that will be layered using GIS maps to assess net potential profit from grass-fed cattle according to soil type and moisture regime. (Grant Morton and Lynne Carpenter-Boggs)
- Soil samples collected and geo-referenced on G & L Farms in November 2008 at Land EKG sites to determine baseline soil organic carbon content and site characteristics. (Dave Huggins and Tabitha Brown)
- Conducting a literature review of methodological approaches to assess management impacts on aboveground and belowground carbon in grassland ecosystems. Also formulating a statistical framework for analyzing data to come out of the Planned Ultra High- density Grazing treatment on CRP grass stands. (Mark Swanson)

## Outcomes

An enterprise budget model has been created to evaluate the economics of each beef cattle production phase (i.e., cow-calf, stocker and grass and grain finishing). The feasibility study will use the budget model to evaluate alternative production scenarios such as changing calving date, becoming part of a grass-fed natural or organic beef production system, planned grazing and alternative assumptions in seasonal forage availability and lease rates. The project site includes 1,000 acres of cropland and pasture that were certified organic in May 2008. Of this, 500 acres were planted to Spring soft white wheat, approximately 393 acres were grazed by yearling cattle and the remaining 107 acres were mowed and baled for hay.

### Results from grazing the 393 acres:

Number of cattle grazed:

Huesby: 112 hd.- avg. in-wt. 907 lbs. (charged @ \$.40/lb. gain)

Para: 84 hd.- avg. in-wt. 593 lbs. (charged @ \$.34/lb. gain)

Total	196	head	-	avg.	in-wt.	778	lbs.
Grazing period	April 19 through July 29, 2008 (102 days)						
Average daily gain/head	2.42 lbs.						
Total gain	42,062 lbs.						
Revenue from gain	\$15,885.64						
Value of hay harvested	\$ 3,159.00						
Total gross revenue	\$19,044.64						
Gross revenue/acre	\$48.46						

### Estimated results from haying 107 acres:

The value of the grass hay harvested was estimated to be \$12,512.50 or \$116.94 per acre @ \$130 per ton. All hay calculations are based on estimated bale weights of 1,300 lbs/bale for alfalfa hay and 1,100 lbs/bale for grass hay. Actual weights will be determined when the hay bales are picked up out of the fields.

To-date the various methods of inter-seeding alfalfa in existing CRP grass stands that have been tested have not been successful. (Gregg Beckley and Steve Van Vleet)

## Future Plans

- Hold a 2-day Planned Grazing/Grass-fed Beef Conference during May 2009 (dates still to be determined) co-sponsored by the Ag Pilots Beefing Up the Palouse and the Extension Grass-fed Beef Production Systems/Pasture Management Team projects. The roster of speakers will include producer collaborators, WSU Extension faculty and outside authorities. (Don Nelson)

- Test the use of the tool, Planned Ultra High-density Grazing, to not only condition and rejuvenate a decadent CRP grass stand, but to also use it to successfully inter-seed alfalfa. (Maurice Robinette, Dick Coon, Steve Van Vleet, Don Nelson and Tip Hudson)
- Measure the impact of various planned grazing approaches on carbon sequestration (mineral cycle), water infiltration (water cycle), biomass production (solar energy flow) and biodiversity (community dynamics). Assess the impacts of the proposed treatments on soil carbon by measuring aboveground and belowground carbon during pre- and post-treatment phases. (Mark Swanson)
- Will continue to seek permission from NRCS to graze one section of land owned by the Washington Department of Natural Resources prior to expiration of the current CRP contract in September 2010. Will also need to get the support of the National Wildlife Federation to work around the primary nesting period restriction that extends from April to August. (Steve Van Vleet, Gregg Beckley and Don Nelson)
- Assess bird-nesting habitat, bird species and bird numbers on grazed and ungrazed CRP grass stands (Mark Swanson and Steve Van Vleet)
- Evaluate the potential of this project site to produce cellulosic crops adapted to marginal soils in a 12-14 inch rainfall zone receiving low inputs with the crop being processed for bio-fuels; also evaluate the potential synergy of integrating cattle grazing with cellulosic crop production (Steve Fransen)
- Evaluate site capability for the various management scenarios under evaluation. (Lynne Carpenter-Boggs and Grant Morton)

**Contact Information:**

**Donald Nelson, WSU Extension Beef Specialist**

[nelsond@wsu.edu](mailto:nelsond@wsu.edu)

#### ***4. Direct Seed Mentor: Spokane County Conservation District***

##### **Pilot Description**

The Direct Seed Mentor pilot seeks to increase the adoption of direct seeding management practices throughout Spokane and Whitman Counties. The pilot plans to accomplish this through a mentoring program and side-by-side on-farm demonstration of direct seeding compared to conventional farming. Direct seeding is a farming method that puts the seed and the fertilizer directly into the ground without the use of conventional tilling. Direct seeding has been shown to increase soil fertility over time, increase water retention capacity, decrease the need for fertilizers and reduce operating costs. Conventional farming generally uses over 8 gallons of fuel per acre, compared to direct seeding that uses approximately 3 gallons of fuel per acre.<sup>2</sup> While direct seeding appears to have many benefits, adoptions of these practices are low. This pilot seeks to help growers see the benefits of direct seeding without the fear of the high up front cost of direct seeding equipment, through the use of mentors that practice direct seeding and have equipment and the expertise to guide the pilot sites.

The goals of the Direct Seed Mentor pilot are threefold:

1. Increase adoption of direct seed operations through the use of a mentoring program.
2. On-farm demonstrations of direct seeding.
3. Case study of side-by-side comparison of direct seeded ground with conventionally tilled ground.

##### **Pilot Progress**

Due to the initial contract timing issues encountered and its impact on the ability to start the pilot in a timely manner, SCCD has taken the necessary appropriate actions to revise the budget in order to accomplish some successful results for this project.

##### **A timeline of events is provided below:**

Initial Proposal Submitted:	September 2007
Pilot Selected for funding:	October 2007
Pilot Details submitted:	November 2007
Notice of Pilot Approval Forthcoming	December 2007
First Pilot Activity Completed at PNDSA Meeting	January 2008
Contracts Signed by SCCD	May 14, 2008
Contract signed by Commission	May 18, 2008
Initial Notice of Fiscal Year 2008 funding Issues	July 28, 2008
Final Notice of FY 08 funding Lost	August 2008

## Summary of Activities:

- Pilot Inception – January 2008
  - SCCD purchased booth space at Pacific Northwest Direct Seed Association annual meeting in Kennewick, WA. Booth was dedicated to the advertisement and promotion of the upcoming Ag Pilots direct seed mentor.
- Pilot Contracts received May 2008
- Spring 2008 seeding phase dropped due to contract process.
- July/August 2008 – Notified that 2008 funding was lost after having only 6 weeks of fiscal year remaining once contract was signed.
- September 2008 – Potential pilot participants backed out of fall seed season due to uncertain pilot funding and late harvest season.
- Fall 2008 – Worked on revising budget and preparing for spring 2009 seed season.
- October/November 2008 – Mentor Direct Seed workshops in Colfax. (30 attendees at the first meeting and 40 attendees at the second meeting)
- November 2008 – Ag Pilots presentation made at the Clearwater Direct Seeders Meeting in Lewiston, ID.
- December 2008 Colfax meeting scheduled.
- 2009 activities Scheduled:
  - Pacific Northwest Direct Seed Association Meeting in Kennewick, WA. – Special breakfast session outlining the mentor program. Potential participants will be taken to the conference.
  - January 2009 Direct Seed Meeting in Colfax
  - February 2009 Direct Seed Meeting in Colfax
  - Spring 2009 Mentor Consulting and Custom Seeding
  - Spring 2009 Economic Analysis of operations
  - June 2009 Direct Seed field Day

Dr. Hans Kok (WSU and UI), one of the pilot participants, has spent approximately 15 hours of his time this fall organizing the special direct seed meetings in Colfax as well as another 10 hours of his time advertising the program. In addition to Hans' time, Dennis Roe from WSU has also spent approximately 20 hours of his time talking with producers and potential mentors for the pilot. These hours are all matching funds for the pilot.

**Additional Pilot Information:**

It is important to note that the Direct Seed Mentor pilot is a completely new concept with farmers in the PNW. The challenges we have faced with contract and budget issues made it difficult to get firm commitments from producers. We now have some momentum and a tremendous amount of recognition for the pilot, which is all focused on getting participation from producers in the spring of 2009.

We have many dedicated, long-time direct seeders and no-till farmers in the region willing to be mentors for the pilot. The challenge is to get conventional farmers to accept direct seeding on their ground and to allow another system to be used to perform the most important operation of the year on their farm, seeding the crop.

Currently, Dr. Kok has another direct seed mentor project running in Latah County, ID with one mentor/producer team taking part so far. This pilot was modeled after the Ag Pilots project and has been faced with similar challenges getting producers to accept direct seed on their land. The advertising, promotions, and educational meetings are having a positive effect on the acceptance of the program and we expect to have both programs running this spring.

**Contact: Spokane County Conservation District. Ty Meyer, Production Ag Program Manager email [Ty-meyer@sccd.org](mailto:Ty-meyer@sccd.org)**

## **Challenges, Next Steps and Contact Information**

### ***Challenges***

While no new challenges have presented themselves since the interim last report (August 2008), the delayed contracting process at the onset of the project has continued to create some difficulties, mostly in the form of the pilots meeting their own implementation timelines and getting an invoicing/billing system in place that is simple and efficient. We have worked with each of the pilots and the Washington State Conservation Commission on each of the issues and believe that we have made progress in resolving these challenges.

Any new challenges arising in the implementation of any pilot or Project evaluation will be enumerated in the April 2009 interim report.

### ***Next Steps***

The next steps in the Ag Pilot Project are as follows:

- 1.) Continue monitor and evaluate the individual pilots
- 2.) Work with the governors office to identify an “state agency home” for the Ag Pilots Project (if the Project is deemed successful)
- 3.) Provide other contract deliverables including the final report

### ***Contact Information***

The Center has assigned Dr. Rob McDaniel as the project manager for the Ag Pilots Project. He can be reached at: 520 Pike St, Suite 1101, Seattle, WA 98101; (206) 219-2426; [mcdaniel@wsu.edu](mailto:mcdaniel@wsu.edu)

## Appendices

### *Appendix A: Summary of Agriculture Pilots Funding Allocation*

<u>Agriculture Pilots Project</u>	
<b>WSU Contract</b>	<b>\$65,241.00</b>
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<b>Projects</b>	<b>\$409,759.00</b>
Transition of Insect Pest Management	\$149,296.00
Direct Seeding Mentor Pilot	\$94,250.00
Farming for wildlife	\$84,500.00
G & L Farms – Transition to Sustainable Future	\$81,713.00
<hr/>	
<b>Other amount</b>	<b>\$25,000.00</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$500,000.00</b>

### *Appendix B: Contract Oversight and TBD Fees*

<b>Conservation Commission Oversight Fees</b>	
The commission takes a 3% fee for handling and overseeing the Ag Pilot funding.	
FY 2008-----	\$4,650
FY 2009-----	\$8,393
<hr/>	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$13,043</b>
<b>Additional funds (TBD)</b>	
These funds are to be used as a reserve in FY 2009 in case pilots need a few extra dollars to complete their pilot.	
FY 2008-----	\$61
FY 2009-----	\$11,692
<hr/>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$11,753</b>

**Appendix C: Pilot Budgets**

WSU Ag-Pilots Grants July 21,2008				
Pilot	Recipient	Amount Awarded FY09	Vouchered Amt.	Amount Remaining FY09
Beefing up the Palouse	WA Sustainable Food & Farming Network	\$16,036.00	<b>\$7,700.31</b>	\$8,335.69
<i>Notes</i>				
Direct Seed Mentor Pilot	Spokane Conservation District	\$60,866.00	<b>\$1,191.81</b>	\$59,674.19
<i>Notes</i>				
Farming For Wildlife	The Nature Conservancy	\$42,250	<b>\$6,819.02</b>	\$35,430.98
<i>Notes</i>				
Insect Pest Management	WA Horticulture Association w/ WSU Tree Fruit Research Station	\$14,349.11**	<b>\$14,349.11</b>	\$0
<i>Notes**The Washington Tree Fruit Research Commission vouchered for July 2008 and August 2008 for a total of \$14,349.11. The remaining Fiscal Year 2009 is funded directly by Washington State University for the remainder of the contract. 10/27/08</i>				

**Appendix D: Ruckelshaus Center Expenditures, FY09**

Salaries and Wages	\$6,818.32
Goods and Services	\$91.33
Travel	\$700.58
Benefits	\$1,820.36
Overhead	\$2,451.96
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,882.55</b>

*Appendix E: Pilot Survey*

## AGRICULTURE PILOTS PROJECT

### Evaluation Survey

This is a request for participation; your responses will remain totally confidential-only researchers at Washington State University and William D. Ruckelshaus staff, who are conducting this survey as part of the evaluation of the Agriculture Pilots Project will see your answers and comments. A compilation of all survey results will appear in the Final Agriculture Pilots Report in July 2009. You may leave any questions blank that you feel uncomfortable answering. You are assured that the university and the Ruckelshaus center will maintain confidentiality of your answers and comments. **(This study has been reviewed and approved by the Washington State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) for human participation.)** If you have any questions or concerns regarding this evaluation study you may contact Kara Whitman at (509)338-5138, or Debra Akhbari at (206)219-2426, or email [agpilots@u.washington.edu](mailto:agpilots@u.washington.edu) and if you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a participant you can call the WSU IRB at (509) 335-1585 or email to [irb@wsu.edu](mailto:irb@wsu.edu).

You have been provided a pre-addressed, postage-paid envelope for your convenience. Thank you in advance for your participation in the Agriculture Pilots Project. Your feedback is very important in determining the overall success and the future of the project.

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This Survey asks questions about different aspects of your **collaborative partnership experience, pilot project outcomes, and Agriculture Pilot Project Performance**. The survey will take you about (?) minutes to complete. The survey allows you to express your opinions and provide information about your experiences. **DO NOT** write your name anywhere on the questionnaire; your name will not be attached to your responses.

By answering the questions on this survey, you will help the Agriculture Pilot team learn about the strengths and weaknesses of the project, and help identify needed changes and improvements for the future of the Agriculture Pilot Project.

There are no right or wrong answers on the questions included on the survey. Thoughtful and honest responses will be the most valuable information for the continuation and/or

improvement of the Agriculture Pilot Project. Please answer every question, and please check only one answer per question unless otherwise specified.

To complete the questionnaire:

- Please use a BLUE or BLACK ink pen.
- Be sure to read all the answer choices before marking your answer.
- Answer each question by placing a legible “X” in the box to the left of your answer, Like this: [X] Extremely Well or [X] Very Poor

**Please identify to which group you belong:**

- Individual Agriculture Pilot Project Affiliated Partner
- Individual Agriculture Pilot Project Manager

**\*\*please answer all questions as related to the Ag. Pilot Project you are affiliated with.**

**1. Leadership:** (developing local leadership)

Please think about all of the people who provide either formal or informal leadership in the Agriculture Pilots Project. Please choose (to the best of your knowledge) the term that best explains the leadership effectiveness in each of the following areas:

- A. Leaders were/are \_\_\_\_\_ at taking responsibility for the partnership
- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| [ ] Outstanding | [ ] Fair       |
| [ ] Very Good   | [ ] Poor       |
| [ ] Good        | [ ] Don't Know |
- B. Leaders were/are \_\_\_\_\_ at inspiring or motivating people involved in the partnership.
- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| [ ] Outstanding | [ ] Fair       |
| [ ] Very Good   | [ ] Poor       |
| [ ] Good        | [ ] Don't Know |
- C. Leaders were/are \_\_\_\_\_ inspiring or motivating people that may be impacted by partnership and project outcomes.
- |                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| [ ] Outstanding | [ ] Fair |
|-----------------|----------|

- Very Good                       Poor  
 Good                                 Don't Know

D. Leaders were/are \_\_\_\_\_ at including affiliated partners and others in planning and implementation throughout the duration of the Ag. Pilots project.

- Outstanding                       Fair  
 Very Good                          Poor  
 Good                                  Don't Know

E. Leaders were/are \_\_\_\_\_ at communicating the vision and outcomes of the partnership.

- Outstanding                       Fair  
 Very Good                          Poor  
 Good                                  Don't Know

F. Leaders were/are \_\_\_\_\_ at fostering trust, respect, inclusiveness and openness in the partnership.

- Outstanding                       Fair  
 Very Good                          Poor  
 Good                                  Don't Know

G. Leaders were/are \_\_\_\_\_ at combining the perspectives, resources, and skills of partners.

- Outstanding                       Fair  
 Very Good                          Poor  
 Good                                  Don't Know

H. Leaders were/are \_\_\_\_\_ at fostering new and creative thinking.

- Outstanding                       Fair  
 Very Good                          Poor  
 Good                                  Don't Know

**Please elaborate on leadership performance that either helped or hindered the success of the project and on how leadership may be improved if the project was/is to continue, comment in the space below.**

Comment:

**2. Synergy and Momentum: Gains through collective Action, and New or improved working relationships.**

Please think about the overall success to date of the Ag Pilots partnerships when answering the following questions.

- A. Through the collaborative partnership, how well is the the Ag. Pilots project strengthening already existing partnerships and relationships between *organization/farm/individual* and other *organizations*?
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extremely Well | <input type="checkbox"/> Not So Well     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very Well      | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Well at All |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Well  | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know      |

B. Through the collaborative partnership, how well is the the Ag. Pilots project strengthening already existing partnerships and relationships between *organization/farm/individual* and other *farms and/or individuals*.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extremely Well | <input type="checkbox"/> Not So Well     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very Well      | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Well at All |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Well  | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know      |

C. Through the collaborative partnership, the Ag. Pilot project is doing \_\_\_\_\_ at fostering **new partnerships and/or relationships** with other *organizations*.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extremely Well | <input type="checkbox"/> Not So Well     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very Well      | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Well at All |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Well  | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know      |

If new partnerships or relationships were formed with other organizations during the project, please list them?

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D. Through the collaborative partnership, the Ag. Pilot project is doing \_\_\_\_\_ at fostering **new partnerships and/or relationships** with other *farms and/or individuals*.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extremely Well | <input type="checkbox"/> Not So Well     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very Well      | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Well at All |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat Well  | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't Know      |

If new partnerships or relationships were formed with other farms and/or individuals during the project, please list them?

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E. Affiliated partners were/are \_\_\_\_\_ in the planning stages of the pilot project.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extremely Important | <input type="checkbox"/> Not So Important     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Very Important      | <input type="checkbox"/> Not Important at All |

Somewhat Important                       Don't Know

F. Affiliated partners were/are \_\_\_\_\_ in the implementation and completion of the pilot project.

Extremely Important                       Not So Important  
 Very Important                               Not Important at All  
 Somewhat Important                       Don't Know

G. Others (besides project managers and affiliated partners) were/are \_\_\_\_\_ in the implementation/completion of the pilot project.

Extremely Involved                       Not So Involved  
 Very Involved                               Not Involved at All  
 Somewhat Involved                       Don't Know

If others were involved who were they?

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H. Through the collaborative partnership, the Ag. Pilot project \_\_\_\_\_ access to scientific knowledge and/or data. (Not sure you can ask this question yet... unless you qualify it by prefacing with the phrase... "To date")

Dramatically Increased                       Did Not Increase  
 Increased                                       Reduced  
 Slightly Increased                               Don't Know

I. The likelihood that this partnership will continue beyond the Agriculture Pilot Funding is

Extremely Likely                               Not Likely  
 Very Likely                                       Definitely Not  
 Likely     Don't Know

J. The likelihood that this partnership will or already is pursuing continuing funding is

Already Pursuing

Extremely Likely

Very Likely

Likely

Unlikely

Don't Know

**Please elaborate on the outcomes (partnerships/increased knowledge etc) of the collaborative partnership, and discuss improvements that could be made. Please comment in the space below**

Comment:

### **3. Project Coordination and Management: individual Pilot Projects as well as overall Ag. Pilot Project.**

Please think about the administration and management activities of individual Ag. Pilot Projects. Please rate the effectiveness in carrying out each of the following partnership activities:

A. Coordinating communication among partners currently is.

Outstanding

Very Good

Good

Fair

Poor

Don't Know

B. Coordinating communication with people and with organizations outside the partnership currently is.

Outstanding

Fair

- Very Good                       Poor  
 Good                                 Don't Know

C. Organizing partnership activities, including projects and meetings.

- Outstanding                       Fair  
 Very Good                         Poor  
 Good                                 Don't Know

D. Applying for and managing grants and funds. (not sure this question is relevant at this point in time.)

- Outstanding                       Fair  
 Very Good                         Poor  
 Good                                 Don't Know

E. Preparing materials that inform partners and help them make timely decisions.

- Outstanding                       Fair  
 Very Good                         Poor  
 Good                                 Don't Know

F. Evaluating the progress and impact of the partnership to date.

- Outstanding                       Fair  
 Very Good                         Poor  
 Good                                 Don't Know

G. Minimizing barriers to participation in the partnership's meetings and activities (example: convenient places and times)

- Outstanding                       Fair  
 Very Good                         Poor  
 Good                                 Don't Know

A. Communication between OFM, Conservation Commission, Ruckelshaus Center, Oversight Committee and Project Managers.

- Outstanding                       Fair  
 Very Good                         Poor

Good

Don't Know

**Please elaborate on Ag. Pilot management and discuss ways that may improve**

Comments:

**communication within, and administration of the program below:**

**4. Innovation, Impact, and Replication:** (new approaches or practices, combining tried and true practices in new ways, likelihood of replication, impact on the agricultural sector)

Please think about the future implications and applicability of each individual Agriculture Pilot Project when answering the following questions. Please answer “yes” or “no” or “Don't Know”, then explain in the comment box below.

A. Is there current interest about the outcomes/applicability of the Ag. Pilot project from the larger agricultural community?

Yes

No

Don't Know

Comment:

B. Will implementation require new skills of the agricultural community?

Yes

No

Don't Know

Comment:

**As the Agriculture Pilot Program is in the Proof of Concept phase we are very interested in any comments you would like to make on any aspect of the Agriculture Pilots Program that will help improve implementation in the future. (attach additional sheets if you wish)**

**Thank you very much for your participation in this important survey!**

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<sup>1</sup> Beefing Up the Palouse – An Alternative to the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Ag Pilot full proposal page 3.

<sup>2</sup> Information from direct seeders on the WSU Extension BIOAg tour sustainable farming in the Palouse region of Washington State held on May 28, 2008.