

# Columbia County Soil and Water Conservation District



Photo Courtesy of Tom Shultz

## Annual Report 2012-2013





## Our Mission

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

## Our Goals

- Effective Natural Resource Management
- Local and Regional Conservation Partnerships
- Conservation Planning and Implementation
- Watershed Enhancement
- Invasive Species Identification and Control
- Informed Citizens and Public Representatives
- Fiscal Accountability
- Financial Assistance for Conservation Effects

The Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District  
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Phone: 503.397.4555

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We are open Monday - Friday 8:30 am - 4:30 pm





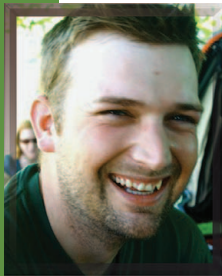
# The Staff



**KARI HOLLANDER, DISTRICT MANAGER** lives in Rainier, and has been with the district since September 2006. The ability to see a diamond in the rough is one of her greatest gifts, and to be a part of the growth of the Columbia SWCD has been great fun. The diversity of projects and people the district has the opportunity to work with make each day a new adventure and more enjoyable all the time. Outside of the office she loves to travel, spend time with her kids, and takes time to mentor young women; encouraging them to pursue their dreams, one on one and at conferences in the US and abroad.



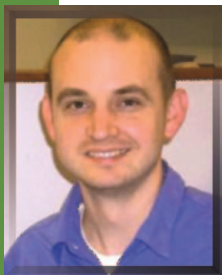
**MALYSSA PAGE, OPERATIONS ADMINISTRATOR** has been with the District since April of 2009. Up until a year ago, she was a lifelong resident of Columbia County. Malysa is excited to be helping the members of her community to improve their land. Malysa handles the day to day operations in the office and enjoys doing education and outreach events. When not working, Malysa enjoys cooking, baking, reading, watching lots of sports and playing with her adorable cat Sharkie.



**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. Tyler has served in both the Marine Corps and Coast Guard and is a die-hard Portland Trail Blazers fan.



**NATHAN HERR, RIPARIAN SPECIALIST** has been with the District since January of 2012. He is a lifelong member of Columbia County. 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 (CREP). In his spare time, Nathan enjoys being outdoors with his dogs and wife or out hunting and fishing as much as possible.

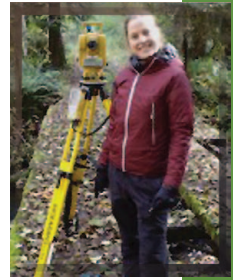


**BILL BENNETT, FIELD RESTORATION ECOLOGIST** is employed by the Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership to help with the identification, design, and planning of habitat restoration projects in collaboration with the Scappoose Bay and the Lower Columbia River Watershed Councils. Bill works with the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



# The Staff

**ROSLYN GRAY, P.E., NORTH COAST BASIN ENGINEER**, worked for Vermont NRCS for three years prior to joining Oregon NRCS in 2010. As a northwest native, she is thrilled to assist Oregon farmers and foresters in their conservation efforts. Roslyn enjoys the breadth of field engineer responsibilities and spends her free time on the hiking trail, on a baking project, and on crafting a home with her husband and new baby boy.



**DEE ROBINSON, PROGRAM SUPPORT TECH** 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. She and her husband, Vic, live in Forest Grove, where they also own and operate a music store, Vic's Guitar Cave. They enjoy music, reading, and the love of their life is their Australian Shepherd, Kapo.



**DON MEHLHOFF, DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST** has over 27 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. Don and his family have resided in St. Helens since 2000 when he accepted the NRCS position here. "My favorite thing about working for NRCS is the opportunity to work with farmers, ranchers and forest operators. The chance to visit their farms, discuss their operations and their interest in conservation makes the job rewarding. I have typically learned more from them than I have probably provided in return."



# The Board



Zone 1:  
Randy Bergman - Chair

Zone 2:  
Jason Busch - Vice Chair

Zone 3:  
Kay C. VanNatta - Treasurer

Zone 4:  
Dave Freytag - Director

Zone 5:  
Craig Ellis - Interim Director

At Large 1 :  
Bill Eagle - Secretary

At Large 2:  
Lona Pierce - Director



## 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 like any other government official.

The Board of Directors meets the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 7:30 PM in our 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:

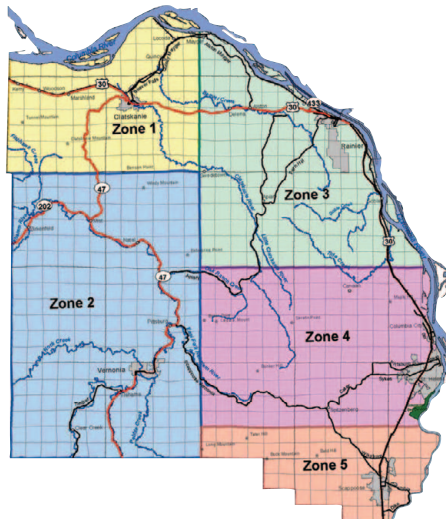
The Columbia SWCD is the county leader for weed control. We have numerous partners who assist us and are always happy to talk weeds with anyone!

## 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 its 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.



## Director Candidates Sought Your Opportunity to Serve has Arrived!

Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District's Board of Directors is composed of seven individual members who come from many different walks of life. Each director must be a resident of the district, a registered voter and own or manage at least 10 acres within their specific zone area. An exception is made for the At-Large position director who has no acreage or zone requirements to meet. All positions require a commitment to serve the district for a full four (4) year term. (Note: the positions are strictly voluntary, and no salaries are paid).

## The District has four positions available in November 2014 Director Candidates will be needed for Zones 1, 3, 5 and the At-Large #2

If you or someone you know is interested in soil, water and other natural resource issues, and likewise would be interested in such a position, the Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) would like to hear from you. Candidates can begin filing their required paperwork from July 28, 2014 through August 26, 2014 for this November's general election. Additional information and application packets are available by calling Columbia SWCD at 503-397-4555 or visiting the office. Or through the District's website: [www.columbiaswcd.com](http://www.columbiaswcd.com), or by contacting the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), Natural Resources Division at 503-986-4775.

*New position terms begin in January 2015.* Board members meet each month, on the 3rd Wednesday evening at 7:30 PM unless posted otherwise.





The US Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA–NRCS) is the federal partner with a long history of working together with conservation districts. This seamless partnership dates back to the original formation of conservation districts throughout the nation (more than 70 years ago).

In the last few years the NRCS has concentrated its efforts and funding on the following:

We have assisted more than 100 forest owners with the development of forest management plans county-wide. These forest plans developed by professional foresters help guide the landowners decisions to meet their forestland goals and objectives.

In 2013, after the local work group identified forestland issues as a high priority, NRCS developed a conservation implementation strategy to improve forest health and diversity. Through the use of certain conservation practices, the concept is to improve the structure and composition of forestland that are currently young mono-cultural stands with very little historic diversity. In 2013, NRCS accepted more than 20 applications for this initiative offered through a farm bill program called the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Through this initiative, private forest owners that fall within the targeted watersheds will install practices like pre-commercial thinning, brush management and tree planting, that in the long term will improve forest diversity. NRCS provides a flat rate payment for each installed practice. This initiative is planned to continue for the next 5 years.

Beginning in 2014, NRCS and the Columbia SWCD have also added an additional conservation implementation strategy. This initiative concentrates efforts to improve grassland habitat for the recovery efforts of the endangered Columbian white-tailed deer. Practices that improve the deer's grazing, browse and cover will be promoted on farmland within the Columbia River floodplains in the Clatskanie and Rainier areas. (See the map showing the watershed boundaries for this program). Although the purpose of this initiative is habitat improvements for Columbian white-tailed deer, the practices will also benefit landowners wanting to improve their grassland productivity and protect their natural resources. This initiative is also planned to occur over the next 5 years.

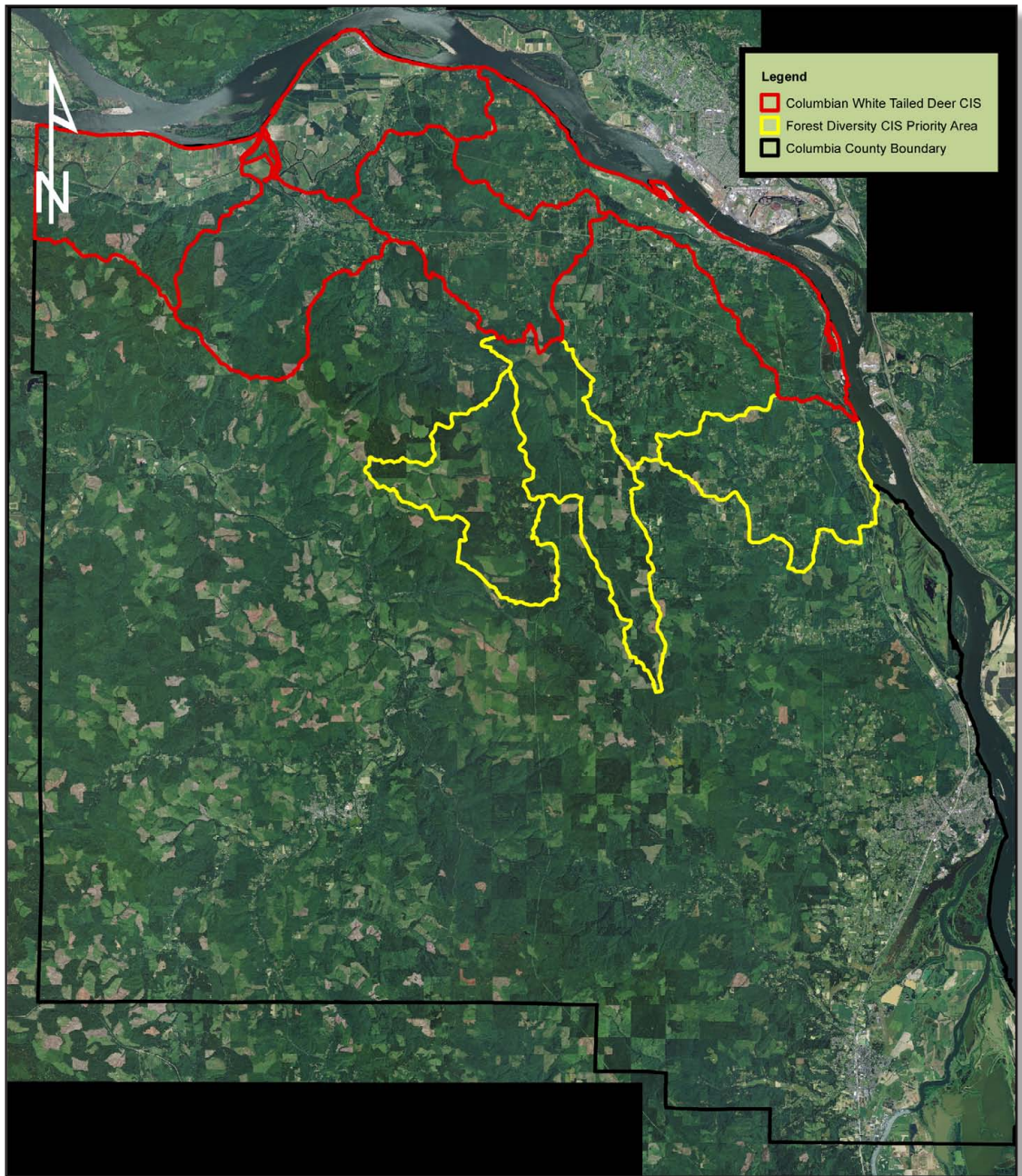
Besides these very specific resource issues in specific target areas of the county, NRCS also offers some national initiatives. One of these is the organic initiative. People that are operating organic farms or are in the process of transitioning to an organic operation may be eligible for this initiative. The organic initiative helps organic operators address natural resource issues like nutrient management, pest management and water quality problems on their farms.

Another national initiative available county wide is the seasonal high tunnel initiative. This program helps small locally grown produce operations by installing seasonal high tunnels that help stretch their growing season, providing fresh produce to local markets for a longer period of time.

For more information about programs and assistance available through the NRCS and the Columbia SWCD, contact us at 503-397-4555 or stop by and see us at 35285 Millard Road, St. Helens, OR 97051.



# Conservation Implementation Strategy Areas Columbia County, NRCS 2013 - 2014







## 2012-2013 Annual Report

The 2012-2013 fiscal year was another productive period for the Scappoose Bay Watershed Council in continuing its mission of supporting the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds. The Council's activities during this time included the completion of a limiting factors analysis, correction of 3 fish-passage barriers, restoration and enhancement along our creeks and natural areas, control of invasive plants, service learning projects with local students, and engaging the community in watershed-related activities. We also saw a change in Coordinator early in 2013 with the departure of Janelle St. Pierre and promotion of Chas McCoy, who had been Restoration Projects Manager for the Council since 2008.

### Project Highlights

**Scappoose Bay Watershed Limiting Factors Analysis:** The Limiting Factors Analysis (LFA) was completed in 2012 and is the culmination of several year's worth of data gathered by the Watershed Council and its consultants. The LFA identifies the dominant processes and habitat characteristics that currently limit the production of coho salmon in the watershed. The LFA focuses on three main sub-watersheds: Milton Creek, North Scappoose Creek, and South Scappoose Creek. The analysis identified habitat conditions that restrict the success of coho salmon at multiple life stages and provides restoration actions that address these limitations. The most common limiting factors across the watershed are elevated summer temperatures from solar exposure, lack of large woody debris in the creeks, and diminished beaver populations. Although the LFA focuses specifically on coho salmon, most, if not all, of the restoration actions being proposed will be beneficial to a wide array of flora and fauna and will have benefits to water quality and the local community.

**City of Scappoose Floodplain Restoration:** Partnering with the City of Scappoose, the Watershed Council worked with a private consultant to develop a floodplain restoration alternatives analysis for a portion of South Scappoose Creek that includes the City's own Veteran's Park. A technical memorandum was produced that details an analysis of potential restoration alternatives and associated benefits, costs, and constraints. The goal of the document is to provide the necessary information for the City, SBWC, and property owners to evaluate a range of alternatives and select and prioritize specific restoration actions. The Watershed Council will use this information to work with the stakeholders to identify a desired alternative and seek funding to design and implement restoration projects along this stretch of creek.

**Honeyman Creek Tidal Restoration:** The Honeyman Creek Tidal Restoration project addressed tidal floodplain connectivity and fish passage issues at three road crossing along the lower reach of Honeyman Creek. The road crossings had undersized culverts that had either failed or were failing and needed to be addressed. The watershed council received funding from the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership to study the site and design a restoration plan to replace the culverts with channel-spanning bridges. The new bridges increased tidal floodplain access to over 40 acres and restored fish access to 1.6 miles of habitat on Honeyman Creek. Water quality and native plant communities are likely to improve as tidal function is restored. The project also helped the landowner maintain access to areas of their property while promoting better habitat.

Failing culverts along Honeyman Creek are removed...



...and replaced with channel-spanning bridges to improve fish passage and tidal connection with Scappoose Bay.





Saint Helens High School Service Learning: The Watershed Council obtained funding from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board to work with the natural resources students from St. Helens High School and science students at St. Helens Middle School to incorporate service learning activities into their curriculum. Students from the high school classes mentor students from the middle school science classes in natural resource topics such as habitat enhancement, native and non-native plants, and stewardship. The Watershed Council is also working with these students to enhance the wetland at St. Helens Middle School, providing students the opportunity to apply the concepts they learn from the class into the physical environment. SBWC is also providing native plants from its native plant nursery for students to plant and enhance the wetland where non-native weeds are being removed.

Scappoose Bay Watershed Native Plant Center: The Watershed Council's native plant nursery became an officially licensed producer of native plants by the Oregon Department of Agriculture in 2012. The Native Plant Center produced approximately 5800 native plants from over 50 different plant species in 2012. This effort was made possible by dedicated volunteers that are composed of local Master Gardeners and native plant enthusiasts. Plants produced are available for sale to the public but almost 90% of the plants produced end up on habitat enhancement projects in our watershed.



# LCRWC Annual Report

## October 2013

I love it when a plan comes together! Some projects require more coordination effort than others but when the goal is achieved the sigh of relief can be heard around the County! Such is the case with the Kloppman Large Wood project on the upper Clatskanie River. Perseverance does pay off and after over two years of planning, designing and funding more than 40 logs and root wads were successfully placed in 1800 linear feet of the Upper Clatskanie River. We will be monitoring several aspects of this project to inform us on the best approach for future placements.

Wetland enhancement to increase fish habitat is a priority of the LCRWC. This fall we were able to implement the Louisiana Swamp wetland enhancement project. This project consisted of a levee breach in a 43 acre parcel of under-utilized agricultural land along the Westport Slough at the mouth of Tandy Creek. A partnership with the landowner, the Lower Columbia Tree Farm, made this project possible. Over 200 pieces of large wood was installed to provide fish refugia and habitat for other wildlife. 4000' of off channel habitat was developed and 1500' feet of levee was removed. Planting of wetland shrubs, trees and grasses will take place this winter. This project gave us the added benefit of being able to employ a local construction company and provide local jobs along with habitat restoration. This project has already been visited by Senator Maria Cantwell's staff and BPA staff. We look forward to seeing the development of this project and using it as a model for future similar projects in the watershed.

Funding for the Council administration and for project development still presents challenges. We are continuing to build upon our relationships with the Columbia SWCD and the Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership as partners and utilizing the skill sets provided by their staffs to enlarge our capacity and to bring projects to the ground.

We have applied for funding to update and expand our Council Action Plan to develop a 5-year road map for future projects. This will allow us to sharpen our strategic approach, to increase our effectiveness and maximize our investments.

Limited funding for treatment of invasive species has limited our ability to expand control efforts of Knotweed Complex, Yellow Flag Iris and Purple Loosestrife. This year we made several placements of Scotch Broom Bio-Control seed eating beetles and continue to develop a working relationship with Georgia-Pacific in improving their weed control program.

We have continued to pursue funding opportunities for replacement of several culverts on the upper Clatskanie River. 65% design has been completed on six crossings with a 2014 target for replacement of two culverts. The Columbia County Road Department is a significant partner in this project.

Outreach to the community continues to be a priority. One of our more popular events this year was a Rain Garden Workshop. Maria Cahill of Green Girl Land Development Solutions was the presenter and the event was held at the Clatskanie PUD using the working rain garden that they had installed as our workshop.

Advancing our 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 continues to be the goal of the LCRWC.





# Columbia SWCD Led Programs and Projects

## Columbian White-tailed Deer Habitat Improvement Efforts

Habitat fragmentation, impassable fencing, and lack of quality forage are some of the primary limiting factors facing deer populations on the highly important privately owned lands within the Lower Columbia floodplain. Based upon recent efforts and observations by the USFWS and ODFW on refuge lands, availability of forage and proper management of agricultural lands will significantly improve the landscape for CWTD and allow for recovery of endangered population.

By working collaboratively and voluntarily with wildlife managers, local agricultural operators, and partner organizations, we plan to assist with the installation of agricultural practices that are both beneficial for the agricultural operations as well as the endangered Columbian White-tailed Deer.

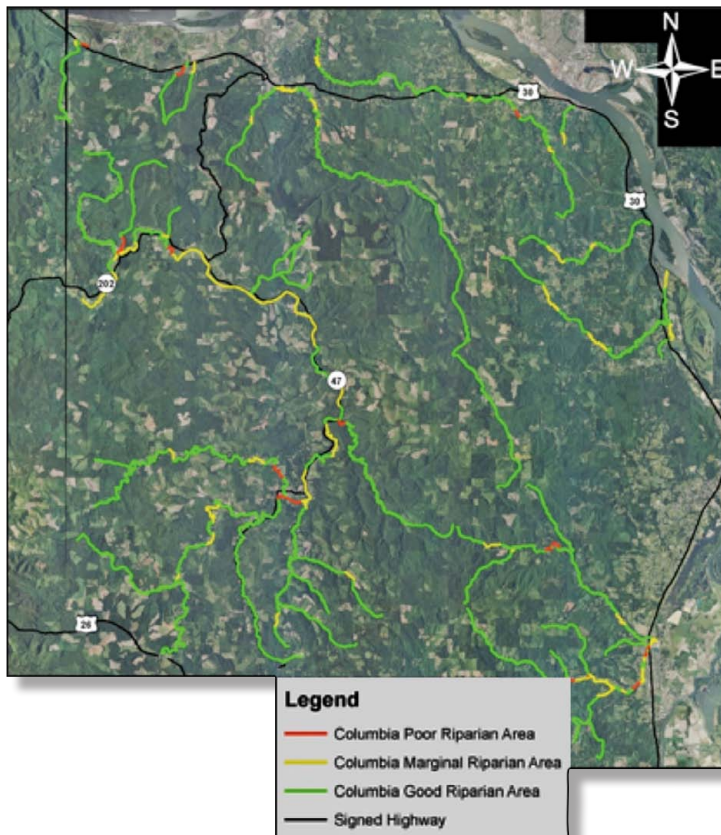
## CREP

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.

This year, there were two new contracts as well as one renewal, totaling 60.9 acres into the program. These contracts were all in the Upper Nehalem Watershed, and all on the Nehalem River.

A riparian survey was also conducted this year for a targeted outreach campaign in the CREP program. Through aerial photographs and visual site assessments, the county was evaluated for the overall riparian condition. This assessment shows that our county has overall good riparian health, and helped develop a focused outreach campaign for the areas that needed help. This outreach led to several projects and landowner technical assistance.

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





# Columbia SWCD Accomplishments 2012-2013

Practice Name	Pr. Unit	Land Unit Acres	Applied Amount	Applied Count
Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan	no	9.5	1	1
Forest Management Plan	no	4,601.50	70.00	70
Composting Facility	no	3.8	1	1
On Farm Composting	ac	170	170	1
Cropland Improvements	ac	234.6	244.9	20
Pond	no	9.2	1	1
Fence	ft	184.6	7919	5
Irrigation Improvements	ac	225.8	281.5	11
Pasture and Hayland Improvements	ac	5162.9	1792.9	89
Planting and Maintenance	ac	998.2	782.9	24
Access Road	ft	126	656	2
Heavy Use Area Protection	ac	2	0.5	1
Watering Facility	no	42.7	9	5
Pipeline	ft	70.8	4372	5
Pumping Plant	no	177	3	3
Roof Runoff Structure	no	2	1	1
Spring Development	no	8.8	1	1
Wildlife Habitat Management	ac	1171.2	838.7	27
Forest Stand Improvement	ac	2812.9	256	17
Wildlife Structures	no	29.8	41	5
Seasonal High Tunnel System for Crops	sq ft	1	2,000.00	1
Pesticide Reducing Practices	ac	1350.4	1112.9	50
Recycle 100% of farm lubricants	no	2551.8	23	23
Locally grown and marketed farm products	ac	1779.8	1780.4	45
Stream Habitat Improvement	ft	27	2550	2
Pollinator Habitat	ac	1205.2	2.8	3

<b>Totals</b>	
Acres Worked On	22,958.50
Practices Implemented	414
Dollars Brought into Columbia County for Implemented Practices	\$439,207.06
Landowner Contacted or Provided with Technical Assistance	638



## COLUMBIA SWCD Summary Balance Sheet As of June 30, 2013

What does Columbia County get for their tax dollars

- Increased staff to address client inquiries
- Quicker turn around for field visits
- Ability to expand our program to include School aged education opportunities
- Other Agencies confidence that the SWCD is stable, opening up additional funding opportunities
- Leveraging the tax base for 2013-2014 by over 600% Bringing those dollars into the Columbia County Economy.

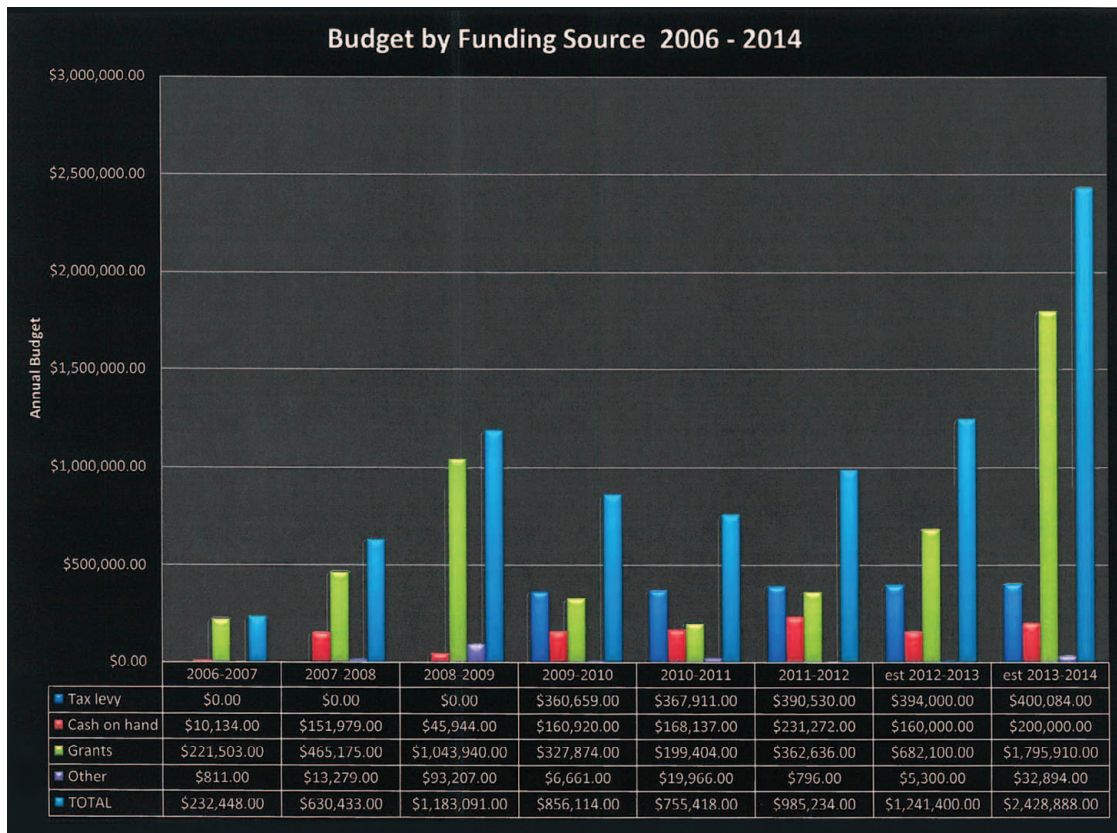
Resources for other local government agencies

- Review LDS applications and field referrals for many different land use issues.
- Partner with the Roads department when working on bridges and culverts.
- Historic documents available for viewing
- Resource for drainage district, Improvement companies, and diking districts.
- Resources for Local school districts Ag and Natural Resource Programs
- And Many more.

	Jun 30, 13
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
Checking/Savings	153,889.80
Accounts Receivable	64,952.63
Other Current Assets	111,539.50
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	330,381.93
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	1,419,816.92
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>1,750,198.85</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>	
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	
Accounts Payable	64,462.63
Other Current Liabilities	827,365.22
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	891,827.85
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	891,827.85
<b>Equity</b>	858,371.00
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>1,750,198.85</b>

Audit available for review at the district office.

## A Lot Has Changed In The Last 7 Years





# Scappoose Creek - Strand Streambank Stabilization Project





# Rainier High School Greenhouse

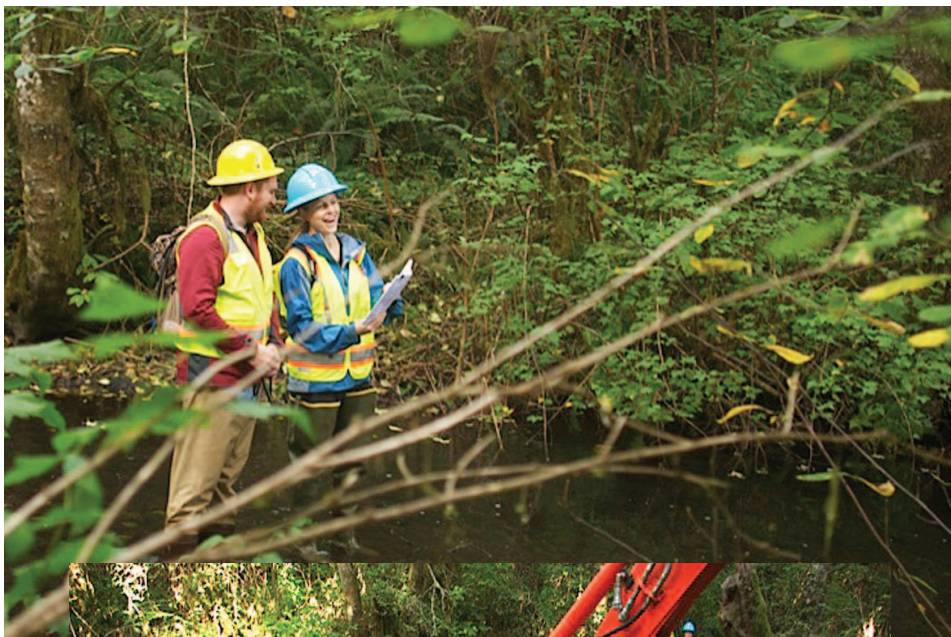




## Private Landowner and Natural Resource Agencies Partner to Improve Fish Habitat in the Clatskanie River

Daniel Kloppman owns Nicholls Tree Farm, 533 acres of forestland in Rainier spanning the Clatskanie River for approximately two and a half miles. Dan started working at Nicholls Tree Farm in 1983 when he was just 16 years old. Back then Roger and Lynn Nicholls ran a Christian work program for troubled boys on the farm. Between 1963 and 1988 the Nicholls took in 75 kids, giving them a loving home and teaching them the value of hard work on their land. Dan came to the Nicholls through CETA, a governmental program designed to assist people into the workforce. Although Dan was not one of their foster children, he developed a very special bond with the Nicholls. He refers to Roger and Lynn as "Dad" and "Mom" and considers himself adopted by them "in heart." After highschool Dan moved out to Rainier and, at the age of 18, was in charge of running the kid crews. Several years later when Roger was diagnosed with a terminal cancer, he sat down with Dan and had a heart-to-heart with him. Roger told Dan that he thought of him as a son and that he was leaving the farm to him because he knew Dan would continue their legacy of good stewardship and Christian values.

Now Dan lives on the property with his wife and two young sons who help him with his logging and forestry operations. He sometimes brings kids from local Christian churches up to help with manual labor, passing on the tradition his parents started of teaching children the value of hard work and caring for the land. Additionally, both Dan and his mother, Lynn, are members of the Lower Columbia River Watershed Council and consider environmental stewardship an important part of the work they do on their land. Dan takes great pride in managing his land for the future, noting that if you "treat it right, [the land] will take care of you." He is teaching his sons the same values in the hopes that when they inherit the land they will be able to make a living off of it like he has.



The Clatskanie River, on which Dan's property is located, is home to several species of salmon including cutthroat trout, steelhead salmon, and a population of federally threatened coho salmon. In the first half of the 1900s the Clatskanie River was one of many rivers that underwent splash damming, a process in which trees are harvested and floated down the river as a means of easily transporting them. The result of this practice was untold damage to riparian areas and aquatic habitat from logs slamming into riverbanks, crushing and removing natural features like downed trees and rocks, and scarring riverbeds. Aquatic ecosystems were further compromised as a result of the removal of large woody debris from the river, following the theory at the time that it impeded fish passage. The results of these historical practices included the loss of quality spawning areas and materials, reduced in-stream habitat diversity and protective cover for fish, and a loss of floodplain connectivity. The diminished quality of in-stream habitat is a serious challenge to the ability of local fish populations to reproduce and for juveniles to survive the winter in-stream before migrating.

As part of their efforts to restore riparian areas in the Clatskanie Watershed, the Lower Columbia River Watershed Council (LCRWC) and The Columbia County Soil and Water Conservation District (CCSWCD) partnered with the Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to initiate a project to replace large wood in the Clatskanie River. The project would never have been possible, however, without Dan's consent and involvement. Dan has a long history of working with NRCS to restore and enhance natural conditions on his property. In the past NRCS has helped Dan upgrade small culverts, construct approximately a mile and a half of forest roads, and replace a culvert with a span bridge to improve fish passage. The large wood project was a natural next step in continuing to improve fish habitat in this section of the Clatskanie River.

After receiving consent from Dan to do the project in 2008, LCRWC applied for an OWEB (Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board) grant which provided about two thirds of the funding for the project with NRCS providing the other third through EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program). NRCS also contributed engineering design and technical assistance throughout the project. NRCS engineers used methods outlined in the DSL Guide to Large Wood and Boulder Placement and methods that mimic natural processes in designing the plan for placement of logs, rootwads, and boulders in the river.

Fifty three key pieces of large wood from trees harvested from Dan's tree farm were installed in the river's mainstem using existing trees as pinchpoints. This ensured that the pieces were anchored and would not be destabilized during high flows. Dan supplied materials from his tree farm as well as equipment and performed much of the installation himself. He was assisted by another local forest operator and LCRWC board member, Casey Vanetta, who contributed excavation equipment and also donated rootwads from his property. The project was completed this summer and, according to Dan, things went pretty much as planned. He noted that working with NRCS staff was a very pleasant experience and that "everyone was cheerful and willing to help." He also appreciated that NRCS handled all of the necessary paperwork.

By restoring large wood pieces to the river, natural resource managers hoped to improve fish habitat by creating greater in-stream diversity, increasing the retention of good spawning gravel, encouraging healthier insect populations, increasing floodplain connectivity, and creating good over-wintering habitat for juvenile salmon. Ten to fifteen years ago, reports suggested that the population of coho salmon in the Clatskanie River only consisted of about 300 individuals. Today reports indicate that there are approximately 1500 coho salmon returning annually to spawn. While managers hope to see this number reach 2500, there is good reason to be hopeful.





# The Meeting Room



The Columbia SWCD meeting room accommodates groups up to 50. It is free for community groups and non profits. There is a charge of \$75 for private parties. We have a fully equipped kitchen that can also be used. If you are interested in using the meeting space, please contact Malysa Page at 503.397.4555 x. 100 or [Malysa.page@columbiaswcd.com](mailto:Malysa.page@columbiaswcd.com)



## Testimonials

*This meeting room is a top notch place to have a formal meeting, a family get-together, a party, or even an open house. Very nice, modern, updated facility, and a commercial kitchen that is absolutely beautiful and well equipped. My first choice to rent!*

*Rene'e Hafeman*

*"We have used the Columbia Soil & Water Conservation District meeting room on a few occasions for Board and Leadership Retreats and Workshops. The facility is a great option for our group of 10-15 people; it is comfortable and easily accessible. We plan to utilize the room again in the future."*

*Kevin P. Owens, P.E., General Manager, Columbia River PUD*

*We really enjoyed your space and appreciate you letting us use it. It was beautiful and was so nice to have a comfortable and equipped place to hold our training. We are truly appreciative of your generosity.*

*Katie, SAFE of Columbia County*

# K - 6 Summer Education Fun

Look for more information in Spring 2014 for next year's game

## The Game

### What is geocaching?

Geocaching is a real-world, outdoor treasure hunting game using GPS-enabled devices. Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the geocache (container) hidden at that location.

### What is the meaning of the word geocaching?

The word Geocaching refers to GEO for geography, and to CACHING, the process of hiding a cache. A cache in computer terms usually refers to information stored in memory to make it faster to retrieve, but the term is also used in hiking/camping as a hiding place for concealing and preserving provisions.



Are you there?!?

Sonja, Andrew, Joey and Bill Morton shared these fun photos of them Geo-Caching

Breanna & Laura Cox learning something new and havin g FUN!

And the Winner....

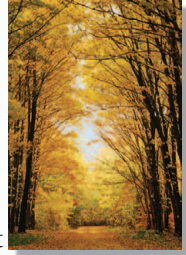
..... Aubrey Sorenson from Rainier

(photo unavailable)



# Looking To The Future

Today, as most summer days, I am sitting on my porch with coffee in hand and reading material laid out on the table around me as the day begins to color itself. First only a few subtle colors appear that soon grow in intensity and vibrancy as each minute passes creating a masterpiece of sorts that is unique to that day itself. It was the subtleness that caught me this morning, and then the uniqueness that separated it from all other days. The layers of faint color and light had to appear first almost as if painted with a brush one stroke at a time. You ask why this is in my review of the closing year and a look to tomorrow? Well, through my eyes The Columbia SWCD has been in somewhat of an awakening for the past 7 years.



Each year a few more strokes of the paintbrush have been added; policies written, procedures put in place, staff carefully added one by one, relationships built, and programs developed and slowly put in place. Eventually a building was purchased and with thought and care renovated into a masterpiece of its own, the beginning of a revived natural resource education program in our county is beginning to take shape, and local partnerships are coming together to make conservation a consideration if not the focus on many Columbia County decisions, all of this is what I have seen in my 7 short years at the district. And now as I step back and reflect on where we are now and where we might be going I see the beauty of the time lapse of the district like a sunrise. Many of the things I just listed were subtle and not that exciting or colorful on their own, but when layered together the Columbia SWCD of today is what we have; a District with a strong foundation and the ability to flex with the changing times.

So enough of the poetic talk for now, there are some real changes taking place in the conservation world locally, statewide, and on the federal level making us all step back and really look at what we are doing, how we are doing it, and what might it look like tomorrow. Each organization whether local grassroots based or government led are being asked to do more and more with less and less.

So what does a local government office do? To begin with, those partnerships that have been built with other local government offices and local conservation groups have to begin thinking through their relationships at a deeper level, and find areas we can work even closer in. Where are we the same? How are we different? Are there areas of our operations that are redundant between each other? How can we become more efficient with the budgets we do have?

Some of the partnerships that have grown over recent years are with county departments. We saved the County Roads department many thousands of dollars on a culvert replacement by assisting them with fish salvage in lieu of then hiring a consultant from out of the county to come and do it. We have worked closely with the Land Development Services office to simplify the restoration permitting process, and assist with some field visits if landowners need a plan for Best Management Practices when developing their property, and many mapping and historic information is available to all local municipalities, organizations, and individuals making current and historical information about land use in Columbia County easy to locate.

A more intimate relationship the SWCD has is with the local watershed councils. Discussions have begun with two of the watershed councils regarding sharing services, merging offices to share staff county wide allowing individuals strengths to be used to the fullest making all of us more productive and efficient in our daily work. Some ideas are to centralize all the administrative work, freeing up time for the technical staff to focus in their areas of expertise rather than the daily administrative duties that have historically kept them from being in the field and working with landowners. This could also lead to less overhead costs as offices could potentially merge as well reducing monthly rent and utility expenses or some of the organizations providing more funds for technical staff, implementation of monitoring, and on the ground projects.

Discussions continue and we are seeking funding from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board to assist in the facilitation of this type of restructuring. On the Education front we are very excited to announce the growth of a county wide school based greenhouse program to propagate natural plants for local restoration projects. Each school district is involved in a different way. Each one is building a curriculum around the greenhouses that fits with the environment of each district. Be on the lookout this coming year for announcements from your local schools as these programs develop and grow. The Columbia SWCD is very excited about this development. Providing education in horticulture, forestry, and natural resources as a whole and combining them with local restoration projects giving purpose and meaning to the students as this program grows.

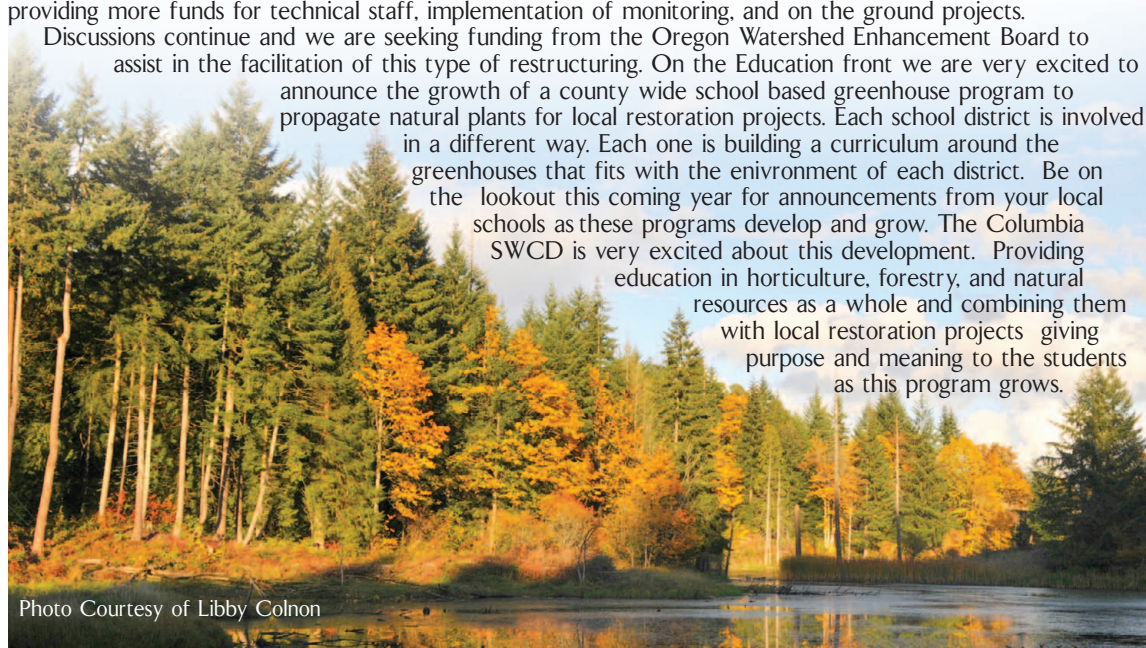


Photo Courtesy of Libby Colnon



# *Columbia County Thanks*

## *Columbia SWCD*

Columbia County Land Development Services would like to join in with others in thanking the Columbia SWCD for a very productive and positive relationship in serving the interests of Columbia County residents and visitors over the years.

Columbia County LDS and CSWCD have worked hand in hand in preserving and enhancing the natural resources which abound in our County. CSWCD has always been willing to coordinate with us in managing land development, by keeping our joint conservation responsibilities at the forefront of review considerations. It is no accident that the State of Oregon agency responsible for land use planning in the State, which prescribes much of what we do at the local level, the Land Conservation and Development Commission, has "conservation" in its name before "development".

Thank you for a continuing close relationship as we jointly provide stewardship for Columbia County's land, water, fish, wildlife and other natural resources.

Todd Dugdale, Director  
Columbia County Land Development Services  
230 Strand Street, St. Helens, Oregon 97051



# PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS



*Thank you* to our partners and many local contractors that we have had the pleasure of working with this year.

Lower Columbia River Watershed Council

Scappoose Bay Watershed Council

Upper Nehalem Watershed Council

Columbia River Youth Corp

Rainier School District #13

St Helens School District #502

Clatskanie School District #6

Vernonia School District #47J

Columbia County Road Department

Columbia County Land Development Services

Clatsop Soil and Water Conservation District

Georgia Pacific - Wauna

Cowlitz Tribe

Oregon NRCS

Oregon Department of Forestry

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Oregon Department Of Agriculture

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

NW Oregon RC&D

Department of State Lands

Army Corps of Engineers

NOAA Fisheries

Oregon Department of Transportation

Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership