



Walla Walla County Conservation District
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Blue Creek Post-Fire Rehabilitation Treatments

Landowners affected by the fire may continue to struggle with post-fire impacts and rehabilitation on their property. Landowners are encouraged to CAREFULLY walk their properties to assess the damage 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 from insect infestations in the fire-killed and fire-stressed trees.

When walking your property, look for items that may potentially 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, etc.) can float in the event of a flash flood or debris flow. Additional runoff may cause channels to shift, creating additional erosion.

- **Check and remove debris in and near draws and/or culverts. This includes rocks, grass clippings, decking, structures, vegetation, and fences across draws, etc.**
- **Secure or anchor all outdoor items. Move lawn furniture, barbeques, propane tanks, etc. away from areas that may flood.**
- 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 for regenerating some fire resistant species such as ponderosa pine trees and shrub-steppe species. You may soon see some grasses and plants recovering on the landscape. Revegetation of burned areas is also imperative for restoring the health of the ecosystem. Some possible treatments include:

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

The Walla Walla County Conservation District is available to assist with site specific questions and provide assistance for landowners as they begin to restore the landscape following the fire. Please contact us at (509) 522-6340 ext. 3 for more information.