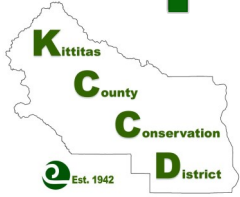


Frequently Asked Questions



About the Kittitas County Conservation District's System of Rates & Charges

I'm looking at my notice from the Assessor's Office and there is a line item that says "SOIL CONSERVATION FUND Conservation Tax". What is this?

This line item is the Kittitas County Conservation District's (KCCD) "System of Rates & Charges". This is a method to collect local funds similar to an assessment. It is authorized by Revised Code of Washington 89.08.405. It is limited to \$5/parcel and up to \$0.10/acre for eligible lands. Although KCCD is not part of Kittitas County government, the authority to approve the collection of these funds lies with the county legislative authority (e.g. Board of Commissioners) of the county in which the conservation district is located for a period not to exceed ten years. The system of rates & charges was approved by the Board of County Commissioners in 2016 for 2017-2026. This replaced the similar "special assessment" which was initially approved in 2006.

How is my rate determined?

Within the KCCD boundaries, there are three major identified land use types: irrigated, non-irrigated, and forestland. A combination of classifications was utilized to identify these types including the boundaries of the local Noxious Weed Districts (to delineate irrigated, non-irrigated and forestlands) and Department of Revenue land use codes assigned by the Kittitas County Assessor. These land use types tie directly to priority natural resource concerns and programs of the KCCD. Within the statutory limits of the 89.08.405, the rates were assigned to these land use types that range from \$4.91 to \$5.00 per parcel and \$0.03 to \$0.10 per acre. The higher rates are assigned to irrigated lands. The Rate Study Report (July 2016) completed by KCCD with assistance from the FCS Group is available at the KCCD office.

What if I think the system of rates & charges was incorrectly applied?

Landowners may appeal a rate by applying in writing to the District based on one or more of the following:

- The area of the parcel is incorrect;
- Wholly or partially outside the District boundaries
- Not assigned the proper rate category
- otherwise erroneous

For instructions on how to file an appeal, contact the KCCD at 509-925-3352 ext 207 or visit the KCCD webpage <http://www.kccd.net/LocalFunding.htm>.

I live within the city limits of Roslyn, why am I included in this?

The Roslyn City Council petitioned to be included in the boundaries of the KCCD in 2018. This petition was approved by the KCCD Board of Supervisors and then the Washington State Conservation Commission as is required. Inclusion in the KCCD boundaries also includes those lands in the existing system of rates & charges. The City of Cle Elum is the only other municipality in the KCCD boundaries. The Cle Elum City Council petitioned for inclusion in 2006.

My parcel is exempt from property taxes. Is there an exemption from this charge too?

Property tax exemptions are identified in Chapter 84.36 of the Revised Code of Washington. Typical organizations receiving property tax exemption are schools, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, social service agencies,

nursing homes, etc. The KCCD Rates & Charges are not a property tax, therefore these exemptions do not apply. The System of Rates and Charges is based on land classifications and are charged on a per parcel and per acre rate, without regard to the assessed valuation of the property. The Kittitas County Noxious Weed assessments are similarly applied and collected.

How are the funds collected from local landowners used?

This source of local funding ensures continuity of services from the KCCD to landowners, land managers and the public working to conserve natural resources. It is used to support basic administrative functions of the District, as well as a way to leverage funds from other sources. The KCCD has leveraged \$6.64 in federal, state and private funds for every dollar of local funds collected since 2007. Those funds have supported everything from irrigation system improvements to Firewise and fuels reduction in the forestlands. Activities are reported annually to the Board of County Commissioners. Annual reports are available on the KCCD website.

Who is the Kittitas County Conservation District?

The KCCD is an independent public agency established in 1942 under Chapter 89.08 of the Revised Code of Washington to assist landowners and operators to protect and enhance natural resources. The KCCD serves all unincorporated areas of Kittitas County, as well as the cities of Cle Elum and Roslyn. The incorporated cities of Kittitas, Ellensburg, and South Cle Elum are not included in the KCCD's service area at this time. An incorporated area may opt in or out of the District by resolution of their City Council at any time.

KCCD's focus is on creating and maintaining resilient working landscapes across Kittitas County through voluntary incentive based measures. Our efforts address the natural resource concerns and priorities detailed in our annual and long range plans. Most KCCD programs work across resource concerns (e.g. water quality/quantity, forest health, fish & wildlife habitat, etc.), as resilient landscapes are not limited to a single resource issue or concern. We provide landowners and land managers with technical, financial and educational assistance through our projects and programs.

How can I access KCCD services?

Visit the KCCD website (www.kccd.net) or call or stop by our office in Ellensburg to learn more about the various services and projects available through the KCCD.



**Kittitas County
Conservation District
2211 W Dolarway Road, Suite 4
Ellensburg WA 98926
(509) 925-3352
www.kccd.net**

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Jeff Brunson, Auditor **Bill Boyum, Member**
Matt Eslinger, Member

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Sherry Swanson, Project Manager
Mark Crowley, Conservation Planner
Ryan Roberts, Engineer
Miranda Nash, Financial Manager
Brent Dixon, Natural Resource Project Manager
Wendy Mee, Resource Technician