

## EDITORIAL: Funding County Projects Makes Sense for Long-Term

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There will be many competing interests seeking funds in Olympia this session, but hopefully the state maintains its commitment to funding outdoor recreation and conservation projects through the Washington Wildlife Recreation Program.

According to the Washington Wildlife Recreation Coalition the legislature will be asked to sustain \$100 million for the WWRP.

The statewide list of projects includes five in Kittitas County:

- Colockum Road abandonment, \$90,094: A portion of the road would be closed to motorized vehicles, but still open to hikers, horses and other non-motorized uses.
- Parke Creek restoration, \$129,000: Restore up to 200 acres of shrub steppe and riparian habitat.
- Teanaway Junction improvements, \$324,932: Replace toilets, put gravel in parking area, install signage, remove derelict boat ramp,.
- Triple Creek Ranch 2008, \$650,425: Purchase development rights through a conservation easement for this 400-acre family owned hay and cattle farm.
- Wade Road Farm Project, \$175,500: A conservation easement to preserve one of the only organic farms in Kittitas County.

The Kittitas County projects reflect the main concerns covered in the statewide list — preserving recreation access, farm lands and protecting the environment.

Obviously these are all key issues in this county. The money for the WWRP projects comes out of the state's capital budget.

Times are tough, but these projects each carry a long-term benefit for Kittitas County. That is a factor that should weigh in their favor.