



REDUCING FOREST FUEL LOADS THROUGH BIOCHAR CONVERSION

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Thinning small, non-commercially viable trees that choke western forests due to years of fire suppression and aggressive logging reduces the risk of devastating fires, ensuring the carbon stored in the remaining trees stays there, rather than being released as smoke. Forest thinning produces waste called slash that is frequently burned in piles that produce unhealthy smoke and sterilize soils. Converting this waste to biochar limits smoke and damage to the soil. The biochar can also be added to agricultural soils to increase its carbon sequestration and water retention capacity. A partnership led by The Lands Council and the Kalispel Tribe of Indians undertook a successful pilot project demonstrating how to reduce forest fuels and transform slash to beneficial biochar.

OBJECTIVES

- Undertake a pilot project to demonstrate conversion of forest thinning slash into biochar, limiting smoke and soil impacts, and creating beneficial biochar.
- Discuss and explore avenues for scaling up and incentivizing biochar production.

PATHWAYS FOR SCALING



Incorporation of biochar production in Farm Bill Programs like the Conservation Stewardship Program and Conservation Innovation Grants program.



The addition of Soil Carbon Amendments (Practice 336) to the Natural Resource Conservation's Services list of climate-smart agriculture and forestry practices could help facilitate inclusion.

LOCATION

Washington

FUNDING AMOUNT AND SOURCES

\$25,000 from the State of Washington Department of Commerce, matched by The Lands Council.

PROGRAM PARTNERS

The Lands Council, the Kalispel Tribe of Indians, Washington State University Extension, Resource Synergy

SUCCESSES TO DATE



Successful execution of a pilot project using two different techniques to convert slash piles into biochar on lands belonging to the Kalispel Tribe of Indians.



Convened stakeholders to discuss next steps for better understanding the climate change mitigation benefits of biochar, best practices for producing biochar, and incentivizing the production and use of biochar.

For more information about this and other innovative and scalable projects implementing Natural Climate Solutions in the U.S., please visit www.usnature4climate.org/building-ambition/.