

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

January 2010

COLUMBIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

2007-2008 WEED CONTROL in COLUMBIA COUNTY

The Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District has made great strides this year towards the eradication of various invasive weeds in Columbia County. The District is the lead agency in the Columbia Invasive Weed Control Partnership, which includes the Scappoose Bay Watershed Council, Lower Columbia River Watershed Council, Upper Nehalem Watershed Council, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, OSU Extension, the County Roads Department, drainage districts, and participating landowners. The Columbia SWCD also participates in weed partnerships beyond the county line. As part of the North Coast Cooperative Weed Management Area, the District partners with organizations in Clatsop and Tillamook counties, as well as the US Forest Service, ODF, ODA, and The Nature Conservancy. These partnerships allow for a sharing of technology and experiences, while ensuring that we have the very latest knowledge of effective and ineffective control methods.

This year the District hired an AmeriCorps Professional Placement Intern to be the Weed Control Coordinator in an effort to help streamline control efforts. The District continues to receive funding from the Oregon Department of Agriculture for control of Knotweed. Herbicide spraying has been focused mainly on Scappoose Creek and Merrill Creek, where the largest known infestations are located. During this past summer, the District released hundreds of beetles in an attempt to help reduce the seed spread of Scotch Broom, a



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WATER:

Drip drop, drip drop
We use water a lot,
We must be careful not to waste
Water when we use toothpaste
Water is a precious gift
It allows the boat to drift.
Water cools us down when
we're hot

And it helps the flowers in the
pot.

Water's hot, water's cold
Let us drink 'til we are old.
Water's good, water's fresh
Let's be sure to waste it less.
Drip drop, drip drop,
We think that water rocks!

By Christopher Tuck, Australia

Who We are

CSWCD STAFF

Kari Hollander

District Manager

Malysa Page

Office Coordinator

Tyler Joki

Resource Conservationist

NRCS

Don Mehlhoff

District conservationist

CSWCD Board Of Directors

Zone 1

Randy Bergman

Chairman

Zone 2

Jason Busch

Vice-Chair

Zone 3

Kay C. VanNatta

Treasurer

Zone 4

Dave Freytag

Director

Zone 5

Roger Brown

Director

At-Large

Bill Eagle

Secretary

Don Laica

Director

Associate Directors

Bill DeJager

Warren Nakkela

Paul Nys

Duane Meissner

Herman McNeely

Americorp Weed Control Coordinator

In the Spring of 2008 the Columbia SWCD hired a weed Control coordinator through the Americorp P2 program administered by the NW Academy in Portland, OR. This position has enabled us to continue the work we started 4 years ago when the Columbia Invasive Weed Control partnership was established.

Meredith Mendola comes to us from Illinois. She is a recent graduate from Southern Illinois University with a degree in forestry. She is excited to be here in the beautiful Pacific Northwest and is looking forward to continued interaction with Columbia County residents and local partners.

Water Quantity a resource concern in Columbia

The question of the availability of drinking water has become a concern in our county. The Columbia SWCD in conjunction with the NRCS, OSU Extension, Columbia County, and the Oregon Water Resources Department, is on the hunt for a solution to our ever declining supply of drinking water. As our population increases, aquifers dry up, and wells turn to salt water, it is becoming more and more important that we find a solution. The current goal is to accomplish a study similar to what has been put in place by other Oregon counties in order to assess the existing situation before we can move forward.



FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2008 - 2009

Financials statement available Spring of 2009 when Audit is completed.

Contact Kari Hollander at the District office for a copy of the Audit and one will be mailed to you when it becomes available.

Conservation Accomplishments in 2007-2008

The vision of the USDA- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is “Productive Lands – Healthy Environment”. This statement recognizes that wise use of private lands, keeping them productive while at the same time ensuring natural resources such as soil, water and plant life are maintained in a healthy condition is good stewardship. NRCS’s mission statement is “Helping People Help the Land”. In 06-07 the Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District (CSWCD), USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and their conservation partners continued to carry out that mission by providing conservation technical assistance to private land owners and operators throughout the county.

Some of the services that CSWCD and NRCS provide include,

- Land use and conservation planning
- Soil survey information
- Conservation programs that provide rewards, cost share or incentive payments to eligible participants for protecting their land.
- Technical assistance from our planners, engineers, foresters, biologists, economists, grazing land specialists, soil scientists and others.
- Education and outreach to the public about soil and water conservation.

Other accomplishments in the 07-08 year

NRCS and CSWCD provided assistance to more than 250 customers.

NRCS and CSWCD assisted approximately 12 landowners with conservation plans

Fencing – 3500 feet of fence was installed to improve pasture management and protect sensitive areas such as streams and wetlands from overgrazing.

Tree Planting – Planted 35 acres of tree and shrubs for fish and wildlife habitat improvements.

Heavy Use Area Protection –Installed hardened heavy use areas around barn yards to provide mud management and improve water quality.

Fish Stream Improvement – NRCS and CSWCD provided assistance to landowners to improve streams for fish passage and better stream habitat. They provided designs and other technical assistance.

Nutrient Management Plans – Assisted 2 operators with nutrient management plans for on over 180 acres.

Wildlife Habitat Management – NRCS and Columbia SWCD assisted landowners with wildlife habitat management on more than 900 acres.

Wetland Restoration – Through programs like the Wetland Reserve Program, NRCS and Columbia SWCD have assisted in restoring more than 120 acres of wetland habitat in the county.

Prescribed Grazing – Nearly 900 acres of pasture have been improved by encouraging grazing management on pasture and hay land.

Emergency Watershed Protection— Assisted over 100 landowners by phone and site visits to assess the flood damage from the December 2007 flood and compile a list of potential EWP projects through Columbia and Clatsop Counties.■

EWP Before



EWP After



2007-2008 WEED CONTROL in COLUMBIA COUNTY cont.



well known and highly visible invasive common along roadways. While this method of control may take fifty to one hundred years to make a difference, biological control is highly recommended and considered a safer method of treatment. A species of weevil was also released to help control Purple Loosestrife, a beautiful yet highly invasive wetland plant.

The Oregon State Weed Board has approved funding for the control of Garlic Mustard, a weed relatively new to the area. Garlic mustard is a biennial herb of the mustard family. In its first year it appears as rosettes, small round forms of vegetation somewhat similar looking to lily pads. In the second year it bolts to produce a flower and copious amounts of seeds in long slender pods. The presence of a taproot facilitates easy uptake of water and nutrients. It is most commonly found under broadleaved forests and is usually connected with human-caused disturbances: trails, roads, rail roads. When the leaves are crushed, an aroma of garlic is produced. Garlic mustard crowds out native vegetation and can quickly proliferate creating monocultures. It will then use up all available resources, making it difficult for native plants to sprout.

Manual removal of garlic mustard is possible, but needs to occur before the plant goes to seed. Chemical control may be possible.

ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW THE LABEL.

Survey for Garlic Mustard has begun along a mile stretch of Scappoose Creek and will continue through the winter, with spraying and manual removal beginning in the spring. If you see this weed, please contact the Columbia SWCD at 503-379-4555.





LCRWC YEAR IN REVIEW

Finding ways to conserve water, to protect homes and habitat and ways to eradicate weeds have been the focus of the LCRWC in 2008-09

After completing the suite of Emergency Watershed Protection projects in the fall of 2008 we saw the projects fully tested by the storms of January 2009. And although the projects did their job in protecting homes and other improvements the continued flow of material down the waterways creates a scenario for potential flooding and habitat impacts in the future.

To address these potential impacts the LCRWC implemented a watershed wide habitat survey in 2009. Todd Boswell and his crew have spent many hours this year surveying streams to provide the Council with specific data as to the condition of the streams and the potential to implement projects to enhance habitat for fish, wildlife and for the human population that live and work in our watershed.

In cooperation with local landowners and the Columbia SWCD the Council has been working on an assessment of lower Tide and Merrill Creeks and Deer Island Slough. This has included a topographic survey and a fish survey. The data collected will aid in determining how to develop and select priority habitat restoration projects that restore estuarine processes supportive of needs of threatened and endangered salmonids in concert with existing land use.

The Clatskanie River Coordinated Resource Management Plan continues to be a high priority of the Council. There is a significant need for a Hydraulic and Hydrologic assessment of the lower Clatskanie to facilitate improved project planning efforts and to balance the need for fish habitat and flood control. The Council has made application for funding to implement this study.

Control of invasive weed species is a priority effort of the Council and is a part of every on the ground project implemented by the LCRWC. We continue to successfully target Purple Loosestrife, Yellow Flag Iris and Knotweed Complex with a program of herbicide treatment, bio-control agents and monitoring of past treatment sites, as well as assisting landowners and land managers with control of other noxious weeds.

Water conservation is fast becoming a priority concern in the watershed. The LCRWC is

Working with Columbia County to Preserve and Protect our Natural Resources

part of the Columbia County Water Conservation and Protection Committee which will soon be implementing a survey of wells to begin the process to determine the quantity of ground water available for use in the County.

Building partnerships with land owners and managers and with local, county, state and federal government entities continues to be key to the successful development and implementation of projects and to helping citizens preserve a healthy watershed.

Scappoose Bay Watershed Council

In 2008-09, the Scappoose Bay Watershed Council continued its mission of supporting the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds by serving as a source of information about the watershed and by coordinating restoration and enhancement efforts among watershed stakeholders. The Council's activities included restoration and enhancement of creeks and natural areas in Columbia County, data gathering, community involvement, fundraising, and partnering with watershed stakeholders. We started implementing our 5-year strategic plan (2008-2012). The following is a brief summary of the Council's activities:

Restoration and Enhancement:

- Completed a geomorphology/ hydrology study of the conditions of S. Scappoose Creek, and developed project concepts for large scale restoration projects that will benefit the creek and the community. We applied for funding for two of the priority projects identified in the study, and will continue to apply for additional funding.
- Obtained funding from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to snorkel survey 55 miles of creek for the presence of juvenile coho and other salmonids. We found populations of coho in N. and S. Scappoose Creeks, Milton Creek, and connected tributaries. This information will help to prioritize future projects. We also completed aquatic habitat inventories for about 15 miles of creek.
- Obtained additional funding from multiple partners to continue the restoration of 30 acres of wetlands and two miles of Scappoose Creek in the Scappoose Bay Bottomlands.
- Worked with the CRYC to monitor project sites, plant projects with native trees and shrubs, and maintain projects.
- Partnered with the Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District to identify and manage non-native invasive weeds including Japanese knotweed and garlic mustard.



Community Involvement:

- Partnered with the Port of St. Helens, Columbia River PUD, St. Helens High School, and Scappoose High School to hold an Earth Day Event and Bay Clean-up event at the Scappoose Bay Marina.
- Started a watershed-wide monitoring program which includes 30 sites. We are working with school groups, and community volunteers to monitor the sites for water quality and temperature. We are working with the City of Scappoose to test for bacteria (including E. coli) on select sites. We also continue to monitor upcoming and previously completed fish barrier correction projects.
- Partnered with the BLM, Master Gardener volunteers, Columbia River Youth Corps (CRYC), and Scappoose High School to provide local landowners with over 3,500 native trees and shrubs to plant along streams and wetlands. Volunteers also helped plant trees on a couple of private properties.



Bonnie Falls 2008



March 2009

Upper Nehalem Watershed Council



THANK YOU TO OUR PROJECT PARTNERS

Without you, all of our 2006 successes could not have been achieved. Again, Thank you and we look forward to many more years of partnerships in the future. CSWCD Staff

BASF Corporation
 Beaver Drainage District
 Bureau of Land Management
 City of Rainier
 City of Scappoose
 City of St Helens
 City of Vernonia
 Clatsop County SWCD
 Columbia County
 Columbia SWCD Volunteers
 Experience Works

Friends of Fox Creek
 Georgia Pacific
 Lower Columbia River Watershed Council
 Marshland Drainage District
 Midland Drainage District
 Northwest Oregon RC&D
 Oregon Association of Conservation Districts
 Oregon Department of Agriculture
 Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
 Oregon Forestry Department
 Oregon Small Woodlands Association

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
 OSU Extension Service
 Scappoose Bay Watershed Council
 Scappoose Drainage District
 Upper Nehalem Watershed Council
 US Fish and Wildlife Service
 USDA / NRCS
 West Multnomah SWCD
 And many thanks to our cooperators throughout Columbia County.

How can we help you?

Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District wants to know what Columbia County Landowners want assistance with or would like more information about. Your responses will help us plan our Workshops and community outreach programs for the coming year.

What interests you?

please mark as many as apply

- Noxious weed control
- Rain Gardens
- Land management for horse owners
- Native Plants
- Rain Collection
- Backyard Conservation
- Soil Nutrient Management
- Small Livestock operator
- Pasture Management
- Water Conservation
- Manure handling and storage
- Program info. - EQIP, WHIP, etc....
- Forest Management
- Fish and Wildlife Habitat
- Other:

How much land do you own/manage?

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Yard | <input type="checkbox"/> 15 -99 acres |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1/3 to 1 acre | <input type="checkbox"/> 100- 499 acres |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1- 4acres | <input type="checkbox"/> 500 -999 acres |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5-14 acres | <input type="checkbox"/> 1000 + acres |

Question?

Name

Address

Phone

Comments:

COLUMBIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Please Mail or fax to:
 CSWCD
 2514 Sykes Road
 St Helens, OR 97051

Phone: 503-397-4555
 Fax: 503-366-0864
 Email: kari.hollander@or.nacdn.net

Working with Columbia County to Preserve and Protect our Natural Resources**COLUMBIA SOIL AND WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

Phone: 503-397-4555
Fax: 503-366-0864
Email:

**Everyone is Welcome
Office Hours 8:30 - 4:30**

What Conservation Districts Do

- *Provide technical assistance to private land owners and managers.*
- *Help land owners control wind and water erosion on construction sites, farms and public lands.*
- *Plant trees and other land cover to hold soil in place, provide wildlife food and cover and beautify neighborhoods.*
- *Help protect beaches, streams, and rivers through education outreach and on-the-ground projects.*
- *Help with flood control and drought management programs.*
- *Teach young people about natural resources and why they must be protected.*
- *Protect farmlands to assure an ample supply of high quality food.*
- *Help land owners and managers draft and implement conservation plans.*
- *Facilitate strategic planning, resource management planning and project planning efforts in your watershed.*
- *Do resource inventories and assessments.*
- *Join forces with many other partners to enhance the quality of watersheds and the quality and quantity of water.*
- *Coordinates many resources and resource agencies to assist with project implementation.*