

Hangman Creek Riparian Restoration and Conservation Program Pilot



OVERVIEW

The Hangman Creek Riparian Restoration and Conservation Program Pilot is an innovative riparian incentive grant program administered by Ecology's Eastern Region Water Quality Program in partnership with the Spokane Conservation District.

This pilot program is unique because it provides relatively high incentive payments in exchange for agricultural riparian land that is taken out of production and restored with native plants.

- \$300/acre for dryland agriculture sites
- \$350/acre when meeting site potential tree height buffers

NEW - \$200/acre prioritized livestock sites

The program also covers 100% of the installation, materials and long-term planting maintenance costs.

PROGRAM DETAILS

- Each year, Ecology identifies a number of priority sites for water quality improvements in the Hangman Creek watershed. To qualify for the program, the location must be a Hangman Creek priority site.
- The riparian area buffer helps improve water quality when native plants, shrubs, and trees are planted along the shore.
- The riparian land is no longer required to be located along fish-bearing streams - all streams are now eligible.
- Landowners agree to 15-year lease contracts.

\$9 MILLION
in grants funded by Ecology

MEASURING SUCCESS



The initial goal of the pilot program was to target 70 acres for restoration – this was quickly surpassed. As of 2024, we've funded more than 300 acres.



The pilot program helps eliminate barriers that many producers have pointed to in the past, including weed control, long-term contracts, economically viable rental rates, and maintenance funding.



Many landowners have expressed interest and excitement in the project. 14 landowners are currently enrolled in the pilot, with more eager to join.



Stream without a land use setback or riparian buffer



Stream setback with riparian plantings
(Image: Palouse Conservation District)

Why Hangman Creek?

Hangman Creek is a major tributary of the Spokane River that originates in the mountains of Idaho and flows northwest toward its confluence with the Spokane River. Hangman Creek and its tributaries are listed among the state's polluted waters.

Riparian areas, where water meets land, are important to Hangman Creek because they shade the water, keeping it cool, and provide woody debris, food, and shelter for fish and wildlife. Planting trees and shrubs in riparian areas reduces stream temperatures, stabilizes stream banks, and intercepts runoff and pollution from adjacent land use.

WHAT'S NEXT?



The program's next focus is implementation capacity. Spokane Conservation District's eight-person crew can only install and maintain so many acres per year. At the rate the program is growing, Ecology is seeing our implementation schedule now years out to get going on some of these sites. The Spokane Conservation District and Ecology are working on partnering with additional riparian restoration partners so we can get more crews working on this.

Hangman Creek Water Quality Implementation Lead

Contact: Mitch Redfern

Email: mitch.redfern@ecy.wa.gov

Phone: 509-638-2050

ADA accommodation

To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 360-407-6831 or email at mitch.redfern@ecy.wa.gov, or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>. For Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341