

Okanogan Conservation District

Craig Nelson, District Manager
1251 2nd Avenue S, Rm 102 Okanogan, WA 98840
(509) 422-0855 x110 | ocd@okanogancd.org | www.okanogancd.org
Board Chair: Ivan Oberg



State Legislative District #7, 12
Congressional District #4

2016 Feature Accomplishment 2015 Okanogan County fires



Eric Choker, Spokane Conservation District Soil Scientist, conducting a field test for soil burn severity after the 2015 Okanogan Complex Fires.

Photo: Andrew Phay

RESOURCE CHALLENGE Following the single largest fire in state history in 2014, Okanogan County was besieged by multiple large fires in 2015. In two years, over 750,000 acres have burned in Okanogan County. Approximately 2,000 miles of livestock fencing have been lost, dozens of irrigators have lost portions of irrigation systems, thousands of acres of steep slopes risk catastrophic erosion, and flash flooding on hydrophobic soils threatens dozens of homes and public infrastructure.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS The Okanogan Conservation District provided leadership assisting private landowners with technical assistance for post-fire risks, recovery guidelines and information, and providing cost-share funds for reseeded highly erosive areas, livestock fencing repair, and irrigation system repairs. The district led recovery with a state and private

lands interagency Burned Area Emergency Recovery evaluation, distributed \$500,000 in cost-share to livestock producers for emergency feed, and are currently working to distribute more than \$1 million in cost-share for fence repair and replacement, weed control, irrigation system repairs, re-seeding, and more.

KEY PARTNERS: Washington State Conservation Commission; USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service; USDA Farm Service Agency; USDA Forest Service; USDI Bureau of Land Management; Colville Confederated Tribes; Okanogan Co. Emergency Management; Colville Reservation Conservation District; Methow Conservancy; Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation; Okanogan Co. Long Term Recovery Group

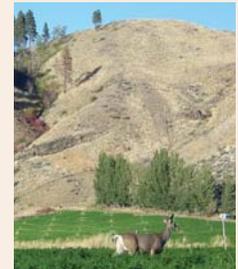


Okanogan Conservation District staff, Zach Day, Terri Williams, and Amy Martin surveying burned area damage.

Other Accomplishments



Firewise-ready home. The district conducted several dozen property assessments for landowners and are continuing this important program. Photo: Kirsten Cook



The district is working with landowners from the Tunk Watershed to develop conservation plans focused on improving wildlife habitat.



NRCS Plant Material Center's Allen Casey works with conservation district soil health intern Stacie Powers to collect data for our soil health cover crop project. Photo: Leslie Michel

More work to do!

- The Okanogan Conservation District will continue to focus much of its energy on helping with wildfire recovery efforts. Additionally, we will work on water quality work that ranges from reducing soil erosion to reducing agricultural based impacts. The district will continue to implement programs to prepare landowners, their properties, and businesses with disaster preparedness.