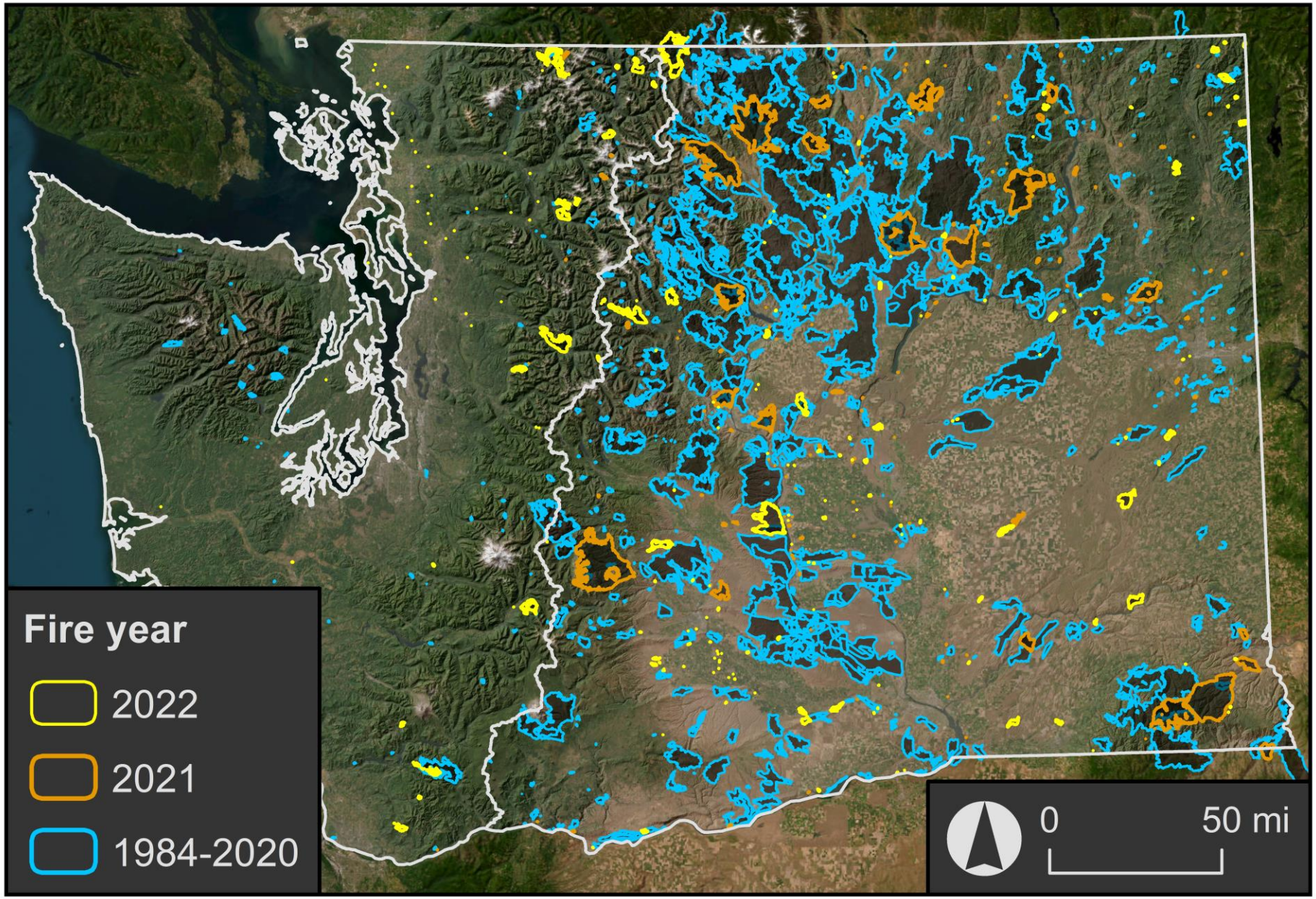
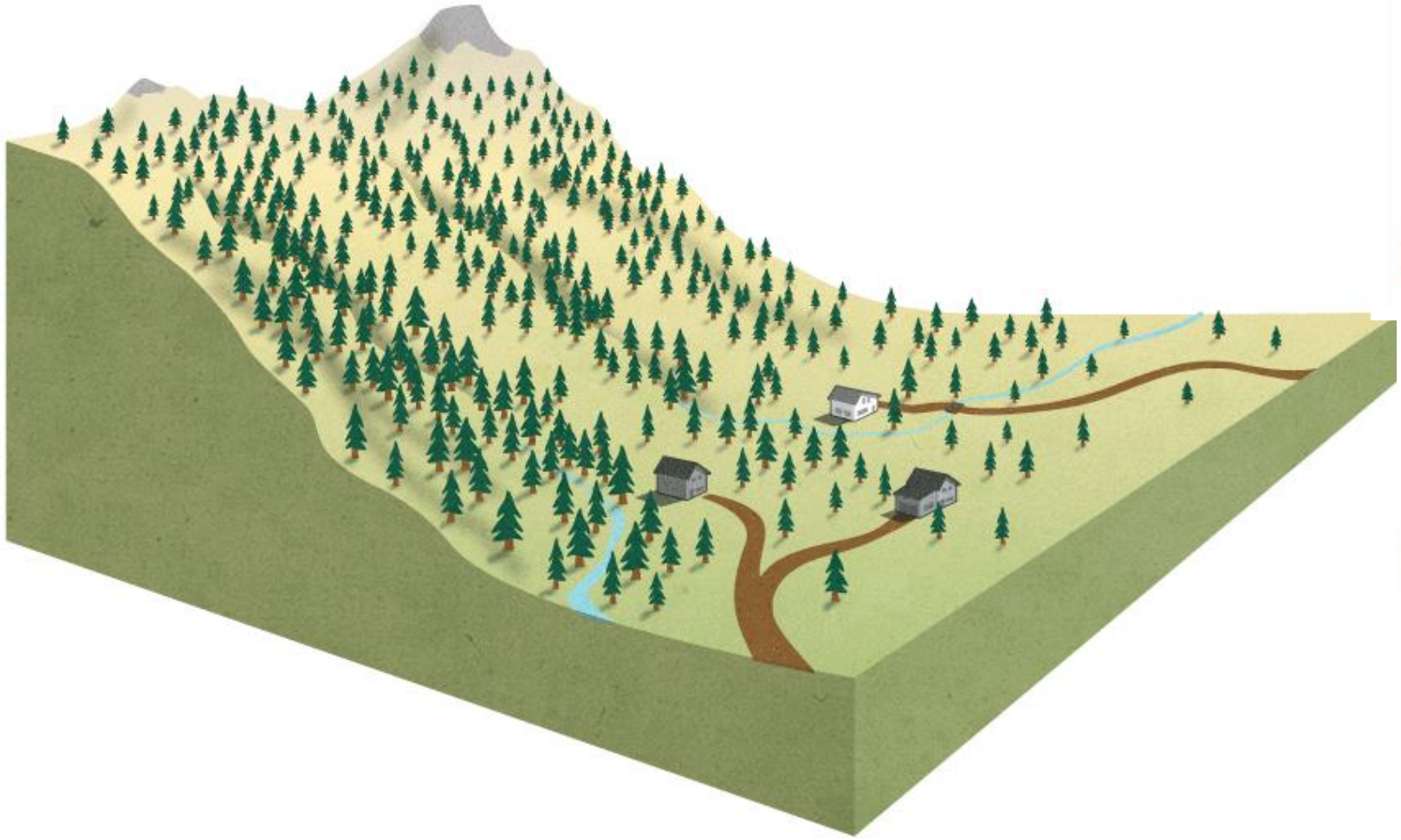
Post-Fire Recovery Program

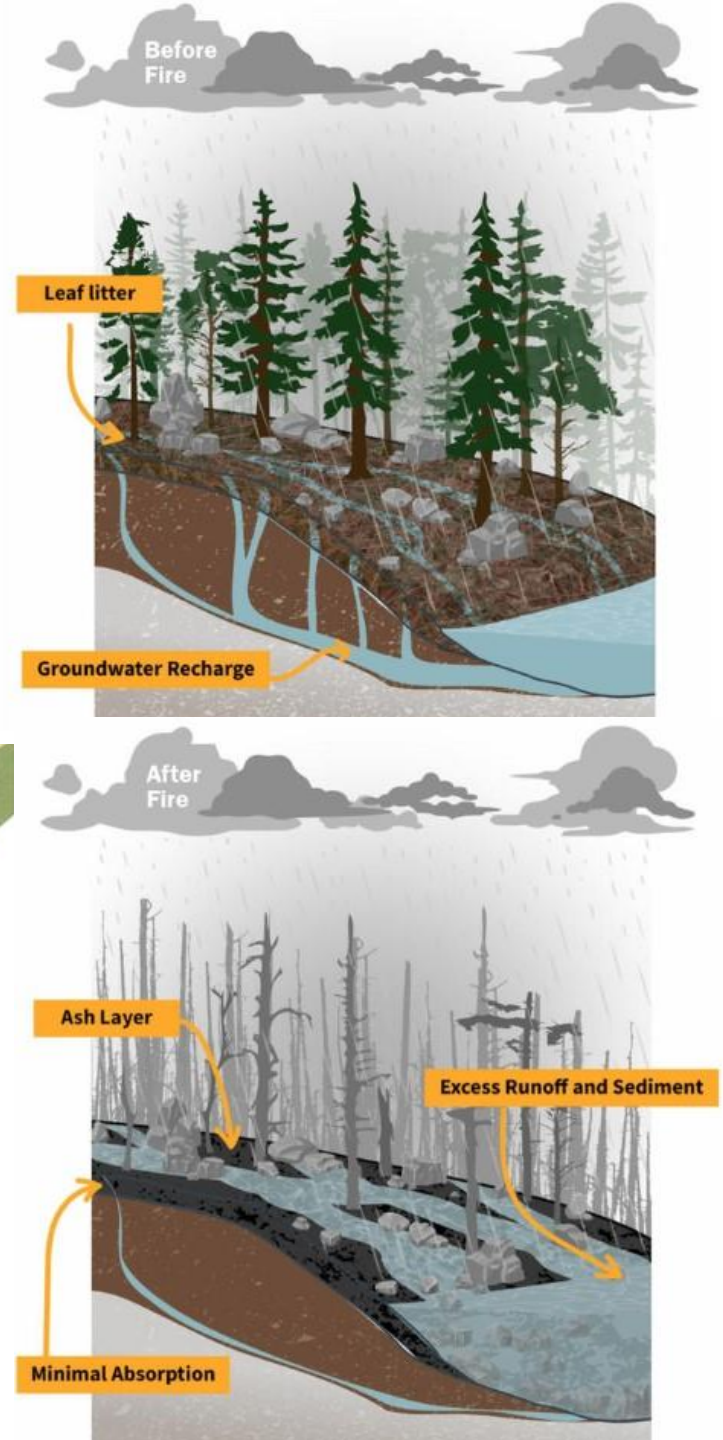
Collin Haffey
Post-Fire Recovery Program Manager
Collin.Haffey@dnr.wa.gov

Recent Fires Across Washington




06/26/2023 19:52 70°F 21°C
SPYPOINT FLEX




Before Fire
Leaf litter
Groundwater Recharge
After Fire
Ash Layer
Excess Runoff and Sediment
Minimal Absorption

Wildfire-Associated Debris Flows

Washingtonians who live on or below hillsides—especially in areas impacted by recent wildfires—should be aware that the rainy season and summer storms increase the chances of potentially dangerous debris flows. The Washington Geological Survey's Wildfire-Associated Landslide Emergency Response Team (WALERT) conducts rapid debris flow hazard assessments in areas recently burned by wildfires. Click on the Reports icon below to see the available WALERT assessment reports.

What is a debris flow?

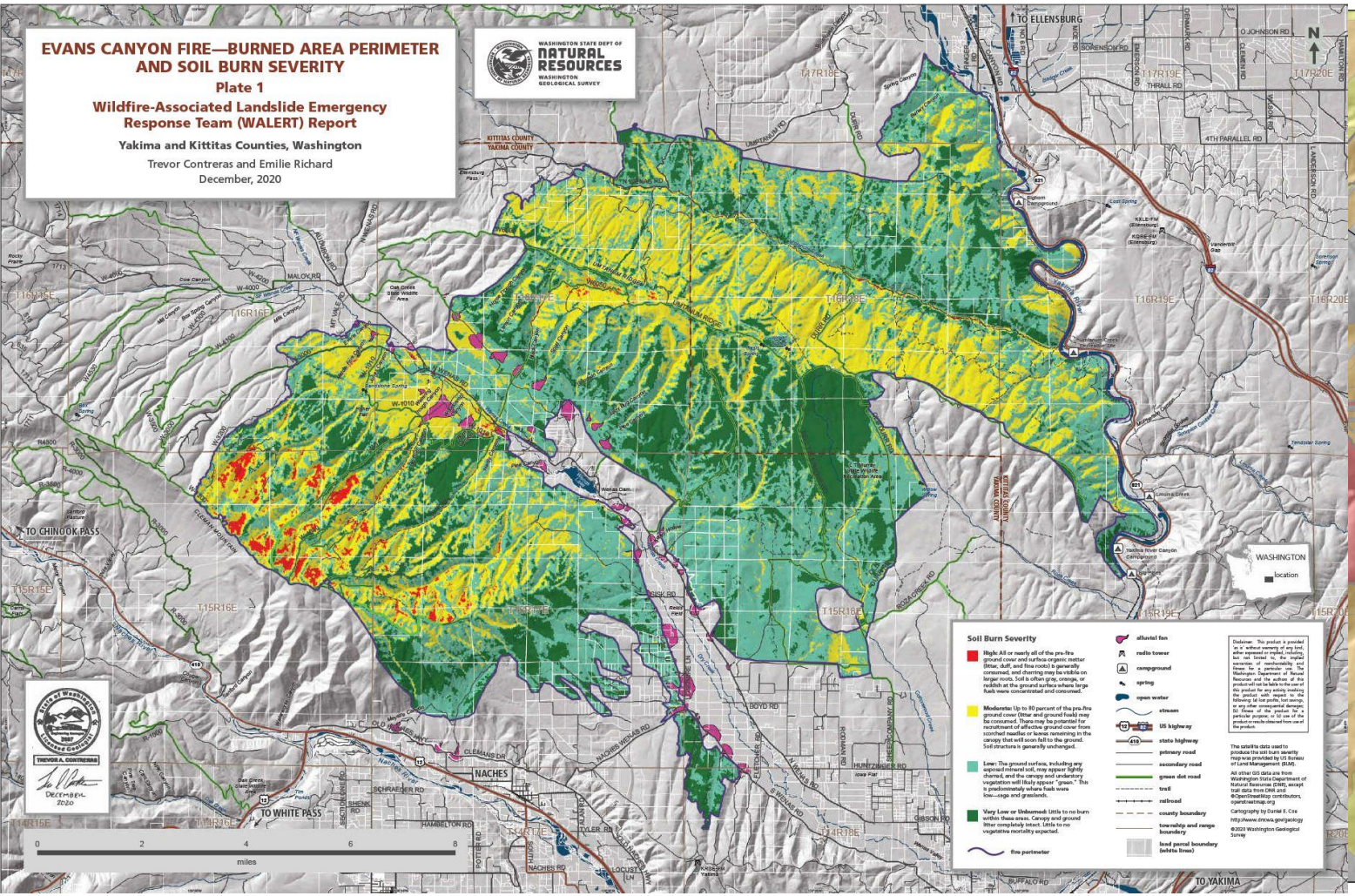
Debris flows after wildfires

Alluvial fans

What you should know and what you can do

What we do

Reports


EVANS CANYON FIRE—BURNED AREA PERIMETER AND SOIL BURN SEVERITY
Plate 1
Wildfire-Associated Landslide Emergency Response Team (WALERT) Report
Yakima and Kittitas Counties, Washington
Trevor Contreras and Emilie Richard
December, 2020
WASHINGTON STATE DEPT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
WASHINGTON GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
TO ELLENSBURG
TO CHINOOK PASS
TO WHITE PASS
TO YAKIMA
NACHES
Soil Burn Severity
High: All or nearly all of the pre-fire ground cover and surface organic matter (litter, duff, and fine roots) is generally consumed, and charring may be visible on larger roots. Soil is often gray, orange, or reddish at the ground surface where large fuels were concentrated and consumed.
Moderate: Up to 80 percent of the pre-fire ground cover (litter and ground fuels) may be consumed. There may be potential for reinitiation of effective ground cover from scorched needles or leaves remaining in the canopy that will soon fall to the ground. Soil structure is generally unchanged.
Low: The ground surface, including any exposed mineral soil, may appear lightly charred, and the canopy and understory vegetation will likely appear "green." This is predominately where fuels were low—sage and grasslands.
Very Low or Unburned: Little to no burn within these areas. Canopy and ground litter completely intact. Little to no vegetative mortality expected.
fire perimeter
alluvial fan
radio tower
campground
spring
open water
stream
US highway
state highway
primary road
secondary road
grave dot road
trail
railroad
county boundary
township and range boundary
land parcel boundary (white lines)
WASHINGTON
location
0 2 4 6 8
miles

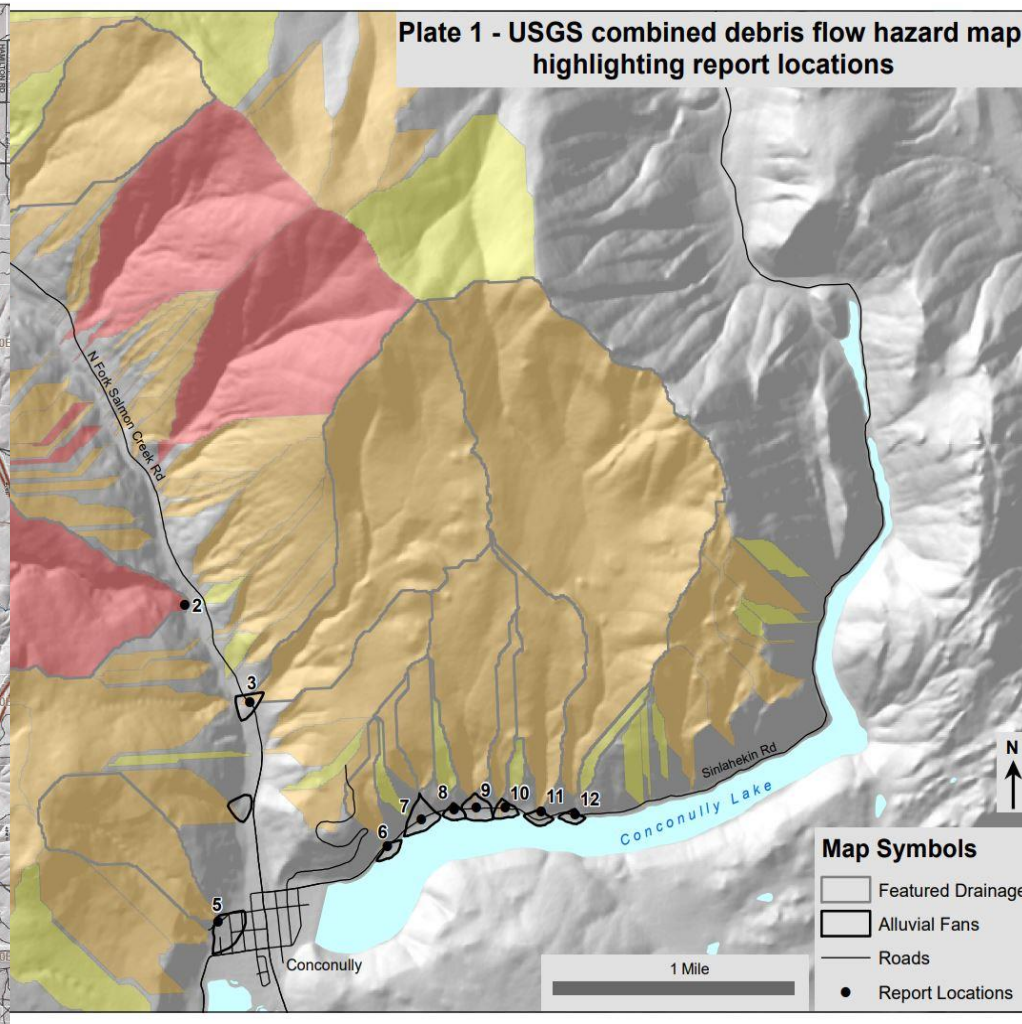


Plate 1 - USGS combined debris flow hazard map highlighting report locations
N Fork Salmon Creek Rd
Sinlahekin Rd
Conconully Lake
Conconully
1 Mile
Map Symbols
Featured Drainage
Alluvial Fans
Roads
Report Locations

Background & Foundation

- Coordination between DNR divisions, state, federal, and local agencies
- Support community post-fire readiness, response and recovery
- Implement existing plans:
  - 20-Year Forest Health Strategic Plan
  - Wildland Fire Protection 10-year Strategic Plan
  - Washington State Forest Action Plan
  - WA Geological Survey – Debris Flow Program (WALERT)

Goals for Program

1. The goal is to help landowners, communities and watersheds recover from wildfires increasing in size, severity, and long-term impacts felt across Washington.
2. Post-Fire Recovery relies heavily on cross-programmatic, cross-boundary coordination.
3. Program staff aim to provide expertise and coordination on post-fire recovery efforts from an all-lands perspective.

Program Outcomes at a Glance

Supplied grass seed for 480 acres on private lands

Completed 3 stream restoration projects in the Methow Valley, working with tribes and NGOs.

Funded recovery projects on 4 conservation districts

$4,770,000+ funding appropriated to date (state and federal)

FY 24-25 Program Objectives

- Create recovery informational materials targeted at landowners
- Facilitate improved coordination of statewide post-fire recovery efforts
- Invest $2M in funds for post-fire recovery projects, including reforestation
- Ensure a smooth transition from fire suppression to post-fire recovery
- Create a "Recovery Visualization Tool" to support community recovery

Evaluate wildland fire recovery needs and recommend solutions.

1. Working to map alluvial fans and identify high risk areas.
2. Working with EMD, SCC, CDs, local collaboratives, and Feds, to identify recovery needs and readiness needs.
3. Working with the SCC to provide funding ($100,000-$150,000) for conservation districts to help coordinate post-fire recovery. Ran a post-fire recovery task force in Spokane after the 2023 fires.
4. Expanding on the Washington Restoration Framework to create local recovery readiness plans.

Increase public awareness of risks post-wildland fire and facilitate access to resources to mitigate those risks.

1. Currently have a cache of ready-to-deploy gauges.
2. Installed gauges on several fires from 2022 and 2023.
3. Currently working on 2 contracts to develop outreach materials for recovery and recovery readiness targeted at landowners and communities ($100,000 investment).
4. Hosting annual post-fire “All Hands” meeting.

Establish a state and private lands Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) team(s) to assess non-federal lands post-fire.

1. Working with federal and state partners to create a pilot project for cross boundary analysis
2. Wildfire-Associated Landslide Emergency Response Team (WALERT) funded with 2 additional positions, new lead starts July 1, 2024
3. Dashboards for debris flow awareness
4. Working to better incorporate post-fire assessment teams with fire suppression teams
5. Weekly calls for statewide resources to increase SA and problem solve

Community Wildfire Protection Plans

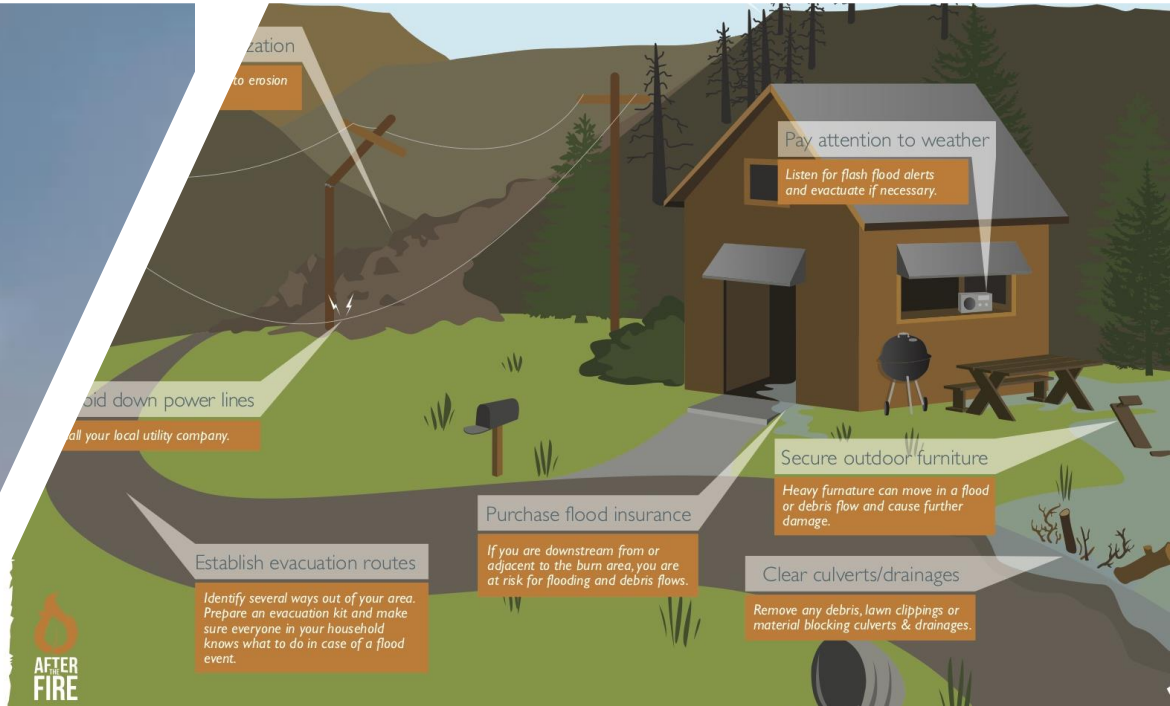
1. Natural materials debris clean up
2. Suppression to recovery handoff needs/expectations
3. Assess and identify areas vulnerable to post-fire debris flows/flooding and mitigation planning to reduce risk and improve resilience

Recovery Visualization Tool

1. Enhanced Decision-making
2. Community Engagement
3. Efficient Resource Allocation
4. Sustainable Land Management
5. Transparent Communication

Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Post-Fire Resource Hub

Information on Post-fire Hazards and Response Operations



Landowner Assessments

Identifying landowner needs and connecting them with relief and recovery resources

1. **Establish a questionnaire or in-take form**
2. **Convene a “watershed taskforce” for each fire, made up of land management agencies and emergency management**
3. **Coordinate landowner assessment and outreach**

Landowner Resources

Provide information to landowners about sound recovery practices, funding sources, and technical assistance

Potential Sources of Cost-share & Funding

1. DNR's Service Forestry Program (formerly Landowner Assistance) for reseeding and tree planting
2. Conservation Districts
3. Natural Resources Conservation Service – contact local office
4. Farm Service Agency – contact local office

Helpful Links

- https://www.dnr.wa.gov/postfirerecovery
- https://afterthefirewa.org/ (update coming 2024)
- https://wildfires.wsu.edu/agriculture-and-forest-landowners/
- https://wildfires.wsu.edu/
- https://www.fireadaptedwashington.org/take-action/
- https://www.dnr.wa.gov/wildfire-debris-flows
- https://foresthealthtracker.dnr.wa.gov/FindYourForester/Index