

# Cascadia Conservation District

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State Legislative District #12  
Congressional District #8

## 2015 Feature Accomplishment: Sunitsch Canyon — wildfire fuels reduction



Top: Dense stands; a high ratio of species susceptible to insects, disease, and fire; abundant ladder fuels; and steep slopes equal high fire risk. Bottom: Open spacing, trimmed limbs, fire-tolerant Ponderosa pine, and low ground fuels reduce burn intensity and the chance of a high-risk tree crown fire.

which will be followed by 13 more acres next year. “We appreciated working with Cascadia,” said manager Andrew Holm, “because of the comprehensive nature of the prescription for overall fire resilience and forest health.”

**KEY PARTNERS:** Sunitsch Canyon, LLC and manager Andrew Holm - Forest Plan and landowner match; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service - Cultural Resources investigation and matching funds through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** Wildfire has been an increasing concern in our area for a number of years. Cascadia Conservation District has been working to help landowners and communities improve the overall health of forested areas and create defensible space around homes and outbuildings. Public forest management practices, lack of low-intensity fires, differing views on vegetation management, and limited funding have hindered significant progress. The result is evident in the recent fires, and there is much more still at risk.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** Trimming ladder fuels, thinning trees, and removing fire risks around homes are effective ways to help decrease the intensity and extent of a wildfire. Cascadia Conservation District’s cooperators are preparing to be survivors, rather than victims, of this natural process in our region. The 306-acre Sunitsch property is located near expanses of at-risk public forest in the Cascade foothills. They recently completed an 18-acre fuels reduction cost share project through Cascadia on this site,

## Other Accomplishments

- Stream bank restoration and planting along Colockum Creek following fire-related flooding.
- In-stream habitat restoration with large wood structures and floodplain reconnection in two locations on the lower Entiat River.
- FireWise risk assessments and technical assistance for landowners.
- Wildfire fuels reduction cost share projects and community chipping events for homeowner fuels removal.
- Education and outreach through Kids in the Creek, Water on Wheels, Native Planting 101, a photo contest and stewardship calendar, fire awareness workshops, and multiple community events.

## More Work to Do!

- In-stream habitat projects with multiple large woody structures, channel re-connection, and floodplain restoration in the middle Entiat River.
- Continued forest health, fuels reduction, wildfire risk assessments, and education/outreach activities.
- Riparian plantings in multiple watersheds.
- Managing the Entiat Intensively Monitored Watershed program and Entiat Planning Unit.
- Ongoing monitoring, education, and outreach programs.