



5-Year Plan (2012 to 2017) Kittitas County Conservation District

For More Information Contact: Anna Lael, 509-925-8585 xt. 4, a-lael@conservewa.net



Organization of the Kittitas County Conservation District

A political subdivision of the State of Washington – authorities, powers and structure contained in RCW 89.08.

- *In 1939, the State Soil Conservation District Law was passed by the Washington State Legislature. There was widespread support in the Kittitas Valley for a conservation district that resulted in the establishment of the Kittitas Conservation District in 1942. By 1947, upper Kittitas County landowners established the Cle Elum Conservation District. In 1962, the Kittitas and Cle Elum Conservation Districts were combined to form the Kittitas County Conservation District (KCCD).*

Function of the Kittitas County Conservation District

- *To seek out all manner of technical, financial and educational resources and coordinate or focus them to meet the needs of local land managers working to conserve soil, water, and related natural resources.*

Who We Serve & Why

- *We serve the citizens of our community (county, state, country) to ensure the long-term use of natural resources in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner using non-regulatory, voluntary approaches.*

Mission of the Kittitas County Conservation District

- *Provide leadership, technical, educational and financial assistance to landowners and land users in their utilization and management of natural resources.*

Vision of the Kittitas County Conservation District

- *The Kittitas County Conservation District is recognized by all private landowners as a source of financial, technical and educational assistance in Kittitas County; and by local, state and federal authorities as the organization of choice to implement on-the-ground stewardship activities.*

Values of the Kittitas County Conservation District

The Kittitas County Conservation District respects and honors both private and public lands, as well as resources and people. We demonstrate this by valuing:

- *Integrity*
- *Honesty*
- *Innovative approaches and new ideas*
- *Serving those that voluntarily engage us*
- *Fiscal and public responsibility*
- *Locally-led, economically sustainable resource conservation*
- *On the ground, science-based solutions*
- *Stewardship for our properties/resources*
- *Sustainability – meaning implementation of economically and environmentally sound and socially acceptable conservation practices*

Natural Resource Priorities, Measures of Success and Goals:

- **Water Quantity** – *Improve water use efficiency through conservation measures and storage opportunities to meet needs of water users and work with partners, to achieve base flows in high priority streams by 2020.*
- **Water Quality** - *Meet the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) goals in Kittitas County.*
- **Fish & Wildlife** - *By 2020, complete installation of approved fish screen and fish passage facilities for the identified high priority areas. By 2025, complete installation of approved fish screen and fish*

passage facilities for the identified medium priority areas.

- **Development & Natural Resource Impacts-** Develop a strategy and an information campaign to address land use fragmentation & small parcel impact on natural resources.
 - **Soil Quality & Health-** Maintain soil productivity and health to meet or exceed NRCS soil quality criteria.
 - **Range Health-** By 2020, document positive trend (health) on rangeland in Kittitas County.
 - **Forest Health-** By 2020, treat 2,500 acres of forestland to improve forest health and reduce wildland fire risks in Kittitas County.
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Critical Geographic Areas: (attached map)

- All lands within KCCD boundaries (includes unincorporated lands and the City of Cle Elum).
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Information – Education Priorities, Measures of Success, and Goals:

- Annually, reach 80% of landowners/users in Kittitas County and continue to reach all 3rd graders in county. Help educate other age groups by working with local schools, producing newsletters (circulation 13,000), hosting workshops and field days, maintaining webpage and blog, participating in the Kittitas County Fair, and providing educational materials to media, and local organizations (e.g. service clubs).
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District Operations Priorities Measures of Success, and Goals:

- By 2017, the KCCD will have staffing and programs in place to meet the needs of landowners and resource users and maintain the reputation the district has developed for being a locally led problem solving group. This will be accomplished in part by establishing our resource needs, remaining on the leading edge of conservation issues, and continuing to recruit quality supervisors and associate supervisors.
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Trends Impacting Conservation in the Kittitas County Conservation District

- Increased demand for water supply with fluctuating climatic conditions
 - Implementation of the Upper Kittitas Ground Water Rule (well moratorium)
 - Development of Water Banks and the movement of water rights from working lands to other uses (lower county to Upper County).
 - Future (new) water uses may be required to be water budget neutral (even the exempt ones)
 - Yakima Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Plan development and promotion (may result in more stability for water supply to irrigators).
- Increased regulatory pressure (Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act) on working lands
 - Kittitas County opts into the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP)
 - Kittitas County updates to Shoreline Master Plan and Critical Areas Ordinance
 - Identified wolf pack in Kittitas County
 - Development of new TMDLs (nutrients)
 - Implementation other TMDLs: temperature, toxics, suspended sediment/turbidity, bacteria
 - Third party litigation pressure related to regulations
- Economic impacts to working lands
 - High operational costs for agricultural producers
 - Increased interest in funding forest health/management activities
 - Decreasing funding opportunities to plan and implement projects and practices
- Impacts of developed lands (conversion from larger parcels to smaller)
 - Working lands converted to small acreage developments now idle due to oscillating economy creating noxious weeds and fire safety concerns
 - New landowners with little or no practical experience
 - Stormwater and other development impacts upslope of urban areas (e.g. Cle Elum).
- Partner agencies
 - Partner agency's reduced roles serving private lands due to budgets and policy (e.g. WSU Extension) resulting in increasing needs to fill in those lost funding or services.
 - Changing program implementation may impact funding and assistance availability (e.g. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service)

- *Interest in renewable resources (e.g. wind, solar, biomass) and energy conservation programs.*
 - *Increased need for response to natural disaster events*
 - *Insect and disease impacts and fuels reduction needs in forestlands*
 - *Flood event impacts on working lands, fish habitat, and public and private infrastructure*
 - *US Forest Service – updating forest management plan, including expansion of wilderness areas*
 - *Appearance of Ventenata dubia (common name – wiregrass)*
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Strategies, Services & Products to Address Trends

- *Be a clearing house for conservation and technical assistance programs*
 - *Seek funding to support or maintain current and future projects and programs*
 - *Develop and maintain partnerships with resource agencies*
 - *Continue coordination with local jurisdictions on resource issues, increase awareness by local jurisdictions of the KCCD's technical and financial capabilities*
 - *Develop and maintain partnerships where appropriate to meet specific resource objectives (e.g. Kittitas County, Fire Districts, Washington Department of Natural Resources, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to implement forest health/fuels reduction projects)*
 - *Use those partnerships to increase program delivery efficiencies so that landowners and land managers continue to have technical and financial resources available through budget cuts and policy changes*
 - *Continue to buffer/facilitate between regulatory agencies or third party interests and landowners*
 - *Investigate renewable energy opportunities and impacts of those opportunities on local resources*
 - *Continue to provide irrigation efficiencies program for water users*
 - *Promote sustainable small acreage management through workshops and other outreach activities*
 - *Continue financial and technical assistance programs for landowners not eligible for current federal programs*
 - *Support land protection programs to encourage continued farming and ranching*
 - *Seek conservation opportunities to help reduce agricultural operational costs*
 - *Monitor development of water banks, on-site mitigation systems, purchase of senior water rights and/or development of a domestic water reserve program to mitigate both out of season water use and local tributary impairment*
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Natural Resource Data:

- *Aerial photography (historic and current)*
 - *Forest conditions (insect and disease, wildland fire danger, etc.)*
 - *Crop Pattern and Irrigation Method Data (collected in 2009, will be updated in 2012)*
 - *Inventory of fish passage barriers and unscreened irrigation diversions*
 - *Soil Survey (available on-line)*
 - *Recent water quality monitoring data collected by the Kittitas County Water Purveyors and others*
 - *2012 Long Range Plan Survey*
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Staffing Needs

Maintain the following current positions (same position may have multiple abilities):

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|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ▪ <i>District Manager</i> | ▪ <i>Project Manager</i> | ▪ <i>Conservation Planner</i> |
| ▪ <i>Financial Manager</i> | ▪ <i>Engineer</i> | ▪ <i>Construction Observer</i> |
| ▪ <i>GIS Specialist</i> | ▪ <i>Resource Technicians</i> | ▪ <i>Grant Writer</i> |

Add the following positions or responsibilities (same position may have multiple abilities):

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|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| ▪ <i>Assistant District Manager</i> | ▪ <i>Resource Technicians</i> | ▪ <i>Riparian Restoration Specialist</i> |
| ▪ <i>Engineer in training</i> | ▪ <i>Permit specialist</i> | ▪ <i>Forester</i> |
| ▪ <i>Contract Specialist</i> | ▪ <i>Hydrologist</i> | |

**Some expertise may be secured using consulting services.*

Annual Budget Needs

- Summary of the annual budget needed to carry out the plan of the Kittitas County Conservation District based on the above information.

- Summary is based on a staff of 7
- Office & Operating Supplies includes insurance, advertising, travel, fuel, equipment, rent, utilities, field and office supplies
- Professional Services (engineering, design, legal, archeological, etc.) is directly related to construction and cost share

	2012 Budget
Salaries/Benefits	\$ 450,000
Office & Operating Supplies	\$ 180,000
Rent & Utilities	\$ 35,000
Equipment	\$ 10,000
Professional Services	\$ 340,000
Construction & Cost Share	\$2,400,000
Total Annual Budget	\$3,425,000

Key Decision Makers

The first and most important key decision maker is the landowner or land manager. Their management decisions affect the condition of natural resources on a daily basis. There are a multitude of other key decision makers who can affect regulations governing land management and resources and sources of funding to establish and maintain technical and financial assistance programs in Kittitas County. They are as follows:

Local

- Commissioner Paul Jewell, **Kittitas County**, 205 W 5th Room 110, Ellensburg WA 98926
- Commissioner Alan Crankovich, **Kittitas County**, 205 W 5th Room 110, Ellensburg WA 98926
- Commissioner Obie O'Brien, **Kittitas County**, 205 W 5th Room 110, Ellensburg WA 98926
- Mayor Charles Glondo, **City of Cle Elum**, 117 E First, Cle Elum WA 98922

State

- Representative Bill Hinkle, **13th Legislative District**, 122D Legislative Bldg., PO Box 40600, Olympia, WA 98504-0600
- Representative Judy Warnick, **13th Legislative District**, 436 John L. O'Brien Building, PO Box 40600, Olympia WA 98504-0600
- Senator Janéa Holmquist, **13th Legislative District**, 106B Irv Newhouse Building, PO Box 40413 Olympia, WA 98504-0413
- Governor Christine Gregoire, **Office of the Governor**, PO Box 40002, Olympia, WA 98504
- Ted Sturdevant, Director, **Washington State Department of Ecology**, P.O. Box 47600, Olympia, WA 98504-7600
- Phil Anderson, Director, **Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife**, 600 Capitol Way N., Olympia, WA 98501
- Dan Newhouse, Director, **Washington Department of Agriculture**, PO Box 42560, Olympia WA 98504-2560
- Mark Clark, Executive Director, **Washington Conservation Commission**, P.O. Box 47721, Olympia WA 98504-7721

- Peter Goldmark, Commissioner of Public Lands, **Department of Natural Resources**, P.O. Box 47001, Olympia, WA 98504-7001

Regional

- Roylene Rides at the Door, State Conservationist, **Natural Resources Conservation Service**, 316 W. Boone Ave., Suite 450, Spokane, WA 99201
- Judy Olson, State Executive Director, **Farm Service Agency**, 316 W. Boone Ave., Suite 568, Spokane, WA 99201-2350
- F. Dale Bambrick, Eastern Washington Branch Chief, NOAA **National Marine Fisheries Service**, 304 South Water Street # 201, Ellensburg, WA 98926
- Colonel Anthony Wright, Seattle District, **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**, 4735 E. Marginal Way South, Seattle, Washington 98134
- Jessica Gonzalez, Manager, Central Washington Field Office, **US Fish & Wildlife Service**, 215 Melody Lane, Suite 119, Wenatchee WA 98801
- Judy Hallisey, **US Forest Service** District Ranger, 803 W. 2nd Street, Cle Elum, WA 98922
- Dennis McLerran, Regional Administrator, Region 10, **Environmental Protection Agency**, 1200 Sixth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101
- Tom Karier, Washington Council member, **Northwest Power and Conservation Council**, N. 501 Riverpoint Blvd, Ste 425, Spokane, WA 99202
- Phil Rockefeller, Washington Council member, **Northwest Power and Conservation Council**, 924 Capitol Way S, Ste 105, Olympia, WA 98501

- Stephen J. (Steve) Wright, Administrator, **Bonneville Power Administration**, P.O. Box 3621, Portland, OR 97208-3621
Tribal
- Phil Rigdon, Deputy Director, Department of Natural Resources, **Yakama Nation**, PO Box 151, Toppenish, WA 98948
- Harry Smiskin, Chairman, Yakama Tribal Council, **Yakama Nation**, PO Box 151, Toppenish, WA 98948
National
- U.S. Representative Doc Hasting, **4th Congressional District**, 1323 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515-4704
- U.S. Representative Dave Reichert, **8th Congressional District**, U.S. House of Representatives, 1730 Longworth Building Washington, DC 20515
- Senator Maria Cantwell, **US Congress**, 717 Hart Senate Office Bldg Washington, DC 20510
- Senator Patty Murray **US Congress**, 173 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510

Benchmarks, Timeline, & Actions:

- *The following is a summary of the priority actions needed to implement the 5-year plan of the Kittitas County Conservation District. These actions should occur between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013.*
- *Actions for all strategic priorities include seeking funding to establish or continue programs (technical, financial and educational assistance); maintaining existing and developing new partnerships with stakeholders (landowners, local, state and federal resource agencies, private groups); and continuing district operations and outreach/education efforts.*

Strategic Priority: Water Quantity

Measurable Goal: *Improve water use efficiency through conservation measures and storage opportunities to meet needs of water users and work with partners, to achieve base flows in high priority streams by 2020.*

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Develop and construct irrigation system conversion projects	July 2012 to April 2013	Utilizing Irrigation Efficiencies Program and/or Bonneville Power Administration Funding to complete at least two large projects to convert to sprinkler irrigation system and secure water savings for instream flow. Complete large earthen ditch to pipeline conversion as part of Manastash project and secure water savings for instream flow. Continue Small Project Cost Share program with priority emphasis on sprinkler conversion projects.
Complete a Tributary Plan as defined by YRBWEP	July 2012 to March 2013	Coordinate with the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Program (YRBWEP) to secure funding for projects in tributaries by completing a tributary plan as part of the Manastash Creek Reach Assessment Project.
Inventory current irrigation methods	July 2012 to August 2012	Conduct crop and irrigation method mapping of agricultural lands in Kittitas County
Yakima Basin Integrated Water Resource Management Plan	July 2012 to June 2013	Monitor progress of the integrated plan, attend meetings, and provide information as needed.
Monitor Manastash Creek flows	July 2012 to June 2013	Continue monitoring of stream flows in Manastash Creek, including the water diverted and the Trust Water.

Save Water Save Energy Program	July 2012 to December 2012	Partner with South Central Washington RC&D and Kittitas County PUD to investigate opportunities to improve irrigation efficiencies through the Save Water Save Energy Program.
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Strategic Priority: Water Quality

Measurable Goal: Meet the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) goals in Kittitas County.

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Coordinate with the groups/agencies currently monitoring water quality	July 2012 to June 2013	Meet with Kittitas County Water Purveyors and Ecology to coordinate activities as needed.
Update crop pattern maps	July 2012 to August 2012	Conduct crop mapping of agricultural lands in Kittitas County
Find acceptable method to install off-channel livestock watering facilities	July 2012 to June 2013	Work with stakeholders and Acquavella Water adjudication process to find an acceptable method to install off-channel watering facilities.
Model stormwater infrastructure in an urban setting	July 2012 to March 2013	Gather info regarding stormwater management requirements, potential funding sources and baseline conditions on urban and suburban lands within KCCD boundaries and coordinate with local jurisdictions.
Demonstrate stormwater infrastructure demonstration project	July 2012 to March 2013	Work with City of Cle Elum to demonstrate proper functioning infiltration gallery as part of a neighborhood stormwater system. Investigate other options for stormwater practice demonstrations.
Conduct reach assessment on Manastash Creek	July 2012 to March 2013	Conduct a reach assessment on Manastash Creek in coordination with county and other agencies in order to inventory and understand the watershed and to develop a prioritized project list.
Improve Riparian Habitat	July 2012 to June 2013	Install second flood fence on Yakima River Side Channel. Improve riparian area near Crystal Creek in association with stormwater improvement project. Continue to install CREP project on Whiskey Creek.
Reduce Irrigation Induced Soil Erosion	July 2013 to June 2013	Continue to implement PAM Cost Share Program utilizing funding from County, Conservation Commission and Special Assessment
Investigate Ecosystem Services Market opportunities	July 2012 to December 2012	Continue to cooperate with the South Central Resource Conservation & Development Council to develop geographical information and analysis to help determine the feasibility of a floodplain restoration market in the Yakima River basin

Strategic Priority: Fish & Wildlife

Measurable Goal: *By 2020, complete installation of approved fish screen and fish passage facilities for the identified high priority areas. By 2025 complete installation of approved fish screen and fish passage facilities for the identified medium priority areas.*

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Construct/install fish screen and fish passage projects	<i>July 2012 to June 2013</i>	<i>Remove fish passage barriers and install fish screens on Parke Creek, Manastash Creek, and Teanaway River. Plan additional projects on Naneum, Coleman, Caribou, Parke, Dry and Manastash Creeks.</i>
Landowner educational guide	<i>July 2012 to June 2013</i>	<i>Establish educational guide/brochure (or webpage) that explains how to plan, permit and implement projects in streams and rivers (e.g. fish screen/ passage). Complete as part of the Manastash Reach Assessment.</i>
Big Game Impacts on Ag Lands	<i>July 2012 to June 2013</i>	<i>Support efforts of the Big Game Management Roundtable to address big game impacts on agricultural lands.</i>
Sage Grouse and Rangelands	<i>July 2012 to June 2013</i>	<i>Monitor and promote Sage Grouse Initiative programs in cooperation with NRCS. Attend Shrub-Steppe Partnership meetings.</i>

Strategic Priority: Development & Natural Resource Impacts

Measurable Goal: *Develop a strategy and an information campaign to address land use fragmentation & small parcel impact on natural resources.*

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Small Acreage Management Program	<i>July 2012 to April 2013</i>	<i>Continue the program offering education and technical assistance to small acreage landowners. Education programs are in cooperation with WSU Extension and NRCS.</i>
Promote Conservation Easement Programs	<i>July 2012 to June 2013</i>	<i>Coordinate with agencies and land conservancy organizations to promote conservation easement programs.</i>
Provide Technical Assistance to Kittitas County	<i>July 2012 to June 2013</i>	<i>Offer technical assistance to Kittitas County by assigning staff to participate in updates to Shoreline Management Plan and Critical Areas Ordinance, to coordinate with Flood Task Force and (if approved) Flood Control Zone District, to participate in the Voluntary Stewardship Program if it becomes funded, and other issues/activities as needed.</i>

Strategic Priority: Soils

Measurable Goal: *Maintain soil productivity and health to meet or exceed NRCS soil quality criteria.*

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Offer agronomy expertise to local growers	<i>July 2012 to June 2013</i>	<i>Coordinate with NRCS for direct and individual communication between NRCS agronomist and growers interested in soil quality & health</i>
Conduct a seminar on no-till practices	<i>October 2012 to April 2013</i>	<i>Partner with NRCS to secure expertise and conduct the seminar either alone or in conjunction with other events (e.g. Kittitas County Hay Growers meeting).</i>
Reduce Irrigation Induced Soil Erosion	<i>July 2012 to June 2013</i>	<i>Continue to offer the PAM Cost Share program to growers to reduce soil erosion.</i>

Strategic Priority: Range

Measurable Goal: *By 2020, document positive trend (health) on rangeland in Kittitas County.*

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Conduct Rangeland Monitoring	<i>July 2012 to June 2013</i>	<i>Support rangeland monitoring effort by WSU Extension (staff) by providing staff to assist with field work.</i>
Provide technical and financial assistance	<i>July 2012 to June 2013</i>	<i>Support and coordinate with NRCS and WSU Extension's efforts to provide technical and financial assistance to rangeland operators.</i>
Support Wild Horse CRM plan	<i>July 2012 to June 2013</i>	<i>Provide technical assistance with monitoring and seeking implementation funding as needed. Continue to attend CRM meetings.</i>
Provide landowners with information about new weeds	<i>July 2012 to June 2013</i>	<i>Coordinate with NRCS and Kittitas County Noxious Weed Control Board to update landowners on common and new weeds (e.g. Ventenata).</i>
Monitor Wild Horse Conservation Easement	<i>July 2012 to June 2013</i>	<i>Continue to conduct annual monitoring on Wild Horse Wind & Solar Facility lands, including photo-monitoring of springs developed for livestock.</i>

Strategic Priority: Forestry

- **Measurable Goal:** *By 2020, treat 2,500 acres of forestland to improve forest health and reduce wildland fire risks in Kittitas County.*

Benchmark	Timeline	12 Month Actions
Complete fuels reduction projects private forestland	<i>July 2012 to June 2013</i>	<i>Enter into agreements with private landowners to complete projects to improve forest health and reduce wildland fire risks on 100 acres. Focus on Community projects that involve multiple landowners.</i>
Conduct forestry assessments	<i>July 2012 to June 2013</i>	<i>Assess 100 acres of private forestland with the assistance of DNR foresters. Assessments will focus on forest health and wildland fire risks.</i>
Assist Communities to become or maintain Firewise USA status.	<i>July 2012 to June 2013</i>	<i>Conduct (4) workshops with communities in cooperation with DNR and Fire District staff</i>
Investigate opportunities for biomass utilization	<i>July 2012 to June 2013</i>	<i>Monitor efforts such as the Tapash Collaborative and participating as needed.</i>
Research Road Maintenance And Abandonment Plans	<i>July 2012 to December 2012</i>	<i>Contact DNR regarding RMAP needs in Kittitas County and coordinate efforts to communicate information to affected landowners.</i>

Washington Conservation Districts assisting land managers with their conservation choices

