



Landowners Making Changes to Reduce Wildfire Risks

INSIDE

New Staff and Interns
P. 2

Drought Resources
P. 2-3

Manager's Note
P. 3

Contact Us:

509-422-0855

okanogancd.org

We live in a fire-adapted landscape in Okanogan County. Our native plants have evolved numerous strategies to survive wildfire: thick bark, deep roots, and seeds that only open after they heat up. Wildfire will always be a part of our experience if we live here, and like our native plants, we can adapt to handle fire. Recently, Okanogan CD provided 50/50 cost share funding to landowners to reduce the risk of their home catching fire during a wildfire by installing “home-hardening” practices. Check out these before and after shots and contact us to learn more about how you can harden your home against embers and flames.

ABOVE:
Any plant can burn, so having them next to the home increases risk. By removing the plants and adding a non-flammable perimeter of gravel, this wood-sided home now has a buffer zone around it.



BELOW:
When embers blow under decks they can ignite needles, grass, or other materials. By adding metal skirting, this under-deck area and the posts are protected from embers.



New Staff and Interns

Hannah Coe, Conservation Planner

Although I grew up on the east coast, over the past six years I have come to call the northwest home! I have followed my love for aquatic systems from the beautiful salmon rivers of CA and WA to the mudflats of Humboldt Bay, CA. I am excited to have landed at the Okanogan Conservation District. I am eager to explore the county and hope to have a positive impact on the interface between our communities and the environment. I enjoy all things outdoors and try to spend most weekends backpacking- the more remote the alpine lake, the better!



Justin Stanley, Natural Resource Technician Intern

I have lived in Okanogan ever since I was born. From a young age, I loved the outdoors: I was always out hunting, fishing or camping. Currently, I am going into my sophomore year at the University of Idaho, pursuing a degree in rangeland management. I held this intern position last year and loved the work I was doing. When I got the opportunity to come back this year, I jumped right on it! This summer I will be doing range inventory and transect monitoring to further my knowledge and hands-on experience in rangeland management.



Dylan Streeter, Natural Resource Technician Intern

I was born and raised in Okanogan and graduated from Okanogan HS in 2018. You can usually find me hunting, fishing, hiking, or shed hunting. I just finished my freshman year at the University of Idaho, with a major in Forestry, and a minor in Rangeland Management. I really enjoy learning about natural resources, and how to properly manage them for future generations. I will be working on making homes fire safe, and doing rangeland transect monitoring. I look forward to the busy summer ahead of me, and learning as much as I can.



Drought Resources

Drought conditions are anticipated for the Okanogan and Methow Rivers this summer. The drought declaration is based, in part, on lower-than-average snowpack, and a warm and dry summer that could impact water availability for agricultural irrigators, residential water users and stream flows. All water users should consider using water conservation techniques to reduce the risk of late-summer impacts that limit water availability.

Okanogan Conservation District will be providing free evaluations of both agricultural and residential irrigation systems and will work with landowners to develop custom irrigation water *(continued)*

Drought Resources, continued

management plans that meet water demand. Irrigation water management may save you time and money while leaving extra water in-stream for other irrigators and fish. Okanogan CD can help agricultural irrigators take advantage of Okanogan PUD's Save Water Save Energy rebate program, which can be used for repairing leaky irrigation systems, pump upgrades, and more.

Trout Unlimited has funding to pay water users to divert less during the low flow season (August through October). Contact Jacquelyn Wallace at 509-881-7690 for more information.

Non-profit, community water systems with water shortages may be eligible for grants or loans during times of hardship from natural disasters through the Washington State Department of Health (360-236-3107 or 1-800-521-0323).

Other opportunities may become available through the summer. Contact the Okanogan Conservation District to learn more.



Visit the National Drought Mitigation Center website to see a national drought map and to report impacts from drought. <http://droughtreporter.unl.edu/>

Manager's Note

By Craig Nelson, District Manager

I'm often asked what we do at the conservation district. It's a difficult question to answer because we do many different, and usually complex, projects. Truth is, conservation districts were created for a very simple purpose: to bring all available resources to address the greatest natural resource concern in the district. That means we may lead a project, we may assist another organization or agency, or we may just inform the public about the availability of a program. Our mission is to be flexible in how the work gets done, but focused on the highest priorities of our community.

To that end, the Okanogan Conservation District would like to hear from you and your neighbors about what our priorities should be for the coming years. We will begin our long-range planning process this fall and hope you will consider helping us identify the priorities for the next planning period. You can e-mail me directly at craig@okanogancd.org, call me at 509-422-0855, ext. 110, write a letter, or stop by the office weekdays between 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. You'll find us at 1251 2nd Ave. South, Room 102, Okanogan, WA 98840. Let us know what you think!



1251 S. 2nd Avenue, Rm 102
Okanogan, WA 98840

This newsletter is published by the Okanogan Conservation District with funding from Washington State Conservation Commission, Washington State Department of Ecology, and various other sources.

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID PERMIT #7
WENATCHEE WA

Okanogan Conservation District
www.okanogancd.org
509-422-0855

LAST CALL!

We will be changing to an electronic newsletter* soon.

You can still receive a hard copy version, but you must **call us by July 1** to confirm. Ready to make the switch? Send your email address to rachel@okanogancd.org.

* Electronic subscribers will still receive a hard copy calendar every year.