

SPLINTERS FROM THE BOARD

September 5, 2018

Convened 1:00 PM

• Board heard updates on the FAST Program, the Nursery Fire, and the Mosier Projects. The Nursery fire took out the irrigation well along with irrigation tubing. Josh proposed that well repairs could include some of the latest well/ irrigation monitoring technology that has been installed on the Molesworth deep well as a demonstration. Use of the technology would be highlighted on crop tours. The nursery could also be upgraded to demonstrate newer conservation practices including rural firewise landscaping and urban conservation practices. The board approved the planned improvements to the nursery as well as the installation of VFD, SCADA, and other monitoring upgrades.

• The Board adopted Resolution 09052018 establishing the Annual Meeting date; Resolution 09052018-2 relating to the District's Proficiency Pay guidelines; Resolution 09052018-3 relating to updating the District's Salary Structure; and Resolution 09052018-4 updating the District's Benefit cap guidelines. Board also reviewed and approved for the current FY Resolution 160601-2 Pertaining to Special Procurements & Services.

• Board approved District Cost Share request for replacement of range guzzler destroyed in the fire.

• Brian Tuck, OSU Extension reported that there would be CORE Pesticide Training in Hood River in November and in Wasco Co. in December. He is retiring on Dec 31st so this would be his last meeting with the District. The Board wished him well and thanked him for his service.

• Clinton Whitten, NRCS, announced he would be leaving for a new assignment in Steamboat Springs, CO, and that Dan Esposito was selected as the new DC.

• Lissa Biehn, FSA, discussed assistance available for fire from FSA and approaching deadlines.

• Adjourned 3:45PM

Conservation Calendar

Catch Wasco Co. SWCD on KODL Coffee Break at 10:00 am with Al Wynn, the 2nd Monday of each month! Unless otherwise noted, the SWCD Board Meeting is always the first Wednesday of the month.

Sep 26 W River WS Council Mtg, 6PM Wamic Com Ctr

Oct 3 SWCD Board Mtg, 1:00 PM, USDA Service Ctr Conf Rm

Oct 3 WS Council Coordinating Board, 3:00 PM, USDA Service Ctr. Conf Rm

Oct 8 Columbus Day, Office Closed

Oct 24 Mosier WS Council Mtg, 6:30 PM, Mosier

Nov 7 SWCD Board Mtg, 1:00 PM, USDA Service Ctr. Conf Rm

Nov 12 Veteran's Day, Office Closed

Nov 22 Thanksgiving, Office Closed

Dec 5 Lower Deschutes LAC Biennial Review, 10:00 AM USDA Service Ctr Conf Room

Dec 5 SWCD Board Mtg, 1:00 PM, USDA Service Ctr. Conf Rm

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SWCD & NRCS Staff		541-296-6178 x3	FAX: 296-7868
SWCD District Manager:	Shilah Olson		
SWCD Office Administrator:	Tammy Tripp		
SWCD Watershed Council Coordinator /Planner:	Abbie Forrest		
Field Office Assistant/FAST Coordinator:	Tatiana Taylor		
SWCD Planners:	Ryan Bessette, Josh Thompson, Karen Lamson		
NRCS District Conservationist:	Dan Esposito		
NRCS Soil Conservationist:			
NRCS Soil Conservationist:	Garrett Duyck		
NRCS Soil Conservationist:	Misty Strayhorn		
Conservation Liason/Farm Bill Biologist:	Katie Pierson		
<i>GROUNDWORK is published six times a year and welcomes contributions from readers.</i>			
<i>Editor: Tammy Tripp</i>			

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Watershed Updates

For information on any of these watershed councils, please contact Watershed Coordinator Abbie Forrest, Wasco Co. SWCD at 541-296-6178 ext 102.



Coordinating Board

The Coordinating Board will have a check-in meeting on October 3rd. They will receive a draft of the Watershed Council FY 17/18 annual report for review.

Fifteenmile Watershed

The 15Mile Council met on September 11th and received the 2018 FAST and Instream Lease program update from Flow Coordinator Tatiana Taylor. The 15mile Underground Storage Feasibility Study Completion Report was also presented by representatives from GeoSystems Analysis, and GSI Water Solutions. The council spent most of the meeting listening to the results of the study and discussing next steps.

There will be a stakeholder meeting tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, November 6, 2018. If you are an irrigator on Fifteenmile Creek, specifically in the Dufur Valley, please plan on attending the November 6 meeting.

The Dalles Area Watershed

The Council met on September 12th. The annual Lamprey update was presented by a member of the CTWS. Tatiana Taylor led a discussion on the next steps for the E.coli monitoring in Mill Creek and presented the results from this season's sampling events. Council members also discussed co-sponsoring the SWCD Annual Tree Sale event. Updates were also provided on restoration projects happening in The Dalles Watershed.

Mosier Watershed Council

Mosier Watershed Council last met on July 25th. They received updates on the oil spill site restoration and monitoring status, from the City of Mosier and WC member volunteers. OWRD presented the latest information on groundwater levels and the Mosier Million Well Replace and Repair Projects.

The council will meet again on October 24th. The agenda will include updates from OWRD, DEQ and the SWCD.

White River Watershed Council

The White River Watershed council will be meeting on Wednesday, September 26th at 6:00pm at the Wamic Community Center. Agenda topics will include updates on the Wasco County Forest Collaborative Group, Watershed Condition Classification tool, status of the RCPP and the Juniper Flat Piping Project.

If you are a landowner in the White River Watershed we urge you to attend this meeting and bring any resource concerns and project ideas you have. There may be funding available and now is the time to plan!

Bakeoven/Buck Hollow Watershed Council

They do not have a meeting scheduled. SWCD and NRCS technicians are hard at work on the rangeland inventory for the recent OWEB grant as well as working on fire restoration efforts.

Ag Water Quality

The Lower Deschutes Local Advisory Council (LAC) Biennial Review of the Area Water Quality Plan is set for Dec 5, 2018, 10:00 AM, USDA Service Center.

All human activities that contribute to water pollution, including, forestry, factories, wastewater treatment plants, manufacturing, etc., must abide by federal Clean Water Rules.

Oregon passed the Ag Water Quality Management Program in 1993 that guides Oregon's agriculture community to meet federal rules. The Ag Water Quality Program for farmers and ranchers is overseen by the Oregon Dept of Agriculture.

There are 38 Local Advisory Councils established in Oregon covering 38 Water Quality Management Areas. Wasco Co. is part of the Lower Deschutes Management Area that is overseen by Wasco Co. SWCD.

The LAC is made up of area agricultural producers and other stakeholders who meet periodically to review progress on the plan and to make revisions if necessary.

Water quality is important to all of us. There are many activities besides agriculture than can have negative impact on water. Such as runoff from streets and lawns, overuse of household chemicals, pesticides, and streambank erosion.

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Service Center News

FSA - ECP signup for 2018 wildfires starts Oct 1st. NAP deadlines will be published soon. Sign-up has started for the Market Facilitation Program.

SWCD - In addition to regular conservation planning work, the District has a number of on-going projects it is actively working on. These include the two projects in Mosier -the Groundwater and the Mosier Well Repair Projects, the multiple RCPP Irrigation projects in the White River Watershed, and assisting NRCS and FSA to implement landowner fire recovery efforts.

For those with fire-impacted CREP the District is working on what assistance can be had (if any) for after fire riparian restoration. The current plan is to wait and see what recovery might happen naturally next year and move forward from there.

NRCS - Clinton Whitten, NRCS Soil Conservationist has accepted a position in Steamboat Springs, Colorado. His last day was September 10th. Clinton was a great asset to The Dalles Field Office and will be deeply missed. Clinton is a passionate skier and the close proximity of ski slopes to his new assignment was something he couldn't pass up.

As we say goodbye to Clinton, we say hello to Dan Esposito who has been selected as the new District Conservationist. He comes to us from Central Point, Oregon. We look forward to working with Dan and are sure our producers will too. Dan has already spent a week with us to help staff with the fire programs and continuous EQIP signups. His official first day will be Oct 1st.

Wasco County SWCD Post-Fire Update

The 2018 wildfire season in Wasco County was one of the most extreme fire seasons in living memory. Four large fires and numerous small fires burned nearly 204,000 acres in Wasco County.

Wasco County SWCD is working closely with local, state, and federal partners to coordinate resources to address the damage caused by these fires. Primary concerns are soil ero-

sion on crop and rangeland, loss of riparian and upland vegetation, damaged fences that protect sensitive areas from livestock damage, and potential for invasive plant species.

The SWCD will be assisting NRCS in getting the contracted conservation practices implemented. This entails organizing suppliers and applicators of herbicide and seed for rangeland restoration projects. The District will also ensure product delivery as well as ensuring that spraying and seeding practices are completed to NRCS specifications.

This project has many complexities with lots of moving parts. It involves dozens of land managers and restoration costs will total several million dollars. This cost will be incurred and reimbursed in phases over the next 12 months.

Contact Wasco County SWCD and NRCS at 541-296-6178 x3 if you had fire damage and haven't signed up for assistance yet, or would like further information.

2019 Conservation Tree & Shrub Sale

The 2019 Tree Sale list can be found in this issue of the **GROUNDWORK**. Trees considered firewise are annotated with a little flame.

This year we've added Buffaloberry. It's been several years since we offered this. It's a medium tree (max height 13') and is good for revegetating disturbed sites. It flowers and produces fruit which makes excellent wildlife food. It is drought and cold tolerant and as a bonus fixes nitrogen similar to legumes. It is also fire-resistant - meaning it doesn't burn easily.

Other new species include Bigleaf Maple, Pacific Ninebark, Pacific Willow, and Blue Spruce.

This year we are going to try a couple things different with our tree sale program. After pre-orders are made by the deadline of January 24th, we won't be taking anymore orders. We will plan on a one to two day plant sale and will fulfill orders only on those two days.

The second new thing is selling discounted bundles. Friends can get together and buy bundles together and get a savings - however you'll have to divide the bundles up yourselves. They

will also be helpful for those who were affected by fire and need to do some landscape restoration.

The plants still won't be arriving until the first week in March so the final sale won't be taking place until those orders are put together. We will keep everyone posted on the particulars as we work out the details.

Besides here, the plant list can be found posted to our website along with links to more information about each of the offered species. The link is: http://www.wasco.wcd.org/wcdswcd_007.htm

If you have any questions or would like more information, give us a call at 541-296-6178 ext 3, or email me at: tammy.tripp@oacd.org.

The Garden Plot

by Tammy Tripp



Firewise Landscaping

The severity and speed of this summer's fires reminds us of how important defensible space is around homes and outbuilding. Slowing the fire even a little can give fire fighters a better chance of stopping it before it can reach your home.

We live in an area where fire happens. Whether from carelessness, accidents, or nature, the key is to accept this and to make the decisions ahead of time to mitigate its effects.

There are landscape choices that can be made to help protect the home from fire as well as provide an aesthetically pleasing environment.

Besides a green lawn, hardscaping gardens on the outskirts with non-burnable materials such as rocks and bricks can act as an effective firebreak. Combined with green ground covers and succulents also greatly reduces ignition sources.

While there aren't any real "fire-proof" plants, there are plants high in moisture and with low sap or resin content that resists fast burning. Unfortunately, pine, fir and other conifers, that grow best in our environment, don't fall into that category. While many can recover well after a fire, they do tend to go up

like a roman candle if not managed well. Not something you'd like to see burning in your front yard.

While they might require a bit more water hardwood trees, maple, poplar, and cherry trees tend to be less flammable due to lack of sap and resins. These would be the best type to grow nearer to the home. Resinous species such as spreading or upright Junipers, that are typically favored due to their drought tolerance, are not a firewise choice.

Some shrub species, such as hedging roses, Redbud, Bush Honeysuckle, Currant, Cotoneaster, Kinnikinnick, Sumac, and Crabapple tend to be a bit more fire-resistant.

Garden plants like Lavendar, Fuchsia, Sage, Coreopsis, Rock cress, and Iceplant, are also good choices.

If you are interested in learning more about creating defensible space with landscaping, check out PNW Publication 590 - Fire-Resistant Plants for Home Landscapes. It lists a multitude of plants to choose from as well as considerations for incorporating them into defensible space around your home.

Wildflower Talk

by Kristin Currin, Humbleroots Nursery

Western Mountain Balm
Monardella odoratissima

Western Mountain Balm, also called Coyote Mint, is a very aromatic, low-growing, native perennial found in open rocky places mainly east of the Cascade mountain crest in Oregon and Washington. The lavender to whitish colored flowers bloom in summer and are somewhat similar in appearance to the commonly known Bee Balm (*Monarda* sp.). Like Bee Balm, Western Mountain Balm is highly attractive to native bees and provides a valuable summer nectar source.



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