



Phone: 503.397.4555

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Hours: 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday — Friday









The Columbia Soil & Water Conservation District

35285 Millard Road, St. Helens, OR 97051

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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

The SWCD's of Oregon were created gradually starting in 1939. To date, there are 45 districts serving Oregon. They are considered subdivisions of state government, but function as local units led by a locally elected board of directors.

District directors are elected on Oregon's general election ballot and serve terms of four years without pay. Directors are members of business, professional and agricultural communities who understand the ecological relationships of soil, water, plant, and animals.



CONSERVATION PLANNING

With the assistance of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (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!

Whether it's talking to landowners or school kids, we are always striving to spread the word about conservation. If you would 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 who will.

OUR MISSION

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

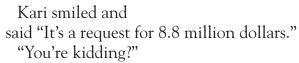
OUR GOALS

- 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

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR 2015

A short time ago, our Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) manager, Kari Hollander, asked me to sign a letter.

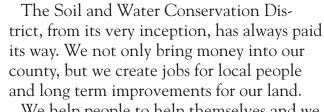
"What are you are asking me to sign?" I asked



"No, I'm very serious. This letter will help release 8.8 million dollars, over then next 5 years, to our Conservation District and to our Conservation partners,"

I shook my head and remarked to Kari. "I remember when we were trying to get our tax levy passed. I remember telling people that "If you give us pennies, we will give you dollars in return." I am really pleased to see us follow through on our promise to them."

The Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District receives a little over \$400,000 in Annual tax revenue. With this base, we have leveraged numerous grants and millions of dollars for the benefit of County residents.



We help people to help themselves and we work well with others. We work with Watershed councils and also with County, City, State, Federal agencies and above all, we are happy to work with you... If you have a problem with your land, there is a very good possibility that we can help.

Our people deal with Soil, Water, Plants, Animals, Air, and most importantly, human beings. We always consider the needs of people and we work with many disciplines in our attempt to help people solve their problems.

If you have a problem with your land, why don't you give us a call? Our telephone number is 503 397-4555

Our price is right, because our service is free.

Bill Eagle Chair, Columbia SWCD

Bill Egle



The Columbia SWCD each year surveys and treats known knotweed patches in August and September. Your help in notifying us of Knotweed on or near your property will help us continue to manage the control the spread of it in Columbia County.

IF YOU SEE IT LET US KNOW.
WE CAN BE REACHED AT 503-397-4555 X104

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETS THE 3RD WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT 7:30 PM IN THE COLUMBIA SWCD OFFICE: 35285 MILLARD ROAD, ST. HELENS, OR 97051

The Columbia SWCD Board of Directors is made up of citizens and landowners of Columbia County. The county is broken up into five zones, of which there are representatives for each. The director must own at least 10 acres of land to qualify.

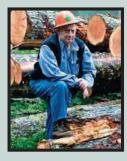
In addition, the Board has two "at large" positions. These can come from anywhere in the county and there is NO land requirement. Directors serve four year terms and are elected just like any other government official.



RANDY BERGMAN DIRECTOR ZONE 1



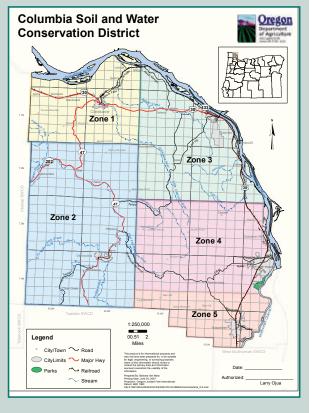
JASON BUSCH VICE CHAIR ZONE 2



VANNATTATREASURER
ZONE 3



DAVE FREYTAGDIRECTOR
ZONE 4





CRAIG ELLIS
DIRECTOR ZONE 5



BILL EAGLE CHAIR AT LARGE 1



LONA PIERCE SECRETARY AT LARGE 2

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.COLUMBIASWCD.COM

THE STAFF



KARI HOLLANDER, District Manager

503.397.4555 x.102 kari.hollander@columbiaswcd.com

Kari lives in Rainier, and has been with the district since September 2006. 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. 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 LEGG, Operations Administrator

503.397.4555 x.100 malyssa.legg@columbiaswcd.com

Malyssa has been with the District since April 2009. Malyssa handles the day to day operations in the office as well as fiscal and grant management. Please contact Malyssa if you would like to use our meeting room facilities. When not working, Malyssa enjoys cooking, baking, reading, watching lots of sports with her fiance and playing with her adorable cat Sharkie.



TYLER JOKI, Resource Conservationist

503.397.4555 x.104 tyler.joki@columbiaswcd.com

Tyler has been with the District since August 2009. He has a BS 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, Resource Conservationist

503.397.4555 x.101 nathan.herr@columbiaswcd.com

He has a BS in Environmental science and a minor in Fisheries from Oregon State University. He handles the Technical Assistance aspects of the District's mission as well as being the lead on the ODA water quality program for Columbia County. In his spare time, Nathan enjoys being outdoors with his dogs, wife, and daughter or out hunting and fishing as much as possible.

NRCS/LCEP STAFF



DON MEHLHOFF, District Conservationist

503.397.4555 x.105 don.mehlhoff@or.usda.gov

Don has over 31 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."



DEE ROBINSON, Program Support Tech

503.397.4555 x. 106 dee.robinson@or.usda.gov

Dee 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.



JENNI DYKSTRA, Field Restoration Ecologist

Jenni joined the Estuary Partnership in 2014. She works closely with the Scappoose Bay and Lower Columbia River Watershed Councils and Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District identifying, planning and implementing habitat restoration projects in habitats important for Pacific salmon recovery. She is leading implementation of several restoration projects, including a floodplain restoration and a side channel reconnection. Prior to joining the Estuary Partnership, Jenni worked with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife prioritizing, developing, and implementing fish passage and habitat improvement projects on state-owned lands. Her career as a fish biologist spans over 16 years, including regulatory work for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and extensive field experience conducting fish studies and habitat inventories for the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Geological Survey, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and HDR Engineering. Jenni has a B.S. in Fish and Wildlife Science and a B.S. in Environmental Science from Oregon State University.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Columbia County Conservation Practices

Practice Name	Amounts installed
Fish Passage Culvert Replacement	2 no
Herbaceous Weed Control	45.7 ac
Plant Establishment	15 ac
Forest Management Plan	14 no
Agricultural Energy Management Plan	2 no
Brush Management	83.7 ac
Herbaceous Weed Control	134 ac
Conservation Cover	8 ac
Cover Crop	204 ac
Fence	3864 ft
Woody Residue Treatment	224 ac
Field Border	2 ac
Irrigation Water Management	57 ac
Access Control	102.6 ac
Tree/Shrub Site Preparation	56.6 ac
Obstruction Removal	0.2 ac
Forage and Biomass Planting	32 ac
Pumping Plant	1 no
Nutrient Management	31.7 ac
Tree/Shrub Establishment	84.4 ac
Water Harvesting Catchment	1 no
Wildlife Habitat Improvements	3027.8 ac
Forest Trails and Landings	30 ac
Forest Stand Improvement	397.9 ac
Fish and Wildlife Structure	3 no
Seasonal High Tunnel System for Crops	4320 sq ft
Stockpiling Forages to Extend the Grazing Season	170 ac
Managing Calving to Coincide with Forage Availability	215.8 ac
On-farm forage based grazing system	17.7 ac
Retrofit watering facility for wildlife escape and enhanced access for bats and bird species	5 no
Recycle 100% of farm lubricants	26 no
Locally grown and marketed farm products	3468.1 ac
Multi-story cropping, sustainable management of nontimber forest plants	120.1 ac
Hardwood Crop Tree Release	40 ac
Intensive Management of Rotational Grazing	72 ac
Conifer Crop Tree Release	299 ac
Non-chemical weed control	253.6 ac
Rotation of supplement and feeding areas	99.9 ac
Pesticide Reduction and Efficiency	2442 ac
On Farm Composting of Farm Organic Waste	170 ac
Irrigation pumping plant evaluation and Improvements	14 no

<u>FINANCES</u>



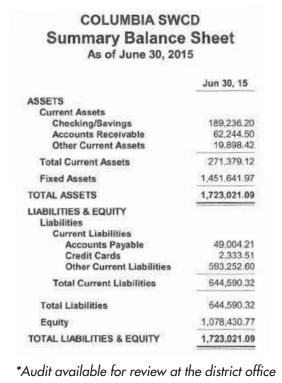
What do Columbia County residents get for their tax dollars?

- Increased staff to address client inquiries
- Quicker turn around for field visits
- Ability to expand our program to include K-12 Education opportunities

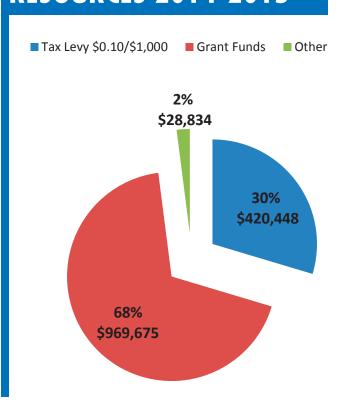
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES PROVIDED TO THE COMMUNITY

- Review Land Development Service Applications and respond to field referral for many different land use issues
- Partner with Columbia County Roads Dept on bridge and culvert projects.
- Historic documents available for viewing
- Resource for drainage districts, improvement companies, and diking districts
- Partner with local school districts agriculture and natural resource programs.
- And much more...

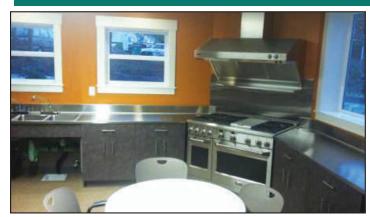
BALANCE SHEET



RESOURCES 2014-2015



THE MEETING ROOM





The Columbia SWCD meeting room accommodates groups up to 50 people with a fully equipped kitchen.

A charge of \$75 for private parties, free for community groups and non profits.

If you are interested in using the meeting space, please contact Malyssa Legg at 503.397.4555 x.100 or malyssa.legg@columbiaswcd.com

I work with local organizations in rural communities all over the state, and the Columbia SWCD offers one of my favorite meeting spaces. It is a high quality and lovely space, fully-equipped, good sound quality, and has comfortable chairs! It is easy to schedule and easy to access after-hours. Plus, they generously make the space available at no cost for local groups. It is a real asset for the Columbia River communities!

—Amy Carlson, The Nonprofit Association of Oregon

St Helens Girls Softball is incredibly thankful for the meeting room space that the Columbia Soil & Water Conservation has allowed us to use the past several months.

As businesses change hands things change, we lost our former meeting room space under these circumstances. Our organization is a 501c3 and we work very hard to raise money for the girls of Columbia County to be able to play ball, learn a sport, learn what team work is, be responsible and play safe.

Having a meeting room to conduct the business of the non profit is extremely important.

Thank you for letting us use your space.

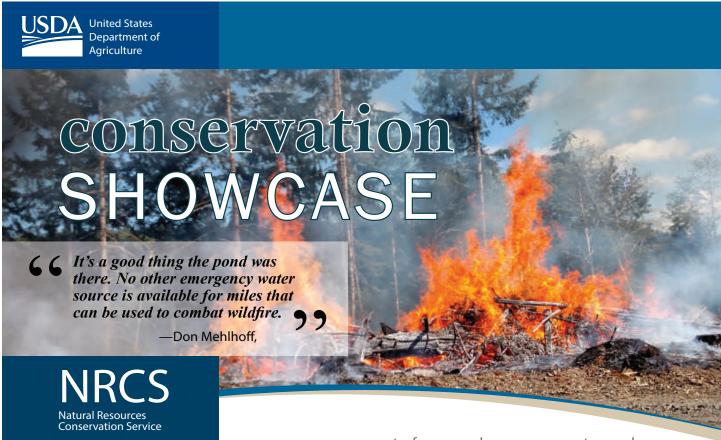
Sincerely, Tricia Stockwell, Treasurer SHGS

As a resident of the County, there are opportunities to participate in the Columbia County SWCD and take advantage of the many services we offer.

- Implement conservation practices on your land.
- Run for elected office as a District Director.

- Work with your neighbors in your watershed.
- Be a volunteer or Associate Director

If you are interested in volunteering at the Columbia SWCD, please contact Kari Olsen-Hollander at 503.397.4555 x.102



NRCS conservation project helps firefighters quench wildfire

hen it comes to fighting wildfires in rural communities, conservation projects can save lives and property. That was the case during a recent fire fight in the Mist-Birkenfeld Rural Fire Protection District.

The crew responded to a wildfire call on Aug. 21, when a forest slash fire ignited on a mountain pass near the small town of Mist, located in the far west boundary of Columbia County, Oregon. Firefighters successfully battled the blazes using

Top Photo: Firefighters quenched a wildfire (pictured) that burned four acres on Aug. 21 in Columbia County, Oregon, thanks to an emergency water supply pond provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Photo by Lora Ressler, The Chief.

water from a nearby emergency water pond—a project made possible through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and partners.

"It's a good thing the pond was there," said Don Mehlhoff, NRCS district conservationist for Columbia County. "No other emergency water source is available for miles that can be used to combat natural gas well fires, residential fires or forest fires."

Referred to as the Fleming pond, the project was completed in 2012 after nearly ten years of effort by NRCS and partners to obtain permits and secure funding. With a capacity of 4 million gallons, the pond was designed to serve multiple purposes, including livestock water supply, wildlife habitat, and emergency water supply for the Mist-Birkenfeld Rural Fire Protection District.

Through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), NRCS worked with private landowner Bruce Fleming to provide technical

Oregon NRCS www.or.nrcs.usda.gov



United States Department of Agriculture



LEFT: Construction crews build the Fleming pond, August 2012.

BELOW: Roslyn Gray, a basin engineer with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, inspects the pumping station at the completed Fleming pond project, May 2013.

Photos by Don Mehlhoff.



and financial assistance for fencing, water troughs, livestock pipeline, trees and shrubs, and a small portion of the cost for the pond's construction. NRCS also provided the engineering design and inspection for the project.

Now, three years after completion, the pond is providing a vital emergency water supply that can save lives and property against the threat of wildfire.

During the Aug. 21 fire response, firefighters were able to load 10 water tenders with water from the Fleming pond and transport it directly to the site of the fire.

"The ponds' pumping capacity provided an uninterrupted water supply, which is essential to effectively respond to fires in a very rural, forested area," Mehlhoff said.

The wildfire burned only four acres—but it potentially could have devastated hundreds of acres of surrounding privately-owned forests without the new pond and the pumping capacity to load water tenders around the clock.

The Fleming pond was a true community effort that would not have been possible without a willing landowner and multiple partners. Partners included:

- Private Landowner Bruce Fleming
- Northwest Oregon Resource Conservation and Development Council
- Mist-Birkenfeld Rural Fire Protection District (with special assistance from now retired Fire Chief David Crawford)
- Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District
- Upper Nehalem Watershed Council
- Northwest Natural Gas

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Natural Resources Conservation Service



DON MEHLHOFF

NRCS District Conservationist don.mehlhoff@or.usda.gov (503) 397-4555 ext. 105

The following is a list of practices that NRCS completed, mostly through USDA Farm Bill program assistance, in fiscal year 2015 (Oct. 1 – Sept. 30).

NRCS PRACTICES IMPLEMENTED IN 2015

Cover Crop – 76 acres
Herbaceous Weed Control – 47 acres,
Fence – 730 feet
Brush Management – 21 acres
Forest Management Plans – 5
Agricultural Energy Management Plans – 2
Forest Stand Improvement – 117 acres

Tree and Shrub Establishment – 1 acre Forest Slash Treatment – 133 acres Season High Tunnel – 1 (2160 sq.ft.) Field Border – 2 acres Obstruction Removal – 1 Nutrient Management – 32 acres Upland Wildlife Habitat Management – 905 acres

Forage and Biomass Planting – 18 acres Forest Trails and Landings – 30 acres.

NRCS PROGRAMS OFFERED IN 2015

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) – NRCS has assisted on 10 existing CREP contracts in the county. This program pays an annual rental payment for marginal pastureland that is planted to trees and shrubs along streams and rivers. Most of the CREP acres are in

the Birkenfeld area, about 396 total acres of riparian forest buffers.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP) – NRCS has developed 24 CStP contracts in the county that cover 6134 acres of cropland, pastureland and forestland. 15 Contracts were completed in 2015. The CStP program offers annual stewardship payments to agricultural and forest owners who maintain good natural resource stewardship on their property and implement various enhancement practices.

Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) – Columbia County has two permanent WRP easements that cover 436 acres. The WRP program offers to purchase

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easements on agricultural lands to restore wetland values on the property using various conservation practices.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) – This is a new program that was launched in 2015 by NRCS. Financial and technical assistance is available for private woodland owners in northwest Oregon and western Washington wanting to improve the health of their forests and participate in a regional carbon crediting program. Participants may receive assistance developing forest management plans and implementing forest practices that enhance carbon stocks, such as pre-commercial thinning, tree and shrub establishment, and others. In Columbia County, we were able to fund 2 contracts in 2015 covering 69 acres of private forest land.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) – EQIP is our most popular conservation program. It provides financial assistance to agricultural and forestry operations to address natural resource problems. Most of the practices implemented above in 2015 were completed

using EQIP. At this time, NRCS has 26 active EQIP contracts. 165 contracts have been completed in the last several years. NRCS in Columbia County has two Conservation Implementation Strategies using EQIP funds. The first is Columbia County Forest Diversity Initiative. Through this initiative forest operators in the target area (Rainier, Goble, Clatskanie, Beaver Creek, and Tide Creek Area) are offered financial assistance to implement practices that improve forest diversity.

The second is Columbian white-tailed Deer Habitat Improvement. 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.

NRCS and the Columbia SWCD are always looking for input from operators identifying what natural resources are most important to them and what practices will solve those issues. Two conservation strategies we are currently considering for the future include creation

NRCS helps America's farmers, ranchers and forest landowners conserve the nation's soil, water, air and other natural resources.

All programs are voluntary and offer science-based solutions that benefit both the landowner and the environment.

For more information on this service visit www.nrcs.usda.gov

of pollinator habitat, small market garden assistance, and road improvement on private forest lands and other rural lands.

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.

LCRWC ANNUAL REPORT NOVEMBER 2015

MARGARET MAGRUDER

Lower Columbia River Watershed Council Coordinator 503.728.2945 Magruder@clatskanie.com

The LCRWC has had a busy and productive project year; working with new landowners and making substantial positive environmental impacts as well as providing significant improvements for landowners. During the

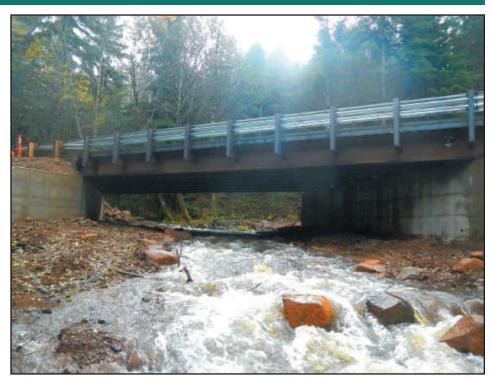


year we also welcomed a new Restoration Ecologist and honored one of our founding members who retired.

Council member Darrel Whipple, who was instrumental in establishing the LCRWC, retired from the Board this year. He was also the founder and leader of the Friends of Fox Creek and represented them and the environmental community on our Board. Darrel brought the current Friends president, Ian Bledsoe, to the LCRWC, and Ian was elected to serve in the position vacated by Darrel. Storm Beck, Forest Engineer, was elected to represent Weyerhaeuser on the Board. Ian and Storm not only bring their expertise to the Board but an "under 50" perspective that we welcome.

Jenni Dykstra was hired as our Restoration Ecologist; a position that we share with the Columbia SWCD, Scappoose Bay WC, and the Estuary Partnership.

Jenni hit the ground running; getting up to speed on all of the projects that were in development and planned for the 2015 work season. She was project manager on the Batwater Station project which involved a levee breach. The project was designed by Waterways. Kynsi Construction built over 1000 feet of new tidal channels complete with logs strategically placed to attract beaver and increase wetland complexity. 85 feet of the 70-year-old dike was removed and the river water flowed in with the tide. The property is home to endangered Columbian white-tailed deer. painted turtles, red-legged frogs and many types of birds. And now juvenile salmon



Bridge installed on Clatskanie River at Schaffer Road.

and steelhead can also call the tidal wetland home. Landowners Karin Hunt and Michael Tilson welcome the wildlife and the extra benefit of improvements to their existing pasture land with the enhanced drainage.

A culvert replacement on Schaffer Road was done in partnership with the Columbia County Road Department. Contractor Kynsi Construction replaced two side-by-side 6 foot diameter culverts with a 27 foot bottomless arch culvert, a solution that restores full passage for salmonids to a mile of spawning and rearing habitat. Lower Columbia Engineering provided design.

A floodplain habitat improvement project designed by Waterways was implemented on the Carl and Stephanie Smith property in the Lower Clatskanie River. This project, located just above the head-of-tide, was implemented by Aquatic Contracting. The project restored 23-acres of floodplain and increased connectivity. 15 large wood structures were installed in the side channels and on the floodplain and 2,000 native conifers, 4,700 native shrubs, and 10,000 willow stakes will be planted. This project not only improves wildlife habitat

but minimizes erosion on the landowner's property.

Newspaper articles and presentations were part of our outreach efforts this year. The Batwater Station project even garnered TV coverage on two Portland Channels as well as articles in The Clatskanie Chief, The Chronicle, the South County Spotlight, the Columbia Basin Bulletin and the Estuary Partnership newsletter.

We were pleased to have Congresswoman Bonamici and staff tour the Batwater Station project. This gave us the opportunity to showcase our restoration work and demonstrate how we utilize our grant funding from state and federal sources to, not only put conservation on the ground, but bring additional production benefits to our local landowners and jobs to our local contractors.

We have wrapped up another successful year of working within our community to help ensure sustainable watershed health, functions, and uses, and to foster better stewardship and understanding of the Lower Columbia River Watershed resources in Columbia County.

SBWC ANNUAL REPORT 2015

PAT WELLE

Scappoose Bay Watershed Council Coordinator 57420-2 Old Portland Road Warren, OR 97053 503.397.7904 www.scappoosebay-wc.org

The past year has been one of both transition and accomplishment for the Scappoose Bay Watershed Council.

Pat Welle took over as Coordinator in September 2014, with several projects nearing completion



and potential new ones on the horizon. Amber Kester returned to the Council in October 2014 and has taken over management of the Council's Native Plant Nursery, where she has increased the nursery's capacity through greater volunteer support and organization. Three new members have joined the Council Board to help support the organization's activities and mission.

Several projects have been completed this past year, or are now underway.

The State of the Watershed was completed in November; this 83--page report details and reviews the Council's work for the past 14 years. The report highlights major watershed research and on-th-ground restoration, and provides future strategy and direction for the next several years. A significant finding in the report identifies the 46 fish passage corrections the Council has completed since 2001. Copies of the report have been distributed to local government and management entities, and are available in the Council office.

The Council received funding in spring 2015 to address limited large wood in the middle portion of Milton Creek, above Smith Creek. The project, in cooperation with the City of St. Helens, installed wood logs over 3.5 miles of the creek, creating pools and increasing channel complexity for salmon habitat enhancement. The



Scappoose Bay Marina.

project reach will also have over 6000 riparian and conifer plantings added in winter 2016 to help reduce stream temperatures and provide future wood recruitment.

Amber and Pat installed continuous-recording temperature loggers at six locations in Scappoose Bay in May, and sampled water quality every 10-14 days. Parameters included dissolved oxygen, turbidity, and bacteria at each location. A report of findings from this work is currently being reviewed, and will be used to help identify future restoration projects along the bay.

Another project to restore Joy Creek and reconnect a wetland to Multnomah Channel, is in the design phase. The Council is working with Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership and OPRD to develop a final design for this 74-acre parcel in northern Multnomah County. The project will provide off-channel habitat for juvenile salmonids, and year-round shallow-water habitat for adults.

The Council continues to do outreach projects, primarily invasive weed removal and native plantings along stream banks, working with landowners to assist in similar projects, and has begun a partnership with the West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District to do outreach through workshops and monitoring. A new website was launched this past spring, and we continue to develop new fish passage and stream restoration projects.

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UNWCANNUAL REPORT 2015

MAGGIE PEYTON

Upper Nehalem Watershed Council **Executive Director** 503.429.0869 maggie@nehalem.org



report that over the last year our organization skillfully managed to advance a number of the high value projects identified in our UNWC Strategic Plan 2014-16.

The highlight of our restoration efforts was the construction of the Apiary Road Mile Post 17.7 Salmon Passage Improvement project completed in September at River Mile 2.82 of Oak Ranch Creek. The project was made possible through a partnership with Columbia County Publics Works, Oregon Department of Fish Wildlife, Weyerhaeuser, and Columbia SWCD. Contracted services were provided by Lower Columbia Engineering who designed the crossing according to state and federal fish passage standards, Contech who provided a well manufactured reinforced concrete open bottom arch, TFT whose highly skilled crew assured timely construction, and due to expert daily oversight provided by Tristan Wood - Columbia County Engineering Project Coordinator who assured project was flawlessly constructed on time and under budget. The funding for the project was acquired by UNWC through grants from The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, ODFW Restoration and Enhancement Board and ODFW Fish Passage Program. Special mention goes to Troy Laws ODFW restoration biologist whose tireless support in grant writing, field survey, and fish salvage/de-watering/stream simulation construction oversight made project implementation possible. The crossing was engineered to provide unconditional fish passage to juvenile and adult salmon, steelhead, trout and lamprey and handle peak flow volumes during winter high water events. We are looking forward to the return of the Coho salmon who will soon migrate through the project reach unimpeded by undersized perched culverts and freely access the essential spawning, rearing and refuge habitat above. The success of this project makes it possible for the partners to coordinate the removal of the next and last upstream barrier along Oak Ranch Creek at MP 16.1 on Apiary Road. This project is more complex and the cost is much higher for construction due to depth of fill, stream alignment and the bedrock elevation unique to this site. Plans are to construct a similar crossing in the summer of 2017. Preliminary designs and a portion of the cost funds are already secured.

We are working out the details for another

PURPOSE

The Upper Nehalem Watershed Council was formed to share information, reduce duplication of activities, help address watershed management issues in the Upper Nehalem Watershed and provide a framework for coordination and cooperation among key interests.

To foster better stewardship and understanding of the Upper Nehalem Watershed resources, deal with issues in advance of resource degradation, and ensure sustainable watershed health, functions, and uses.

VISION

A balanced ecosystem that supports a healthy watershed, provides for an economic base and viable communities.

collaborative project to restore salmon anchor habitat in the upper Rock Creek basin. This project will be implemented in the summer of 2016 in partnership with the ODFW, Oregon Department of Forestry, Oregon Parks and Recreation District, Oregon Department of Transportation, Weyerhaeuser and Stimson Lumber Company. The focus and scope of this project was identified in the Rock Creek Limiting Factors Analysis conducted by BioSurveys, LLC in 2011.

Since 1996 UNWC has been deeply involved in native Coho salmon habitat restoration and as a result the Nehalem River basin has been selected as one of three pilot areas to complete a strategic action plan (SAP) to promote greater focus and increase stakeholder collaboration to assure native Coho population recovery.

Oregon's two coastal Coho salmon ESU's have been federally listed as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act. Primary concerns include habitat loss and uncertainty concerning trends in freshwater and estuarine habitat quality.

As part of the SAP process a small team of public and private partners (the "Steering Committee"), which includes the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration - Fisheries, NOAA Restoration Center, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), Wild Salmon Center, and OWEB, has convened to increase the funding available for Coho conservation on the coast while engaging local partners to develop SAP's that identify local restoration priorities.

One of the highlights of Nehalem SAP process is the renewed partnership that has formed between the Lower Nehalem Watershed Council and UNWC. This partnership will

Oak Ranck Creek - Lower Crossing Summer 2015 installation of ConSpan





assure a greater focus of recovery efforts in the Nehalem basin from a broader base of supporters who bring essential technical and funding resources to assure restoration efforts are enacted effectively and efficiently. The Nehalem SAP will provide us with a stepping stone to building and securing a Focused Investment Partnership in alignment with OWEB priorities to improve Coho freshwater habitats from the headwaters to the Nehalem Bay Estuary.

Meanwhile we continue to conduct subbasin watershed assessments including culvert surveys, water quality monitoring for stream temperature and turbidity, riparian reforestation along high priority temperature impaired reaches with cooperative landowners, raise stakeholder awareness of watershed health and salmon recovery issues/solutions and build good will in the community.

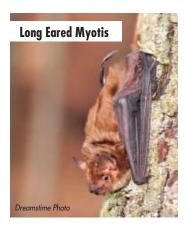
We are especially proud of our relationship with the Vernonia School District which continues to grow opportunities to provide hands-on learning experiences for local youth in riparian and wetland reforestation, native plant nursery development, geographic information systems, salmon watch and natural resource sustainability.

Our future is bright. Thank you, for your support!









NATHAN HERR

Nathan.herr@columbiaswcd.com (503) 397-4555 ext. 101

What is a bat box you ask? Simply put, bat boxes are a place for female bats to sleep in during the day and raise their young during the spring and summertime. Bats usually only have one pup each year, so populations grow slowly. Bats are enormously helpful to the environment, especially to humans who hate mosquitos. On average, bats eat 1,000 mosquitos an hour during their waking times. During high bug years, like this last summer, bats are a big contributor to lowering the bug populations to a more manageable level. Plus, because of habitat loss, bats are finding it harder to find places to roost during the day and to raise their young.

Building a bat box is simple, and are easily attached to sides of barns, sheds, or trees. Just make sure the bat box has plenty of sun during the day (at least 7 hours of direct sunlight), as

bats need as much heat as possible to survive. Also, paint your box either black or brown to intensify the sun that does hit it. The idea behind a bat box is a place for the bats to hide in the dark during the daytime, and hang from at night when waiting to find other bugs to eat. A simple thin box like the one in the picture is great for them and will lower your bug population around the house.

There is one concern with bats. If you see a bat on the ground DO NOT touch it. Bats are a carrier of rabies, and the standard is if they are bad enough to be on the ground rather than up a tree or hanging on the side of a barn, it's safe to assume they are rabid and should be disposed of immediately. Other than that, bats are one of the unsung heroes of insect control.

If you have any questions on bats, or any questions don't hesitate to call or email Nathan at the District. He can be reached at 503-397-4555 ext. 101 or at Nathan.herr@columbiaswcd.com.

If you have any questions, contact Nathan Herr, 503-397-4555 x101, to set up a site visit with him to discuss any of your conservation needs.

DID YOU KNOW?

A single little brown bat can eat up to 1000 mosquitoes in a single hour, and is one of the world's longest-lived mammals for its size, with life spans of almost 40 years.

Bats are the only mammals capable of true flight. With extremely elongated fingers and a wing membrane stretched between, the bat's wing anatomically resembles the human hand. Almost 1,000 bat species can be found worldwide. In fact, bats make up a quarter of all mammal species on earth!

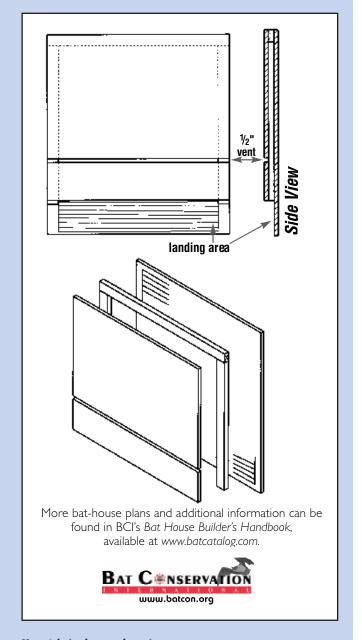
Single-chamber Bat House (wall mounted)

Construction

- 1. Measure and cut plywood into three pieces: $26\frac{1}{2}$ x 24" $16\frac{1}{2}$ " x 24" 5" x 24"
- 2. Roughen inside of backboard and landing area by cutting horizontal grooves with sharp object or saw. Space grooves $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ apart, cutting $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{1}{16}$ deep.
- 3. Apply two coats of dark, water-based stain to interior surfaces .Do not use paint, as it will fill grooves .
- 4. Cut furring strip into one 24'' and two $20\frac{1}{2}''$ pieces.
- 5. Attach furring strips to back, caulking first. Start with 24"piece at top. Roost chamber spacing is 34".
- 6. Attach front to furring strips, top piece first (caulk first). Leave ½" vent space between top and bottom front pieces.
- 7. Caulk all outside joints to further seal roost chamber.
- 8. Attach a 1" x 4" x 28" board to the top as a roof (optional, but highly recommended).
- 9. Apply three coats of paint or stain to the exterior (use primer for first coat).
- 10. Cover roof with shingles or galvanized metal (optional).
- 11. Mount on building (south or east sides usually best).

Optional modifications to the single-chamber bat house

- Wider bat houses can be built for larger colonies. Be sure to adjust dimensions for back and front pieces and ceiling strip. A 34" support spacer may be needed in the center of the roosting chamber for bat houses over 24" wide to prevent warping.
- 2. To make a taller version for additional temperature diversity,use these modifications: From a 2' x 8' piece of plywood, cut th ree pieces: 51" x 24", 33" x 24" and 12" x 24". Cut two 8' furring strips into one 24" and two 44" pieces. Follow assembly procedure above.
- 3. Two bat houses can be placed back-to-back, mounted between two poles, to create a three-chamber nursery house. Before assembly, cut a horizontal ¾" slot in the back of each house about 9" from the bottom edge of the back piece to permit movement of bats between houses. Two pieces of wood, 1" x 4" x 41/4", screwed horizontally to each side, will join the two boxes. Leave a ¾" space between the two houses, and roughen the wood surfaces or cover the back of each with plastic mesh (see item 5 below). Do not cover the rear exit slots with mesh. One 1" x 4" x 34" vertical piece, attached to each side over the horizontal pieces, blocks light but allows bats and air to enter. A galvanized metal roof, covering both houses, protects the center roosting area from rain. Eaves should be about 3" in southern areas and about 1½" in the north.
- 4. Ventilation may not be necessary in cold climates. In this case, the front should be a single piece 23" long. Smaller bat houses like this one will be less successful in cool climates. However, those mounted on buildings maintain thermal stability better and are more likely to attract bats.
- 5. Durable plastic mesh can be substituted to provide footholds for bats. Attach one 20" x 241/2" piece to backboard after staining interior, but prior to assembly.



Materials (makes one house)

 $\frac{1}{4}$ sheet (2' x 4') $\frac{1}{2}$ " AC, BC or T1-11 (outdoor grade) plywood One piece 1" x 2" ($\frac{3}{4}$ " x $\frac{1}{2}$ " finished) x 8' pine (furring strip) 20 to 30 exterior-grade screws, 1" One pint dark, water-based stain, exterior grade One pint water-based primer, exterior grade One quart flat, water-based paint or stain, exterior grade One tube paintable latex caulk 1" x 4" x 28" board for roof (optional, but highly recommended) Black asphalt shingles or galvanized metal (optional) 6 to 10 roofing nails, $\frac{1}{6}$ " (if using shingles or metal roofing)

Recommended tools

Table saw or handsaw Caulking gun Variable-speed reversing drill Paintbrushes Screwdriver bit for drill Hammer (optional) Tape measure or yardstick Tin snips (optional)

Career Technical Education, a new Rainier program for students

RAQUEL DUARTE

The Chief

In May of 2014, the Rainier Junior Senior High School (RJSHS) began a program which was made possible by a grant awarded to them from the Oregon Department of Education (ODE). The funds were used to train staff, coordinate local partners and sponsors, and purchased the needed materials to build the program from the ground up.

The program's official title is Career Technical Education (CTE). It focuses primarily on agriculture, watershed restoration and forestry. Since its founding, RJSHS began working on improving an existing greenhouse on the school's property, and also building an outdoor nursery area for native plants that will be grown for local watershed projects. These projects are developed by

the Columbia Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD), which has been serving Columbia County since 1946, as well as the Lower Columbia River Watershed Council (LCRWC). The community and school have both benefited with the addition of a labyrinth of native plant land-scape as an example of team building.

The Columbia SWCD has been the main sponsor and support of the CTE program at RJSHS and works with many of the local farmers and foresters in the surrounding communities. Pat Schenk, owner of Canaan Hill Farm in Deer Island, became aware of the CTE program at the school and wanted to get involved somehow. He shared how the average age of a farmer reaches to about 57 years and because of that knowledge, he wants to

be able to reach out to teach kids in the community about farming and encourage them to farm themselves, even if it's just in a small backyard.

On Thursday, April 23, students were given the opportunity to plant potatoes with a potato planter, plant young apple trees, and talk about different farm operations at Canaan Hill Farm. On Tuesday, April 28, the students went to River Rock Farm, also in Deer Island, to plant peonies, beans, cucumbers, and much more.

"Connecting kids to

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— Kari Hollander

district manager of SWCD

"Connecting kids to local farmers, and connecting farmers and the community to the school, is one of the biggest successes of the year in my book," said Kari Hollander, district manager of SWCD. "Education that goes beyond the classroom prepares kids for life after high school. And I am proud to be able to say that Columbia SWCD is part of helping make those connections."

Having invested in school districts around the state, ODE connects, through the legislative body, with the Oregon vision of 40/40/20 to revive career and technology programs for students. The ODE's education specialist, Reynold Gardner, has been working closely with the CTE program, assisting in ideas, professional development and also overseeing student goals. The staff at ODE has sent several teams this year to applaud and encourage progress and offer support. Both Clatskanie and Rainier have benefited with extended classes, equipment, hands-on learning processes, and community partnerships.

Rainier has been able to add learning time for students through summer classes, two additional classes for the 2014-2015 school year, and a CTE teacher. There



Pat Schenk walking beside Tristen Halverson who is seated on a potato seeder, while Aaron Cantrell drives the tractor.

is also a strong partnership with ODE, CSWC, Greg's Garden in Longview, and the Clatsop Community College.

The Clatskanie forestry and woods class has also benefited from the ODE grant with additional equipment and classes, as well as community and business partnerships. Clatskanie has received a portable sawmill, table saw and a wood dehumidifier. Logs have been donated by community members and the middle and high school woods class have used the milled wood for class projects.

Wood has also been milled and transported to Rainier for the use in the woods class and students have benefited with hands-on experience leading to skills that they could potentially use in future career jobs.

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A more bird-friendly yard

LONA PIERCE Columbia SWCD Secretary at large 2

Why Birds? Birds are the most common type of wildlife many of us see on a daily basis. If you are a farmer, perhaps geese



grazing in your freshly sprouted wheat fields aren't a delight, but who can find fault with a black-capped chickadee cheerfully dee-dee-deeing in a tree nearby? Any time of year, birds are active just about everywhere. Having a yard filled with bird activity is fun, and it's easy to create a bird-friendly space. Creating habitat for birds also helps many local species that are dwindling in numbers. Feeding and watching birds is a hobby that millions of people enjoy.

THE BASICS It's not hard to attract birds to your property. At the most basic level, some shrubs and trees and a steady supply of clean water in a shallow container will invite birds to drop in. Trickling water will get more attention, and a birdfeeder with sunflower seeds can lure a crowd. Many people feed birds year around. Some species that visit feeders, such as black-headed grosbeaks, are only here in the summer.

PROVIDING HABITAT Native vegetation is best for birds, but a mix of cultivated and native plants works, too. Suggestions include big-leaf maple and other deciduous trees; D. fir and other evergreens; Seed, fruit and nutbearing plants such as filberts, cascara, white oak, Oregon ash, elderberry, Oregon grape, and salal. The Scappoose Bay Watershed Council has a native



plant nursery with good choices. If you can leave part of your property less groomed, it would provide far more food and shelter than one that is closely manicured. It's fun to watch out the window as varied thrushes and Steller's jays toss leaves around looking for insects or buried nuts. A rural property with an unmowed meadow is perfect for many ground nesters, as well as providing seeds and insects that birds need for food. Bumblebees and many butterflies also need unmowed areas to thrive. A brush pile is also a magnet for many birds.

Leaving dead trees standing in place whenever possible is very important for a wide variety of birds. A sizeable dead tree can be the most important tree on your property for nest holes and for providing burrowing insects as food. If you have a small pond, marshy area, or stream—you have one of the best natural habitats for many birds, especially if the border has protective cover for them to feel safe. Even seasonal wet areas and streams are valuable as habitat.

HUMMERS If you want hummingbirds, plant a few of their

favorite flowers (hardy fuchsia shrubs, salvia, penstemon, redhot poker, mints, red-flowering currant, weigela, and columbine are a few). A hummingbird feeder is like a fast-food joint for hummers—four parts water to one part sugar is the proper ratio. Heat in a covered glass container in microwave until sugar dissolves, then let cool. No food coloring is necessary and may be harmful. Be sure to keep the feeder free of mold, and change solution at least once a week.

BIRD FEEDERS Feeding birds with seed and suet is a great way to lure many different kinds of birds. If you put sunflower seed out regularly—even one small feeder—you should get birds before long. If it runs out, they will be back the next day for more. Ground birds such as juncos, doves and towhees prefer a millet mix on or near the ground. The most economical way to buy seed is in large quantities at feed stores or when on sale. Store in a bin or metal can to keep it dry and safe from squirrels. Do not place a feeder in the middle of a lawn. Most birds won't use a feeder or birdbath too far from nearby shrubs

or trees to dive into if a predator shows up.

WHAT ABOUT? Go easy on the pesticides—they can be harmful to birds, fish, and beneficial insects. Birds are also very helpful in controlling insects you don't want. Birds can sometimes snack on crops such as blueberries or cherries. Place netting over blueberry shrubs when the fruit starts to ripen. Shiny strips, available in garden departments, hung from branches right before harvest time keep birds out of cherry trees long enough for you to pick the fruit.

Birds hitting windows is a major killer. To fix, move the feeder or put up a decal or two so they can see that something is there. You can buy decals for this purpose, or make your own. It works! if you have cats in your yard, put a fence between the shrubs and feeder to deter cats jumping out to kill birds. A green-coated 3-foot-tall wire fence is nearly invisible: smaller birds hop through, but it foils leaping cats.

Don't put out so much seed that it can't be consumed by nightfall. It may attract rodents. Squirrels can also be a nuisance, but a baffle on a pole feeder stops them. They are hard to stop on the ground, but putting seed in several locations can help, or use a squirrel-resistant cage around the seed. Clean feeders with a mild bleach solution on occasion to prevent the spread of diseases, and scrub birdbaths with a bristle brush as needed to control algae.

NEED MORE TIPS? Check out the Portland Audubon Society's website, or sites like birdzilla. com. There is also information available at your Soil & Water District, Extension Service, or local Watershed Councils. Happy Birding!

Lona Pierce

Annual Report 2014-2015

FROM THE MANAGER

Reflection... always a time I enjoy, but it requires time set aside away from the hustle and bustle of everything to really get perspective. Looking back, peering forward, and taking inventory of where you are today. My surroundings as I write this are not the most usual of writing getaways and I'm not here by choice, but the view is nice of the West Hills in our neighboring Multnomah County and the sunlight is sprinkled across of the trees. Our friends have done a nice job keeping



up with urban growth while maintaining a respectable bit of green flowing through the town. It reminds me that while we are all working towards similar goals of clean water, productive soils, wildlife habitat, and energy our problems and solutions are all one of a kind in each of our own backyards. That said, there is a lot we can all learn from each other.

If you come to a local board meeting at the SWCD you will hear stories of times past in relation to what we are doing today. Some talk of practices done not so long ago only to later be reversed as more has been learned from our actions. These trials in conservation, if you will, are kept in front of us to remind us there is always more to learn as we attempt to man handle nature. I think one of the beauties of Columbia County is that the changes we can make in our County do not have to be as invasive as others may need to be. We have a team of staff, partners, and board members that see the importance of working lands and conservation going hand in hand. We have landowners that see the cross benefit to their farms and pasture when the wildlife habitats are improved. They have a desire to see floodplain areas as space that can incorporate fruit and berries in addition to the more common native plants; not only for the wildlife to enjoy

but for those of us on two feet to enjoy as well.

The local students when given the opportunity to interact with different partners from around the state in their own Columbia County, grow in knowledge and appreciation for what lies under the surface of the water and soil. A high school student shared with me this past year how much she enjoyed volunteering on fish salvage just prior to projects each summer, I ask her what made it so enjoyable and her response was that the fish biologist from ODFW talked about every species that was saved not just to count them, but to really talk about what they found. She had no idea how many species of fish we have in some of our streams, including the giant salamander... let's just say he left an impression that needed no words to make. Creepy and cool all at the same time.

I need to personally thank all of those that came before that laid the ground work for all the Columbia SWCD is able to do today. Partnerships don't happen overnight, they can't be forced. The many years of SWCD and Watershed Council folks sitting in meetings, planning forums, association gatherings, conversations, and inviting people from agencies out to see with their own eyes what we have going on. Talking about the challenges as well as the successes to give an understanding to our partners what can happen here in Columbia County and what might be a lot of wasted time and money. Giving them perspective and building trust so they are willing to try different approaches to putting conservation on the ground. Your work made it easy to build upon as it is much easier to walk through doors that have already been opened. So thank you.

Here is to a new year and much more success to everyone in the conservation world.

> **Kari Olsen-Hollander,** District Manager

Visit our website for more information on events & meetings in your area www.columbiaswcd.com





Connect with us! We'd love to hear from you.



FROM OUR PARTNERS

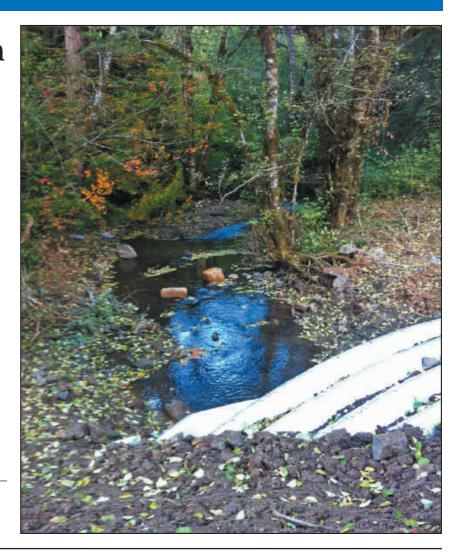
A thank you from the Columbia County Roads Department

Columbia County Road Department appreciates the services and work dedicated to the enhancement and improvement to the water quality and fish habitat restoration of the various streams and wetlands around Columbia County. Working with the district has been a pleasure on the replacement of the passage barriers along the Clatskanie River and we look forward to the replacement of the final structures over the next couple years. The district has not only replaced these structures though its various grant sources but has been an active partner in assisting the County in other projects we have lead. We look forward to this partnership in the future as we collectively work to the betterment of the County water resources.

Tristan Wood

Engineering Project Coordinator Columbia County Roads Dept.

Culvert installed on a logging road off of Schaffer Road.



OREGON ENVIROTHON COMPETITION

The Columbia SWCD encourages local high schools to build teams and compete in the Oregon Envirothon Competition.

St. Helens High School has sent two teams and ranked very well and we would love to see more team representing Columbia County in the coming years.

For more information go to the http://oregonenvirothon.org/ for training for teachers and coaches, plus materials available to make preparing easy.

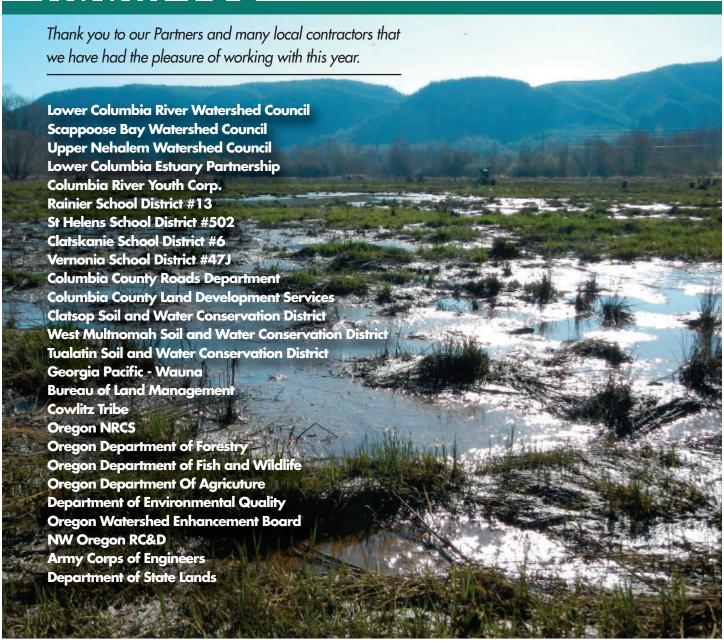
If you want to support an envirothon team at one of the high schools, let us know here at the SWCD. We will get you connected with the local teachers sending teams. Sponsors are always welcome.



THIS YEAR'S COMPETITION TBA

Annual Report 2014-2015

THANK YOU



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