

Okanogan County Wildfires

Natural Resources Recovery Guide



Okanogan Conservation District acts as a clearinghouse for landowners to report natural resource and agriculture infrastructure damage and post-fire resource concerns. Okanogan CD conservation planners can conduct site visits, identify resource concerns, and seek funding for cost-share grants to assist landowners with post-fire recovery actions. Contact us for more information at 509-422-0855 or ocd@okanogancd.org.

In an Emergency, Call 911

To report structural damage or get information about current fires, contact the Okanogan County Emergency Management Department:

Maurice Goodall
Emergency Manager
509-429-2576 (cell)
509-422-7207

Kayla Higbee
Emergency Management Specialist
509-422-7206
em@co.okanogan.wa.us

This publication is intended to provide public information and resources for natural resources and agricultural rehabilitation only. For assistance with housing and other social service needs, please contact Room One (ask for a Disaster Case Manager) at 509-997-2050, Okanogan County Community Action Council at 509-422-4041, or Okanogan Housing Authority at 509-422-3721

BE PREPARED!

Fire increases the risk of flash floods, so keep an eye to the sky and an ear to the radio. Know what the weather is doing around you and be prepared to move to higher ground if necessary. Have an emergency kit ready in case it becomes necessary for you to leave your home in a hurry. Be sure you have enough medications, water, clothing and non-perishable food to last 14 days.

If your home survived the fire, consider purchasing flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program. Speak with your insurance agent for details. Policies for NFIP can be written at any time. In some cases, you must obtain the policy within 60 days of fire containment.

Was your **property within the burn zone** or nearby?



Consider obtaining FEMA National Flood Insurance Program insurance to protect assets against flash flooding. Prepare for possible flash flooding. Contact your insurance agent for more details. Other applicable programs are listed in this booklet.

Did you have **structural or other damages** to your property?



Check with your insurance agent about your applicable home, farm and other insurance that may cover part of the damages. Report losses to Okanogan County Emergency Management.

Are you an **agricultural producer** (make money from livestock or crop production)?



Check with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to determine if any of their emergency assistance programs may apply.

Are you a **small forest landowner**?



Contact the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Small Forest Landowner Office for advice and assistance.

Do you have **wildlife concerns or conflicts**?



Contact the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife.

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Would you like assistance with basic site evaluation and guidance on appropriate treatments or available funding assistance?



Contact Okanogan Conservation District.

Does your property **share a border with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management?**



Contact the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for advice and assistance.

Does your property **contain fish-bearing creeks?**



Contact the Okanogan Conservation District or the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Do you plan to do **work in or near a wetland, stream or river?**



Contact the Okanogan County Planning Office, Army Corps of Engineers and the WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife for approvals/permits before beginning work. Expedited HPA permits for in-stream work may be available through the WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife.

Other local organizations may be able to help, depending on your location, such as Methow Conservancy, Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation, and others. Okanogan Conservation District staff can refer you to the appropriate agency or organization.

Wildfire Recovery Contacts

Okanogan Conservation District

Kirsten Cook (509) 422-0855 x.103 kirsten@okanogancd.org www.okanogancd.org/fires

Washington Department of Natural Resources

Steve Harris (509) 684-7474 steven.harris@dnr.wa.gov www.dnr.wa.gov

U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Services Agency

Any staff person (509) 422-2750 cliffene.coyne@wa.usda.gov http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov

U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service

Sarah Troutman-Zahn (509) 422-2750 x.119 Sarah.troutman.zahn@wa.usda.gov

U.S. Bureau of Land Management

Erik Ellis (509) 665-2141 edellis@blm.gov www.blm.gov

Okanogan Co. Noxious Weed Control Board

Anna Lyon (509) 422-7165 alyon@co.okanogan.wa.us www.okanogancounty.org/nw

Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife

In-stream work and permitting:

Methow Basin - Lynda Hofmann (509) 997-9428 lynda.hofmann@dfw.wa.gov

Okanogan Basin: Connie Iten (509) 826-3123 constance.iten@dfw.gov

Range and land management: Dale Swedberg (509) 826-7205 dale.swedberg@dfw.wa.gov

Wildlife Conflicts: Ellen Heilhecker (509) 429-4584 ellen.heilhecker@dfw.wa.gov

Wildlife Hunting/Feeding: Jeff Heinlen (509) 826-7372 jeffrey.heinlen@dfw.wa.gov

Methow Conservancy

Any staff (509) 996-2870 info@methowconservancy.org www.methowconservancy.org

Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation

Chris Johnson (509) 429-1232 chrisj@methowsalmon.org www.methowsalmon.org

Post-Fire Rehabilitation Treatments

Landowners affected by fire may struggle with post-fire impacts and rehabilitation on their property. Landowners are encouraged to CAREFULLY walk their properties to assess the damages and potential risks. Potential problems resulting from fires may include:

- Safety issues along property boundaries, roads and buildings.
- **Significant increase in sediment delivery to stream channels.**
- **Surface and gully erosion on slopes and possible debris flows down draws.**
- Loss of vegetation and forest cover which reduces grazing for livestock & wildlife, degrades habitat, and increases the risk of weed infestations.
- Hazards trees.

When walking your property, look for items that may plug stream channels and/or culverts, particularly at road crossings. Keep in mind that things that don't normally float (concrete blocks, barbeques, propane tanks, lawn furniture, potted plants, etc.) can float in the event of a flash flood or debris flow. Additional runoff may cause channels to shift, creating additional erosion.

- **Check culverts and draws and remove debris. This includes rocks, grass clippings, decking, structures, vegetation, fences across draws, etc.**
- **Secure and/or anchor all possible outdoor items. Move lawn furniture, barbeques, propane tanks, pool covers, etc. inside.**
- Stream work and salvage removal may require special permitting. Please contact the Department of Natural Resources and Department of Fish and Wildlife for more information.

It may be difficult to visualize the rebirth of a forest or rangeland following a wildfire. However, nature is well equipped to regenerate as long as soil has not been too severely burned or disturbed by firefighting equipment. In cases where revegetation of burned areas is called for, possible treatments include:

- Grass seeding (quick establishment, weed suppression, and forage)
- Forest tree planting (primarily ponderosa pine)
- Riparian plantings along stream corridors

The Okanogan Conservation District is available to assist with site specific questions and provide assistance for landowners as they begin to restore the landscape following fire. Please contact us at (509) 422-0855 or ocd@okanogancd.org for more information.