

# 2006 Annual Report (July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006)

## Kittitas County Conservation District



Washington Conservation Districts  
assisting land managers with their  
conservation choices

### Featured Natural Resource Accomplishment of the Year

#### **Yakima Tributary Access & Habitat Program (YTAHP)**

Upper Yakima River Tributaries- Kittitas County

##### **Resource Challenge:**

Upper Yakima River tributaries contain hundreds of small private irrigation diversions. Few of these diversions are properly screened to protect fish from entrainment and the diversion structures are generally not passable by upstream migrating fish. The Kittitas Valley has numerous tributaries that could be utilized as rearing habitat for salmonids (spring chinook, coho, and summer steelhead) if they were accessible. summer steelhead are listed as a threatened species in the Middle Columbia ESU (which includes the Yakima River watershed).

##### **Project Summary:**

YTAHP was conceived as the response to requests for assistance from irrigators who lacked proper fish screens and as a logical follow-up to the Bureau of Reclamation's Phase I and Phase II fish screen programs that served larger irrigation districts. YTAHP addresses the smaller, private diversions in the tributaries to the Yakima River. In addition to fish screen installation, YTAHP also works to provide access to additional habitat and improve the quality of the in-stream and riparian habitat. YTAHP is funded primarily by a grant from the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA).

##### **Results and Accomplishments:**

KCCD staff completed 130 miles of stream assessment in 2002-2005. The follow-up to that work is the publication of assessment reports and the formation of Tributary Teams. In FY06, the first two Trib Teams (Coleman Creek and Cherry Creek) were initiated and a total of four meetings conducted. Projects constructed in FY06 include a habitat improvement project on Wilson Creek (addition of large woody debris, removal of sediment, and shaping and planting the streambank); installation of a pipeline and sprinkler system that allowed an in-stream diversion to be removed; and initiated a demonstration riparian planting on City of Ellensburg property along Wilson Creek. Planning, engineering and design work is underway for 8 projects to be constructed in FY07. A dozen riparian planting projects through Kittitas County will be initiated or maintained in '07.

##### **Highlight:**

Since inception, the YTAHP Core Team has secured approximately \$3.5 million to match the \$4 million



*Release of 500 weevils to control knapweed at a YTAHP riparian planting site on Wilson Creek. Left to right: Landowner John Eaton, KCCD Technician Mark Crowley, and WSU Extension Entomologist Dale Whaley.*

provided by BPA. In FY06 alone, KCCD secured funds from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (\$45,000) and the Department of Ecology (\$750,000).

##### **Key Partners Involved:**

North Yakima Conservation District  
Kittitas County Water Purveyors  
South Central Resource Conservation & Development  
Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife  
Yakama Nation  
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Salmon Recovery Funding Board  
Department of Ecology  
National Fish & Wildlife Foundation

##### **For More Information Contact:**

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##### **Kittitas County Conservation District**

##### **Board of Supervisors:**

Mark Moore (Chair), Lynn Brown (Vice-Chair),  
Jeff Brunson (District Auditor), Dale Dyk (Member),  
Ron Gibb (Member)

##### **Legislative Districts:**

State Legislative District # 13  
Congressional District # 4

##### **Funding: (optional)**

County & Other Local \$718.51  
State \$891,679.34  
Federal \$557,924.08

**Total \$1,450,321.93**

# Annual Status Report of Natural Resources Kittitas County Conservation District

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## Background Summary of the Kittitas County Conservation District

The KCCD has served Kittitas County since May 1942. The KCCD consists of 1.48 million acres, including 465,000 acres of privately owned land. Publicly owned lands in the KCCD include parts of the federally owned Wenatchee National Forest and Yakima Training Center, as well as several state wildlife areas. The privately owned lands include forestland, shrub steppe rangeland, and irrigated cropland (predominately timothy hay, pasture and row crops). The KCCD spans from the crest of the Cascade mountain range, east across the headwaters of the Yakima River to the shrub-steppe lands bordering the Columbia River. The Yakima River and its tributaries are home to two species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act- bull trout and summer steelhead, spring chinook and coho are also present. Sixty percent of the 34,000 residents in Kittitas County live in the cities of Ellensburg, Cle Elum, Kittitas, Roslyn and South Cle Elum. The population is rising rapidly, particularly in the unincorporated areas. Large cropland and forestland tracts have been subdivided creating an increase in small acreage landowners.

## 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.

## Natural Resource Priorities and Goals:

- **Water Quantity** - By 2015 100% of senior water rights and minimum of 85% of junior water rights are met; and 100% of baseline flows are met by 2030
- **Water Quality** - By 2006, 2011, 2017 meet or exceed the revised Total Maximum Daily Load goals.
- **Fish Passage & Screening** - By 2010 complete installation of approved fish screen and fish passage facilities for the high priority areas; and by 2015 complete installation of approved fish screen and fish passage facilities for all areas.
- **Land Use Fragmentation, & Small Parcels & Natural Resource Impacts**- Develop a strategy, information campaign, incentive package to address land use fragmentation & small parcel impact on natural resources. By 2006, have a technical assistance program for resource friendly land development.
- **Soil Quality & Health**- By 2015, raise soil productivity and health on 25% of cropland to meet or exceed NRCS soil quality criteria.
- **Range & Forest Health**-By 2020 document positive trend (health) on 75% of rangeland and forest land.

## Information – Education Priorities and Goals:

- By 2007, reach 80% of landowners/users in Kittitas County by working with local Schools, producing newsletters, hosting workshops and field days, participating in the Kittitas County Fair, and providing educational materials to local media and local organizations.

## Critical Geographic Areas:

- Critical geographic areas include the irrigated croplands of Kittitas County.

## Natural Resources Information & Status

### Forestland (811,520 Acres with 203,000 privately owned)

- To Date - No forest management or wildfire plans completed by KCCD for 271 landowners.

### Range & Non-Irrigated Lands (555,000 Acres with 141,000 privately owned)

- To Date- No conservation plans completed by KCCD
- To Date- No wildfire risk assessments or management plans completed by KCCD for 300 landowners in urban wildland interface.

### Irrigated Cropland (100,000 with 95,000 acres privately owned)

- To Date- 2,300 acres of rill irrigation converted to sprinkler or delivery systems piped, with 255 acres and 3 landowners assisted in FY06.
- To Date- Polyacrylamide application occurs annually with 2,100 acres enrolled in FY06 preventing movement of 7,300 tons of soil.
- To Date- 880 acres and 8 landowners assisted with Irrigation Water Management techniques in FY06.
- To Date- 138 conservation planning maps created for landowners in FY06.

### Incorporated lands (7,000 acres)

- To Date – no conservation plans completed.

### Water Resources

- To Date – 29 water measuring devices installed in FY06 on private irrigation diversions.
- To Date- Approximately 10% of the fish passage barriers and unscreened irrigation diversions have been addressed, including 1 in FY06.
- To Date- 5,000 feet of Riparian areas planted or maintained with 700 feet planted and 4,000 maintained in FY06
- To Date- 2918 acre-feet placed in Trust Water Program through Irrigation Efficiencies Program and YTAHP, with 773 acre-feet placed in FY06.
- To Date- 63 Water quality sampling events (temp., sediment, discharge, benthic) have occurred in the Teanaway River watershed with 15 events in FY06