



Coos Soil & Water Conservation District



Spring Newsletter June 2011

COOS SWCD GOALS:

Promote wise use of renewable resources through locally led voluntary conservation. Conserve, protect and develop natural resources for the economic benefit of the people of Coos County. Encourage measures for the protection of waters of Coos County. Assist local landowners in the developing and utilizing their resources to reduce soil erosion and improve water quality and support the Coos County economy.

Coos SWCD 2010 Annual Meeting



The 2010 Coos Soil and Water Conservation District's Annual Meeting was a big success. This year's meeting was held at the "Barn"/Bandon Community Center on December 3, 2010 from 5 p.m. – 8 p.m. There were around 40 people in attendance this year and it looked like everyone had a good time. Sub Sandwiches and potluck dishes were provided by the Coos SWCD director's and staff. Wayne Krieger (State Representative) for the third year in a row gave a talk about issues affecting the state or Oregon in the upcoming year, primarily the budget shortfall. The Coos SWCD Cooperator of the year was Ed Groves a landowner on the East Fork of the Coquille River. He has recently completed a 50 acre irrigation efficiency project with the help of the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), but was unable to attend the meeting. Dan Varoujean was the guest speaker for his final meeting as a Coos SWCD Director and gave a very interesting talk about oil spills, sea birds in Alaska, and a lot of personal stories and opinions. Dan Varoujean, Fred Wiebe and Jim Maitland who all decided not to serve for another four years as Coos SWCD Directors all received plaques for their years of service.

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2010 GUERIN MEMORIAL ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS

There were a total of 50 essays received at the office this year. There were entries from Myrtle Point Middle School, Myrtle Point High School, Coquille High School, and Marshfield High School.

First Place- \$125.00 cash prize went to Katie Ledbetter from Coquille High School. She was a junior in Mr. Devereux's science class and wrote about how agricultural conservation benefits fish and wildlife. She was presented with a traveling plaque with her name engraved on it that will be kept out her High School for one year.



Katie (left), Anne Guerin (light blue), Cheryl Griffith (dark purple).

Second Place- \$100.00 cash prize went to Shannon Boatright from Marshfield High School for her essay titled "*The Most Important Water Preservation Method.*" Shannon was unable to attend the meeting due to a school commitment.

Third Place- \$75.00 cash prize went to Kassy Freerksen from Marshfield High School.



Winners received their certificates and cash prizes at the Coos Soil and Water Conservation District's Annual Meeting that was held at the Community Building in Bandon, December 3, 2010. The awards were presented by Cheryl Griffith and Annie Guerin who are the daughters of Tom and Dorothy Guerin, who are the person's the memorial essay contest was created to honor.

Feb. 12th SOLV event at the Matson Creek Wetland Preserve

By: Tyler Pederson, Coos Watershed Association



Matson Creek Elk Exclosure Project Photos 09-11 OWEB Small Grant
Matson Creek Wetland Preserve Photos

The goal of this project was to restore wetland habitat and bring about community awareness through service learning. The 33 volunteers were very efficient over the 4 hour time span of the event. Three boy scout troops, four SWOCC students, Coos Watershed Association (Coos WA) staff and individual volunteers split up into three groups and planted over 200 native trees including Western Red Cedar, Port Orford Cedar, Western Hemlock, Oregon Ash, and several different shrub species in a half-acre elk exclosure. Volunteers potted 250 spirea, ninebark, and black hawthorn in the nursery and removed bamboo from plastic vexar tubes (old tree protection) to reuse and recycle. Volunteers also dug up blackberry root balls in the exclosure and took down

two stock wire fences around previous plantings in the exclosure. The elk exclosure was paid for by an Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) Small Grant for the total of \$2,947, and total of \$5,094 of in-kind labor, over 500 hours of volunteered time by The Wetlands Conservancy/Coos Watershed Association, the Boy Scouts of America, and the Friends of the Coos Watershed. The exclosure was built to prevent the elk herd from damaging the recent tree plantings. The elk exclosure was an Eagle Project that built a 600ft perimeter and eight foot high fence to better insure that the trees will grow. Another community volunteered maintenance project at this site was done recently in June of 2011.

COOS SWCD SPONSORED: Fish Passage/Permitting Workshop



There was an attendance of over 40 people.



Ken Loffink, Assistant Fish Passage Coordinator (ODFW)

The Coos Soil & Water Conservation District (Coos SWCD) sponsored “State & Federal Permits Made Simple Workshop” on April 6, 2011 was very informative, even though the title may have been misleading. Overall what everyone learned was that every project is different, and it is important to make sure you go through all the steps, and talk to all the agencies before starting your project. Having all the proper permits and paying all the fees is a way to make sure you are in compliance and getting the work done correctly. There are lot of professionals and agencies for example the Coos Soil & Water Conservation District and local Watershed Associations that provide technical assistance and will help you with your permitting processes.

Even though the workshop and the breakfast were free, the major benefit of coming to the workshop was to hear from and talk to the many professionals who traveled from all over Oregon to give their presentations that represented their involvement for their particular agency. The Speakers included Eric Metz, Nancy Pustis and Chris Castelli (Department of State Lands-DSL), Benny Dean (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), Ken Loffink (Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife - ODFW), Jim Muck (National Marine Fisheries Service - NMFS), and Pam Blake (Oregon Department of Environmental Quality -DEQ). The workshop was from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. with an hour lunch and the presentations were non- stop. Most people that attended were professionals that have some involvement with permits, others attended the workshop to receive educational credits, and others were landowners that had specific questions about their particular restoration or maintenance projects.

Some of the presentations stressed water quality for example Pam Blake’s from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and how important it is to do your homework and hire experienced contractors. A lot of the handouts and displays that were provided by the Coos SWCD also gave a lot of valuable information pertaining to water quality.

2nd Annual Manure Pickup Day was a Benefit to the Community!



The “Free Manure Pick-up Day” was thought up last year by Eric Nusbaum (ODA-Water Quality Specialist) and put into action by Eric Himmelreich (Coos Soil & Water Conservation District) and landowner Sylvia Bailey with the hope of getting rid of her over abundance of horse manure at her ranch. Last year’s event offered pony rides for the kids, gift bags, balloons, guest speakers on composting and a lot of manure management handouts. Very quickly Eric Himmelreich realized that people were coming for the free fertilizer and not necessarily for the event itself.

So this year was a little bit different. There were handouts, gift bags and free lemonade, but there were two experienced tractor operators that were busy from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Unlike last year there was no limit to the amount of manure that you could take, thus there were many dump trucks and trailers that made numerous trips to all areas

of the county even with the high gas prices. I talked to a lot of the people that came, and some of which came last year and said the manure work great on their garden, others were stock piling and using it for a composting start, and others were picking up the manure and delivering it to friends or people that didn’t have a pickup. The main thing was 46 pickups/dump trucks filled up and left with smiles. Eric Himmelreich and the landowner were also satisfied that because so much manure was distributed there will be better manure management and pasture management that can now take place at the G-G Ranch in Coaledo. This free event will take place every year, but please call the Sylvia Bailey at (541) 267-4644 if you want to pick up a truck load of manure for a reasonable price throughout the year. Also please call the Coos SWCD at (541) 396-6879 for information about manure management and water quality and future community educational events.

NEWS & UPCOMING EVENTS

- Please check out the Coos SWCD's new website at: coosswcd.org for the most current news, information, and to subscribe to an electronic newsletter!
- Summer Field Tours on the North Fork/East Fork Coquille River will begin in August, please call Eric Himmelreich at (541) 396-6879 or Kelly Miles at (541) 572-2541 for more information.
- The Coos SWCD Long Range Business Plan is now available at the new website!
- Coos County Fair will be from July 26th – 30th and the Coos SWCD will have a booth.

NUTRIA MANAGEMENT IN OREGON

Living with Nutria

Provided by the ODFW Springfield Field Office

Nutria constructs burrows in banks of rivers, sloughs, and ponds, sometimes causing considerable erosion. Burrowing is a commonly reported damage caused by nutria. Burrows can weaken roadbeds, stream banks, dams, and dikes, which may collapse when the soil is saturated by rain or high water. Rain action can wash out and enlarge collapsed burrows and compounds the damage.

Nutria depredation on crops is also well documented. Crops that have been damaged include corn, sugar and table beets, alfalfa, wheat, barley, oats, various melons, and a variety of vegetables from home gardens and truck farms. Nutria girdle fruit, nut, deciduous and coniferous forest trees, and ornamental shrubs. They dig up lawns when feeding on the tender roots and shoots of sod grasses.



Nutria
-Oregon Fish and Wildlife-

At high densities and under certain adverse environmental conditions, foraging nutria can also significantly impact natural plant communities. Overutilization of emergent marsh plants can damage stands of desirable vegetation used by other wildlife. Nutria are aggressive competitors with the native muskrat which is smaller. Muskrats have been largely eliminated or greatly reduced where nutria have become established.

Legal Status

In Oregon, nutria are classified as unprotected Nongame Wildlife (OAR 635-044-0132). As unprotected wildlife nutria may be trapped (cannot be relocated) or shot. No license is needed for a landowner to control

nutria on his/her own property. Most cities have restrictions on leg-hold trapping or the discharge of firearms within their city limits--live trapping is usually the main population control measure inside the city limits.

Exclusion

Since nutria are usually found in waterways, there is often an unlimited supply of replacement animals upstream and downstream from where the damage is occurring. Rapid immigration coupled with a high reproductive rate makes population control a "high effort" method of damage control and often ineffective. Exclusion is often the best long term solution to nutria damage. Most commonly used methods include:

Low woven-wire fences (about 3 feet) with an apron buried at least 6 inches have been used effectively to exclude nutria from home gardens and lawns.

Electric wire barriers have also been used to exclude nutria where vegetation can be controlled to keep it from shorting the wires. Usually one wire 6 inches off the ground will be effective.

Welded-wire cylinders around individual plants are often used where only a few plants need to be protected.

Sheet metal shields can be used to prevent gnawing damage to wooden structures or trees.

Habitat Considerations

In creating dikes and drainage ditches it is often important to consider nutria damage and the maintenance that can be required. Nutria like steeply sloped banks next to relatively deep water for den sites. Dikes and drainage ditches designed with gradual slopes will be much less attractive as den sites and require much less if any nutria damage maintenance.

Crops and gardens located close to water will be more attractive to nutria than those further from water. If you have a choice of where to locate your garden, consider nutria damage. Natural vegetation buffers next to water bodies can provide feeding areas and reduce the attractiveness of vegetation further from the water.

Hazing

Nutria are wary creatures and will try to escape when threatened. Loud noises, high-pressure water sprays, and other types of harassment have been used to scare nutria from lawns and golf courses. The success of this type of control is usually short-lived and problem animals soon return, consequently, hazing is usually not an effective control technique. Large aggressive dogs are often persistent and effective at "hazing" nutria out of back yards. Small dogs are often intimidated by bold nutria.

Repellents and Trapping

No chemical repellents for nutria are currently registered.

Nutria are easily captured in live traps. Bait live traps with sweet potatoes or carrots and place them along active trails or wherever nutria or their sign are seen. A small amount of bait leading to the entrance of the live trap will increase capture success. When cornered or captured, nutria are aggressive and can inflict serious injury to pets and humans. *Extreme care should be taken when handling captured nutria.*

http://www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/living_with/nutria.asp



Coos Soil & Water Conservation District
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UPCOMING EVENTS & PROGRAMS

- **Regular Meetings:** 4th Thursday of every month
- **Landowner Resource Guides available at office**
- **Conservation/Farm Planning**
- **Technical & Financial Assistance**
- **Weed wrenches:** for extracting noxious weeds on your property ex. gorse and scotch broom are available to borrow at the Coos SWCD (396-6879) and NRCS (396-2841) offices in Coquille.

