Canyon Drainage Maintenance

There are three seasonal watercourses that drain the canyons on the east slope of Mission Ridge into populated areas of Chelan County and the City of Wenatchee. Two of those watercourses are No. 1 Canyon and No. 2 Canyon. The outfall points of these canyons include alluvial fans where sediment has been deposited naturally over the years. The soils in these fans are primarily fine soils. Alluvial fans are, by their nature, unstable and unpredictable floodplain features.

It's hard to find the open channel under all of the vegetation.

Below is the ditch after the bushes had been cut.

In a rain event, the water that falls in the canyons is currently handled by a series of ditches, swales, and culverts that meander through the county and city before they eventually connect with the Columbia River. If this drainage system is partially or fully blocked, the water will find its own path.

Maintenance of the drainage system located on public property is the responsibility of either the city or county. However, maintenance of the drainage located on private property is the responsibility of the property owner. It is the landowner's responsibility to see that the flow of water through their property is maintained, be it in an open ditch or enclosed in an underground pipe.

What are the Public Works Departments doing in response to the fire?

- A thorough storm system cleaning effort will begin the middle of October in anticipation of future rain events.
- The County and City will continue working with other local, state, and federal agencies to have a coordinated restoration effort.
- Staff will be available to answer any questions the public may have.

Chelan County Public Works ~ 667-6415 City of Wenatchee Public Works ~ 888-3235

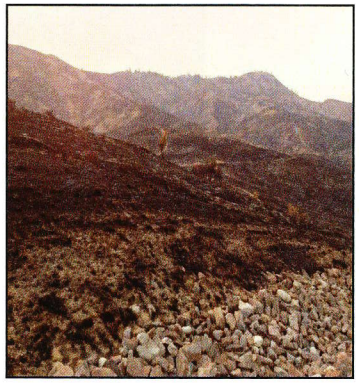
This homeowner's drainage contained the flow - until it encountered the neighbor's fence at the property line.

What can *you* do?

- Secure any lose items around your property, such as yard furniture, pool covers, tarps, agriculture tools and equipment.
- If you have part of the canyon drain on your property, please inspect it regularly. Inspections should also occur after a rainfall to determine if any changes have occurred that require maintenance to the ditch or pipe.
- Maintain the integrity of the canyon drain by not placing fill (i.e. rock, dirt, yard waste, concrete) in it, not allowing livestock to enter the ditch, removing any fences, sheds, or other structures, not allowing noxious weeds to grow, and removing any garbage or debris.

Fire Effects on the Canyons

The Wenatchee Complex Fire was the result of an extensive, severe lightning storm which occurred Saturday, September 8, 2012. Lightning strikes were reported to have started close to 100 individual fires. Of interest, one of those fires, the Canyons Fire, has burned over 7,500 acres.



Aftermath of the Canyons Fire

The recent Canyons Fire has raised concerns about the potential for significant runoff events if heavy rainfall were to occur prior to the re-establishment of vegetation. This event, should it occur, has the potential to greatly affect the No. 1 and No. 2 Canyon drainage areas. With no vegetation, excessive runoff events with mud flow and debris could impact all downstream properties.

The County and City Public Works Departments encourage you to review the information in this brochure.

Canyons Fire and Watercourse Maintenance

No. 1 Canyon
No. 2 Canyon

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City of Wenatchee

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