

Flood Newsletter

ISSUE

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NOVEMBER

2014

2015 FLOOD CONTROL ZONE DISTRICT PROJECTS

- Begin the planning process for the Naneum, Wilson and Cherry Creek Watershed.
- Complete the planning process for the Yakima River Assessment—Hansen Pits to Ringer Loop.
- Implement the Manastash Creek Corridor Plan, including acquisitions and easements.
- Review of new digital floodplain maps from FEMA.
- Update the 1996 Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan.
- Apply for grants to acquire flood prone property and perform river assessments.



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Letter From Your Floodplain Manager

Flood season and winter are on their way, and the forecast is trending towards El Niño, which occurs when ocean temperatures in the Equatorial Pacific are warmer than average. La Niña occurs when ocean temperatures are colder than average.

In the Pacific Northwest, El Niño brings warmer than average winter temperatures and reduced precipitation. However, some of the county's worst floods have come during El Niño years and it is important to be prepared for flooding no matter the long-range forecast.

November is Flood Awareness Month in Kittitas County. This newsletter is being sent to owners of flood-prone property, and is a reminder that flood season is starting.

Even though County staff and Emergency Management will do everything possible to warn you of upcoming weather events or flooding, the best way to be prepared is to be aware. There is a wealth of data on the internet and many websites have compiled it into an easy to understand format. Additional information can be accessed through your cell phone. There are applications and services that will send weather alerts and other updates directly to your phone by email or by text message. Some of these are discussed on the next page.

The Flood Information Website has links to some of the weather and river related websites discussed on the next page. The District is also investigating developing a custom flood warning

system for Kittitas County.

In 2014 the District met many of the goals that were set last year. These include:

- Applying to and being accepted into the Community Rating System which will result in lower flood insurance rates;
- Applying to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board to receive grant funding. The District is set to receive funding to purchase at risk property and conservation easements along Manastash Creek;
- Working with the Army Corps of Engineers to evaluate the riverine protection system. Currently the evaluation is focused on the South Cle Elum and Cle Elum levee system.

2015 is setting up to be a busy year as we complete the Yakima River Assessment and begin the Naneum, Wilson and Cherry Creek Watershed Assessment, which is summarized on Page 3. We have also applied for more grants to begin implementation of the Manastash Creek Corridor Plan and perform more assessments.

If you have questions about any of the planned projects or questions regarding development activities within the regulated 100-year floodplain, please be sure to contact the Public Works office at 509-962-7523 or email me at christina.wollman@co.kittitas.wa.us. The Public Works office is prepared to assist you in understanding what tools are available to you under current floodplain regulations.

Sincerely,

Christina Wollman



Buying flood insurance is the most important step to take in protecting your home from flood-related losses.

FLOOD PROTECTION & PREPARATION

- **Know your risk.** Are you located within a known flood area?
- **Check your insurance coverage.** Standard homeowners insurance doesn't cover flood related losses.
- **Prepare your property.** Ensure that items and buildings within the floodplain are elevated and anchored. Elevate your utilities, such as air conditioners and heat pumps, to avoid damage from minor floods.
- **Minimize flood damage.** Store valuable, important documents and electronics higher.
- **Keep drainage systems clean.** Keep ditches and culverts free of debris and remove tarp dams when not in use.
- **Put together a disaster kit and disaster plan.** Keep essential items, such as medication and extra food and water, on hand, and be sure your family knows who to contact in case of emergency.

STAY CONNECTED!

Flood Warning System

Tools are available to provide advanced warning of floods and other weather events.

With today's technology, it's easy to stay connected with local emergency information, up-to-the minute weather conditions, detailed forecasts, and instant notification of weather alerts.

During a local emergency, Kittitas County Sheriff's Office provides information and updates to newspapers, TV and radio. The Sheriff's Office will also post information on their Twitter page ([@KCSheriffOffice](#)). During this past summer's Snag Canyon Fire, information related to evacuations, public meetings, and updates were posted. The Sheriff's Office also posts information about other events within the county. A Facebook page is under development.

The National Weather Service (NWS) in Pendleton, Oregon issues the official weather outlook for Kittitas County (<http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/pdt>). The NWS is also on

Twitter ([@NWSPendleton](#)), Facebook ([NWSPendleton](#)) and YouTube ([NWS Pendleton, OR](#)).

**Kittitas County
Sherriff's Office is
on Twitter:
[@KCSheriffOffice](#)**

The National Weather Service also provides river flow forecasts, which can be found on their website (<http://water.weather.gov>). Flow predictions are available for the Yakima River at Easton, Horlick and Umptanum, and the Teanaway River just below the forks.

The United States Geologic Service (USGS) provides real-time information on stream levels and maintains the river gages within the county. The USGS WaterAlert service allows you to set parameters for notification by email or text message, after the river reaches a certain level. Currently the Umptanum gage is the only gage within the county that can be selected (<http://maps.waterdata.usgs.gov/>).

Many third party weather services are available which pro-

vide data in a format specific to your needs. These services also provide weather alerts issued by the NWS by email, phone alert or text message. Hundreds of services exist, many of them for free. Some of the most popular free services that provide alerts include websites and mobile apps from: [AccuWeather](#), [Weather Underground](#), [The Weather Channel](#), and [Weather Bug](#).

The University of Washington and Washington State Department of Transportation have developed a traveler information website. For I-90, Ellensburg to Seattle, the site provides current conditions, forecasts, cameras, road temperature and snow depth (<http://i90.atmos.washington.edu/roadview/i90/>).

These are just a few of the many tools available today to keep you aware of current and forecast weather conditions. Being aware is the first step towards being prepared for flooding and other weather events.



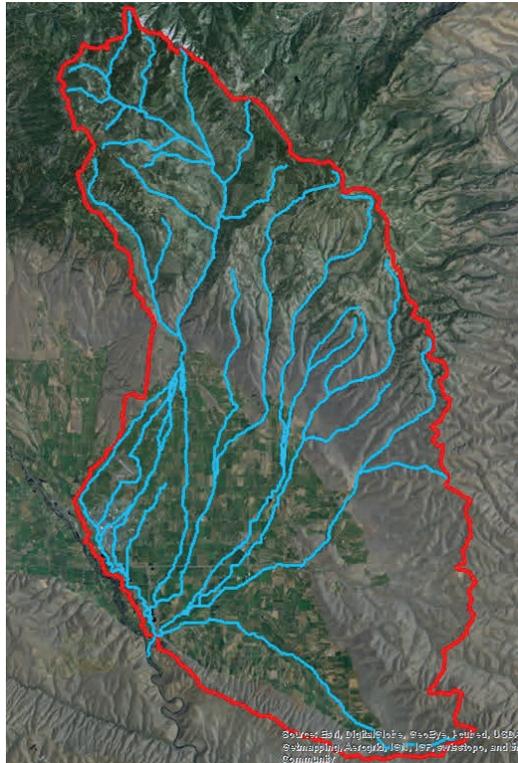
NANEUM, WILSON AND CHERRY CREEK WATERSHED ASSESSMENT

Kittitas County is preparing to start a flood hazard and habitat assessment of the Naneum, Wilson, and Cherry Creek watersheds. This is the first phase in producing a watershed plan that will be used to guide future projects to improve irrigation reliability, reduce the impact of irrigation facilities on streams, reduce flood hazards, improve water quality, and improve fish passage, use and productivity within the three watersheds.

The purpose of Phase 1 is to develop a baseline understanding of the existing condition of each stream as it relates to flooding, fish, irrigation, and water quality in order to plan and prioritize future projects. The estimated schedule for Phase 1 is approximately 2.5 years - with completion by November 2016.

Because most of the land within the watershed is privately owned, landowner participation and input is critical. All landowners that choose to participate will be part of the Landowner Advisory Group. Landowners can participate by attending meetings, reviewing website updates, and providing information. A meeting schedule and public participation plan is under development and information will be sent to all landowners and creek water users this winter.

Kittitas County Flood Control Zone District is the lead agency and will manage the project.



The Kittitas County Conservation District (KCCD) will support the project and focus on stream assessments and irrigation efficiencies. Funding for the project is provided by the Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB), the Kittitas County Flood Control Zone District (FCZD), and in-kind services and funding by KCCD, the United States Bureau of Reclamation-Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project (USBR), and the Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group (MCFEG). Additional support will be provided by Washington Water Trust.

If you would like to be placed on a list to receive project updates and notifications by email, please send an email to christina.wollman@co.kittitas.wa.us or call 509-962-7523. Information related to the project will also be posted on the Flood Information Website.

FCZD Mailing List & Flood Information Website

Sign up to receive Flood Control Zone District updates and information by visiting the flood information website at:

<http://www.co.kittitas.wa.us/public-works/flood>

RESOURCES

Kittitas County Public Works
publicworks@co.kittitas.wa.us
509-962-7523
Office: 411 N. Ruby St, Ste. 1
Ellensburg, WA 98926

Kittitas County Community
Development Services
[cgs@co.kittitas.wa.us](mailto:cds@co.kittitas.wa.us)
509-962-7506
Office: 411 N. Ruby St, Ste. 2
Ellensburg, WA 98926

Kittitas County Emergency
Management Office
509-925-9525

National Flood Insurance
Program
Floodsmart.gov
1-888-379-9531

Disaster & Readiness Infor-
mation
Ready.gov

City of Ellensburg Public
Works
509-962-7230

City of Kittitas
509-968-0220

City of Cle Elum
509-674-2262

City of Roslyn
509-649-3105

Town of South Cle Elum
509-674-4322

To find out if property
you own or plan to
purchase is located in
a mapped floodplain or
floodway, contact the
Kittitas County Public
Works Department.

Kittitas County Flood Control Zone District
411 N Ruby St, Suite 1
Ellensburg, WA 98926



COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM

Kittitas County joined the Community Rating System (CRS) in 2014. This program recognizes a community's floodplain management activities that reduce or prevent flood damage. In exchange for implementing these activities, flood insurance policy holders are awarded with a premium reduction. At this time, only policy holders within the unincorporated County are eligible for the reduction. The reduction will go into effect in May 2015.

During the summer, the County provided documentation that certain activities are being implemented. Activities have a point value, and every 500 points equals a 5% reduction in standard flood insurance policy premiums. The county submitted documentation of activities valued at over 2000 points and is waiting for the documentation to be reviewed.

The following are examples of activities that were submitted:

- **Map Information Service:** Providing basic flood information, historical flood information, and information on flood or drainage problems not shown on flood maps.
- **Outreach Projects & Website:** Providing informational outreach such as annual newsletters and floodplain information on the website.
- **Open Space Preservation:** Preserving floodplain through open space and deed restrictions. Over 25% of the 20,000 acres of regulated floodplain in Kittitas County is in conservation.
- **Higher Regulatory Standards:** Enforcing regulations that are above the minimum requirements.
- **Stormwater Management:** Enforcing regulations for stormwater management, water quality, and soil and erosion control.
- **Floodplain Management Planning:** Provided for adoption of the Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- **Flood Data Maintenance:** Maintaining and using digitized maps and electronic records.