

# Kittitas County Conservation District

June 2014

*Serving  
Landowners in  
Kittitas County  
Since 1942*



Office location:

607 E Mountain View Avenue

Ellensburg, WA 98926 Phone: (509) 925-8585 ext. 4 Fax: (509) 925-8591 Website: www.kccd.net

Volume XI Issue II

## Steady Progress Continues on the Manastash Creek Restoration Project

The Manastash Creek Restoration Project is closing the door on another major phase. This spring brings the completion and operation of two major pipelines that convey water from Manastash Creek to agricultural lands. These pipelines, the "Consolidated" and the "MWDA", accomplish both improvements to instream flow and protection of fish from entrainment in the irrigation canals. The Consolidated Pipeline allows the water rights formerly diverted at the Reed Ditch and Hatfield Ditch diversions to be diverted at the MWDA facility near the mouth of Manastash Canyon. The MWDA facility has a fish screen and instream rock weirs for fish passage. With the change in their point of diversion on the creek both the Hatfield and Reed Diversion can now be considered for removal. The Reed Diversion currently constitutes the last barrier to upstream migration on Manastash Creek, blocking more than 20 miles of habitat in the upper watershed.



*Pipeline outlet into Reed Ditch at Cove Road.*

The Consolidated Pipeline was actually constructed under two separate contracts. The US Bureau of Reclamation constructed pipelines this winter as well, including the KRD 13.8 Lateral off of the South Branch Canal. As part of their construction contract, approximately 8,000 feet of the consolidated pipeline was constructed. The KRD Lateral 13.8 pipeline will also result in water for instream flow in Manastash Creek.

The MWDA pipeline was constructed specifically to conserve water lost through the earthen irrigation ditch. MWDA entered 1.9 cubic feet per second of stockwater into the Washington State Trust Water Rights Program in perpetuity as part of this project. The pipeline extends 5,800 feet from the diversion at Manastash Creek to Hanson Road. As part of an additional effort to pipe water deliveries, the Kittitas Reclamation District's Lateral 13.6 was piped from the South Branch Canal down to the MWDA pipeline.

When the project began in 2003, the intent was to provide fish screens at all irrigation diversions to protect fish from entrainment in the ditches and canals; to remove the barriers to upstream fish passage; and to improve instream flow. In 2009-2011, three fish screen and passage facilities were constructed on Manastash Creek. Water has been secured to benefit instream flow in Manastash Creek through conservation projects (like pipelines and sprinklers) and through purchases with willing sellers starting in 2009 and continuing through present day. All the pipeline installation work this last winter has cumulatively converted more than 30,000 feet of earthen ditch to pipelines.

Work is planned in the coming two years to implement additional pipelines and sprinklers, to continue to purchase water rights from willing sellers and to remove the Reed Diversion to improve fish passage.

Work is planned in the coming two years to implement additional pipelines and sprinklers, to continue to purchase water rights from willing sellers and to remove the Reed Diversion to improve fish passage.

## “Non-Shellfish” Funding For local Projects to Improve Water Quality

The 2013 Legislature appropriated funding to the Washington State Conservation Commission for water quality improvement projects in two categories, “shellfish” and “non shellfish”. We were able to secure some of the non-shellfish funding for a dozen sprinkler conversion projects in our District. Approximately half of the projects are complete or near completion and the other half will be completed in the next year.

These particular sprinkler conversions are helping to reduce sediment transport to waterways (both creeks and ditches/canals that lead to creeks). The conversions from rill irrigation (gated pipe or concrete ditch & siphon tubes) mean less tailwater and therefore less soil and



*A new center pivot sprinkler system installed on 120 acres southeast of Kittitas.*



*Installation of the mainline for a new linear sprinkler system northwest of Ellensburg.*

nutrient movement off of agricultural lands. This helps to address the Upper Yakima Suspended Sediment TMDL (a water cleanup plan). There remains significant work to do to meet the Upper Yakima TMDL goals which were not met in 2011 as originally planned. Those goals for sediment levels at compliance points in streams was extended to 2017.

The project list currently held by us includes approximately 4,000 acres owned by cooperators interested in converting to sprinklers. Additional funding is being sought. Any landowners with projects not already on our list are encouraged to contact Mark Crowley at 925-8585 ext 4 or [mark-crowley@conservewa.net](mailto:mark-crowley@conservewa.net).

## We're Moving!

In just a few weeks, the Kittitas County Conservation District (KCCD) will be relocating to a new office at 2211 W Dolarway Road in Ellensburg. The building was purchased by KCCD in March, bringing an end to months of uncertainty about where we would be located in the future. That uncertainty was due to changing policies with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). For more than 70 years, the KCCD office space has been provided by NRCS at no cost as part of a cooperative agreement. In recent years, due to budget issues, NRCS has worked toward either requiring conservation districts to pay a share of the rent or find other office space. This is not unique to our conservation district, it is happening all across the country.

Then last fall came a shutdown of the federal government offices because of the lack of a federal budget. We were shut out of our offices for more than 2 weeks, just because we shared office space with federal agencies. Although shutdowns have been threatened in the past (2011 being the most recent) and relatively rare, this one actually happened and forced the KCCD staff to telework from home. It was a serious



and frustrating disruption to our operations. That was another factor in the decision by the KCCD Board of Supervisors to secure our own permanent office space.

While we are sad to see our cooperative agreement with NRCS go away, we understand the budget difficulties they have endured in recent years. Both NRCS and KCCD intend to continue our partner relationship as it is very beneficial to the local landowners and we'll both work to make this transition as smooth as possible.

We are excited for this new phase and to be moving to a location where we have control over our space and operations. We intend to hold an Open House when we are moved in and settled. In the meantime, we can be reached at our current location through at least June 13th. If you'd like to know how this move impacts NRCS you can contact Erin Kreutz at 509 969-5258

## Kittitas County Conservation District

### Board of Supervisors

Mark Moore - Chair (Elected - term expires in 2016)

Lynn Brown - Vice Chair (Appointed - term expires in 2017)

Jeff Brunson - Auditor (Elected - term expires in 2015)

Bill Boyum - Member (Appointed - term expires in 2016)

Ron Gibb - Member (Elected - term expires in 2017)

### District Staff

Anna Lael - District Manager

Sara Leist - Financial Manager

Suzanne Wade - GIS Specialist

Mark Crowley - Resource Technician II

Ryan Roberts - District Engineer

Sherry Swanson - Project Manager

Brent Dixon - Resource Technician

**Board meetings are generally held on the second Thursday of each month. The schedule for the year:**

<b>July</b>	<b>7:00 AM</b>
<b>August</b>	<b>7:00 AM</b>
<b>September</b>	<b>7:00 AM</b>
<b>October</b>	<b>7:00 AM</b>
<b>November</b>	<b>1:00 PM</b>
<b>December</b>	<b>1:00 PM</b>

**Meeting notices are also posted on the KCCD web page and at the KCCD office. Additional special meetings are occasionally held throughout the year. For more information or to receive e-mail notifications of meetings, contact Anna or Sara at 925-8585 ext 4 or [sara-leist@conserveva.net](mailto:sara-leist@conserveva.net).**

 Visit KCCD on the web at [kccd.net](http://kccd.net)

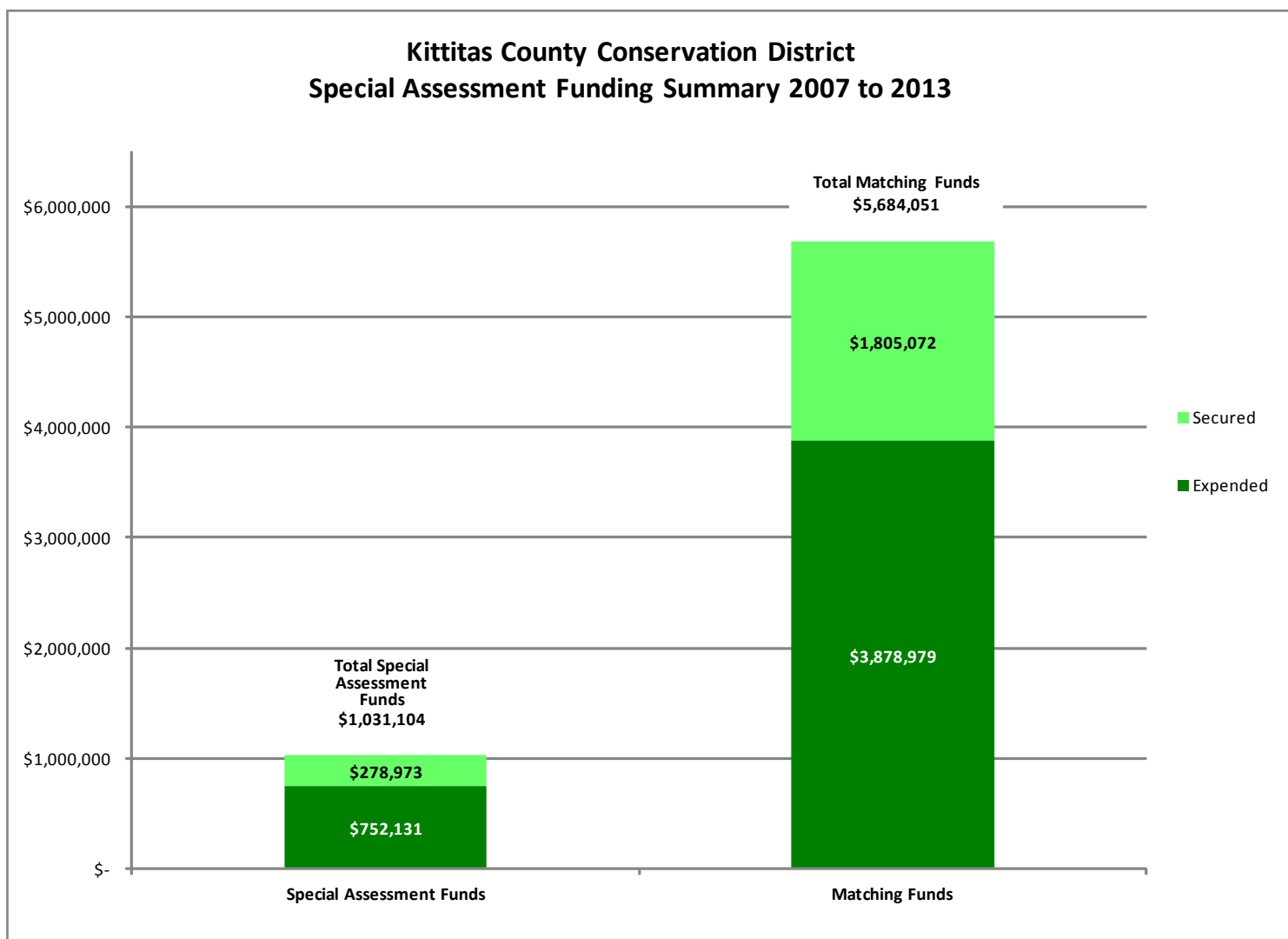
### KCCD Special Assessment

By establishing a dedicated fund through a special assessment, landowners within the Kittitas County Conservation District are able to rely on District personnel to provide answers and technical advice for local natural resource concerns. Funds raised by the assessment have allowed the District to offer technical assistance, financial assistance, and educational opportunities to private landowners at no charge.

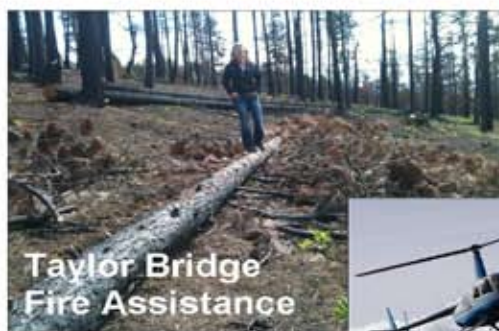
In addition, funds raised by this assessment have been instrumental in leveraging additional monies from various sources. District staff continually research and apply for funds to implement projects and programs developed through landowner contacts and partnering efforts.

Specifically, these additional funds make it possible for the District to offer financial assistance to private landowners working to implement resource related projects. Examples include funding for small project cost share applications, funding for spring development and improvement projects, fuels reduction projects, as well as PAM (Polyacrylamide) erosion control cost share. These are just a few of the many projects that the special assessment allows the District to offer.

In summary, the Special Assessment to date has leveraged an average of \$5.67 for every dollar of the Assessment funds collected. See graphic below of leveraged funds, both those already expended and those secured for future projects and activities. The full version of the annual report is available on our website at [KCCD.net](http://KCCD.net).



# Kittitas County Special Assessment 2013 Activities



## Annual Plant Sale a Success

The 17th Annual Roy & Marge Bach Memorial Conservation Plant Sale was a great success! We filled over 120 orders (including pre-orders and walk-in's) with nearly 4,500 trees and shrubs. A big thank you to our volunteers (Darlene Carlton, Jonelle Bull, Ken Titus, and all the Master Gardeners). Leftover plants were potted and are being used for restoration on the Manastash Pipeline Project and future restoration projects.

Each year, hundreds of elementary school students across Kittitas County benefit from the proceeds of the Plant Sale. The proceeds are used to fund activities from planting trees and shrubs on school property, to buying science kits, to field trips highlighting local and regional natural resources. Over the years, funds have been provided to individual teachers and classes as well as for other broader groups.

Other examples of approved applications include the Ag Appreciation Day bus costs, Wheat Week, and Science field trips at Kittitas High School. Contact Sara 509 925-8585 ext 4 if you are an educator and want to learn more about applying for a grant.

The KCCD named the plant sale in honor of Roy & Marge Bach. Roy was an avid outdoorsman and friend of the KCCD. Marge was the KCCD secretary for 30 years, retiring in 2000. After Marge's retirement, she continued to volunteer each year to help with the plant sale. The KCCD continues to receive donations in their honor to the Plant Sale fund.



**Keep up with current activities! Follow  
our blog  
<http://kittitascd.blogspot.com/>  
or follow us on Facebook!**



## Do You Have A Forest That Is Unhealthy and at Risk of Wildfire and Insect Damage?

*Contributed by Scott Chambers, Fuels/Stewardship Forester, DNR*

You've likely read news accounts in recent years about the worsening health of forests in the western U.S. and the increasing incidence of catastrophic wildfires and insect damage. Large areas of eastern Washington forests are in an unhealthy condition due to overcrowding, drought, and tree species prone to damage from insects, disease, and fire.

If you own forest land in eastern Washington, the odds are that your property is in a less-than-healthy condition and at increased risk of damage from threats like wildfire and bark beetles.

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Forest Landowner Cost-share Program can provide you with professional forestry advice and financial assistance to help you significantly improve the health of your forest and substantially reduce the threat of future damage and loss.



Unhealthy, overstocked forest



Healthy, thinned forest

### HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?

The DNR applies for funds through grants from the US Forest Service, and has received funds from the state legislature, that can then be used to help with on the ground forest health and fuels reduction work.

The DNR program can reimburse approved applicants for 50% of their cost (not to exceed a maximum threshold amount per acre).

Eligible cost share practices include:

- ◆ Thinning
- ◆ Pruning
- ◆ Slash (forest debris) Disposal
- ◆ Preparation of a Forest stewardship Plan by a private consulting forester

In addition, the DNR has partnered with the Kittitas County Conservation District (KCCD) by awarding funding through interagency agreements and cost sharing totaling around \$500,000 in the last 4 years, including \$100,000 for a 50% cost share program in 2014. These funds are used by the KCCD to conduct workshops, meetings, mapping, property risk assessments, and to complete forest fuel treatments on the ground throughout Kittitas County.

Advance written approval for DNR cost share program is required before any work begins. Contact your landowner assistance forester, or apply online to get the process started.

DNR Southeast Region

Scott Chambers

Fuels / Stewardship Forester

(509) 925-0929

Apply Online: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/dnrcostshare>

## Range Drill

The Kittitas County Conservation District is considering purchasing a grass (range) drill which would be available for landowners to rent. The drill would be narrow (approximately 5'-6' wide) and would be intended for use by landowners with small acreages who want to seed their property. Several conservation districts in the state have similar rental programs. We'd like to explore the opportunity for our District. Please help us by answering the following questions online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Q7D9VWZ>

1. If a grass drill were available for rent, would you rent it?

2. What kind of ground would you be seeding?

*Irrigated Pasture*

*Dryland Pasture*

*Rangeland*

*Dry Forest*

*Other (please specify)*

3. If the drill required a 40-horse tractor, would that be a barrier to you?

4. How many acres do you anticipate seeding?

*0-5 Acres*

*6-10 Acres*

*11-10 Acres*

*> 15 Acres*

5. Is \$25/acre a reasonable rental rate?



◆ We're Moving

◆ Manastash

◆ Special Assessment

◆ Forest Health

Inside:

Kittitas County Conservation District  
607 E Mountain View  
Ellensburg, WA 98926