

## Composting to Improve Air Quality

Many people do not think of creating composite as an air quality improvement project. Just Consider November 6 to 9 this year when we measured 24 hour concentration into the Moderate category on the WAQA in Omak. People began burning their leaf and other vegetation debris piles after several days of rain and drizzle when the sun came out. This is a pattern we can see in the data for many years.

The Partnership discussed the desirability of composting and results from the WDOE Air Quality Survey showed that 68% of respondents would support a community operation

EPA advertised a grant opportunity “Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreement Program” that could fund a feasibility study to develop a composting project in our emphasis area.

If you would like to participate in the planning or have great ideas contact: Kris Ray, Air Quality Program Manager, CTCR, 509-634-2418 or [kris.ray@colvilletribes.com](mailto:kris.ray@colvilletribes.com)

WA Department of Ecology, Central Regional Office is running wood stove outreach on KNCW FM 92.7 and KOMW AM 680 in the North Central WA area from Nov 6 – Jan 31 four times each day. In addition to the airing during music and talk radio programs, it also includes 2 spots in each Seahawk, UW and WSU games. The outreach message focuses on well-seasoned firewood producing more heat and less smoke, getting more from your firewood, checking your chimney, and not burning garbage. Their new web address is included at the very end - <https://www.ecy.wa.gov/>.

Camille added the Okanogan County Air Quality Survey to the updated Washington Department of Ecology website: <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/share/Sites/AQ>. The report will be available for only 90 days so download a copy soon. Be sure to look at the Central Okanogan County responses starting on page 110 to see what people in the emphasis area are thinking.

Maurice Goodall, Emergency Manager, Okanogan County, took this picture from his drone near the airport north of Omak. You can easily see the top of the inversion layer at 1000 feet above sea level. The Omak monitor showed concentration at the time of the picture in the Moderate air quality category.



Kris Ray recently helped the Okanogan High School ecology class learn the basics of air quality, the health impacts of poor air quality and how the United States compares with Asia. The class also learned how citizen science can be an effective tool for data collection and change. The students ended the class by reading air quality related haiku that express their thoughts.

### Air Pollution

By Hailey Shiflett  
Air pollution is bad  
Protect the environment  
You should do your part

By Max Cheeseman  
Mountain peaks gone  
Smog covers the sky all day  
What will be changed

The Okanogan County Conservation District applied for and received a Pollution Prevention (P2) source reduction assistance grant from EPA focused on reducing PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels in our

# Okanogan River Airshed Partnership Update January 5, 2018

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emphasis area. Kirsten Cook identified three tasks to help accomplish a reduction:

1. **Community Chipping:** This project will test the assertion that many residents would make use of a small-scale “chipping bank” in their community by conducting demonstrations of this concept. The project will conduct demonstrations in two locations, one in the Okanogan Valley and one in the Methow Valley. The demonstrations will take place in spring 2018 and fall 2018, ideally in conjunction with scheduled community clean-up days. The project will document the costs, strengths, and weaknesses of the chipping bank system and assess the feasibility of creating an ongoing community chip bank in Okanogan County. Conservation Planner Mindy Widell is leading this aspect of the grant and is setting up meetings with key partners to develop the logistics and budget information needed to proceed.
2. **Orchard Alternatives:** This project will provide technical assistance on alternatives to burning to orchardists in Okanogan County. Soil Scientist Leslie Michel is working with her contacts at WSU Extension/ Tree Fruit Research to develop a survey on burning for orchardists and to create an up-to-date reference document about alternatives to burning.
3. **Social Marketing Plan:** Social marketing efforts “seek to develop and integrate marketing concepts with other approaches to influence behaviors that benefit individuals and communities for the greater social good”. Community Outreach Director Kirsten Cook will begin to build the plan in January and will be reaching out to the partnership for input on key ideas as the plan evolves.

## **Community Based (Social) Marketing**

We talked briefly about Community Based (Social) Marketing and how the partnership could utilize it during our last meeting in September. Several organizations and companies conduct training to provide the skills and knowledge for groups to implement a marketing plan.

Training for the Partnership could be arranged if people feel that would be useful and productive. After creating this base knowledge we would then need to follow through with developing our marketing plan to encompass all the projects the partners are working on.

Community based marketing involves

- Identifying the barriers to a behavior
- Developing and piloting a program to overcome these barriers
- Implementing the program across a community
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the program

A great resource to learn more about this marketing approach is -

<http://www.cbsm.com/public/world.lasso>.

Hope all are enjoying the winter and looking forward to spring.