

## FARMED SMART CERTIFICATION & DIRECT SEED LOAN IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

**STATE PROGRAM:** Washington State Department of Ecology

**ASSISTANCE RECIPIENT:** Spokane Conservation District

**ASSISTANCE AMOUNT:** \$3M



### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Spokane Conservation District is tackling nonpoint source water quality issues in Eastern Washington through partnerships with local agricultural producers. The Spokane Conservation District received \$3 million in CWSRF loans to implement a Direct Seed Loan Implementation Program and nearly \$475,000 in state grant funds to implement their Farmed Smart Certification program and direct seed cost-share. These programs aim to improve water quality through reductions in sedimentation, temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, and nutrients in the dry-land production agriculture regions within Washington State with an emphasis on the Spokane River and Palouse River Watersheds. Farmed Smart is an environmental conservation on-farm certification program that was developed to differentiate agricultural producers that are willing to adopt conservation practices on their land. The Washington State Department of Ecology recognizes certified producers with a letter, stating that they meet water quality requirements with their farming practices. Through Farmed Smart, six agricultural producers received certification to regenerative soil health practices. Two producers utilized direct seed cost-share on a total of 1,135 acres, preventing the runoff of an estimated 7,000 tons of sediment from entering adjacent water bodies. This CWSRF loan allowed the Spokane Conservation District to make 32 loans for direct seed equipment, implementing conservation practices on over 107,000 acres.

Since 2000, the District has utilized a conduit lending approach to provide CWSRF loans to offer low-interest loans to agricultural producers in Eastern Washington. As of November 2023, the District has provided over \$23.3 million in CWSRF funding to transition land to agricultural practices that support healthy soils and improve water quality. The District was recently awarded an additional \$3.8 million CWSRF loan to continue the direct seed local loan program.

To read more about this case study, please visit <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-04/cwsrf-pisces-2023-recognition-program.pdf>.