

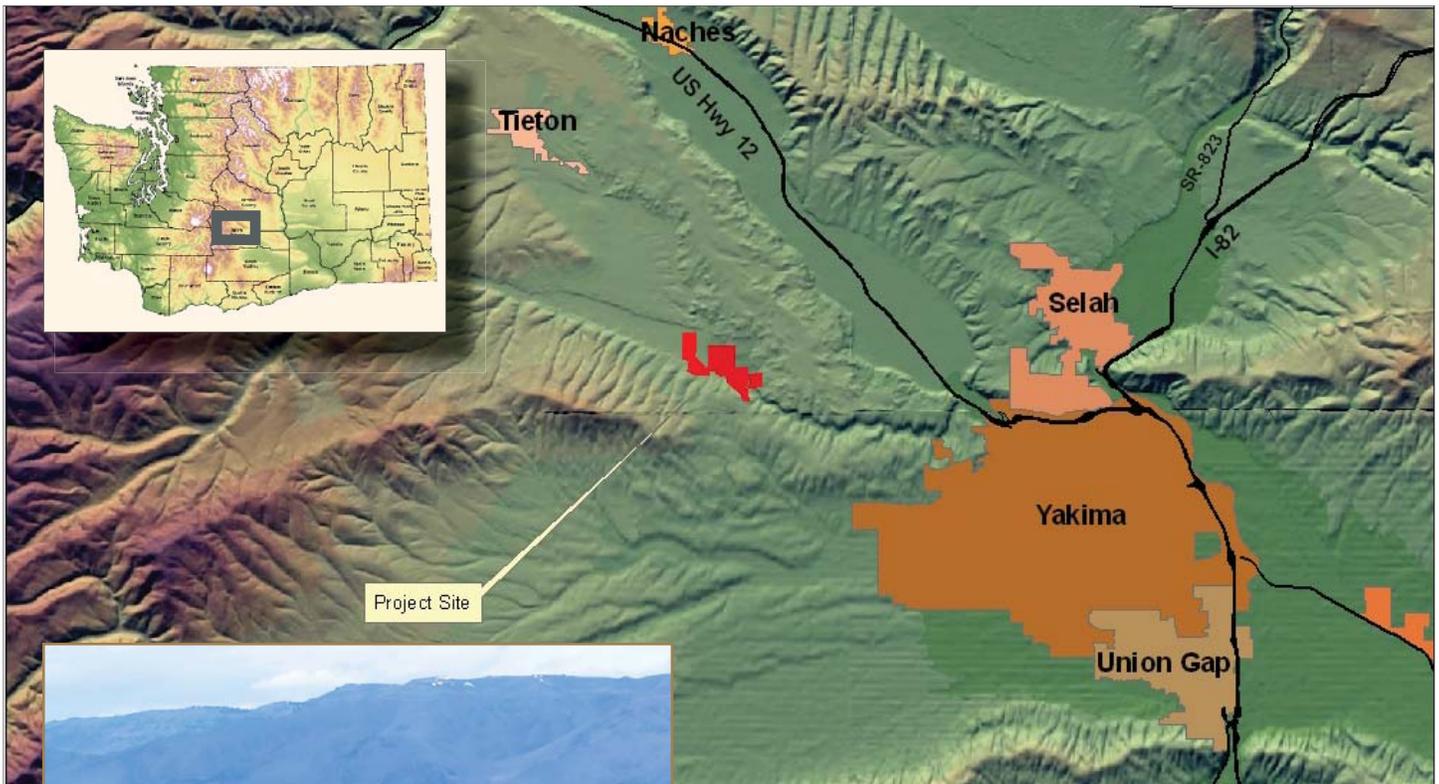
FY 2018 PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Office of Farmland Preservation (OFP)

OFP assists farmers, conservation districts, and policy-makers with promoting and retaining agricultural lands. The program offers several tools to achieve this goal, including assistance with farm transition planning workshops, agricultural easements, and tracking data on trends that impact farmland loss.

Lust Family Farm and Ranch Preservation

In 2018, OFP funded **North Yakima Conservation District (NYCD)** to acquire development rights and secure four agricultural conservation easements to permanently protect 283 acres of irrigated farmland in the Cowiche Basin.



This project was years in the making. Leading up to the easements, NYCD worked with the landowners and other partners to restore and enhance habitat for resident fish, including steelhead, spring Chinook, and coho.

By following this work with agricultural conservation easements, all the agricultural and ecological values of this property will be permanently preserved.



What's an Agricultural Conservation Easement?

It's a voluntary agreement that gives landowners the option to sell their right to develop their agricultural property to an entity (e.g. conservation district). The agreement adds a permanent restriction on development and subdivision to the property title, and it provides a plan to protect the conservation values of the land. Landowners are paid the portion of the property value that the development rights represent and retain all other property rights.

Examples of property enhancements that are preserved through the agricultural conservation easements:



NYCD worked with landowners to address water quality issues caused by streams flowing through livestock area into a wetland complex and riparian areas. Troughs were constructed to supply permitted livestock water away from the wetlands and riparian areas.



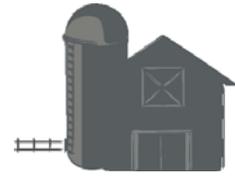
NYCD installed fencing to exclude livestock from wetland and riparian areas, and then planted native vegetation and trees to further protect water quality.



NYCD worked with the landowner, Cowiche Creek Water Users Association, Yakima Tieton Irrigation District, and other partners to increase streamflow in Cowiche Creek for steelhead while still protecting irrigators' water rights. NYCD removed two shared points of diversion on Cowiche Creek and constructed an improved pressurized system that allows irrigators to draw water from the Tieton River instead. Pictured: Landowner Jim Lust opens the valve on his new irrigation line.

FY 2018 Highlights

Examples of what was accomplished through the OFP this fiscal year:



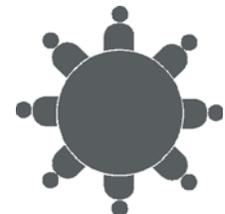
283

acres of irrigated farmland permanently protected in the Cowiche Basin by four agricultural conservation easements in partnership with North Yakima Conservation District.



12

issues published of the Farmland Preservation Newsletter, which covers land use, grants, food policy, legislative updates, research, and more.



4

meetings of the Farmland Roundtable coordinated by OFP in partnership with Whatcom and King Counties. This network of stakeholders meets quarterly to discuss topics relevant to farmland preservation.

Learn more about OFP:
scc.wa.gov/ofp