

Chapter 3

3 Asotin County Characteristics

3.1 Demographics

Asotin County reported an increase in total population from 17,605 in 1990 to 20,551 in 2000 with approximately 9,111 households. Asotin County has two incorporated communities which are Asotin (pop. 1,095) and Clarkston (pop. 7,337) reported from the 2000 Census.

Table 3.1 summarizes some relevant demographic statistics for Asotin County.

Table 3.1. Selected demographic statistics for Asotin County, Washington, from Census 2000.

Subject	Number	Percent
Total population	20,551	100.0
SEX AND AGE		
Male	9,798	47.7
Female	10,753	52.3
Under 5 years	1,406	6.8
5 to 9 years	1,444	7.0
10 to 14 years	1,428	6.9
15 to 19 years	1,524	7.4
20 to 24 years	1,104	5.4
25 to 34 years	2,328	11.3
35 to 44 years	3,036	14.8
45 to 54 years	2,777	13.5
55 to 59 years	1,163	5.7
60 to 64 years	986	4.8
65 to 74 years	1,652	8.0
75 to 84 years	1,194	5.8
85 years and over	509	2.5
Median age (years)	38.8	(X)
18 years and over	15,310	74.5
Male	7,094	34.5
Female	8,216	40.0
21 years and over	14,507	70.6
62 years and over	3,935	19.1
65 years and over	3,355	16.3
Male	1,343	6.5
Female	2,012	9.8

3.2 Socioeconomics

Asotin County had a total of 8,364 occupied housing units and a population density of 32.3 persons per square mile reported in the 2000 Census. Ethnicity in Asotin County is distributed: white 95.6%, black or African American 0.2%, American Indian or Alaskan Native 1.3%, Asian 0.5%, Hispanic or Latino 2.0%, two or more races 1.8%, and some other race 0.6%.

Specific economic data for individual communities is collected by the US Census; in Asotin County this information is limited to the incorporated cities. City of Asotin households earn a median income of \$33,524 annually and Clarkston earns a medium income of \$25,907 annually. The Asotin County median income during the same period was \$33,524. Table 3.2 shows the dispersal of households in various income categories in Asotin County.

Table 3.2. Income in 1999.	Asotin County	
	Number	Percent
Households	8,352	100.0
Less than \$10,000	874	10.5
\$10,000 to \$14,999	667	8.0
\$15,000 to \$24,999	1,529	18.3
\$25,000 to \$34,999	1,266	15.2
\$35,000 to \$49,999	1,503	18.0
\$50,000 to \$74,999	1,375	16.5
\$75,000 to \$99,999	602	7.2
\$100,000 to \$149,999	377	4.5
\$150,000 to \$199,999	72	0.9
\$200,000 or more	87	1.0
Median household income (dollars)	33,524	(X)

(Census 2000)

Executive Order 12898, *Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low Income Populations*, directs federal agencies to identify and address any disproportionately high adverse human health or environmental effects of its projects on minority or low-income populations. In Asotin County, a significant number, 11.6%, of families are at or below the poverty level (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3. Poverty Status in 1999 (below poverty level).	Asotin County	
	Number	Percent
Families	657	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	11.6
With related children under 18 years	550	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	19.5
With related children under 5 years	340	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	29.1
Families with female householder, no husband present	384	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	38.8
With related children under 18 years	368	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	45.5
With related children under 5 years	210	(X)

Table 3.3. Poverty Status in 1999 (below poverty level).	Asotin County	
	Number	Percent
Percent below poverty level	(X)	59.8
Individuals	3,132	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	15.4
18 years and over	1,940	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	12.8
65 years and over	216	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	6.7
Related children under 18 years	1,155	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	22.7
Related children 5 to 17 years	693	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	18.6
Unrelated individuals 15 years and over	964	(X)
Percent below poverty level	(X)	25.2

(Census 2000)

The unemployment rate was 4.0% in Asotin County in 1999, compared to 4.4% nationally during the same period. Approximately 3.3% of the Asotin County employed population worked in natural resources.

Table 3.4. Employment and Industry.	Asotin County	
	Number	Percent
Employed civilian population 16 years and over	9,211	100.0
OCCUPATION		
Management, professional, and related occupations	2,619	28.4
Service occupations	1,764	19.2
Sales and office occupations	2,280	24.8
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	131	1.4
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	975	10.6
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	1,442	15.7
INDUSTRY		
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	300	3.3
Construction	684	7.4
Manufacturing	1,107	12.0
Wholesale trade	287	3.1
Retail trade	1,240	13.5
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	469	5.1
Information	142	1.5
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	563	6.1
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	546	5.9
Educational, health and social services	2,158	23.4
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	791	8.6

Table 3.4. Employment and Industry.	Asotin County	
	Number	Percent
Other services (except public administration)	578	6.3
Public administration	346	3.8

(Census 2000)

Approximately 73.6% of Asotin County's employed persons are private wage and salary workers, while around 16% are government workers (Table 3.5).

Table 3.5. Class of Worker.	Asotin County	
	Number	Percent
Private wage and salary workers	6,780	73.6
Government workers	1,486	16.1
Self-employed workers in own not incorporated business	892	9.7
Unpaid family workers	53	0.6

(Census 2000)

3.2.1 Description of Asotin County

Adapted from the Asotin County Comprehensive Plan . . .

Asotin County was organized in 1883 and was once part of Garfield County. It is located in the far southeast corner of the state and borders Oregon on the south and Idaho on the east.

In 1805-1806, Lewis and Clark passed through the County as well as Captain Bonneville in 1834. A ferry was established on the Snake River in 1855 to accommodate thousands of miners rushing to the goldfields. In 1881, a ferry was established in Asotin. Today, the county's economy is primarily agricultural, based on food and livestock raising and processing, fruit growing, and wheat and barley production.

3.2.1.1 Land Use

A relatively large percentage of the County is privately owned. Private parcels are becoming more and more expensive as the population grows and more property is developed. This factor combined with the mountainous nature of the topography in the southern half of the County is expected to produce significantly higher demands on privately held land in the future.

Table 3.6. Ownership Categories in Asotin County.		
Land Owner	Acres	Percent
County Government	168	<1%
Forest Industry	4,022	1%
Incorporated Cities	2,039	<1%
Private	288,729	70%
US Army Corps of Engineers	2,673	1%
US Bureau of Land Management	14,417	4%
US Forest Service	54,151	13%
Washington Department of Natural Resources	20,150	5%
Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife	22,496	5%
Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	842	<1%
Total	409,685	100%

3.3 Cultural Resources

3.3.1 National Register of Historic Places

The National Park Service maintains the National Register of Historical Places as a repository of information on significant cultural locale. These may be buildings, roads or trails, places where historical events took place, or other noteworthy sites. The NPS has recorded sites in its database. These sites are summarized in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7. National Register of Historic Places in Asotin County, Washington.				
Item Number	Resource Name	City	Listed	Architect, builder, or engineer
1	Clarkston Public Library	Clarkston	1982	
2	Cloverland Garage	Cloverland	1986	Howard, Henry
3	Full Gospel Church	Asotin	1972	
4	Grande Ronde River Bridge	Asotin	1995	Hagman, Henry, WA State Hwy Dist.
5	Indian Timothy Memorial Bridge	Pomeroy	1982	WA State DOT
6	Nez Perce Snake River Archeological District	Asotin	1978	
7	Snake River Archeological District	Asotin	1976	
8	US Post Office	Clarkston	1991	McGovern, J.D., Simon, Louis
9	Van Arsdol, C. C. House	Clarkston	1975	

(NRHP 2003)

Fire mitigation activities in and around these sites has the potential to affect historic places. In all cases, the fire mitigation work will be intended to reduce the potential of damaging the site due to wildfire. Areas where ground disturbance will occur will need to be inventoried depending on the location. Ground-disturbing actions may include, but are not limited to, constructed fire lines (hand line, mechanical line, etc.), new roads to creeks to fill water tankers, mechanical treatments, etc. Only those burn acres that may impact cultural resources that are sensitive to burning (i.e., buildings, peeled bark trees, etc.) would be examined. Burns over lithic sites are not expected to have an impact on those sites, as long as the fire is of low intensity and short duration. Some areas with heavy vegetation may need to be examined after the burn to locate and record any cultural resources although this is expected to be minimal. Traditional Cultural Properties (TCPs) will also need to be identified. Potential impact to TCPs will depend on what values make the property important and will be assessed on an individual basis.

3.4 Transportation & Infrastructure

The transportation system within the County is comprised of a significant number of roads, an several airport, and an extensive trail system. The road system is comprised of state and federal highways, Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) roads, county roads, US Forest Service roads, and private roads. The transportation network is very important in the wildland urban interface, because they provide a means of escape and access to fight fires and because they may act as barriers to the spread of a fire.

Almost all of the roads in the County were originally built to facilitate farming and logging activities. As such, these roads can generally support the firefighting equipment referenced in this document. However, many of the new roads have been built for home site access, especially for new subdivisions. In most cases, these roads are adequate to facilitate firefighting

equipment as they adhere to County road standards. County road standards and building guidelines for new developments should be strictly enforced to insure this tendency continues.

Transportation networks in the County have been challenged because a number of communities have only one or two access points suitable for use during an emergency. The community of Rogersburg is a prime example. Other communities that may be at risk because of limited access include Grande Ronde, Grahams Landing, and potentially even Asotin.

Primary access routes were identified by committee members and amended by the public during public meetings. These routes identify the primary access into and out of the County that are relied on during emergencies. As such, they often receive prioritized treatment when allocating resources for hazard abatement. There are 70 miles of primary access routes identified in Asotin County.

Asotin County has both significant infrastructure and unique ecosystems within its boundaries. Of note for this Community Wildfire Protection Plan are the existence of US Highway 12, State Route 129, and the presence of high tension power lines.

3.4.1 Communication Sites and Lookouts

Included in the assessment of critical infrastructure is the location of lookouts, repeater towers, and other communication sites. Known items were identified in the County and are summarized in Table 3.8.

Table 3.8. Lookouts, Repeater Towers, and Communication Site Locations.		
Name	UTM_X	UTM_Y
USFS Saddle Butte	-117.4611052	46.07040056
USFS Cottonwood	-117.3555444	46.27253046
WA-DNR ST E	-117.3511565	46.27258452
Inland Cellular	-117.0735337	46.18616468
Big Butte	-117.2461759	46.11532065
Asotin Creek Radio Comm	-117.1006103	46.34267069
Puffer Butte	-117.1736502	46.07522637
Stout Ridge Repeater	-117.1583816	46.43464102
Asotin Grade Radio Tower	-117.0405279	46.31790164

3.5 Vegetation & Climate

Vegetation in Asotin County is a mix of forestland and agricultural ecosystems. An evaluation of satellite imagery of the region provides some insight to the composition of the vegetation of the area. The full extent of the County was evaluated for cover type by the USDA Forest Service in 2001 as determined from Landsat 7 ETM+ imagery in tabular format.

The most represented vegetated cover type is grassland at 46% (Table 3.9).

Table 3.9. Vegetative Cover Types in Asotin County.		
Cover	Acres	Percent
Barren Land (Rock/Sand/Clay)	68	0%
Cultivated Crops	64,520	16%
Deciduous Forest	215	0%
Developed, High Intensity	73	0%
Developed, Low Intensity	3,044	1%

Table 3.9. Vegetative Cover Types in Asotin County.

Cover	Acres	Percent
Developed, Medium Intensity	874	0%
Developed, Open Space	8,396	2%
Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands	110	0%
Evergreen Forest	69,793	17%
Grassland/Herbaceous	188,584	46%
Mixed Forest	40	0%
Open Water	3,443	1%
Pasture/Hay	491	0%
Shrub/Scrub	69,825	17%
Woody Wetlands	207	0%
Total	409,684	

Vegetative communities within the County follow the strong moisture and temperature gradient related to the major drainages. As moisture availability increases, so does the abundance of conifer species, with subalpine forest communities present in the highest elevations where precipitation and elevation provide more moisture during the growing season.

3.5.1 Monthly Climate Summaries in Asotin County

3.5.1.1 Asotin, Washington

Period of Record Monthly Climate Summary

Period of Record : 7/ 1/1976 to 12/31/2005

Table 3.10. Monthly climate records for Asotin, Asotin County, Washington.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
Average Max. Temperature (F)					Insuff	icient	Data						
Average Min. Temperature (F)					Insuff	icient	Data						
Average Total Precipitation (in.)	0.91	0.90	1.33	1.89	2.33	1.89	1.16	1.06	0.90	0.96	1.31	1.01	15.63
Average Total SnowFall (in.)	4.6	3.1	1.4	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	2.0	2.4	14.1
Average Snow Depth (in.)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Percent of possible observations for period of record. Max. Temp.: 0% Min. Temp.: 0% Precipitation: 98.4% Snowfall: 94.5% Snow Depth: 88.5%

3.5.1.2 Anatone, Washington

Period of Record Monthly Climate Summary

Period of Record: 6/ 1/1948 to 11/30/1981

Table 3.11. Monthly climate records for Anatone, Asotin County, Washington.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
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Table 3.11. Monthly climate records for Anatone, Asotin County, Washington.

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
Average Max. Temperature (F)	32.0	39.2	43.9	52.3	60.9	68.8	79.1	78.9	70.2	57.9	43.2	35.5	55.2
Average Min. Temperature (F)	18.1	24.0	26.4	31.5	38.1	44.2	48.4	48.1	41.3	34.5	27.5	22.4	33.7
Average Total Precipitation (in.)	2.24	1.64	1.88	1.73	2.21	1.94	0.84	1.02	1.02	1.57	2.17	2.16	20.41
Average Total SnowFall (in.)	18.4	11.7	9.1	1.3	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	8.0	16.2	65.9
Average Snow Depth (in.)	8	7	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	2

Percent of possible observations for period of record. Max. Temp.: 92.6% Min. Temp.: 92.4% Precipitation: 94.9% Snowfall: 91.3% Snow Depth: 88.3%

3.6 Ecosystems

Recent forest health assessments of dry ponderosa pine forests in the interior West indicate that fire and insect disturbance regimes and concomitant changes in stand and landscape characteristics have been significantly altered. These altered forest are increasingly susceptible to catastrophic fire events such as the 1988 55,000 acre Dinkleman Burn (Washington), the 1994 250,000 acre Foothill Burn (Idaho), and the 1994 140,000 acre Tyee Burn (Washington). These burns are characterized as catastrophic because they are outside the range of variability in burn intensity and extent of historical burns that occurred on these sites before Euro-settlement. Severe burns have the potential to adversely impact biological capacity and biological integrity of affected watersheds (Everett et al 1996).

Asotin County is a diverse ecosystem with a complex array of vegetation, wildlife, and fisheries that have developed with, and adapted to fire as a natural disturbance process. A century of wildland fire suppression coupled with past land-use practices (primarily timber harvesting, agriculture, and grazing) has altered plant community succession and has resulted in dramatic shifts in the fire regimes and species composition. As a result, forests and rangelands in Asotin County have become more susceptible to large-scale, high intensity fires posing a threat to life, property, and natural resources including wildlife and special status plant populations and habitats. High-intensity, stand-replacing fires have the potential to seriously damage soils and native vegetation. In addition, an increase in the number of large high intensity fires throughout the nation's forest and rangelands, has resulted in significant safety risks to firefighters and higher costs for fire suppression (House of Representatives, Committee on Agriculture, Washington, DC, 1997).

3.7 Hydrology

The Washington Department of Ecology & Water Resources Program is charged with the development of the Washington State Water Plan. Included in the State Water Plan are the statewide water policy plan, and component basin and water body plans which cover specific geographic areas of the state (WDOE 2005). The Washington Department of Ecology has prepared General Lithologies of the Major Ground Water Flow Systems in Washington.

The state may assign or designate beneficial uses for particular Washington water bodies to support. These beneficial uses are identified in section WAC 173-201A-200 of the Washington Surface Water Quality Standards (WQS). These uses include:

- **Aquatic Life Uses:** char; salmonid and trout spawning, rearing, and migration; nonanadromous interior redband trout, and indigenous warm water species
- **Recreational Uses:** primary (swimming) and secondary (boating) contact recreation
- **Water Supply Uses:** domestic, agricultural, and industrial; and stock watering

While there may be competing beneficial uses in streams, federal law requires protection of the most sensitive of these beneficial uses.

The geology and soils of this region lead to rapid to moderate moisture infiltration. Slopes are moderate to steep, however, headwater characteristics of the watersheds lead to a high degree of infiltration as opposed to a propensity for overland flow. Thus sediment delivery efficiency of first and third order streams is fairly low. The bedrock is typically well fractured and moderately soft. This fracturing allows excessive soil moisture to infiltrate into the rock and thus surface runoff is rare. Natural mass stability hazards associated with slides are low. Natural sediment yields are low for these watersheds. However, disrupted vegetation patterns from logging (soil compaction), farming, road construction, and wildland fire (especially hot fires that increase soil hydrophobic characteristics), can lead to increased surface runoff and debris flow to stream channels.

A correlation to mass wasting due to the removal of vegetation caused by high intensity wildland fire has been documented. Burned vegetation can result in changes in soil moisture and loss of rooting strength that can result in slope instability, especially on slopes greater than 30%. The greatest watershed impacts from increased sediment will be in the lower gradient, depositional stream reaches. Of critical importance to Asotin County will be the maintenance of the domestic watershed supplies in the Middle Snake River Watershed (Watershed Resources Inventory Area 35).

Timberlands in the region have been extensively harvested for the past several decades, therefore altering riparian function by removing streamside shade and changing historic sediment deposition. Riparian function and channel characteristics have been altered by ranch and residential areas as well. The current conditions of wetlands and floodplains are variable. Some wetlands and floodplains have been impacted by past management activities.

Table 3.12 lists the Washington Water Resources database of municipal water supplies in Asotin County and the Recorded Water Certificates and Permits in Asotin County. These water sources may be placed at risk in the event of a wildland fire.

Table 3.12. Municipal Water Sources in Asotin County.

System Name	System Type	Source Name
ASOTIN COUNTY ROAD DEPT SHOP	Group B	WELL 1
ASOTIN WATER DEPT	Community	Well #1
ASOTIN WATER DEPT	Community	Well #2
BEAMERS LANDING INC	Transient Non-Community	Well #1
BLUE MOUNTAIN HOMESITES	Transient Non-Community	Well #1
BLUE MOUNTAIN HOMESITES	Transient Non-Community	Well #2
BUBBA S COUNTRY STORE & GRILL	Group B	WELL 1
CHIEF TIMOTHY PARK	Transient Non-Community	Well #1- ABR771
CLOVERLAND FREE METHODIST CHURCH	Group B	WELL 1
COUNTRY LIVING COURT	Group B	WELL 1
DALOSTO WATER SYSTEM	Group B	Well #1
FIELD SPRINGS STATE PARK	Transient Non-Community	Well #1

Table 3.12. Municipal Water Sources in Asotin County.

System Name	System Type	Source Name
FIELD SPRINGS STATE PARK	Transient Non-Community	Spring
GRAND RONDE RANCHES #1	Transient Non-Community	Well #1
JIMS EXPRESS MART	Transient Non-Community	Well #1
PUD #1 OF ASOTIN COUNTY	Community	Well #2
PUD #1 OF ASOTIN COUNTY	Community	Well #6
PUD #1 OF ASOTIN COUNTY	Community	Well #7
PUD #1 OF ASOTIN COUNTY	Community	Well #4 (standby)
PUD #1 OF ASOTIN COUNTY	Community	Well #5
PUD #1 OF ASOTIN COUNTY	Community	Well #3
PUD #1 OF ASOTIN COUNTY	Community	Well #1
ROGERSBURG ADDITION	Group B	WELL 1
WALKER, L.	Group B	Well 01

3.8 Air Quality

The primary means by which the protection and enhancement of air quality is accomplished is through implementation of National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). These standards address six pollutants known to harm human health including ozone, carbon monoxide, particulate matter, sulfur dioxide, lead, and nitrogen oxides (USDA Forest Service 2000).

The Clean Air Act, passed in 1963 and amended in 1977, is the primary legal authority governing air resource management. The Clean Air Act provides the principal framework for national, state, and local efforts to protect air quality. Under the Clean Air Act, OAQPS (Organization for Air Quality Protection Standards) is responsible for setting standards, also known as national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS), for pollutants which are considered harmful to people and the environment. OAQPS is also responsible for ensuring these air quality standards are met, or attained (in cooperation with state, Tribal, and local governments) through national standards and strategies to control pollutant emissions from automobiles, factories, and other sources (Louks 2001).

Smoke emissions from fires potentially affect an area and the airsheds that surround it. Climatic conditions affecting air quality in southeastern Washington are governed by a combination of factors. Large-scale influences include latitude, altitude, prevailing hemispheric wind patterns, and mountain barriers. At a smaller scale, topography and vegetation cover also affect air movement patterns. Air quality in the area is generally moderate to good. However, locally adverse conditions can result from occasional wildland fires in the summer and fall, and prescribed fire and agricultural burning in the spring and fall. All major river drainages are subject to temperature inversions which trap smoke and affect dispersion, causing local air quality problems. This occurs most often during the summer and fall months and would potentially affect all communities in Asotin County, but particularly Clarkston, Asotin, Grahams Landing, and Rogersburg.

3.8.1 Washington State Smoke Management Plan

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Department of Ecology (DOE), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), National Park Service (NPS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), participating Indian nations, military installations (DOD), and small and large forest landowners have worked together to deal with the effect of outdoor burning on air.

Protection of public health and preservation of the natural attractions of the state are high priorities and can be accomplished along with a limited, but necessary, outdoor burning program. Public health, public safety, and forest health can all be served through the application of the provisions of Washington State law and this plan, and with the willingness of those who do outdoor burning on forest lands to further reduce the negative effects of their burning.

The Washington State Smoke Management Plan pertains to DNR-regulated silvicultural outdoor burning only and does not include agricultural outdoor burning or outdoor burning that occurs on improved property. Although the portion of total outdoor burning covered by this plan is less than 10 percent of the total air pollution in Washington, it remains a significant and visible source.

Background

Washington State has had a Smoke Management Plan in effect since 1969. After the enactment of the original plan, and with the addition of the 1975 plan, the number of smoke intrusions into designated population areas has dropped significantly every year.

The 1975 Smoke Management Plan has undergone several informal and semi-formal modifications since its adoption, mainly by agreement with the plan's signatories and other agencies. These modifications represent significant changes in DNR operating procedures and emphases.

The earlier Smoke Management Plans of 1969 and 1975 have done their job well. Today the Pacific Northwest is regarded as a leader in controlling smoke from outdoor burning on forest lands; many other states have used past plans as models in setting up their own smoke management programs.

Purpose

The purpose of the Washington State Smoke Management Plan is to coordinate and facilitate the statewide regulation of prescribed outdoor burning on lands protected by the DNR and on unimproved, federally-managed forest lands and participating tribal lands. The plan is designed to meet the requirements of the Washington Clean Air Act.

Goals

- Protect human health and safety from the effects of outdoor burning
- Facilitate the enjoyment of the natural attractions of the state
- Provide a limited burning program for the people of this state
- Provide the opportunity for essential forest land burning while minimizing emissions
- Reduce emissions from silvicultural burning other than for forest health reasons first by 20 percent and later by 50 percent, as required by law
- Foster and encourage the development of alternative methods for disposing, of or reducing the amount of, organic refuse on forest lands
- Acknowledge the role of fire in forest ecosystems and allow the use of fire under controlled conditions to maintain healthy forests.

Scope

The plan provides regulatory direction, operating procedures, and advisory information regarding the management of smoke and fuels on the forest lands of Washington State. It applies to all persons, landowners, companies, state and federal land management agencies,

and others who do outdoor burning in Washington State on lands where the DNR provides fire protection, or where such burning occurs on federally-managed, unimproved forest lands and tribal lands of participating Indian nations in the state.

The plan does not apply to agricultural outdoor burning and open burning as defined by Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 173-425-030 (1) and (2), nor to burning done "by rule" under WAC 332-24 or on non-forested wildlands (e.g., range lands). All future reference to burning in this plan will refer only to silvicultural burning unless otherwise indicated.

The plan does not address nor attempt to regulate prescribed natural fire in wilderness areas and national parks for several reasons: the amount of emissions caused by such burning in Washington is relatively small, it is impossible to "regulate" unforecastable natural ignitions, and it is nearly impossible to gather emission data efficiently in the areas where this type of burning generally takes place. Federal agencies that have adopted the use of prescribed natural fires will remain solely responsible for the administration of such programs.

Participation

Those who receive fire protection from the DNR, or from agencies contracted by the DNR, must abide by the requirements of this plan. This includes all burning done on private and state-managed lands that pay, or are subject to paying, Forest Protection Assessment.

Federal agencies that do outdoor burning on forest lands must participate in and abide by the requirements of this plan under the direction of the federal Clean Air Act. These agencies include, but are not limited to, the Forest Service (USFS), Park Service (NPS), Fish and Wildlife Service (F&WS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and Department of Defense (DOD).

Indian nations may choose to participate in all or portions of the plan. Participation would be by written agreement between the Indian nation and the DNR. Advantages of participation by Indian nations would include statewide coordination of burning, shared weather forecasting services, uniform data reporting and storage, better protection of the public through a unified burn approval system, satisfaction of federal EPA requirements, and other services provided by either party to the other. Such future agreements would become appendices to this plan.