

Kittitas County Conservation District

Serving
Landowners in
Kittitas County
Since 1942

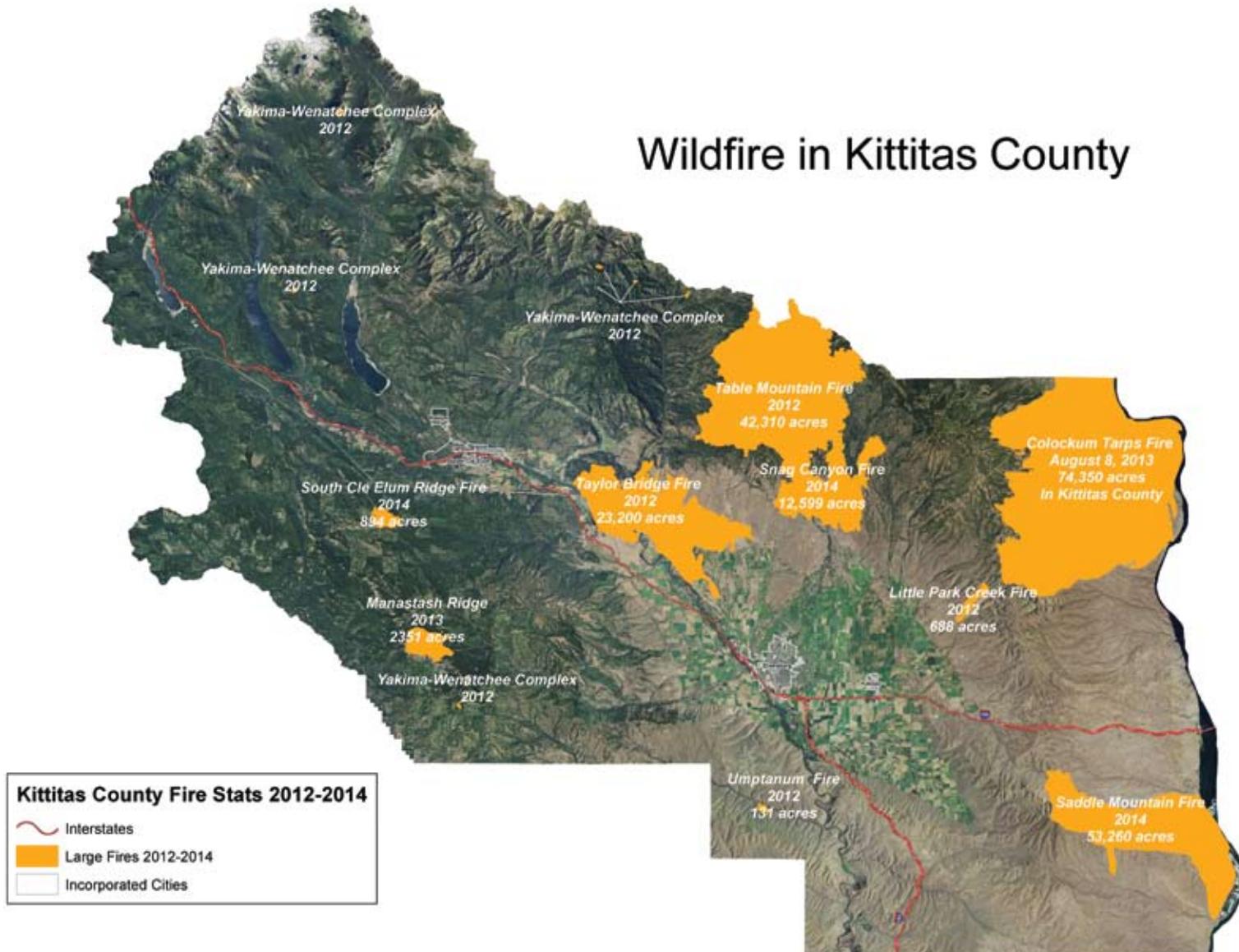
November 2014



Volume XI Issue III

Office location:
2211 W. Dolarway Rd, Suite #4
Ellensburg, WA 98926 Phone: (509) 925-3352 Fax: (888) 546-0825 Website: www.kccd.net

Wildfire in Kittitas County



Another wildfire season has ended, breaking a record for number of acres burned in Washington State set in 1902. Over 320,000 acres were scorched across the state with more than 66,000 acres burned in Kittitas County alone.

KCCD has been actively seeking grant money to help landowners with defensible space and fuels reduction projects to reduce wildfire risk. Brenda Larsen, the county Fire Marshal, was able to secure a \$365,000 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant to reduce fuels in the Hidden Valley, Sky Meadows and Pine Loch Sun areas of the county. More grants are being worked on to address other areas of the county.

KCCD has helped 16 communities become Firewise Communities and also provides individual assessments to interested landowners in the county. Contact Suzanne at suzanne-wade@conserveva.net or call (509) 925-3352 ext. 202 for more information.

Interested in Becoming a Board Member?

The Kittitas County Conservation District Board of Supervisors is seeking applicants for one elected supervisor position. The Conservation District is directed by a Board of five volunteers, three elected and two appointed, all of whom serve three year terms. These supervisors represent landowners, and the general public, while identifying local conservation needs and implementing programs to protect soil, water, wildlife, and other renewable resources within Kittitas County. Supervisors attend monthly meetings, oversee disbursement of District funds and direct paid staff.

To be eligible for the position, the applicant must be a registered voter within the Kittitas County Conservation District boundaries (all unincorporated areas and the City of Cle Elum). Interested persons should contact the Kittitas County Conservation District, 2211 W. Dolarway, Suite #4 Ellensburg, WA 98926, 509-925-3352 (office hours are Monday – Friday 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM).

A filing deadline for the elected position will be established in December and posted on our website. Completed Candidate Information Forms and Nominating Petitions must be received by the deadline at the KCCD office. Both the Candidate Information Form and the Nominating Petition are available at the KCCD office or on the KCCD website (kccd.net).

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

Carlton Complex BAER Team

KCCD staff was asked to provide support in the recent BAER (Burned Area Emergency Response) analysis in cooperation with the Okanogan Conservation District and the Forest Service to help landowners affected by the Carlton Complex fires. Suzanne Wade went up early to work on GIS support and Ryan Roberts helped with field analysis and engineering.

KCCD was able to apply much of the information that was learned from our County's Taylor Bridge fire and used this knowledge to work cooperatively with the BAER team to determine the impacts of the Carlton Complex fire on private and state lands (about 170,000 acres worth). This is a new process the Forest Service is trying out. More and more fires are affecting private lands each year and the high level analysis offered in a BAER Team approach may be the best answer to providing a multitude of landowners the answers they are seeking.

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:

November	1:00 PM
December	1:00 PM

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 925-3352 or sara-leist@conservewa.net.



Open House!

Kittitas County Conservation District (KCCD) has relocated to its new office at 2211 W Dolarway Rd, Suite #4 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. For more than 70 years, the KCCD office space had 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.

We are very happy with our new location where we have control over our space and operations. We have also offered space to both the NRCS and FSA on a temporary basis, and they now share our office building.

Finally settled, we'd like to invite the public to come to our Open House, December 11, 2014 from 3-5:30. Hope to see you there!



Visit KCCD on the web at kccd.net

From Our Partners at NRCS.....

Application sign-up cut-off date for EQIP statewide initiatives set for November 21, 2014

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program is a voluntary, technical and financial assistance program designed to help farmers improve irrigation efficiency; manage nutrient run-off and/or animal waste; improve the health of native plant communities; and reduce soil loss. In most instances, producers who participate in the program pay for roughly half of the costs of the conservation measures or practices.

Eligible producers and entities interested in applying for financial assistance through the EQIP program will have until November 21 to submit their applications for consideration this fiscal year.

Applications are available to enroll in the EQIP Local Working Group Pool, Organic Initiative, High Tunnel Initiative, and Energy Initiative.

Applicants who are entities must provide a DUNS number, be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM), and maintain an active registration with current



information prior to applying for funding and to remain eligible for payments under a funded contract. For more information regarding SAM and DUNS, or if interested in applying for EQIP funding, contact the local NRCS field office or visit the NRCS Washington web site at: www.wa.nrcs.usda.gov, and click on the "programs" tab.

Please contact Erin Kreutz in the Ellensburg NRCS Office at (509) 925-8585 x3 if you have any questions or to set up an appointment to complete your application.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Family Forest Fish Passage Program



Before photograph of the culvert on Wagon Wheel Road in the Teanaway.



Removing the old, undersized culvert in preparation for the new bridge.

Work began in October on a Family Forest Fish Passage Project (FFFPP) on Lick Creek in the Wagon Wheel Community of the Teanaway. This undersized culvert will be replaced with a bridge this Fall.

The Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFFPP) assists private forestland owners in replacing culverts and other stream crossing structures that keep trout, salmon, and other fish from reaching upstream habitat. Road culverts and other structures that are aging, too small, or improperly installed can block fish from reaching their spawning grounds. The same barriers then impede the movement of young rearing salmon to the ocean. FFFPP funds the replacement of eligible barriers with new structures.

Since 2003, nearly 200 landowners have taken advantage of the program that has replaced 244 barriers and opened more than 524 miles of stream habitat. For more information go to http://www.dnr.wa.gov/BusinessPermits/Topics/SmallForestLandownerOffice/Pages/fp_sflo_fffpp.aspx.

\$16 Million Requested for Work on Private Lands

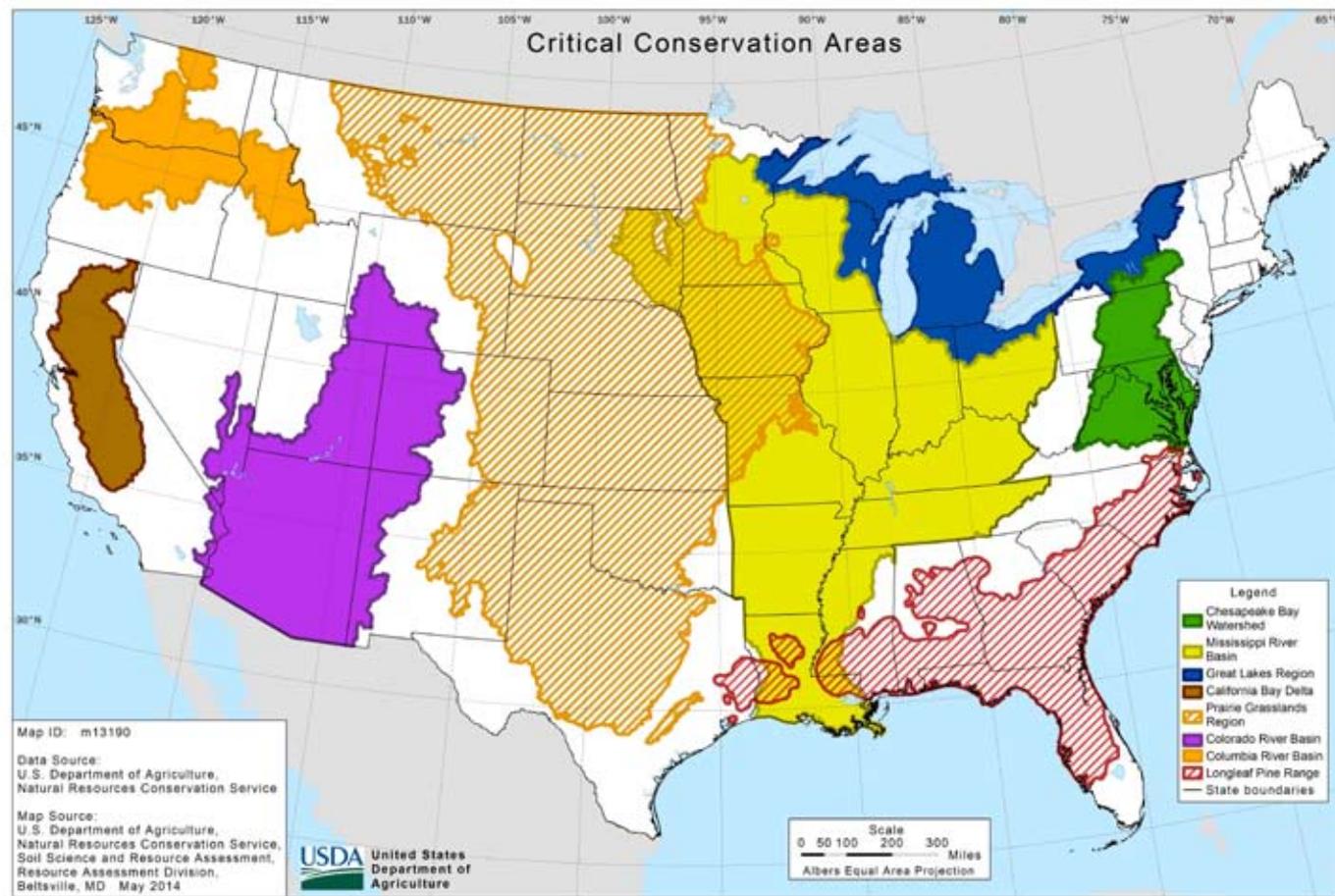
A group of local entities working on the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan implementation, including the Kittitas County Conservation District, have requested \$16 million from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) over the next five years for projects on private lands. This request is through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), which was created by the 2014 Farm Bill and is a reconfiguration of NRCS cost share programs.

RCPP encourages NRCS partners to join in efforts with producers and landowners to increase the restoration and sustainable use of soil, water, wildlife and related natural resources on regional or watershed scales. This fits nicely with the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan currently being implemented. The proposal submitted for the RCPP involves two of the seven elements of the Integrated Plan, "Enhanced Water Conservation" and "Habitat/Watershed Protection & Enhancement".

RCPP funds were offered in three categories: state, national and critical conservation areas (CCA). The Columbia River basin was selected as one of only 8 CCAs in the nation by Secretary Vilsack early this summer. The Columbia River Basin CCA, which includes the Yakima River watershed, notes these resource concern priorities: inefficient use of irrigation water; water quality degradation (excess sediment, nutrients and pesticides in surface waters); and fish and wildlife habitat degradation. These resource concerns also fit well with the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan. The proposal submitted for RCPP funding involves two of the seven elements of the Integrated Plan, those being "Enhanced Water Conservation" and "Habitat/Watershed Protection & Enhancement".

NRCS programs are focused on private lands and agricultural producers. If funded, the \$16 million would primarily provide funding through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program. Conservation practices with the landowners could include sprinkler systems, pumps and pipelines; fish screens and fish passage barrier removals; and habitat/stream restoration activities. Conservation easements could include riparian and wetland areas, as well as working farmland. Easement payments and agreements would be directly with eligible landowners. More than half of the \$16 million request will focus on work in Kittitas County. This includes approximately \$3.4 million for irrigation system improvements (sprinklers, pipelines, etc.), \$3.6 million for conservation easements, and \$500,000 for habitat improvement projects.

To be successful, RCPP proposals need a substantial match through the partners who submit the proposal. Together the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan Proposal partners have committed to \$24 million in local, state and federal funds over the 5 year proposal. This brings the total conservation effort to \$40 million, a significant contribution to the implementation of the Integrated Plan on private lands. Matching funds in Kittitas County include funding for irrigation systems through the Washington State Conservation Commission and funding for fish screens and fish passage barrier removal through the Bonneville Power Administration and Salmon Recovery Funding Board as well as significant funding related to irrigation systems and through the Department of Ecology and the US Bureau of Reclamation.



The Secretary of Agriculture designated eight critical conservation areas (CCAs) across the nation under RCPP



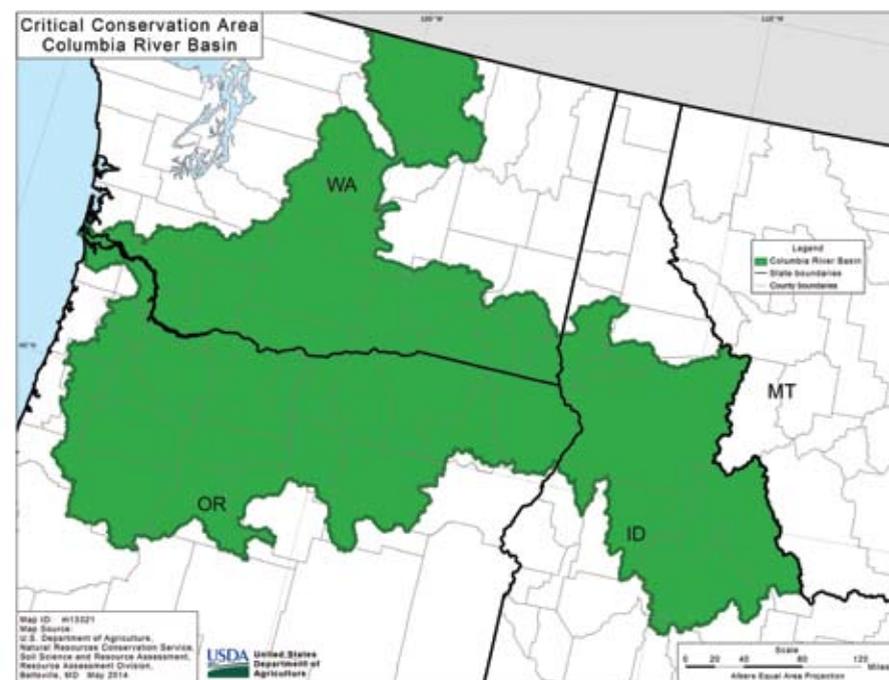
Multiple tours and presentations have occurred throughout this year to share information about the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan and the proposals for funding, include the RCPP proposal to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. This photo is a recent tour that included the Manastash Creek Restoration Project. Left to right Anna Lael, along with Lisa Pelly and Urban Eberhart, describe the Manastash Creek Project to a group in September.

NRCS is currently scheduled to announce funding decisions in mid-November. Should the proposal submitted be selected, producers and landowners could expect to be able to sign up in early 2015. For more information on the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan, go to <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/cwp/ybip.html>.

For more information on the RCPP, go to <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/farmbill/rcpp/>.

Partners for the RCPP Proposal include:

Kittitas County Conservation District
 North Yakima Conservation District
 South Yakima Conservation District
 Benton Conservation District
 Kittitas County Flood Control Zone District
 Yakima County Flood Control Zone District
 Washington State Department of Ecology
 Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
 U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
 Yakima/Klickitat Fisheries Project;
 Yakima-Tieton Irrigation District
 Cowiche Conservancy
 Mid-Columbia Fisheries
 Enhancement Group
 South-Central Washington Resource Conservation and
 Development Council
 Forterra
 Trout Unlimited
 Washington Water Trust



The Columbia River Basin includes those portions of the watershed that are currently accessible to salmonids.

The Columbia River Basin provides habitat for salmon and steelhead, essential components of a healthy ecosystem and critical to Indian tribes and local communities. Loss of quality habitat because of pressures from population growth threaten fish numbers and the overall health of the basin. With this Critical Conservation Area designation, USDA will build on existing strong partnerships in the basin to work with agricultural producers to improve water quality and quantity in order to restore critical components of salmon habitat, aid in the recovery of Pacific salmon, and protect public health and the environment while maintaining a strong agricultural sector. The boundary of the CCA is a portion of the Columbia River Basin that includes essential fish habitat.

Yakima Tributary Access & Habitat Program

As part of our Yakima Tributary Access & Habitat Program, several of the local creeks are surveyed regularly for fish presence. This crew is working on Reecer Creek south of Dolarway Road. Throughout the Fall they will also survey Wilson, Naneum, Coleman, Cooke and Cherry Creeks. This information helps to support our work installing fish screens on irrigation diversions and removing fish passage barriers.



Inside:

- ◆ **Wildfire Season**
- ◆ **Open House**
- ◆ **Election**
- ◆ **Integrated Plan**

Kittitas County Conservation District
 2211 W Dolarway, Suite #4
 Ellensburg, WA 98926