

NEWS RELEASE

Kittitas County Conservation District

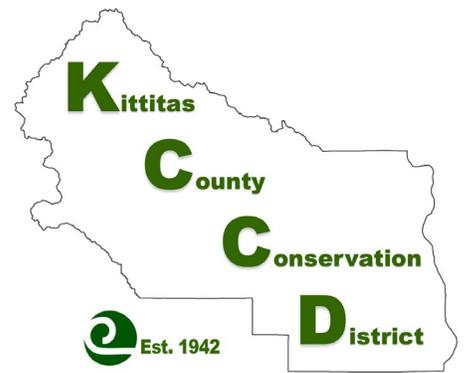
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Application Cut-off Date for Healthy Forest Reserve Program Announced

ELLENSBURG, Wash. (August 19, 2019) – The Kittitas County Conservation District announces an October 31, 2019 application deadline to sign-up for the Healthy Forest Reserve Program (HFRP). Land enrolled in HFRP easements must be privately owned and restore, enhance or measurably increase the recovery of threatened or endangered species, improve biological diversity or increase carbon storage.

Funding for HFRP is provided through the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). The program provides financial and technical assistance to restore, protect, and enhance forest resources by providing funds directly to eligible landowners for the purchase of HFRP easements. Additionally, NRCS pays for the implementation of forestry restoration, enhancement, and habitat management practices.

HFRP will be focused in the Teanaway and Swauk Watersheds with a priority on private lands including or adjacent to the Teanaway River or Swauk Creek and any of their tributaries. HFRP includes provisions for forest conservation easements and habitat restoration to benefit mid-Columbia Summer Steelhead. Landowners who enroll in the HFRP will be paid up to 100% of the appraised easement value. Easements can be 30 years or permanent in duration. For permanent easements and easements for the maximum duration available under State law, easement compensation provides up to 100 percent of the fair market value of the enrolled land less the fair market value of the land encumbered by the easement. Restoration payments provide up to 100 percent of the restoration costs for the permanent easements and up to 75 percent for the 30-year easements.

HFRP applicants must provide proof of ownership, or an operator (tenant) must provide written concurrence from the landowner of tenancy for the period of the HFRP restoration agreement in order to be eligible.

Applications are being accepted immediately. Application instructions are available here: <https://www.kccd.net/rcpp-programs>. Interested landowners should contact the District at 509-925-3352 or 2211 W Dolarway Road, Ellensburg for more information.

This program became available in Kittitas County through the “Yakima Integrated Plan- Toppenish To Teanaway” RCPP project. The project was one of 88 high impact projects across the country that was approved for funding through the USDA’s Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) in December 2016. For more information on that project, visit <https://www.kccd.net/rcpp>.

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