



Okanogan Conservation District

1251 S. Second Ave, Room 102

Okanogan, WA 98840

2021 Fire Recovery Funding and Reimbursement Guidelines

July 9, 2021

Background

Funding to replace qualifying 2020 wildfire losses is available from the Washington State Conservation Commission through the Okanogan Conservation District.

Projects must be planned with and approved by the Okanogan Conservation District prior to being eligible for reimbursement. Project expenses incurred before approval cannot be reimbursed.

Project Approval

An Okanogan CD planner will work with you to develop a project plan including maps, a cost estimate, required project specifications, and before photos. Then, a 'cost-share' contract will be developed, which outlines the total project costs and how much financial reimbursement you are eligible for. Once the contract is signed by you (the participant), Okanogan CD, and approved by the Washington Conservation Commission, you will receive a Notice to Proceed and can begin the project.

Reimbursement

Funds will be available to participants on a reimbursement basis of 75% of the total project cost of damaged infrastructure from the wildfires.

NOTE: For fence projects, the per-foot reimbursement maximum will be based on current USDA Farm Service Agency rates at the time of contract signature. This amount will be included in the cost-share contract. If your final costs are below the allocated maximum for fence, reimbursement will be adjusted so it is no more than 75% of total costs.

The total, final project costs will be calculated from receipts and 'contributed services' forms that document the value of unpaid labor contributions and materials on-hand (no receipt).

- Unpaid labor will be valued at \$22.00/hour and will be counted towards a participants 25% project contribution. Unpaid labor will not be reimbursed.
- Materials purchased prior to the project implementation must be in good condition and is subject to Okanogan CD approval prior to use. Materials without a receipt may not be reimbursed but will count towards the total project costs and the 25% contribution by the participant.
- Use of equipment owned by the participant may be reimbursed at the current FSA equipment rental rate. Some FSA rental rates include labor for operation and the \$22.00/hr labor rate will not also apply.



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General Guidelines

- An individual's reimbursement cannot exceed \$50,000.
- Projects must meet Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) design specification to receive reimbursement. Fences built within the Colville Reservation will follow specifications provided by the Colville Confederated Tribes. Okanogan CD staff will plan with participants so that projects meet standards.
- If you are working with other agencies like the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Habitat for Humanity, Methow Conservancy, Room One, or Community Action and sign up for the Okanogan CD Fire Recovery program it could affect your reimbursement rate with us or the other agency/organization you are working with. You must talk with an Okanogan CD planner about financial contributions towards a project.
- Cost-share funding may only reimburse participants to replace qualifying projects (see list below) that were burned in a wildfire since July 1, 2020.

These funding guidelines may be subject to change and may be appealed by a participant to the Okanogan CD Board of Supervisors. These guidelines may not address every project or reimbursement scenario. Circumstances not addressed in this document will be decided upon by the participant, Okanogan CD staff, and the Okanogan CD Board of Supervisors. The Okanogan CD Board of Supervisors decisions are final and binding.



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The following lists include qualifying and non-qualifying project types.

List of Qualifying Projects:

- Irrigation systems for agriculture
- Wildlife plantings (native shrubs and trees)
- Livestock watering systems like troughs
- Riparian plantings (plantings to stabilize creek banks)
- Fence related to one or more of these categories:
 - Critical Area – fencing intended to keep livestock (generally cattle) out of surface water and wetland areas. This is generally a 4-strand livestock fence with variations for wildlife considerations, terrain, soil types, amount of livestock pressure, etc.
 - Livestock Inclusion – fencing intended to keep livestock (generally cattle, but occasionally sheep, goats, or other species) within pastures. These fences are 4-strand cattle fences of substantial length.
 - Livestock Exclusion – fencing intended to keep livestock (generally open-range cattle/wildhorses) from accessing private parcels.
 - Cross fence- to break up a pasture for livestock rotation.
 - Deer fencing – intended to keep deer from eating orchard tree leaves, branches, and bark. It is generally a 10 ft. tall, woven wire type of fence in this area.

Non-Qualifying Projects:

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| • Farm equipment (tractors, hand tools) | • Livestock feed/hay |
| • Pet fences including horse fence | • Driveway repairs |
| • House yard fence | • Feed bunks |
| • Structures like sheds, barns, or houses | • Weed control/bags of seed |
| • Lawn irrigation | • Dump fees |
| • Domestic wells | • Projects that have already been completed |