USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE









Emergency Watershed Protection Program

Update for STAC

FARM PRODUCTION AND CONSERVATION
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Purpose

Inform STAC about recent and current Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program projects.

Agenda

- Brief overview of EWP
- EWP Project Updates





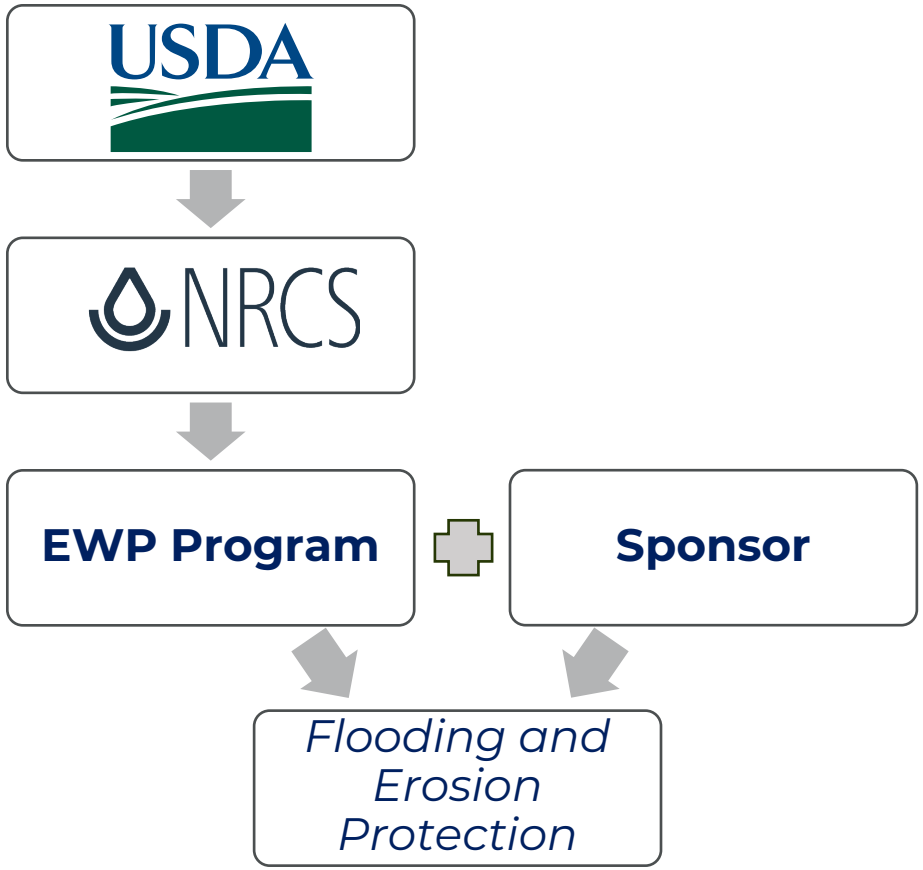


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EWP Provides Recovery Assistance



Natural Disaster

- Floods
- Fires
- Windstorms
- Ice storms
- Hurricanes/ Typhoons
- Tornadoes
- Earthquakes
- Volcanic actions
- Slides
- Drought

Program Assistance

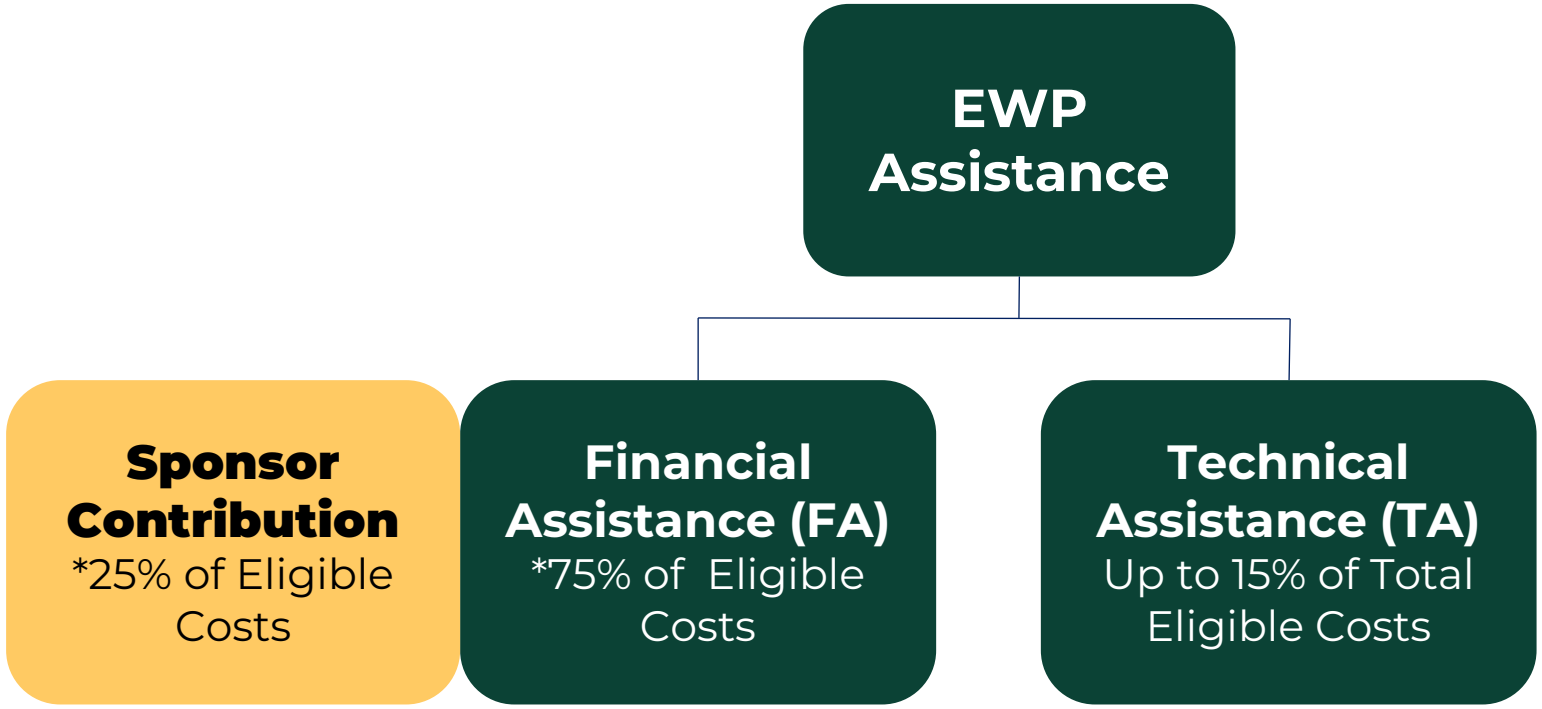
Structural Practices

- Structural, enduring, long-life conservation practices
- If applicable, follow NRCS standards

Property Buyouts

- Acquire properties
- Remove or relocate existing structures
- Deed restricted to open space

EWP Cost-Share Program



*Limited Resource Area (LRA) cost-share is 10% Sponsor / 90% EWP – Calculated Yearly
+Washington currently has one qualifying county and seven tribal reservations that qualify

FA Uses:
Construction or Buyout Acquisition

TA Uses:
Planning, design, contract administration, Quality Assurance Inspections

Sponsors

Eligible Sponsors

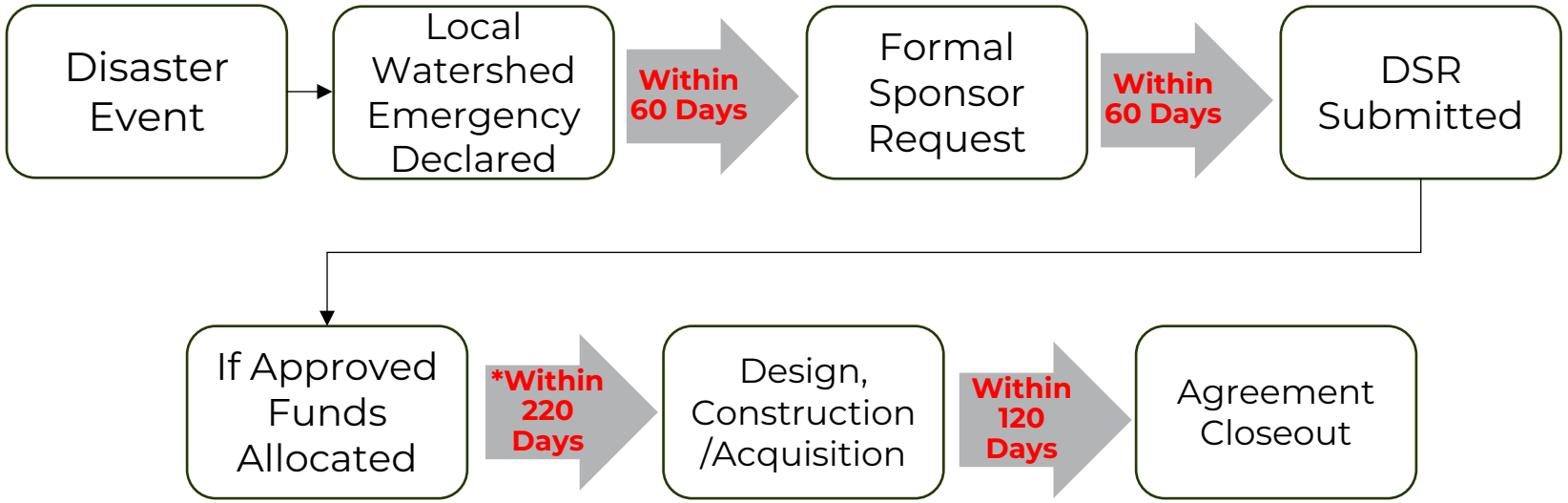
- State
- Political Subdivision of State
- Qualified Indian Tribe or Tribal Organization
- Unit of local government

IF

- Legal interest in or responsibility for assets at risk
- Ability and legal authority to obtain necessary land rights
- Ability to operate and maintain emergency measures



Basic Program Timeline





*Possibility for waiver to extend 18 months from disaster date

Additional Information

- Visit https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs-initiatives/emergency-watershed-protection
- EWP Recovery Fact Sheet
- EWP Buyout Fact Sheet
- EWP National Sponsor's Guide

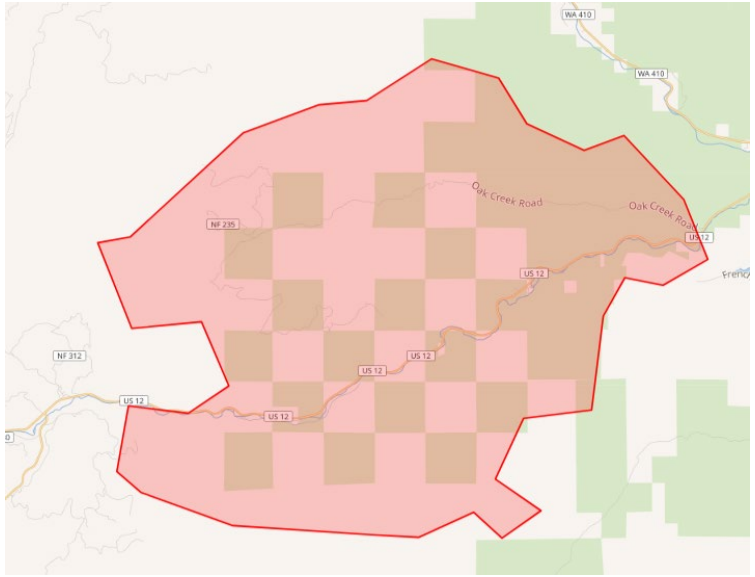




2024 Rimrock Retreat Fire

- The fire began on July 23, 2024 as the result of a house fire.
- It burned 45,601 acres and caused the closure of U.S. Route 12 and Yakima-Tieton Irrigation District's main canal.
- The fire burned on both private and public land.





Yakima-Tieton Irrigation District

- Requested assistance to protect 3 pipe bridges from debris flows.
- 1 site was ineligible due to being on Forest Service land.
- Agreement finalized on 8/19/2025.
- Work began in October 2025 and was completed mid-December 2025.





Yakima-Tieton Irrigation District

- Drilling at the first site proved difficult due to encountering cobble material.





Yakima-Tieton Irrigation District

- Inclement weather was also a challenge and delayed project completion.







December 2025 PNW Flooding Event

- Beginning December 8, 2025, a series of historic atmospheric rivers caused widespread flooding in the Pacific Northwest, particularly in Western Washington.
- EWP webinar was presented on 1/8/2026 for potential Sponsors, which was also the declaration date for 21 counties, requests for assistance were taken until 3/9/2026.



December 2025 PNW Flooding Event

- Received 9 requests for assistance. 4 DSRs moved forward with 2 Sponsors.
- 3 of the 4 DSRs have been completed. The 4th project is planned for installation in 2027.







Kittitas County Conservation District

- 3 sites were eligible and approved.
- Agreement became active May 7, 2026.







Fogarty Ditch (KCCD)

- The ditch's headgate failed and the river was starting to flank upriver of the structure.
- Project bioengineered streambank stabilization and replaced the headgate structure.
  - Addressing the intake structure was necessary to prevent flooding of the ditch and surrounding structures.



Fogarty Ditch (KCCD)

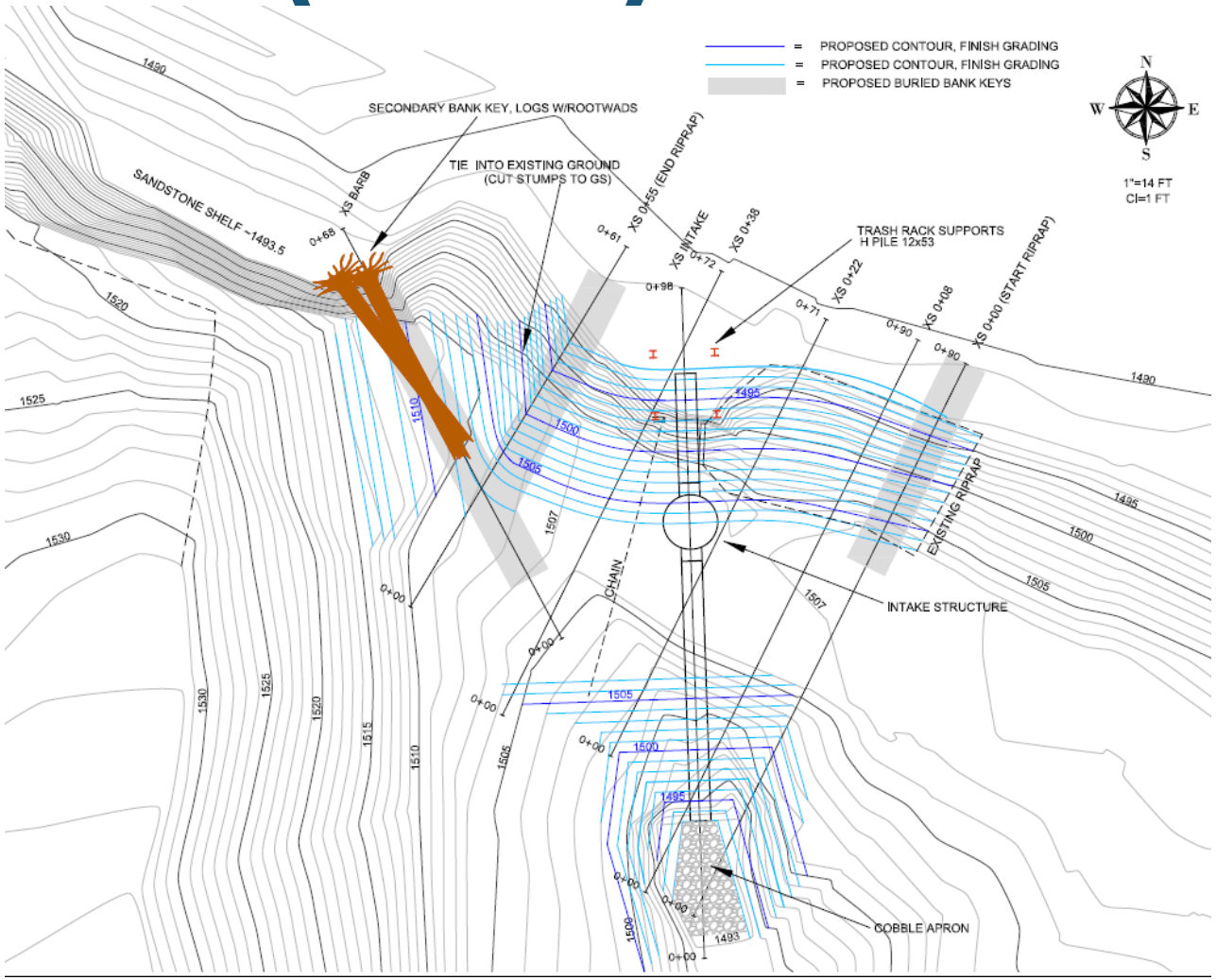




Fogarty Ditch (KCCD)



Fogarty Ditch (KCCD)



Fogarty Ditch (KCCD)







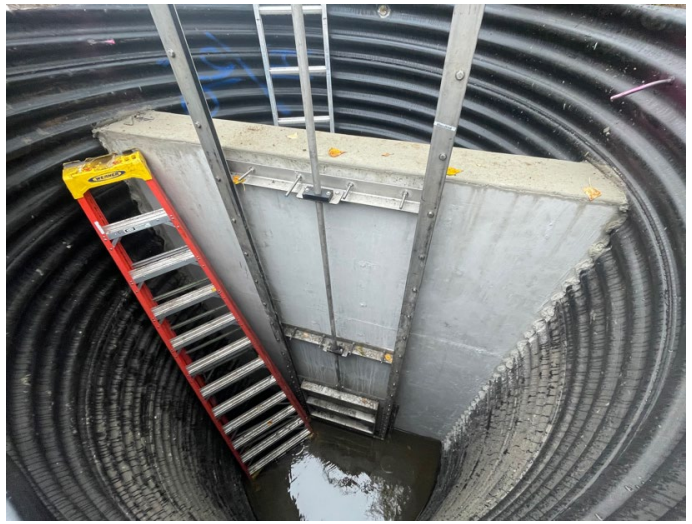
Fogarty Ditch (KCCD)



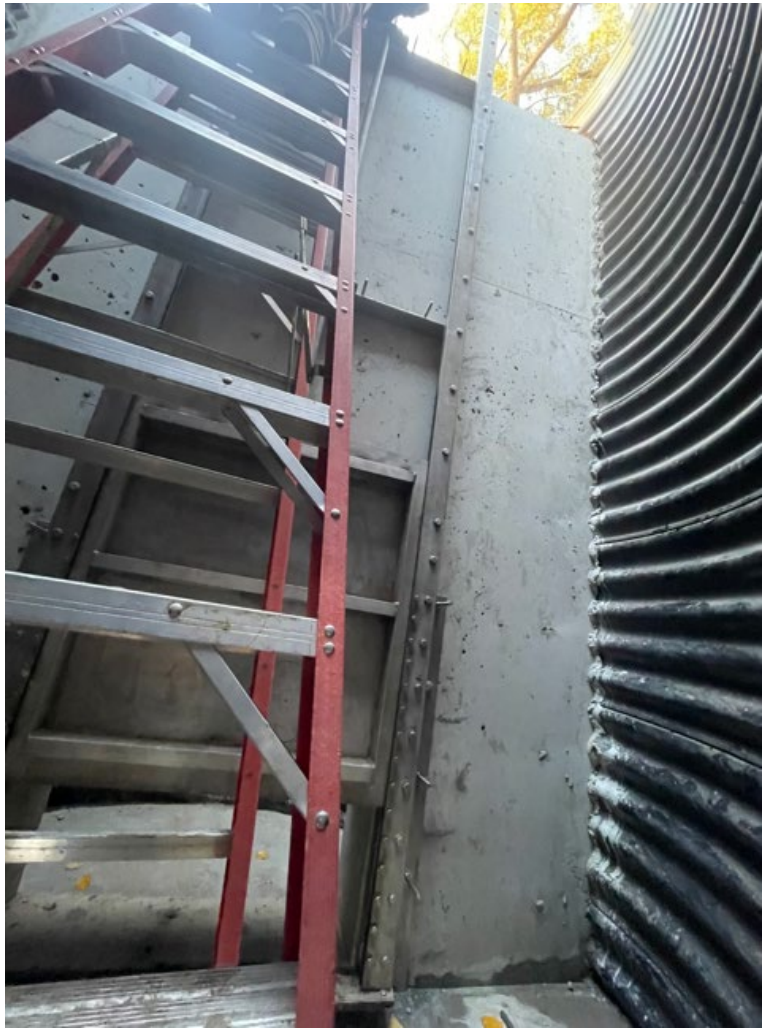


Fogarty Ditch (KCCD)









Belouskas Property (KCCD)

- Flood waters saturated the soil/fill on the bank, so when the waters receded the soil/fill sloughed off into the river.
- The project excavated the compromised soil/fill down to glacier till and “soft” armored the embankment.





Belouskas Property (KCCD)





Belouskas Property (KCCD)







Belouskas Property (KCCD)

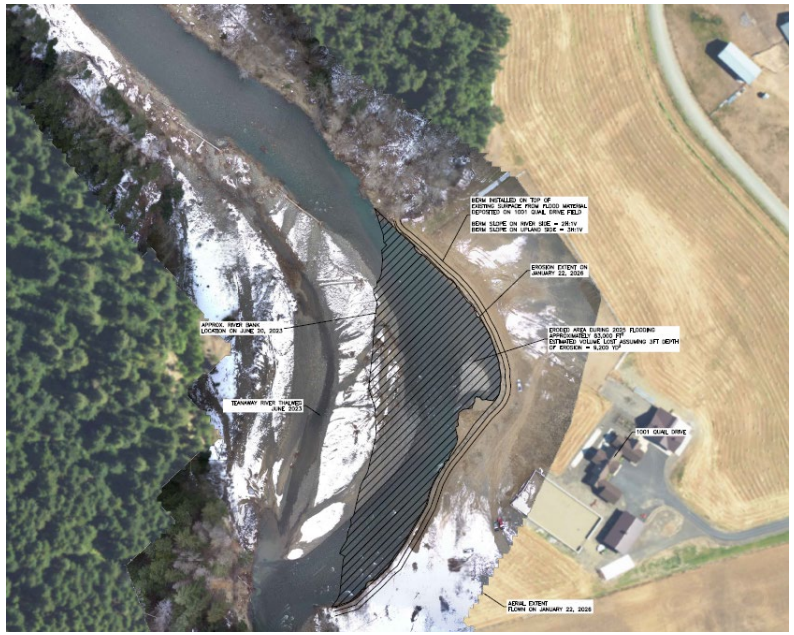




Blais Property (KCCD)

- The property owners were already looking into planting a riparian buffer before the flooding event.
- Flooding eroded away several acres of pasture, washed away an access road, and threatened two residential properties.





Blais Property (KCCD)

- Due to the complexity of the site and the short timeframe before the 2026 in-stream work window, design, analysis, and permitting has extended this project for construction in 2027.





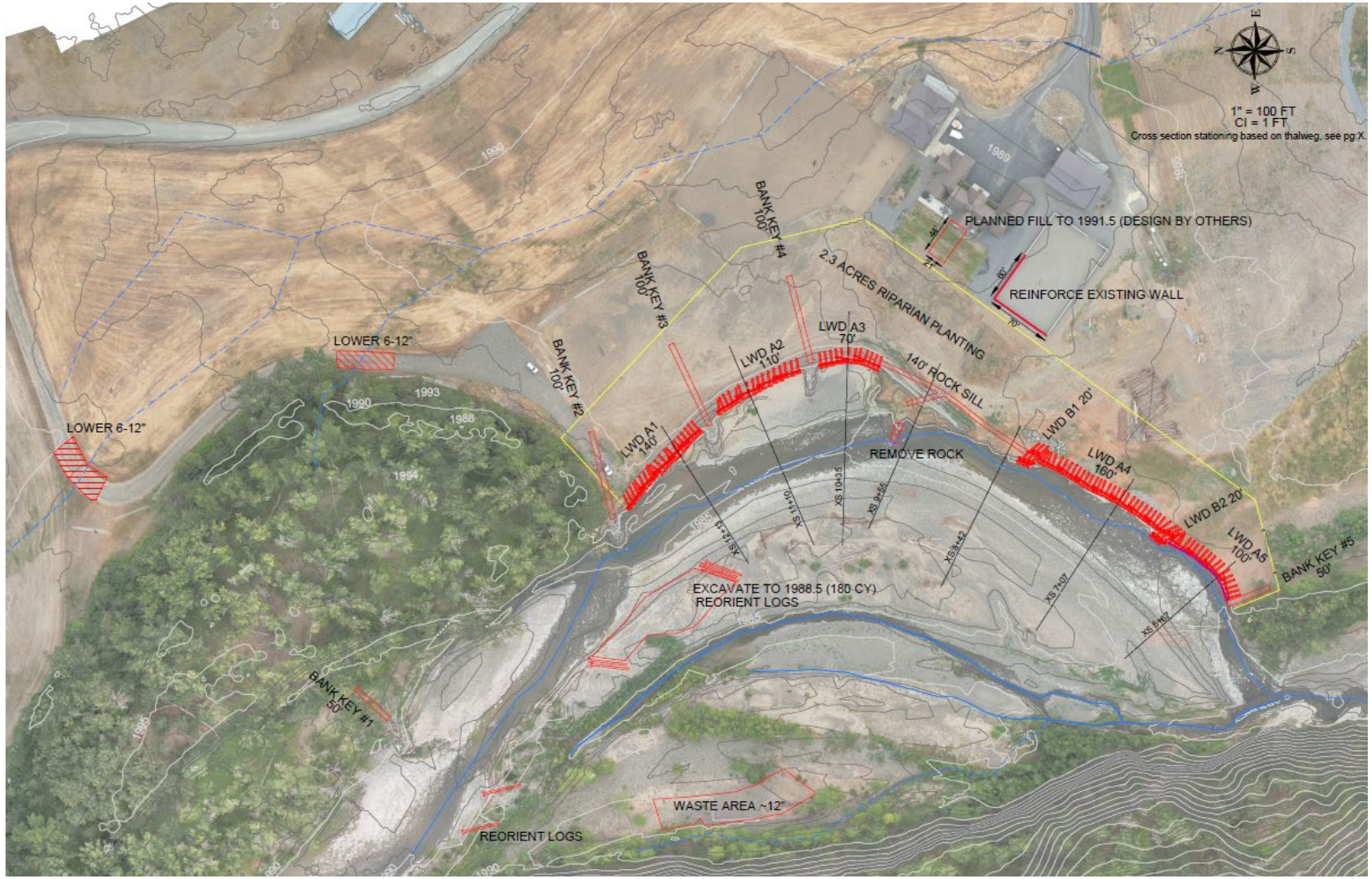


Blais Property (KCCD)





Blais Property (KCCD)



Rattlesnake Ditch Association

- 1 eligible site and DSR approved.
- Agreement became active June 29, 2026.





Rattlesnake Ditch Association

- NRCS surveyed and designed the new headwall.





Rattlesnake Ditch Association





Rattlesnake Ditch Association





2026 Fire Season

- State-BAER (Burned Area Emergency Response) initiated for the first time in Washington, led by DNR's Forest Resilience Division.
- NRCS gave EWP webinar on 9/17/2026 for potential Sponsors.
- Emergency declarations made in 6 counties (Walla Walla, Columbia, Okanogan, Chelan, Whatcom, Spokane) on 9/29/2026. **Requests for assistance will be taken until 11/28/2026.**
- So far, have received 2 requests for assistance, and a 3rd request is likely.

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QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS







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