

Wildlife-friendly Property Can Be Fire Ready Too!

By Allisa Carlson, Okanogan CD Wildlife Conservation Planner

Okanogan County has an abundance of two things: wildfire and wildlife. By taking action to reduce wildfire risk around your home, you may feel that you are reducing the wildlife habitat value of the land. While it's true that removing fuels like trees, fruit-bearing shrubs, and brush piles can reduce the diversity of food and cover that attracts wildlife, it is possible to provide habitat while maintaining defensible space around the home. It simply requires some extra time and thought in the planning stage.

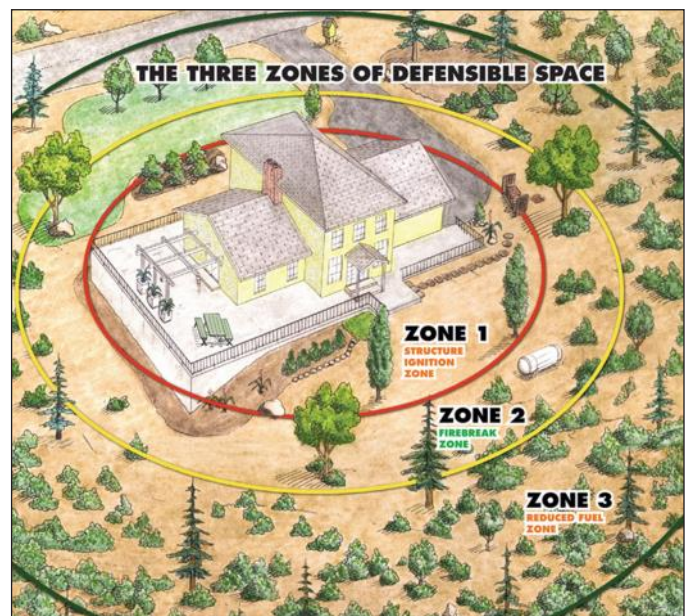
The first step is understanding the different zones of defensible space around your home. Zone 1, the **Home Ignition Zone**, includes the home and its immediate surroundings up to 30'. This area should have the least amount of fuels, and vegetation should be managed to reduce the chance that fire can move from the landscape to the home, or that airborne embers can find a receptive place to smolder and burn. For a personalized evaluation of the home ignition zone around your house, contact Okanogan CD for a **free** wildfire risk assessment.

Zone 2 & 3 (the area 30' up 200' from the house, depending on slope) provide the most habitat flexibility. The table and diagram on the next page provide examples of wildlife features appropriate for the various zones.

Ultimately, landowners need to evaluate their own level of comfort when it comes to balancing wildfire risk reduction with wildlife management goals. To learn more about fire readiness, the **SLLOPPS** method for wildlife habitat, or to schedule a site visit to explore your options, please contact Allisa Carlson at 509-422-0855 x. 111. or email allisa@okanogancd.org.



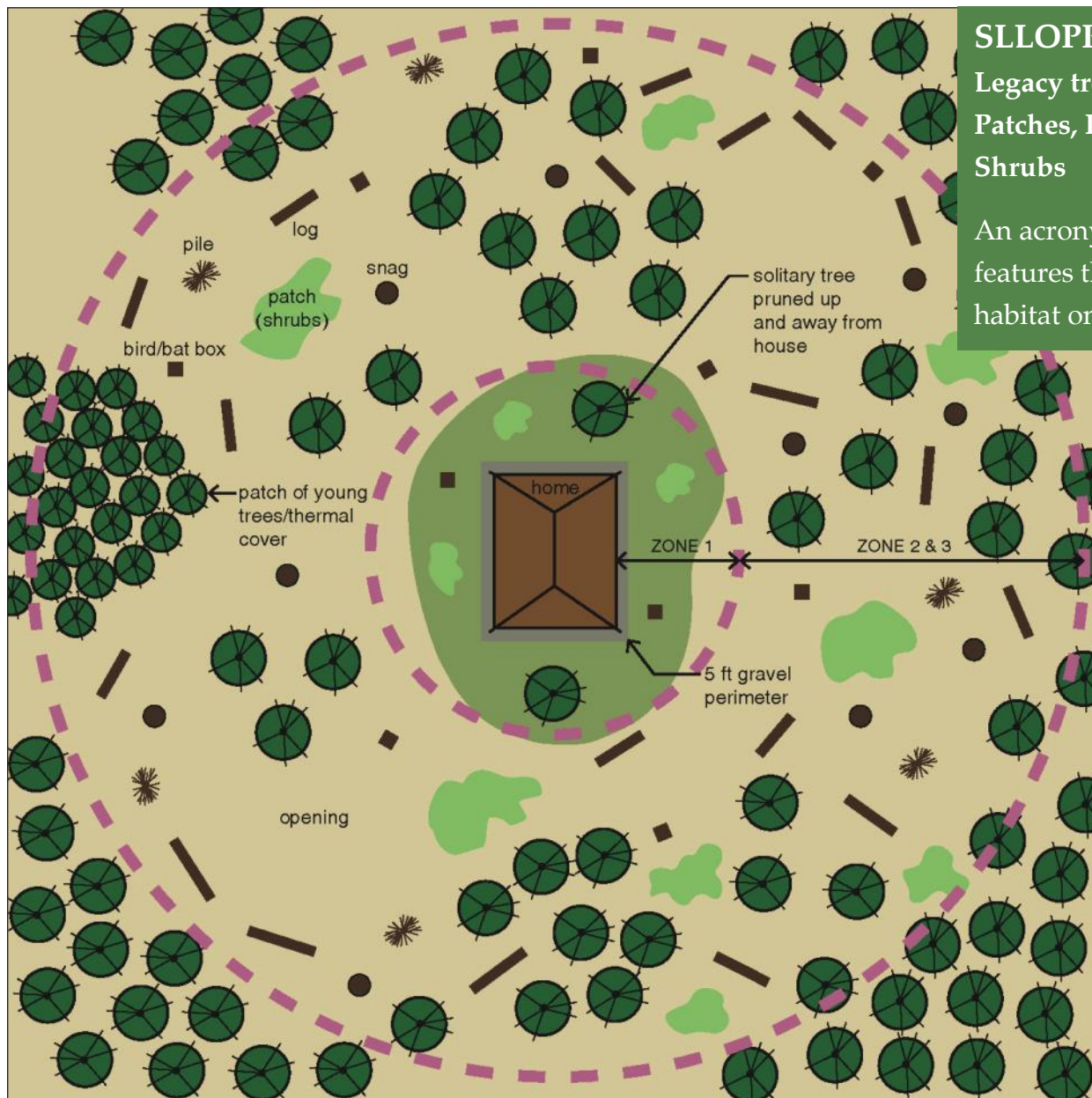
Whooo says you can't balance habitat needs and wildfire preparedness?
Photo credit Patti Cockfield.



Wildlife-friendly and Fire Ready

WILDLIFE FEATURES IN FIREWISE ZONES

<p>ZONE 1 - 30' FROM THE HOME</p>	<p>Solitary trees pruned up (6-10') and away from the house are appropriate in this zone. Maintain non-flammable material or low growing vegetation at the base of the trees. Maintain adequate distance between shrubs and trees, and do not place shrubs next to the house.</p>	<p>For the highest wildlife value, consider deciduous trees such as Black Hawthorn, Suksdorf Hawthorn, and Western Crabapple, and Rocky Mountain Maple. Hang bird feeders and install nesting boxes within view of your windows.</p>
<p>ZONE 2 & 3 - 30-200' FROM THE HOME</p>	<p>Break up continuous paths of fuel, providing 10-20' breaks between trees, shrubs, and wildlife features. Open areas are beneficial for wildlife and provide fuel breaks between tree patches, shrub patches, habitat piles, and snags.</p>	<p>Provide wildlife habitat through the "SLOPPS" method in this area away from the home. Snags, logs, openings, patches, and piles provide cover, nesting, and feeding areas for local wildlife.</p>



SLOPPS: Snags, Logs, Legacy trees, Openings, Patches, Piles, and Shrubs

An acronym for wildlife features that will enhance habitat on your property!

Reference:
Strong, N., Bevis, K., and Bracher, G. 2016. *Wildlife-Friendly Fuels Reduction in Dry Forests of the Pacific Northwest.* <http://woodlandfishandwildlife.com>