

**WSU Contract SPC006432**

**AGREEMENT BETWEEN  
WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY AND  
PALOUSE CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

**1. Parties:** This Agreement (Agreement) is between Washington State University, an institution of higher education and an agency of the state of Washington (WSU), and Palouse Conservation District (District), a municipal corporation of the State of Washington.

**2. Purpose:**

- a) WSU has been requested by the District to provide funds from WSU's Verle Kaiser Conservation Endowment Fund to complete the "Taking Root: Soil Health Education for Whitman County Youth" project, as set forth in Exhibit A attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference (Project).
- b) WSU has determined that the Project is consistent with the purposes of the Verle Kaiser Conservation Endowment Fund.
- c) The District agrees to execute and complete the Project in accordance with Exhibit A and the terms and conditions set forth herein.

**THEREFORE**, it is mutually agreed that:

**3. Responsibilities of the Parties.**

**3.1 WSU will provide the following:** \$4,991 (Four thousand nine hundred and ninety-one dollars) from the Verle Kaiser Conservation Endowment Fund to support this Project.

**3.2 District will provide the following:** An itemized invoice billing WSU for reimbursement at least quarterly, but not more often than monthly, to the following address:

Washington State University  
Controller's Office  
PO Box 641025  
Pullman, WA 99164-1025

**4. Period of Performance:** Subject to its other provisions, this Agreement will be effective when the last signatory executed this Agreement and be completed on December 31, 2025 unless terminated sooner as provided herein.

**5. Payments:**

- a. The amount of compensation under this Agreement shall be \$4,991.00 (four thousand nine hundred ninety one dollars)
- b. The source of the funding under this Agreement shall be the Verle Kaiser Conservation Endowment Fund.
- c. Payments will be made by WSU within thirty (30) days of approval of a properly completed invoice.
- d. Payments shall be made to:

Palouse Conservation District  
Attn: Elizabeth Sebo  
1615 NE Eastgate Blvd, Suite H  
Pullman, WA 99163

**6. Independent Capacity:** The employees or agents of each Party engaged in the performance of this Agreement will continue to be employees or agents of that Party and will not be considered for any purpose to be employees or agents of the other Party.

**7. Termination:** Either party may terminate this Agreement upon ninety (90) days prior written notice to the other party. Any compensation due to the parties as provided in the Agreement shall be prorated to the effective date of termination.

**8. Amendments:** This Agreement may be amended by mutual agreement of the Parties. Such amendment will be binding only if it is in writing and signed by personnel authorized to bind each of the Parties.

**9. Dispute Resolution:** If a dispute arises under this Agreement that the Parties cannot resolve, the dispute will be determined by a dispute panel in the following manner: each Party to this Agreement will appoint one member to the dispute panel. The members so appointed will jointly appoint one additional member to the dispute panel to make a panel of three members. The dispute board so constituted will review the facts, contract terms, and applicable statutes and rules and make a determination of the dispute. The determination of the dispute panel will be final and binding on the Parties. The Parties will share equally the costs, if any, for the services of the dispute panel.

**10. Hold Harmless:** Each Party to this Agreement shall be responsible for its own acts and/or omissions and those of its officers, employees, and agents in the performance of this Agreement. No

Party to this Agreement shall be responsible for the acts and omissions of those entities or individuals not a Party to this Agreement.

**11. Governing Law and Venue:** This Agreement will be governed by the laws of the State of Washington without regard to the conflict of law rules of any jurisdiction. Every dispute concerning this Agreement must be resolved in the applicable courts in Whitman County, State of Washington. The Parties agree to the exclusive personal jurisdiction, subject matter jurisdiction, and venue of these courts.

**12. Assignment:** The work to be provided under this Agreement and any claim arising from this Agreement or performance of this Agreement is not assignable or delegable by either Party in whole or in part without the prior written consent of the other Party. Any assignment will be effective only if written, signed by the authorized representatives of each Party, and attached to this Agreement.

**13. Notice:** Any Notice required under this Agreement must be in writing, signed by the applicable Party, properly addressed to the contact person designated in this section, and: delivered in person, electronically or via facsimile to be effective upon receipt; delivered by recognized overnight courier service to be effective the next business day; or, deposited in the United States Postal Service mail, postage pre-paid, to be effective three (3) business days after mailing.

**For WSU:**

Name: Jean Canonica or Contracts Manager

College or Department: CAHNRS-CSANR

Address: 2606 W. Pioneer, Puyallup, WA 98371

E-mail Address: canonica@wsu.edu Telephone: (253) 445-4506

**For District:**

Name: Elizabeth Sebo

Address: 1615 NE Eastgate Blvd, Suite H, Pullman, WA 99163

Email: ElizabethS@palousecd.org Telephone: 509-553-1846

**14. Signatures:** The Parties affirm that the individuals signing this Agreement have been granted the authority to do so and by their signature affirm that the Parties will comply with the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

**Washington State University**

Recommended by:

Name: Katie Doonan

Title: CSANR Extension Coordinator

Date: 4/22/2024



Approved by:



Name: Heather Davison

Contract Manager

Title: Procurement & Contract Services

Date: 4/18/2024

**Palouse Conservation District**

Recommended by:

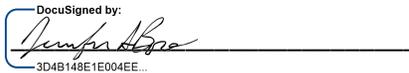
Name: Elizabeth Sebo

Title: Education and outreach Coordinator

Date: 5/20/2024



Approved by:

DocuSigned by:  
  
3D4B148E1E004EE...

Name: Jennifer Boie

Executive Director

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 5/7/2024

**EXHIBIT A**

**VERLE KAISER CONSERVATION ENDOWMENT 2024**

**Project Title:** Taking Root: Soil Health Education for Whitman County Youth

**Personnel**

Elizabeth Sebo, Education and Outreach Coordinator | 509-553-1846 | ElizabethS@PalouseCD.org

Kara Matson, Grants and Contracts Coordinator | 509-553-1840 | KaraM@PalouseCD.org

Palouse Conservation District

1615 NE Eastgate Blvd, Suite H · Pullman, WA 99163 · 509.332.4101 · www.PalouseCD.org

**Additional Support**

Pine Creek Conservation District	Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC)
Rock Lake Conservation District	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)
Whitman Conservation District	USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
United States Forest Service (USFS)	Whitman County Public Libraries
Neill Public Library	Washington State University (WSU)

**Justification**

Although soil erosion has decreased on Eastern Washington farms as practices have changed, we continue to see active soil loss on the landscape. Engaging youth in soil and natural resource issues supports future land stewards and soil conservationists. Rural schools in Whitman County need more resources, funding, and opportunities for students outside the classroom. Many families work in the agricultural industry and, although students participate in agricultural activities such as Future Farmers of America (FFA), there are not many opportunities to learn about conservation practices. Local communities are heavily influenced by agriculture, and many students are interested in natural resources, livestock production, and agriculture. They often envision themselves pursuing a career in a related field. Serving Pullman and surrounding rural communities, Palouse Conservation District (PCD) will work with FFA advisors and science teachers across regional school districts to engage students in educational programming.

Palouse CD offers the only stable conservation district-based experiential environmental education program for youth in the region. Programs guide students through scientific inquiry through hands-on learning opportunities and natural resource assessments. We will collaborate with natural resource professionals from partner agencies and organizations to offer educational programming throughout the school year through the Envirothon competition, land judging competition, and in-classroom instruction. We will also support teachers seeking to expand their natural resources curriculum by hosting an Envirothon workshop for teachers and prospective advisors. To reach wider audiences beyond the classroom, we will collaborate with regional libraries to bring soil health programming to youth. This proposal will support continued efforts to educate local students about the challenges and consequences of soil erosion on a local level and foster increased understanding of how natural resource conservation can provide an avenue to address specific conservation practices.

**Objectives**

PCD will partner with Whitman County Conservation Districts, USDA NRCS, USFS, WDFW, WSU, and local high school teachers to host natural resource education initiatives for 9th through 12th grade students in Whitman County. These programs enable students to interact with local natural resource professionals to learn about careers in natural

resources. Students will also participate in experiential learning and real-world applications of conservation activities through hands-on assessments.

Teachers from rural and urban schools have expressed a need for more regular natural resources lessons built into their annual curriculum. Funds will support three conservation lessons with schools throughout Whitman County. Guided by natural resources professionals, these lessons will empower approximately eighty students to learn about local resource concerns relating to soils, aquatic ecology, and wildlife. Lessons will include technical resource assessments and recommendations for best management practices in areas of natural resource concern, and students will gain a greater understanding of natural resource management key concepts and vocabulary.

We will coordinate with teachers and students from Whitman County and the surrounding areas to encourage participation in the Southeast Washington Envirothon Competition. Envirothon is a hands-on environmental problem-solving competition for 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students in the United States and Canada. Teams compete in five subject areas: Soils and Land Use, Aquatic Ecology, Forestry, Wildlife, and a rotating current environmental issue. During the competition, students visit field test stations staffed by career professionals. Written, oral, and hands-on problem solving are required as participants demonstrate their knowledge of local resource conservation issues, mitigation strategies, and best management practices to address concerns relating to soil erosion, water quality, and habitat. Test scores are sent to students so they can make improvements in the next year. After the competition, PCD will follow up with teachers and distribute a student survey to solicit comments on improvements for the next competition. Winning teams from regional competitions compete in the state Envirothon competition in May, and the state winner represents Washington State at the North America competition in July.

To support new advisors and students in the Envirothon Competition, PCD will host an Envirothon Advisor Workshop and invite teachers from schools across the SE region. During the workshop, teachers will learn about the Envirothon Competition and the resources available to them as they prepare their students for the competition. We will contact at least twenty schools to invite them to the workshop. As the Southeast Envirothon Competition covers a large geographic area, we will host the workshop virtually to facilitate greater access to information across the region. The workshop will be recorded and published on the PCD YouTube channel.

Whitman County Conservation Districts will host the State and Regional FFA Land Judging Competition in partnership with regional agencies, natural resource professionals, and local producers. Approximately two hundred students from Whitman County and the surrounding area will examine soil properties and determine best management practices to prevent soil erosion and build soil health. After the competition, we will facilitate a soil health lesson with students to engage with more hands-on soils knowledge. Palouse CD and partners will create a hands-on soil health activity, coordinate with regional soil scientists, and organize all other event details. This event has been integrated into FFA curriculum at the local and state level.

Whitman County Libraries and Neill Public Library provide vital community outreach with after-school programming throughout the school year and during the summers with their summer reading programs. PCD will partner with these entities to develop a soil health program lesson and activity kits relating to compost, soil erosion, wildlife underground, or other soil health topics. The program, which will be developed by PCD staff and facilitated by library staff, will further local youths' understanding of the landscape around them.

## Approach

The K-12 initiatives listed below will be advertised directly with schools and teachers in our region. Library initiatives will be advertised through PCD and library social media channels.

1. **Natural Resource Lessons** (2024-2025 School Year, grades 9-12; approximately 80 students)

Students will participate in three environmental lessons to engage in scientific inquiry through natural resource assessments and experiential learning opportunities. Lessons will occur in the classroom, with field items brought in to discuss how best management practices can contribute to improvements in soil health, water quality, and wildlife habitat.

2. **Host SE Washington Regional Envirothon Competition** (Spring 2025, grades 9-12; approximately 50 students)

Envirothon is a hands-on, problem-solving, natural resource competition. This competition is a valuable opportunity for high school students to compete in a team setting, interact with professionals who work in natural resources careers, and participate in an engaging event while learning more about natural resource topics.

3. **Host SE Washington Regional Envirothon Advisor Workshop** (Fall 2024, grades 9-12; approximately 20 advisors)

PCD will host a virtual Envirothon Advisor Workshop and invite advisors from regional schools.

4. **Host Land Judging Contest** (Fall 2024, grades 9-12; approximately 200 students)

PCD and partners will host a land judging competition. Participants will examine conservation practices that landowners implement in the testing area to reduce erosion and protect soil health, as well as study the impacts of water and wind erosion on different land formations firsthand. Competition results will be published in local media. Conservation districts will follow up with teachers and distribute a student survey to solicit comments on improvements for the next competition.

5. **Create Soil Health Programming for Libraries in Whitman County** (Winter 2024, grades K-5; approximately 200 students annually)

PCD will coordinate with libraries to create and facilitate soil health lessons and activities for youth attending library programs. Attendee numbers will be recorded by library staff.

## Progress

Progress report attached (Appendix A).

## Budget

Category and Item	Miles	Rate	Hours	Total Cost
<b>2024-2025 Budget</b>				<b>\$4,991.00</b>
<b>Natural Resource Lessons</b>				<b>\$1,815.50</b>
Staff		\$40.00	40	\$1,600.00
Travel	100	\$0.655		\$65.50
Assessment Tools and Supplies				\$150.00
<b>SE Regional Envirothon Competition</b>				<b>\$1,382.75</b>
Staff		\$40.00	20	\$800.00
Travel	50	\$0.655		\$32.75
Supplies				\$50.00
Refreshments				\$200.00
Awards and Recognition				\$100.00

State Competition				\$200.00
<b>Envirothon Advisor Workshop</b>				<b>\$120.00</b>
Staff		\$40.00	3	\$120.00
<b>Land Judging Competition</b>				<b>\$1,382.75</b>
Staff		\$40.00	20	\$800.00
Travel	50	\$0.655		\$32.75
Supplies				\$100.00
Refreshments				\$200.00
Awards and Recognition				\$50.00
Port-a-Potty Rental				\$200.00
<b>Library Soil Health Programming</b>				<b>\$290.00</b>
Educational Supplies				\$250.00
Storage bins				\$40.00

Staffing: Based on a general composite rate of \$40.00 per hour, 83 staff hours will be available to conservation district staff, including technical and education staff. Education staff will build out lesson outlines and curriculum, develop introductory presentations, host the Envirothon advisor workshop, coordinate with teachers and natural resource professionals, and coordinate with local libraries to design soil health activity kits and associated lesson plans. Staff funding for conservation planners will be provided for planning and organizational efforts and field instruction time with students.

Supplies: Funds will be used to purchase educational materials and professional equipment, awards and recognition items, event logistics, light event refreshments, and kit materials for the soil healthy activity kits.

Transportation: Included for staff preparation, picking up supplies, prepping event location, and transportation to and from programming locations.

## **Appendix A: Progress Report for 2023 Verle Kaiser**

*PCD received Verle Kaiser funding in 2023. See progress report below.*

Since we received the 2023 Verle Kaiser Conservation Endowment, efforts have been focused on planning and facilitating the soil judging competition, natural resource high school field days, and workshops. We hosted the 2023 Envirothon competition and have initiated efforts to plan the state and regional Envirothon natural resource competitions in 2024.

The SE Regional Envirothon competition was held on April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023 with seven teams, five schools, and approximately 33 students in attendance. Natural resource professionals from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), US Forest Service, and Washington State University led students through Envirothon test topics including Soils, Forestry, Wildlife, and Aquatic Ecology. Students also delivered a solutions-based presentation on the current issue topic, Adapting to a Changing Climate.

Palouse CD staff assisted with the coordination of the 2023 Washington State Envirothon Competition on May 24-25, 2023 in Longbranch, WA. Two teams from the Southeast Region competition qualified for and attended the state competition: Gar-Pal High School from Palouse and Walla Walla High School from Walla Walla. They competed against nine other teams hailing from across the state. In total, approximately 69 students were engaged at the competition. Walla Walla High School took first place overall and moved on to the North American Competition in New Brunswick, Canada in July 2023.

In June 2023, Palouse CD staff planned and facilitated a Palouse Prairie and Conservation Agriculture field day at Steptoe Butte in Whitman County, WA. Students learned about native Palouse Prairie habitat, conducted vegetation monitoring, and visited an adjoining agricultural parcel to discuss conservation agriculture and participate in a soil health analysis. Throughout the day, students interacted with natural resource professionals who provided information on natural resource career options and gave students advice on pursuing a natural resource career. During the conservation agriculture portion of the day, students learned about soil health, completed a technical resource assessment led by an NRCS Resource Conservationist, and compared soil from an agricultural field to soil from the Palouse Prairie. 18 students from two schools attended on June 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023.

Palouse CD also assisted with a land judging competition attended by about 200 high school students on October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The competition took place outside Lacrosse, WA, at a farm that integrated conservation agriculture practices. Students spent the morning analyzing soil pits for soil type and soil health through hands-on activities.

On October 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Palouse CD hosted aquatic ecology workshops with 23 students at Gar-Pal High School and Lacrosse High School. Staff adapted the planned natural resource lesson field days to accommodate time commitments and cold weather. Students learned about local natural resource concerns in the Palouse River Watershed and completed hands-on assessments to determine the water quality of the Palouse River through live macroinvertebrate identification and chemical water quality testing. These workshops provided students with the valuable opportunity to interact and connect with their local watershed while also preparing them for the SE Regional Envirothon Competition.

Additional efforts are focused on coordinating and planning the 2024 SE Regional Envirothon Competition. In November of 2023, staff assisted with solicitation of auction items for the upcoming Envirothon fundraising auction at the Washington Association of Conservation Districts Conference. Since September of 2023, staff have also been conducting outreach to schools to encourage participation in the competition. Over 28 schools have been contacted thus far with information and resources to participate in the Envirothon competition. As of this date, at least three schools have committed to attending the competition.

Palouse CD staff are planning and facilitating an additional natural resource workshop for students in early February 2024. This workshop will be led by a WSU PhD Candidate and will focus on soil and land use. Due to time commitments and cold weather, the workshops will be hosted at the schools indoors, with soils and additional hands-on materials brought to students to interact with in the lesson. This workshop is not only intended to support student awareness of the soil landscapes around them, but also to continue to prepare them for the SE Regional Envirothon Competition that will be held in April 2024.



Left: Students pose for a group photo at the 2023 Land Judging Competition in Lacrosse, WA.  
Right: Pullman Environmental Club students practice an infiltration test led by an NRCS Resource Conservationist.