

*Mission Statement:*

*Offering people of our  
community assistance  
to sustain local  
natural resources.*



Columbia Soil & Water Conservation District is an equal opportunity employer, providing services to the public without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status.

**Columbia Soil & Water  
Conservation District**

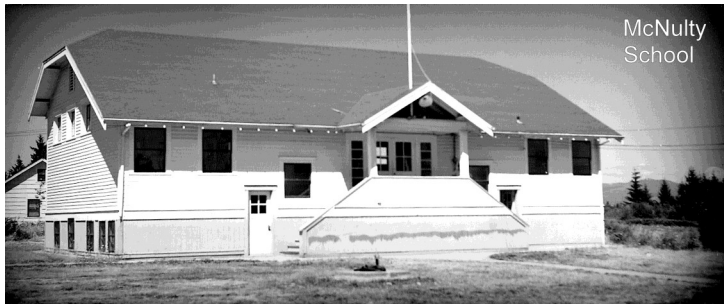
---



---

**Annual Report  
2011-2012**

## The Building Throughout the Years



1915



2009



Today

varying levels with each we have provided some assistance. We are hopeful to have 1-3 teachers from each high school come together to share their needs, share their successes and lessons learned with each other, and find out what common ground they all have so we can best help all of them together.

There is a huge potential to have a greenhouse horticulture program on each of the high school campuses. The Columbia SWCD is very interested in assisting all of them with this endeavor to provide native plants for restoration and for community projects, as well as produce a small income to pay for the maintenance, upkeep, and operation of the greenhouses.

### Outreach:

The District is taking a turn to focus more on outreach than we have in the past. We will be taking our time to make sure the workshops and classes we offer are pertinent to our county and meet the mission of the district and the needs of the residents of Columbia County. We have heard from many of the constituents of Columbia county with their interests for workshops and will be taking all of them into consideration as we move forward. We are beginning to make use of social media and other forms of communication so be on the lookout for the Columbia SWCD more and more this year.

### New Storage building:

There is one last construction project to be completed this year, a 3 bay 40' deep garage storage building with loft for archival storage. This will give us secure parking for the NRCS and SWCD vehicles and space to have all of our field equipment in one location rather than scattered across the county in personal storage spaces. The construction should be complete February of 2013.

## Looking Toward the Future

This year was full of changes and growing. We remodeled the new office building, coordinated the move and finally got settled in to the new digs in June. We added a new staff member to handle the CREP program in not only Columbia County, but Clatsop as well. And our board took precious time to work with a consultant to go back to the basic foundation of the district, reestablish policy, reformulate our mission statement and our goals to better reflect the conditions of our county and the financial status of our district so we can continue to serve our community well.

For the year of 2012-2013 we are taking a deeper look at our individual programs.

### **The Weeds program:**

With new regulations and limited funding we are evaluating our past successes and lessons learned to create options for future treatment of the noxious weeds in Columbia county, the prevention of noxious weeds that have not appeared in our county, and education of the residents of Columbia county on best management practices for handling the weeds on their property themselves. One potential option for some of our more invasive noxious weeds may include a cost-share program of some kind to spread the funding we do have out further across the county. Also to add restorative plantings in the places where weeds have been brought under control.

### **School Aged Education:**

Coordination with the High Schools in Columbia County on their Natural Resource programs and/or segments of their science classes is beginning. We have had several teachers come to us asking for assistance with curriculum this past year, and at

## 100 Years Old and Ready For Another 100 Years

Last year we told you about the purchase and redesign of the Warren Grange as our future home of the Columbia SWCD. This last year was the year of demolition and reconstruction all the while retaining some of the 100 year old charm of the McNulty School and Warren Grange the two former uses of the building respectively. Our Architect and design firm, did an amazing job taking a historic building keeping a historic feel while giving it a modern purpose and look.

This was a big project to undertake while continuing with day to day business of the Columbia SWCD in our old location, but we found help from many different arenas in our county to help with the process. We want to give a big thank you to Columbia County for allowing their former county counsel to work as a volunteer for us drafting our contracts and assisting with any contractual questions that came up throughout the project, we could not have done it without you. This not only was a valuable service in knowledge and expertise, it was a huge financial saving to the district as well. Our local architect for the project AKKAN Architecture and Design was also the project manager for the project. They worked hand in hand with the district manager to handle the day to day surprises that arise when remodeling a 100 year old building, weekly scheduled meetings on site and many other meetings as needed.

In my estimate 80 percent of the woodwork in the building is original. The floors were resurfaced, the wainscoting was reinstalled, and the window and door casing were left intact.

Windows that had been boarded up for decades by wood paneling are now providing huge amounts of natural lighting to the office.

The renovation incorporated many sustainable design features including high efficiency heating, light fixtures with occupancy sensors, low flow plumbing with ability to switch over the plumbing to flush with rain water in the future, on demand hot water, 100% natural wool insulation by Oregon Shepherd, LLC. of Rainier, OR, carpet made from recycled rubber tires, and designer resin wall panels and doors made from recycled plastic bottles, just to name a few. The landscape also included rain gardens and a bioswale with natives plants to handle and help filter the storm water runoff from the roof and the parking lot. The landscape also includes some edibles like strawberries, blueberries, and huckleberries along with the apple trees that were already on site.

The interior at present houses 7 staff between the SWCD and the NRCS, with open desks for 2 additional staff and 2 small volunteer stations. An upstairs conference room for 8-10 people and a classroom downstairs that seats 50 comfortably and a kitchen that doubles as a break room that can be used for teaching for groups like 4-H, OSU Extension, and health services. Several local community groups have already used our facilities for trainings, monthly meetings, seminars, and board retreats. And general public has also rented the space for a reasonable rate for a wedding shower, memorial service, and a book sale supporting local schools. Not only is our new home making day to day work easier with some space to grow, we have provided a very much needed meeting space for the community at-large.

## OWEB Small Grant Program

The State of Oregon has a flexible small grant program available to the residents of Columbia County. The goal of this program is to reduce human and livestock impacts to the environment, and it's priorities are locally set and funding decisions are made locally as well. The grant can typically pay for 75% of the cost of an eligible practice up to \$10,000.

### Eligible Projects Include:

- Streambank Stability or wildlife habitat.
- Heavy Use Areas for Livestock.
- Rain Collection for Livestock or Irrigation.
- Covered Manure Storage Facilities for Livestock waste.
- Culvert Replacements for Fish Passage.

### Ineligible Projects Include:

- Engineering Design, Streambank Protection not using Best Practices (ie, Rip-Rap or Rock Walls), Rain Collection solely for drinking water, or projects required .

Interested landowners should contact Tyler Joki - Resource Conservationist at [tyler.joki@columbiaswcd.com](mailto:tyler.joki@columbiaswcd.com) or 503-397-4555 x104 to inquire for availability.



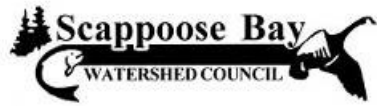
**RAIN COLLECTION**



**STREAMBANK STABILITY**



**CULVERT REPLACEMENT**



57420-2 Old Portland Road  
Warren, OR 97053  
Phone: 503-397-7904  
.cappoosebay-wc.org

### PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

The Scappoose Bay Watershed Council is working with a local landowner to replace three failing culverts on lower Honeyman Creek. The culverts are fish passage barriers, which are in extreme disrepair and in danger of failure. We plan to replace the three culverts with 40-ft span rail car bridges with funding from the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership.

The project will restore fish passage to ~1 mile of Honeyman Creek and 54 acres of tidal wetlands in the Scappoose Bay. This type of wetland habitat is critical for juvenile coho and Chinook salmon, which live within the Bay. Juvenile salmon use these highly productive wetlands to rest and feed during times of high water. Reconnecting the wetlands will not only restore salmon's access to the wetlands, but will also improve water quality and the stream's hydrology. Construction of this project is planned for July/August of 2012.



BEFORE



AFTER

If you are interested in what the SBWC does, they meet the 1st Tuesday of the month at the Scappoose Bay Watershed Council office.



# Who We Are and What We Do

The Columbia SWCD was created in 1946 and has been serving the citizens of Columbia County ever since!

## Conservation Planning:

With the assistance of the NRCS, we can create a Conservation Plan for your property. These plans help conserve your natural resources while helping to maintain and improve productivity.

## Weeds:

The Columbia SWCD is the county leader for weed control. We have numerous partners who assist us and are always happy to talk weeds with anyone!

## Outreach and Education:

Whether it's talking to landowners or school kids, we are always striving to spread the work of conservation. If you'd like us to speak to your group, JUST ASK!

## Technical Assistance:

The SWCD and it's board members have been at this for a long time! If you have a question, feel free to ask. If we don't know the answer, we have an extensive network of experts that can.

Mentoring from Network of Oregon Watershed Councils, Columbia SWCD, Tillamook Estuary Partnership, Tualatin River Watershed Council, Tillamook Bay Watershed Council, Jo Zettler and Lee Klingler.

Technical advice from experienced personnel of the ODFW, DEQ, BLM, USFWS, OWEB, NRCS, ODF, Columbia and Clatsop SWCD and River Network.

Academic support from faculty and students of Western Oregon University, Portland State University and Oregon State University.

Watershed restoration mapping and website development from Triangle GIS.

Conservation efforts of The Nature Conservancy, North Coast Land Trust, Lower Nehalem Community Trust, Western Rivers Conservancy, Pacific Wildlife Guardians and Freshwater Trust.

Volunteer project development and implementation support from Vernonia School District, SOLV, OSU Extension, Columbia County Flood Relief and Landowners.

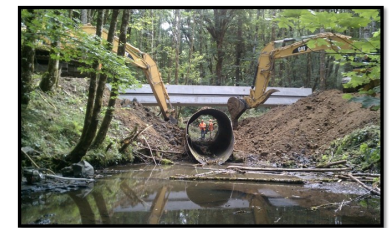
Project labor and hands-on learning from Columbia River Youth Corp, Vernonia School District - Rural Education Corps Forestry class and Natural Resource study students.

Sustainable community development and education support from Oregon Solutions, Vernonia School District, OSU Indicators Project, Salmon Fest, Oregon Heritage Days, Salmon Watch, Hands On Art and Vernonia Grange 305.

If you are interested in what the UNWC does, they meet the 4th Thursday of the month .



Pebble Creek - Completed Bridge



Pebble Creek - Culvert Removal - Weyerhaeuser Company/Siegmund Excavation and Construction

# Upper Nehalem Watershed Council

919 Bridge Street  
Veronica, OR 97064  
Phone: 503-429-2401  
www.unwc.nehalem.org



## **Upper Nehalem Watershed Council: A year in review...**

It has been a very inspiring and productive year for UNWC with the positive energy of a renewed dedicated board, complete reorganization of the council operations, dedicated and capable staff support in the office and in the field, many worthy watershed health assessment and restoration projects implemented with many more in development and the ever growing support of the community, landowners, advisors and experienced contractors. Our path is clear and our future is bright!

### **Project highlights include:**

#### Watershed Health Assessment:

Nehalem Conservation Action Plan (The Nature Conservancy/Stakeholders/Advisors)  
Rock Creek - Limiting Factors Analysis (Bio-Surveys, LLC)  
Upper Nehalem - Rapid Bio-Assessment (Bio-Surveys, LLC)  
Upper Nehalem - Temperature and Turbidity Study (DEQ, Vernonia School District)  
Nehalem Floodplain - Vegetation and Wildlife Survey of Carmichael wetland/riparian area (ODFW, USFWS, NRCS, Clatsop SWCD/Carex Consulting)

#### Watershed Restoration:

Beneke - Riparian, Salmon Habitat Improvement (ODFW, ODF, Weyerhaeuser, Hampton Affiliates/Aquatic Contracting)  
Lousignont - Salmon Habitat Improvement and Road Decommissioning (ODF, ODFW/Bighorn Logging)  
Pebble Creek - Riparian, Salmon Passage and Habitat Improvement, Road Decommissioning (ODFW, Weyerhaeuser/Quality Excavation and Aquatic Contracting, LLC)  
Upper Nehalem - Riparian Restoration (Landowners, Jones Consulting)

#### Native Plant Nursery:

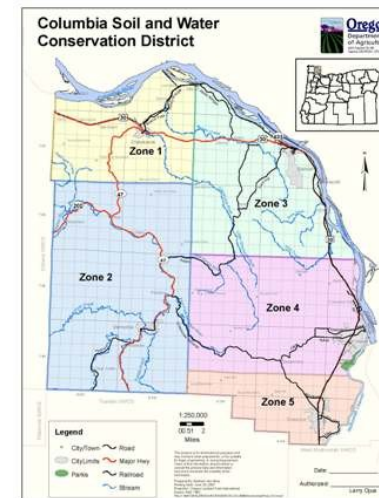
Trillium Forest - maintained and improved  
Vernonia School District - planned, funded and to be built in the fall/winter 2012/13

#### Grateful for:

Funding support from OWEB, DEQ 319 Non-Point Source Program, USFWS - Partners for Wildlife, BLM and Pacific Coast Joint Venture.

# Board of Directors

The Columbia SWCD Board of Directors is made up of citizens and landowners of Columbia County. The county is broken up into 5 zones of which there are representatives for each. There is a requirement that the director must own at least 10 acres of land to qualify. In addition, the Board has 2 "at large" positions. These can come from anywhere in the county and there is NO land requirement. Directors serve four year terms and are elected just like any other government official.



Learn more about  
being a director at our  
website:  
[columbiaswcd.com](http://columbiaswcd.com)

## **Zone 1**

Randy Bergman - Chair

## **Zone 2**

Jason Busch - Vice Chair

## **Zone 3**

Kay C. VanNatta -  
Treasurer

## **Zone 4**

Dave Freytag - Director

## **Zone 5**

Vacant

## **At Large 1**

Bill Eagle - Secretary

## **At Large 2**

Lona Pierce - Director

**The Board of Directors meet the 3rd Wednesday of  
every month at 7:30 PM in our office.**

## Meet the Staff



**Kari Olsen-Hollander , District Manager**, has been with the district for over 6 years. No two days are the same at the district office and that is what makes it enjoyable for her. The landowners are wonderful to work with and the staff (District and NRCS) make a great team.



**Tyler Joki, Resource Conservationist**, has been with the District since August of 2009. He has a BS and MS in Biology from Portland State University and a Graduate Certificate in River Restoration. Tyler handles the Technical Assistance aspects of the District's mission, as well as project coordination and landowner outreach



**Nathan Herr, Riparian Specialist**, has been with the District since January of 2012. He has a BS in Environmental Science and a minor in Fisheries from Oregon State University. He has been hired by the District to provide assistance with landowners to develop and establish riparian buffers throughout the county using the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.



**Malysa Page, Office Assistant**, has been with the District since April of 2009. Malysa handles the day to day operations in the office and enjoys doing education and outreach events.



**Don Mehlhoff, District Conservationist for NRCS**, has over 28 years with NRCS. He began working for the agency in North Dakota followed by several years in eastern Washington, northern Idaho and now Oregon. He has been a certified crop advisor since 1997 and is certified as a journeyman conservation planner with Oregon NRCS since 2000.

Outreach is an integral part of our Council activities. We hosted two presentations in the watershed by Irene Martin, Northwest author and co-author of the new book "Flight of the Bumble Bee: The Columbia River Packers Association and a Century in the Pursuit of Fish."

LCRWC Council member Gary Soderstrom serves on the ODFW Restoration and Enhancement Board which had its July meeting in Clatskanie. Council members and staff were able to meet informally with the R & E Board members at a dinner hosted by Gary and learn more about funding opportunities from this body.

The Lower Columbia River Salmon Conservation and Recovery Plan is entering the implementation phase. The LCRWC is participating in the development of a project prioritization plan which will inform project implementation. This is another challenging process as we navigate through the many conflicting views of implementers, regulators and landowners to reach the goal of successful salmon recovery.

The LCRWC continues in its efforts to advance its mission to foster better stewardship and understanding of the Lower Columbia River Watershed resources in Columbia County and establish healthy partnerships with landowners and agencies alike.

If you are interested in what the LCRWC does, they meet the 2nd Tuesday of the month at the Columbia SWCD office.







12589 Hwy 30  
Clatskanie, OR 97016  
Phone: 503-728-9015  
www.lcrwc.com

The restoration business continues to become more challenging each year. There are many suitable projects in the watershed, but with increasing regulation, lack of agreement between regulators and permittees and the limited funding available, the LCRWC is finding that the road to implementation of these projects is a long and arduous one. The growing requirements are also adding considerable cost to project development and ultimately to implementation. It appears that there will not be a lessening of these obstacles only an increase.

Much of 2012 has been devoted to project development, design and permitting along with research, outreach and education. One of the highlights has been working with ODFW on the Chum recovery project. Fish traps were installed in both the Clatskanie River and Conyers Creek. Preliminary data indicates significant populations, in both streams, of Coho, steelhead, and cutthroat trout smolts and Chinook fry, but no Chum recorded.

After much time and effort put forth to bring funders and regulators together to agree upon the mechanics of large wood placement we thought that implementation of a large wood project on the upper Clatskanie River was a sure thing for 2012, but final design came too late to be able to make implementation a 2012 reality. Another large wood project on Carcus Creek has also been delayed due to our unseasonably dry weather and the closure of the woods to harvest activity.

Limited funding for treatment of invasive species has limited our ability to expand control efforts of Knotweed Complex, Yellow Flag Iris and Purple Loosestrife. In order to maintain momentum on control efforts we have targeted specific sites to continue treatment so as not to lose the advantage that has been gained over the past few years.

A survey of Clatskanie River culverts, in partnership with ODFW, has allowed us to prioritize culverts in need of improvement on the upper Clatskanie River. 65% design has been completed on six crossings. Implementation funding is being applied for with a 2014 implementation target for the first two crossings.

## Meet the Staff (continued)



**Dee Robinson, NCB Program Support Technician for NRCS**, began working for the Northwest Oregon RC&D Council in 1987, and was converted over to SCS/NRCS in 1989. Over the past 23 years, Dee has served in many different capacities, providing assistance to RC&D and the North Coast Basin NRCS.



**Bill Bennett** is employed by the Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership to help with the identification, design, and planning of habitat restoration projects in collaboration with the Scappoose Bay and the Lower Columbia River Watershed Councils. Bill works with the District to help find and write grants to get these projects accomplished.



**Dan McLain** has worked for the Conservation District for several years. He has done outreach with the local schools in the past and currently is the district's certified weed control technician. Each Spring he also teaches workshops at Hudson Park Elementary's outdoor school.

## Contact Us

**Address:** 35285 Millard Road; St. Helens, OR 97051

**Phone:** (503) 397-4555

**Fax:** (503) 366-0864

**Email:** [information@columbiaswcd.com](mailto:information@columbiaswcd.com)

**Website:** [www.columbiaswcd.com](http://www.columbiaswcd.com)



# Financial Report

## CONDENSED FINANCIAL INFORMATION

	June 30, 2011	June 30, 2012	Increase (Decrease)
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 164,932	\$ 255,925	\$ 90,993
Property tax receivable	31,123	39,724	8,601
Grant funds receivable	88,299	63,168	(25,131)
Capital assets	275,275	1,175,710	900,435
Total assets	559,629	1,534,527	974,898
Accounts payable	21,958	3,814	(18,144)
Long-term loan	0	911,904	911,904
Total liabilities	21,958	915,718	893,760
Fund balance	262,396	355,559	93,163
Invested in capital assets	275,275	263,806	(11,469)
Total net assets	\$ 537,671	\$ 618,809	\$ 81,138

	Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2011	Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2012	Favorable (Unfavorable)
Federal and Oregon grant revenue	\$ 199,404	\$ 366,030	\$ 166,626
Property taxes	386,614	410,356	23,742
Interest income	1,171	796	(375)
Other revenues	28,796	0	(28,796)
Total governmental-type revenues	615,985	777,182	161,197
Personal services	176,996	216,640	39,644
Materials and services	253,172	476,010	222,838
Depreciation	0	3,394	(3,394)
Total governmental-type expenses	430,168	696,044	(265,876)
Increase (decrease) in net assets	\$ 185,817	\$ 81,138	\$ (104,679)

### FINANCIAL CONTACT

Columbia Soil & Water Conservation District's financial statements are designed to present users (citizens, taxpayers, customers, investors, and creditors) with a general overview of the District's finances and to demonstrate the District's accountability. If you have questions about the report or need additional financial information, please contact the District at: Columbia Soil & Water Conservation District, 35285 Millard Road, St. Helens, Oregon, 97051.

## Weeds

NPDES Permitting and Funding challenges will force the District and its partners to remake the weed program next fiscal year.

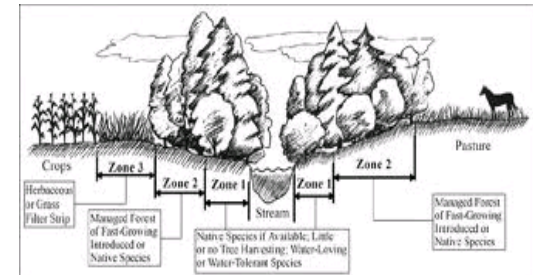
With the elimination of BLM RAC funding and the de-prioritization of Columbia County's Priority weeds on the state level will leave the district with difficult choices to make in the upcoming fiscal year.

On top of the funding challenges, the inclusion of Soil and Water Conservation District Weed Programs statewide into the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements will either significantly limit the area the district is allowed to cover county wide to be under the umbrella of the state license, or introduce changes into our equipment, training and operating procedures to comply with the new Federal Reporting and Record-keeping requirements.

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter to stay up to date as our weed program evolves next fiscal year.

# New Face, New Program

Nathan Herr started volunteering with the District in September of 2011 and became the District's Riparian Specialist in charge of our CREP program in January of this year. Nathan graduated from Oregon State University in 2011 with a degree in Environmental Science and a minor in Fisheries and Wildlife. In his free time he likes to fish, hunt and hike with his wife and two dogs. With the recent purchase of their first house, he is excited to start working on conservation techniques on his own property.



### What is CREP?

We have a new program in the county to help stream adjacent landowners. The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) helps landowners pay to plant trees, fence, and create off-channel water next to the stream bank. This will help prevent erosion and create a healthy riparian habitat while landowners get compensated for taking part of their land out of production. This program will help pay for the materials for planting, fencing, off channel watering, site preparation and time for each of the practices. With either 10 or 15 year commitments to the program, CREP will pay an annual payment for each year enrolled, with the amount depending on cropping history and soil types.

For more information about CREP, or to see if you qualify, please contact Nathan at 503-397-4555 ext. 101 or at [nathan.herr@columbiaswcd.com](mailto:nathan.herr@columbiaswcd.com)



## Projects & Outreach

By working with various local partners (NRCS, Watershed Councils) the Columbia SWCD implemented the following conservation projects and practices.

- 3 acres of Heavy Use Protection installed,
- 1 manure compost facility,
- 36.7 acres transitioned to Organic crops,
- 189 acres of cropland Best Management Practices,
- 168 acres of Irrigation Water Management,
- 59 acres of wetland/habitat management and restoration,
- 15 acres of upland wildlife habitat management,
- 75 acres of native planting,
- 630 feet of streambank protection,
- 282 acres of Livestock Best Management Practices,
- 13,361 feet of livestock fencing,
- 240 acres prescribed grazing,
- 49 Forest management plans covering 2,888 acres,
- 146 acres of Forest stand improvement,
- 2,000 feet of access roads,
- 500+ acres of weed management,
- 1 Roof Runoff structures to collect runoff and reduce impacts,
- 1.3 acres of Rain Gardens/Bioswales to filter runoff and recharge groundwater.

# Projects & Outreach

Columbia SWCD conducted the following outreach and education activities:

- 81 Landowners provided with Technical Assistance
- 90 Assistance Visits leading to 16 Projects Planned
- 1,886 landowners attended various workshops, presentations, and displays including topics such as:
  - Agricultural Water Quality,
  - Conservation Planning and available programs,
  - Forest Health,
  - Invasive species management,
  - Rain Collection and Rain Gardens,
  - Mud and manure management,
  - Water quality/quantity issues.
- 285 students in local K-12 public schools were presented information on topics of water quality, forestry, soils, and watershed health,
- Local civic groups (Kiwanis and S. Columbia County Chamber of Commerce) in the county were presented information about what the district offers the community,
- 3,135 Landowners contacted through targeted outreach mailings and site visits,
- 600 brochures and information packets were passed out to local residents at local events such as the Clatskanie Health and Safety Fair, or mailed as part of target outreach,
- 3 Tours were conducted highlighting the Districts Projects and local issues,



**Patterson  
Planting**

**Sage  
Heavy  
Use Pad**



**Merrill  
Creek  
Planting**



**CRYC Mer-  
rill Creek  
Planting**

