



**ASOTIN COUNTY  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**



Assisting, protecting, and restoring Asotin County's natural resources.

# The Dirt

## Teaming Up with the Weed Board



A transition is still in process as ACCD goes through files, cost-share information, and program details. In addition, the Asotin County Weed Management Plan is being updated. We will be seeking landowner input, so you will hear from us soon! Participation will allow for ACCD and ACNWCB to plan for priority weeds, project opportunities and targeted regions for 2021. Our website and the Weed Board page on the Asotin County website will soon be updated to house frequently updated information.

## CRM in Asotin Creek

ACCD and WDFW have joined together to implement a CRM (Coordinated Resource Management) "pilot" program in Asotin Creek watershed. The CRM will focus on addressing natural resources for private and public landowners. Both agencies would like to see landowners actively engage in the process for this CRM to be successful.



## CRP General Sign-Up

### Conversation Reserve Program (CRP) Signup Dates Announced

1. Signup will be held January 4 to February 12, 2021.
2. Current CRP Contracts set to expire 09-30-2021 can be offered for re-enrollment.
3. New and expired land can be offered if it was in annual crops, CRP or summer fallow 4 of the 6 years between 2012-2017, or some perennial crops in rotation, depending on year/crop planted.
4. The annual rental rate has changed significantly for Asotin County for this signup.
  - a. 2020 Average Rental Rate \$53 per acre
  - b. 2021 Average Rental Rate \$89 per acre
5. CRP is still limited to 25% of the total cropland acres for the county, so this will be a highly competitive bid.
6. Please contact Lorelei at the Asotin County FSA office at 509-552-8074 beginning January 4<sup>th</sup>. She will be able to run the scenario on your ground and let you know what your individual maximum rental rate will be.
7. FSA is planning on doing an informational meeting, most likely through electronic communication methods. Watch the GovDelivery emails for more information.







## Bighorn Sheep Health Program Update



In the last two years we have accomplished many great relationships with domestic sheep and goat owners. We have had countless positive conversations with domestic sheep and goat owners in the greater Hells Canyon area to better understand what role domestic sheep and goats may play in disease transmission in bighorn sheep and collecting nasal swabs to test for disease. At this point in time, the bacteria *Mycoplasma ovipneumoniae* has been identified as the primary cause of severe pneumonia outbreaks in the Hells Canyon Bighorn Sheep herds, with high mortality rates in lambs. This project is a collaboration between Asotin County Conservation District (ACCD), Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), Idaho and Washington Wild Sheep Foundations (WSF), and Oregon chapter of the Foundation for North America Wild Sheep (FNAWS).

- 2019: 42 contacts, 14 herds tested, 123 individual animals tested
- 2020: 109 contacts, 46 herds tested, 515 individual animals tested
- Tested 515 animals in 47 herds (130 sheep, 385 goats)
- Individual goats 14.5% positive (56/384) and sheep 8% positive (11/130).
- Total positive individuals 13% (67/515)
- Positive flocks 34%; categorized as positive if 1 or more animals are positive (16/46)
- Almost all M.ovi positive animals are clinically healthy with no symptoms
- Most M.ovi positive animals are in breeding herds; most breeders have biosecurity protocols in place for other diseases; breeders retain animals due to high genetic value
- Owners with positive animals expressed interest in using a vaccine or treatment, if available

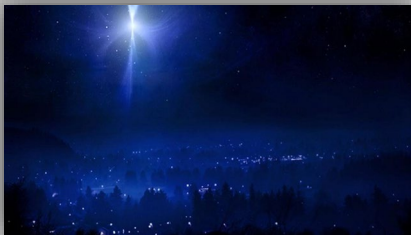


### FUN FACTS!

As Christmas nears, astronomers are urging citizens to look to the sky in a few weeks to witness something not seen in almost 800 years.

From Earth's viewpoint, Jupiter and Saturn are getting very close to one another and will look like a double planet when they appear to nearly collide on Dec. 21 — the date of the winter solstice — forming a rare phenomenon known as a "Christmas star."

"Alignments between these two planets are rather rare, occurring once every 20 years or so, but this conjunction is exceptionally rare because of how close the planets will appear to be to one another



### USDA Service Center Holiday Closures



*Christmas Eve, December 24<sup>th</sup>*



*Christmas Day, December 25<sup>th</sup>*



*New Year's Eve, December 31<sup>st</sup>*  
(ACCD only)

**2021** *New Year's Day, January 1<sup>st</sup>*



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### ACCD, FSA & NRCS Updates

- ACCD Board Mtg. Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> at 12 pm
- CRP Sign-up Jan. 4-Feb. 12, 2021