

Washington State University Chelan County Extension

YOUTH & FAMILIES

NATURAL RESOURCES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



CHELAN COUNTY QUICK FACTS

- *Named for the Chelan Indian word meaning "deep water"*
- *County seat: Wenatchee*
- *Land area, in square miles: 2,921 (state rank: 3)*
- *Median household income (2004): \$39,942*
- *Population (2007): 71,200 (state rank: 16)*

CONTACT

WSU Chelan County Extension Office
400 Washington Street
Wenatchee, WA 98801
(509) 667-6540 FAX: (509) 667-6561
<http://www.ncw.wsu.edu/>

Washington State University Chelan County Extension is part of the world-class outreach and engagement enterprise of the university. We partner with businesses, the community, and volunteers to drive innovation, invention, and technology transfer. We focus on expanding the problem-solving capacity of communities, enhancing and sustaining the local economy, enhancing natural resources and the environment, enhancing economic opportunities for agriculture, improving health and wellness—especially in the realm of nutrition and obesity prevention—and eliminating barriers to the success of youth and families.

We leverage every dollar received from Chelan County with federal, state, grant, and private funding to maximize our reach and effectiveness. For every \$1 invested by Chelan County, WSU Extension provides more than \$2 in state and federal resources. Additionally, faculty and staff in the county raised more than \$358,000 in extramural funding. Therefore, every dollar that Chelan County spends in support of WSU Chelan County Extension generates \$3 for the county—a 300 percent annual return on investment.

Impacts

Youth and Families

Parenting Programs Reduce Drug Use Among Youth

Chelan County has seen a wave of increased awareness and support for community-based solutions to problems facing its young people. One such solution is WSU Chelan County Extension's Strengthening Families, a program that improves parenting skills and family communication.

Strengthening Families has been shown to reduce high-risk behavior, increase educational success, help students stay in school, and promote improved decision-making. More than 180 Chelan County youth and



HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The father of an autistic rider participating in the 4-H Spurs and Spokes program said: “He refuses to try new foods. After he rides, we try new foods with him, and he will eat them and continue to eat them regularly.”

their families have participated since 2003. The Washington State Institute of Public Policy estimates that this program has saved Chelan County more than \$1 million in reduced court, prison, and victim costs.

Children Cope with Divorce (COPE), another community-based program, served more than 275 parents in 2008. COPE helps parents focus on the needs of their children during and after divorce and separation. Begun in 1997, it has earned the endorsement of the Chelan County judiciary.

Spurs and Spokes 4-H Therapeutic Horseback Riding Program

The therapeutic riding program Spurs and Spokes, established in 1988, is the only program of its kind in north-central Washington. Each year, 125 volunteers contribute more than 2000 volunteer hours—worth more than \$30,000—to children and adults with disabilities. Spurs and Spokes has a powerful impact on participants. After only six weeks, one rider with cerebral palsy said, “I don’t need my harness to sit up in my wheelchair. I can sit up straight without it, just like I sit up straight on Beau.” After 21 years in the program, she continues to sit up straight on her own.

4-H Eco-Stewardship: National 4-H Program of Distinction

The Chelan County 4-H Eco-Stewardship Program has partnered with schools, volunteers, and natural resource agencies to reach 3,000 young people. Many students earn school credit for their participation.

Through experiential learning, the program helps students learn to communicate and cooperate with one other, solve problems, set goals, make decisions, and build healthy relationships. At the same time, they learn the fundamentals of natural resource stewardship and management and the basics of fish, wildlife, and watershed ecology.

For example, participants worked with professionals from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at the Leavenworth hatchery to build bat hotels. One brown bat can eat 1,000 mosquitoes in an hour. By building homes for the bats, participants learned about natural pest control, helped reduced pesticide use, reduced the threat of West Nile Virus, and improved fish habitat.

Participants report significant gains (95.3%) in life skills as a result of their involvement in Eco-Stewardship. This program has a minimum return-on-investment of more than \$3 million in 6 years. In addition to being named a National 4-H Program of Distinction, it has been honored by the U.S. Forest Service and the National Association of Counties.

Natural Resources

Forest Stewardship Education

More than 1,850 families or individuals control 123,000 forested acres in Chelan County. These landowners need tools and information to sustainably manage their forests. Since 2006, more than 1,800 landowners, natural resource professionals, and young people in north-central Washington have benefited from Chelan County Extension forestry events. Knowledge and skills gained

at field days, demonstrations, and workshops have resulted in forest health improvements, wildfire risk reduction, and wildlife habitat enhancement on 1,440 parcels totaling 30,240 acres. Fire suppression alone on these lands would cost an estimated \$45.5 million.

Extension educators are developing an online version of one of these programs—the Coached Planning Stewardship Short Course. Available to more than 150,000 land owners, it teaches how to set personal goals, write a forest stewardship plan, assess risk and improve forest health, enhance wildlife habitat, assess and reduce wildfire risk and damage, plant and care for a young forest, harvest timber sustainably, and market specialty forest products.

Firewise Urban Landscaping

In the summer of 1994, catastrophic wildfires burned 180,000 acres in the Wenatchee National Forest. The destruction included 37 homes and 76 out-buildings. In the past four years, the county has had 13 large wildfires.

Chelan County Extension’s FireWise program helps residents safeguard their homes from wildfire through selection, placement, and maintenance of landscape plants. Appropriate landscaping can prevent wildfires as well as lowering the intensity and scope of fires once they start. Between 2006 and 2008, Chelan County FireWise helped protect 150 homes worth \$25 million.

Rocky Reach Park Arboretum

Each year, approximately 60,000 people visit the Rocky Reach Visitor Center. The Rocky Reach Arboretum was developed in 2006 based on a proposal developed by WSU Chelan County Extension. In cooperation with the Chelan County Public Utility District, 424 trees and shrubs were inventoried and identified, and a native plant garden was developed. Ten WSU Chelan County Master Gardener volunteers were trained to give guided tours.

The arboretum is a living classroom on tree planting and care. Those who attend these classes report (70%) changing the way they plant and care for their trees. One mature tree absorbs roughly 240 pounds of air pollution. By properly planting and maintaining trees homeowners reduce storm water runoff, home energy use, and pollution.

WSU Master Gardeners

Each year, more than 70 volunteers donate a total of 5000 hours, valued at \$97,000 to the WSU Chelan County Extension Master Gardener program. More than 17,000 residents have participated in Master Gardener programs in the last five years. Master Gardeners teach sustainable landscape management through diagnosis clinic, seminars, and workshops.

Workshops topics include xeriscaping, use of native plants, vegetable gardening, soils, landscape design, and composting. Of the 244 county residents who participated in workshops in 2008, 86% say they learned something new about sustainable landscaping practices and plan to use what they learned at home. These changes will lead to water conservation, water quality protection, and can increase property values in Chelan County by 10–20%.



NATURAL RESOURCES

“The class offered valuable, up-to-date information and access to forestry professionals. I completed a forest stewardship plan for my 125-acre property. Based on information I learned in the class and from on-site consultation with specialists, I have improved and enhanced ongoing projects for fuels reduction/forest health and wildlife habitat enhancement.”

—Leavenworth, WA





Economic Development

New Control Options for Cherry Fruit Fly

Sweet cherries are a \$300 million industry in central Washington. In 1997, sweet cherry growers had only two older classes of insecticides available for control of their most important insect pest, the cherry fruit fly. Most of those products were scheduled to be removed from use within a decade. In response, WSU Chelan County Extension began testing alternative products with lower toxicity. Six of the 17 alternatives tested provide excellent control of the fruit fly and are now registered for commercial use; more are to be registered soon. Two have become the only effective organic controls. Another, a molasses-based bait, GF-120, is an entirely new control method for fruit growers and has become the most used control for this pest in Washington State and is being adopted throughout the Pacific Northwest and British Columbia. This organic control method is especially appreciated by growers who have cherries near waterways or urban areas and often use the bait instead of the traditional sprayer-applied insecticides

The shift to these new products has reduced the use of traditional insecticides in Chelan County by more than 37,500 pounds per year. Chelan County growers saved \$625,000 in labor, application, and material costs in 2008. Hours of applicator exposure to organophosphate and carbamate pesticide dropped by more than 5,000 hours per season.

An application method for the GF-120 bait, first introduced to the region by WSU Chelan County Extension, reduces application time and fuel use. In 2008, Chelan County growers, using this new control method, were able to reduce their use of gasoline and diesel by more than 100,000 gallons. Total savings to Chelan County growers since the method was developed are estimated at \$1.7 million.

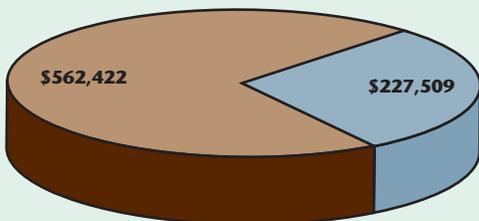
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The shift to new pest control products has reduced the use of traditional insecticides in Chelan County by more than 37,500 pounds per year. Chelan County growers saved \$625,000 in labor, application, and material costs in 2008.

Overview of Funding for WSU Chelan County Extension Programs

WSU Support for County Extension Programs

- WSU Support in County
- Other WSU Support



Direct Funding Sources for County Extension Programs

- Total WSU Support
- Grants and Contracts
- County Support



Total Funding Supporting County Extension Programs

- WSU Support in County
- Other WSU Support
- Grants and Contracts
- County Support

