

Region 3 Updates

Mike Livingston

Regional Director, South Central Region

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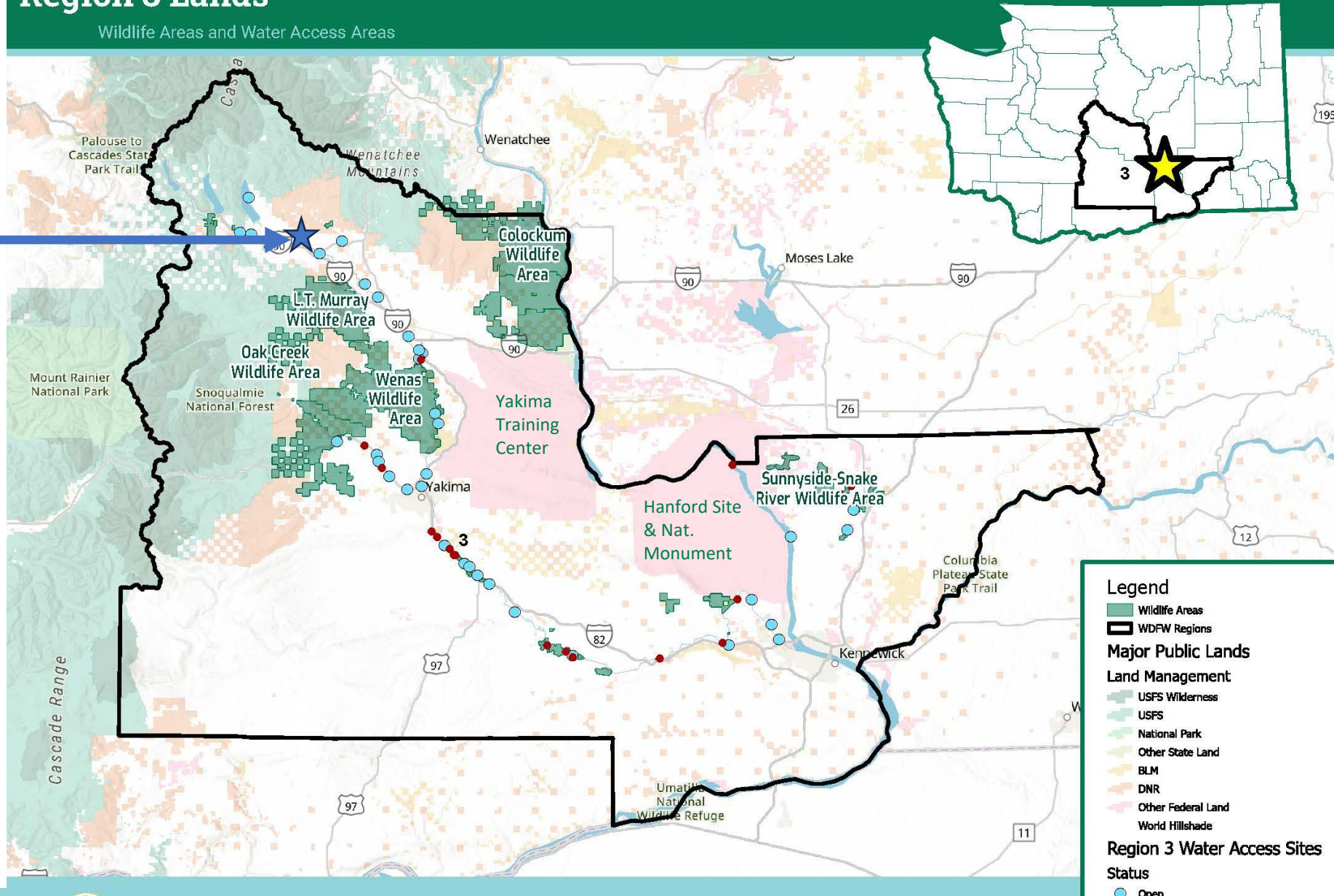


Washington
Department of
**FISH &
WILDLIFE**

Region 3 Lands

Wildlife Areas and Water Access Areas

You are here



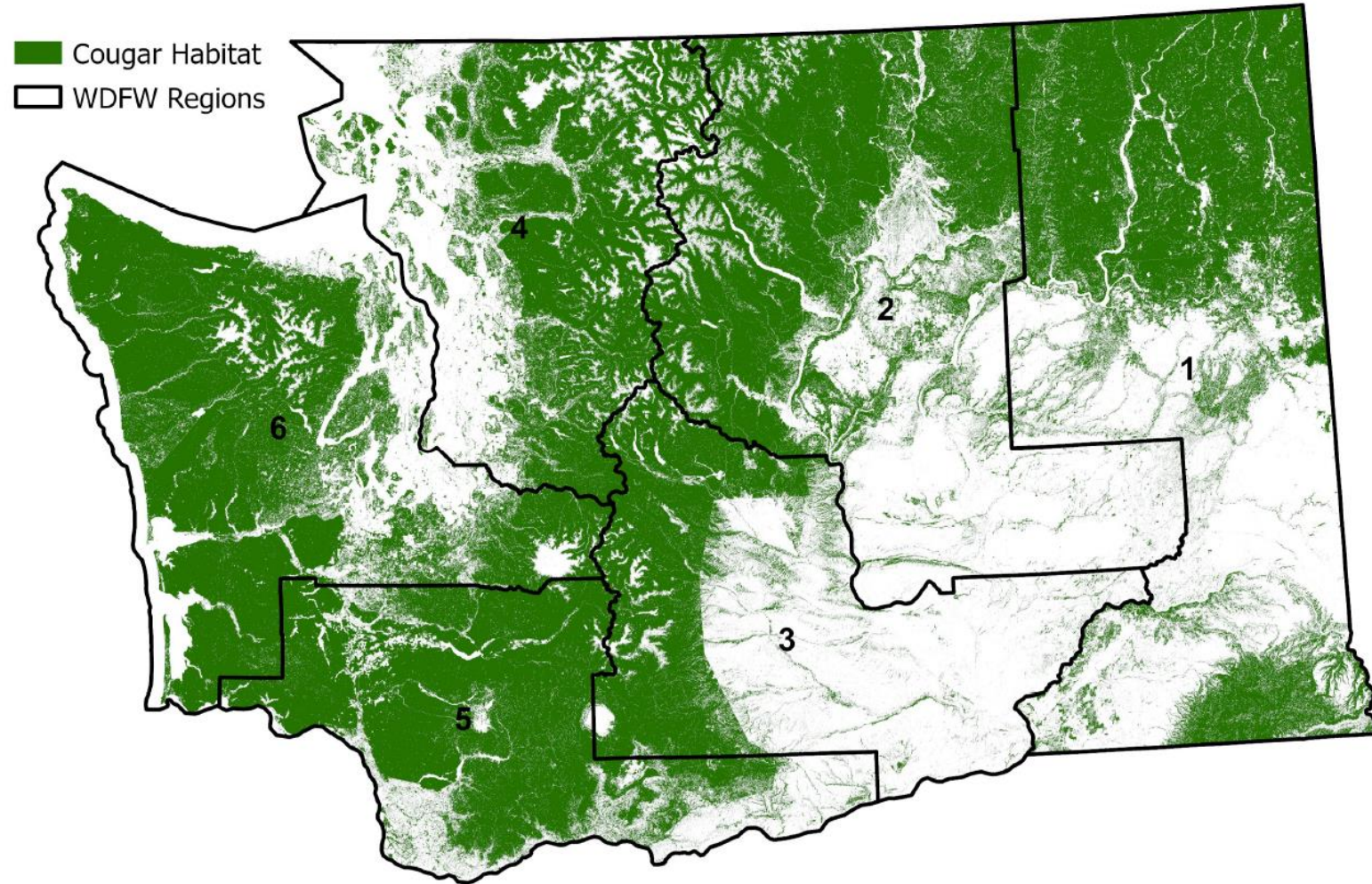


Wildlife management

Cougar calls & removals by region

Cougar Calls Received by Region							Cougar Removals by Region						
Region	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024* as of Oct 31	Region	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024* as of Oct 31
R 1	352	333	311	216	216	278	R 1	70	69	27	22	33	21
R 2	169	138	129	217	124	131	R 2	10	14	7	20	13	9
R 3	120	120	136	232	174	109	R 3	6	4	3	4	2	2
R 4	114	235	258	340	382	390	R 4	11	3	1	2	2	4
R 5	104	98	102	110	127	202	R 5	17	6	5	5	5	3
R 6	282	275	339	368	345	301	R 6	19	3	16	13	5	3
Totals	1141	1199	1275	1483	1368	1411	Totals	133	99	59	66	60	42

Cougar habitat in WDFW regions





Land Management – Wildfire Update

Wildfire Impact to Wildlife Areas



Rimrock Retreat Fire

- Fire area: 45,601 acres across all ownerships.
- Oak Creek Wildlife Area impact: 19,040 acres.
- Location: Both sides of U.S. Highway 12 & Tieton River Corridor



Retreat Fire - Elk Fencing

- Temporary fixes to get through this winter - mostly complete.
- Permitting and surveys to for replacement.
- Fencing contract - replace wood with steel posts.



Elk fence damaged by Retreat Fire – Tieton River drainage

Retreat Fire - Dozer line restoration

- Dozer line needs reseeding since new weed growth is expected in fire-impacted shrub steppe habitat.
- Seed was purchased for reseeding six miles of dozer line, and staff are in the process of reseeding this month.
- Spring 2025: increase spraying of noxious weeds by contractors in fire-affected areas



Retreat Fire – Restoration planting

- This photo represents a snapshot of the area to be planted with forest seedlings (foreground).
- 21,980 trees are on order to be planted spring of 2025.
- Planting density will be approximately 100 trees per acre across 220 acres.



Intensely burned forested area south of Tieton River

Retreat Fire restoration: Planned and current expenditures

Activity	Current Expenditures	Planned Expenditures	Future Needs	Totals
Cultural Resources	\$1,000	\$30,000		\$31,000
Weed Control		\$20,000		\$20,000
Habitat Restoration	\$34,000	\$195,000		\$229,000
Fence Repair/Replacement	\$2,300	\$67,000	\$316,000	\$385,300
Hazard tree removal		\$5,000		
Totals	\$37,300	\$317,000	\$316,000	\$670,300

Wenas Wildlife Area - Black Canyon Fire

Approximately 9,900 acres burned

Work Completed

- Cultural Clearance for shrub planting, native grass seeding, weed control, and temporary fix to damaged elk fence with t-posts.
- Purchased t-posts to prop up elk fence and completed temporary fix to get through winter 24-25.
- Purchased all native species needs for planting.



Black Canyon Fire Restoration work completed

- 60 acres Reseeded McCabe Restoration site.
- Seeded approximately 18 miles of dozer lines.
- Planted 5210 native shrubs (over 3000 were sagebrush).



Black Canyon Fire - Ongoing work

Cultural Clearance is planned to be contracted out for approximately 1.5 miles of rebuild for damaged elk fence.



Black Canyon Fire - Work planned for 2025

- Purchase of herbicide & Aerial spraying of ~600 acres.

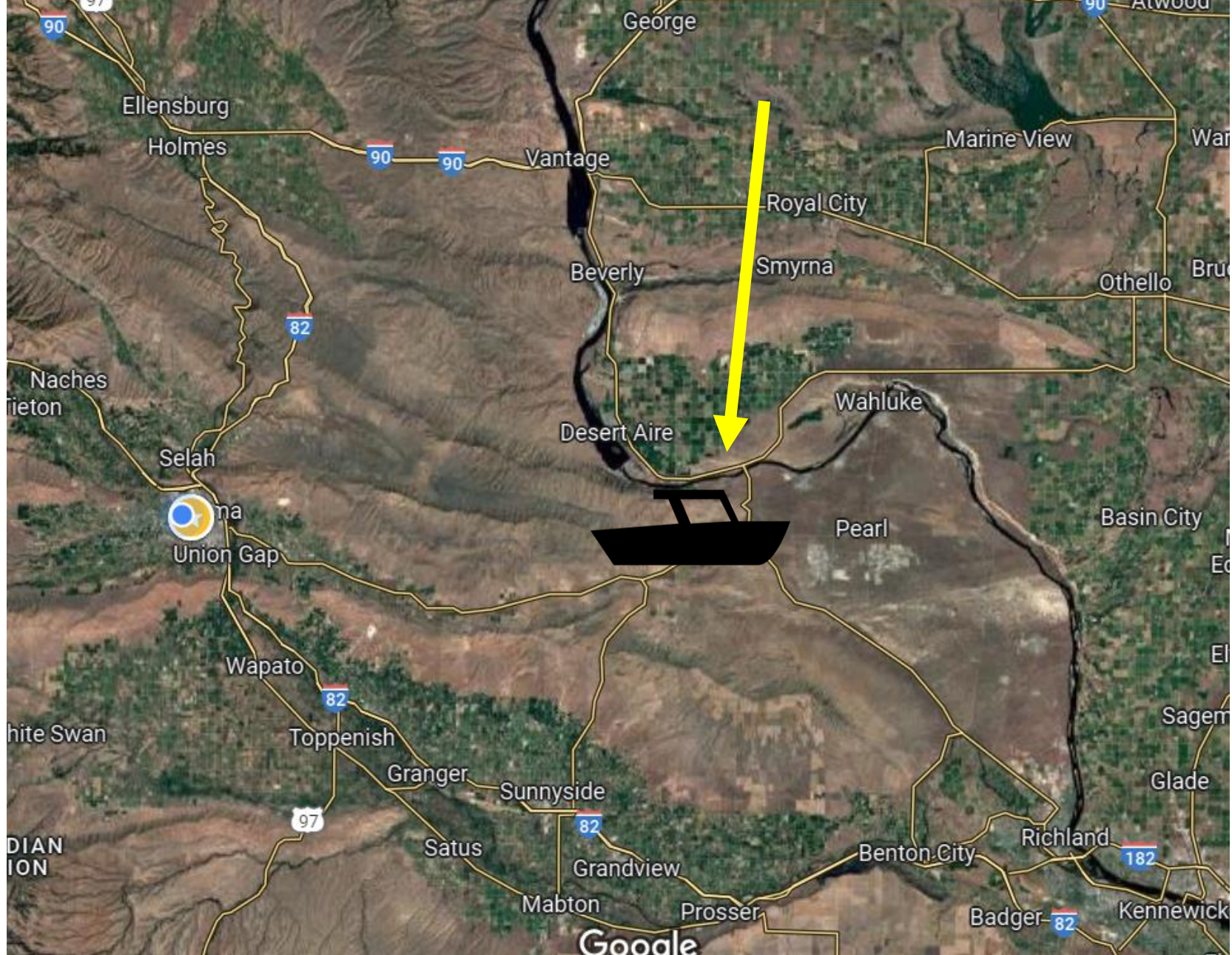


Black Canyon Fire restoration: Planned and current expenditures

Activity	Current Expenditures	Planned Expenditures	Future Needs	Totals
Cultural Resources	\$7,500	\$82,500		\$90,000
Weed Control		\$20,000		\$20,000
Habitat Restoration	\$35,000			\$35,000
Fence Repair/Replacement	\$1,500	\$10,000	\$405,000	\$416,500
Hazard tree removal				
Totals	\$44,000	\$112,500	\$405,000	\$561,500

Total for Rimrock & Black Canyon Fires = ~\$1.2 Million (\$801,300 fence costs)

Vernita Bridge River Access Area



Vernita Bridge access area changes

- **Very popular river access for the Hanford Reach fall Chinook fishery.**
- **Access site is owned by Dept. Of Energy and managed by WDFW.**
- **Primary use is September & October for fishery**
- **Amount of use became unsustainable.**



Vernita - Addressing the issues

- Primitive launch area hazardous especially during low water.
- RCO planning grant received in 2022.
- Columbia River Tribes and DOE environmental impacts concerns.
- Shoreline vegetation was impacted by recreational use.
- WDFW restricted launch sites, parking, & camping in 2024.
- Camping phase out after fall 2025 Chinook season.



Vernita - Launch area closures and restricted parking



Vernita – 2024 results

- **Parking, launching & camping restrictions protected sensitive shoreline habitats.**
- **Compliance was high and people adapted well to the situation.**
- **Fishing guides were generous and helpful.**
- **Signage and boundary modifications in 2025 season to increase compliance.**



Vernita - Next steps

- Identify new camping site
- Transition to a day-use only area by 2026 with a developed boat launch, designated parking area, and restroom.
- Continue planning, environmental review, permitting, design, & implementation



Vernita - Next steps

- **Collect public input as part of the planning and permitting process.**
- **Continue to provide public river access.**
- **Apply for an RCO development grant during 2026**
- **If successful, fund ramp development during 2027.**



KITTITAS CONSERVATION TRUST



KCT - Cooperative agreement with Suncadia

- **Cooperative agreement between WDFW, Yakama Nation, and Trendwest Resorts (now Suncadia) signed on Dec. 4, 2000.**
- **Articles of Incorporation of Kittitas Conservation Trust filed on June 19, 2002.**
- **Kittitas Conservation Trust created to manage and steward conservation easements and mitigate onsite and offsite development impacts in the upper Yakima River watershed.**
- **Cle Elum River corridor easement finalized on Sep. 2, 2004.**
- **Bullfrog Urban Growth Area (UGA) Managed Open Space Easement finalized on Jan. 16 , 2007.**
- **Natural and managed open space easements finalized on Dec. 11, 2015.**

KCT- Purpose, Vision, Mission



Kittitas Conservation Trust

Purpose – “Ensure no net loss of fish and wildlife habitat.”

Vision – “KCT envisions an Upper Yakima River Basin Community with dynamic ecosystems that sustain diverse habitats shared by all creatures as a part of a broader network of watersheds.”

Mission – “Protect and enhance fish and wildlife habitat in the Upper Yakima Watershed”

KCT - Restoration and passage projects

2006-08 Cle Elum River: Cooper Bridge restoration	2006-09 Cle Elum River: restoration, phase 1
2007-09 Coleman Creek: passage at Olmstead State Park	2007-10 Currier/Reecer Creek: passage, Pott and Pautzke dam removal
2007-12 Taneum Creek: passage, removal of two diversion dams	2009-12 Swauk Creek: restoration
2011-14 Cle Elum River: restoration, phase 2	2012-Present – Gold Creek Valley: restoration
2016-23 Upper Kachess River: restoration, phase 1	2019-Present – Yakima River: restoration at Hanson Ponds
2017-Present – Box Canyon: restoration and passage	2023-Present – Kachess River: restoration, phase 2

KCT - Conservation and stewardship

- **2004 – Cle Elum River Corridor Conservation Easement – 1230.7 acres**
- **2007 – Bullfrog UGA Managed Open Space Conservation Easement – 105.5 acres**
- **2015 – Natural and Managed Open Space Conservation Easements – 2207.2 acres**
- 2008 – Holmes Property – 37.5 acres
- **2009 – Swamp Lake Forest – 71 acres**
- 2010 – Hanson Ponds Cle Elum – 50 acres
- 2012 – Hundley Property Conservation Easement – 431 acres
- **2019 – Eagle Bend Property – 40 acres**
- **2022 – Cottonwood Cove – 15 acres**
- **2024 – Hutchinson Ranch River Conservancy – 235 acres**
- Ongoing – Timber Cove – 1 acre
- Ongoing – Cle Elum Ridge – 9,700 acres
- **Ongoing – Murphey Property – 40 acres**

Conservation totals

KCT Ownership & Management = 3,904 acres

Conservation Total = 15,477 acres

thanks