



**NORTH SANTIAM
WATERSHED COUNCIL**

Landowners replant following the Beachie Creek and Lionshead Fires

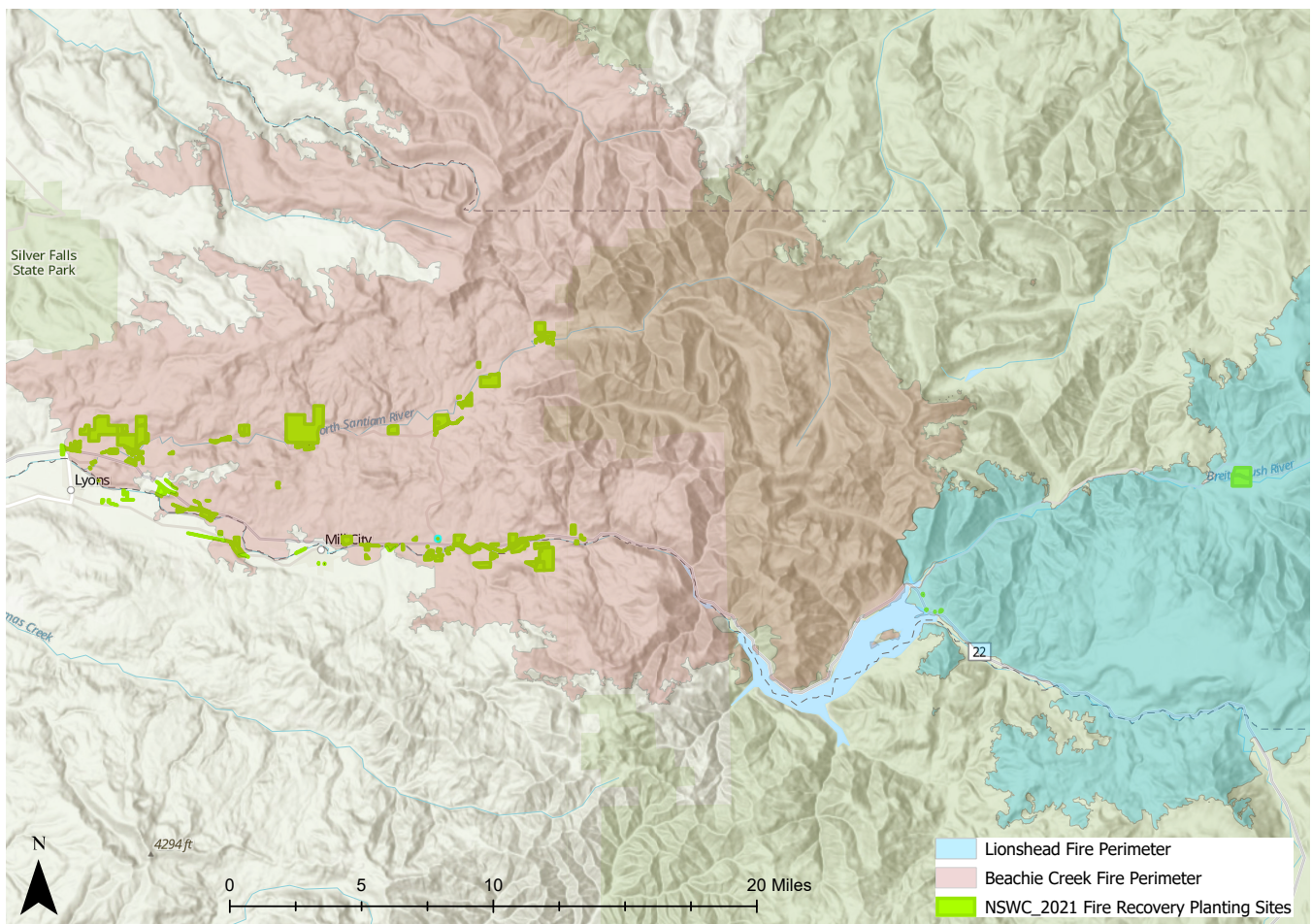
North Santiam Watershed Council Partners with BEF, Arbor Day Foundation and One Tree Planted to Distribute Native Plants to Community Members Impacted by the Fires in 2020

2021 North Santiam Watershed Council Fire Recovery Planting Sites

This map shows the aerial extent of the Beachie Creek Fire (pink) and the Lionshead Fire (blue). The North Santiam Watershed Council with support from the Arbor Day Foundation and One Tree Planted has provided plants to over 128 landowners in the Santiam Canyon, shown in green.

Nearly half of the 500,000 acre North Santiam Watershed was affected by the 2020 Beachie Creek and Lionshead fires, destroying over 1500 structures and generating hazardous materials, hazard trees, erosion of sediment and toxic runoff into sensitive waterways.

The **North Santiam Watershed Council**, with the support of numerous groups including Willamette Partnership, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, and city and county agencies, has distributed straw, seed, and native plants to over 128 landowners.



Rebecca McCoun, Executive Director of the North Santiam Watershed Council, reflects upon how climate change is impacting recovery efforts:

1 Are you approaching planting any differently post-fire and in light of climate change?

We are informing landowners of our concerns about the viability of Western red cedar and Douglas fir in some areas, and are encouraging people to consider planting ponderosa pine and incense cedar, especially for landowners who are replanting properties where timber harvest is not the long term focus.

2 What does fire recovery look like in the North Santiam basin?

We have been working hard with our partners to address immediate post fire needs, straw, seed, plantings. Removing hazard trees and salvage logging is taking place before bug infestations can take hold. The local entities are working hard to identify the short term, mid term and long term needs. Given the scope and scale it will take time.

In addition to post fire recovery we are working with ODF funds to address fuels reduction on areas just outside of the Beachie Creek fire parameter. We are working with partners to educate the communities on creating defensible space and how to improve forest health through thinning excess fuels and creating fuel breaks.

(Top) Brandon and Rechelle Kirk look at saplings donated by the NSWC that will be planted in areas impacted by wildfires.

(Middle) A boy poses with a freshly planted Ponderosa pine. Multiple generations of his family lost their homes during the fires.

(Bottom) Michele Beal Evans picks up some free plants distributed by the NSWC and Arbor Day Foundation to plant in her land impacted by the fire.

3 What are some of the bottlenecks you are facing?

With COVID getting the various partners in one room to discuss the vast issues that need to be identified and addressed has been challenging. With regards to on the ground work bottlenecks have been log trucks, self loaders, trained man power to get the salvage logging implemented quickly before the burned timber is no longer salvageable. Availability of seedlings and folks to plant has also been a bottleneck.

4 As we mourn the transformation of so many beloved places are there any small reasons for hope? Are there ways to approach recovery that can position the basin for healthier forests and waterways? Anything else we can learn?

Having the community working together to recover has been a huge blessing. We really want to come together and address restoration using a holistic approach. We are working on this now. How can we replant and restore the landscape so that it is more resilient. We are trying to bring as many voices to the table so that we can make informed decisions. Where did we fail in the past and what can we do now to avoid making the same mistakes?

