Coos Soil & Water Conservation District

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Winter Newsletter January 2012

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 reduces soil erosion and improve water quality and support the Coos County

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Coos SWCD 2011 Annual Meeting

The 2011 Coos Soil and Water Conservation District's Annual Meeting was a big success. This year's meeting was held at the North Bend Public Library on December 2, 2011 from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. There were over 30 people in attendance this year and it looked like everyone had a good time. Three types of lasagnas were provided: elk, beef and vegetarain and potluck dishes were provided by the Coos SWCD director's and staff. Co-Speaker Arnie Roblan gave a talk about issues affecting the state of Oregon in the upcoming year, primarily the budget shortfall. The Coos SWCD Cooperator of the year was Brett Clarno a North Bend landowner who owns property in North Bend on Mettman Creek. He has recently completed a 3/4 mile riparian fencing and planting project with the help of the Coos Watershed Association, Coos SWCD and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB). Mark Villers was the guest speaker and he gave a great presentation on stream restoration projects that his company Blue Ridge Timber specializes in. Mark is able to pull whole stream side trees into the creek to provide fish habitat. He stressed how important the trees with root wads are for providing cover for juvenile fish and a solid anchoring point to collect more large wood naturally. Sharon Waterman, Coos SWCD Director and current Chairman was presented with a plaque for her nine years of service on the board.

2011 GUERIN MEMORIAL ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS

There were a total of 49 essays received at the office this year. There were entries from Myrtle Point High School, Coquille High School, North Bend High School, Powers High School as well as Coquille Middle School and Myrtle Point Junior High.

Winners received their certificates and cash prizes at the Coos Soil and Water Conservation District's Annual Meeting that was held at the North Bend Public Library on December 2, 2011. 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.

First Place- $125.00 cash prize went to Ireland Tall Hunter from Myrtle Point Junior High School. She is a seventh grader and wrote about what loggers and farmers can do to benefit fish and wildlife habitat. She was presented with a traveling plaque with her name engraved by presenters Anne Guerin and Cheryl Griffith. The plaque will be displayed at Myrtle Point High School for one year.

Ireland (left front), Anne Guerin (right front), Cheryl Griffith (back).

Ireland Tall Hunter – First Place Winner

Second Place- $100.00 cash prize went to Scarlet Celestino from Myrtle Point High School for her essay titled "*Decreasing Soil Erosion*."

Third Place- $75.00 cash prize went to Ivy Metzgus from Myrtle Point High School who was unable to attend the meeting.

WHAT LOGGERS & FARMERS CAN DO TO BENEFIT FISH & WILDLIFE HABITAT

By: Ireland Hunter, 1st Place Guerin Memorial Essay Contest Winner 2011: 7th grader at Myrtle Point Junior High School

Loggers and farmers can do things to benefit fish and wildlife habitats in many ways. Farmers can do some small things on their farms that can help. Loggers can also do some things that can help to benefit these habitats. Some people think that to protect the habitats you have to go to extreme measures, but there are other ways to benefit the fish and wildlife habitat without going without, or being someone who doesn't want to take any trees, or use any land.

For Instance, farmers can help make these habitats better by, fencing their livestock away from the river. Livestock, especially cattle, can cause land erosion over the years by walking up and down the banks of the river. This erosion can cause trees to fall, and mud to slide into the river. The waste from the livestock can also contaminate the river. This can cause *E. coli* when the waste is in the water. *E. coli* is harmful to fish and wildlife. Some of the vaccinations that are given to the livestock go through their bodies and are flushed out through their waste. This can also be dangerous to the fish, and the wildlife that drink it. Farmers can keep an eye on their irrigating. Irrigation degrades water, and wildlife habitat. Another thing farmers could do is, to limit cutting down trees that are unnecessary to cut down. The more trees that are there, the more homes there will be for the wildlife. They could plant large trees such as, willow trees, and myrtle tree along the river banks, which would hold the banks together, preventing erosion. They could also let the native plants such as, ferns, and grasses over grow the river banks which would also help hold the banks together. This would provide homes for the wildlife, keep the rivers clean for the fish, and provide places for spawning.

Loggers can also do their part to benefit the habitat around the rivers and forests. They could keep their machines and fuel trucks away from the riverbed to prevent fuel leakage into the river. Just one fuel spill can ruin many habitats. Loggers who log near the river should always make erosion fences during, and after they are done cutting, when needed. An erosion fence helps keep mud and debris from sliding into the river. They should always replant where they have cut down trees. This will replace the wildlife's home that had just been taken. Replanting will also help hold the river banks together if the logging was anywhere near the river. The loggers could lay some of the scrap branches, and maybe one or two trees in the river. Those branches and trees would provide shelter for the fish, and a place to spawn.

There are many ways to protect wildlife and fish habitats without going to the extreme. Loggers still need to cut down trees to make a living. Yes, sometimes they shouldn't clear-cut in some places, but in other places it might be necessary. Loggers shouldn't clear-cut near the rivers in some places. If someone plants trees on their property to be cut down (like a crop), he should have the right to cut those trees down as long as he replants when he is done. Clear-cutting also lets the shrubs and undergrowth get sun that they usually wouldn't have gotten with the trees blocking them. This helps them to grow and create shelter and food for the wildlife. Farmers have to plant and grow their crops to make money, and provide needed food for people and animals. If there were no farmers, there would be almost nothing to eat. Farmers should be responsible when farming. They should not cut all the grass and trees down, and use all the land for their crops. If farmers didn't cut some of the grass it would be unmanageable, and they would have paid a bunch of money for something they can't use. Sometimes farmers have to use chemicals to keep their crops healthy, but they can be careful where they use those chemicals. They could keep them away from the river and forests, where they know some wildlife lives.

Loggers and farmers don't have to stop their job to protect the fish and wildlife habitat. They just have to be careful and responsible with the environment around them. It's not just up to the loggers and farmers to benefit the habitat. We can all do our part to help keep our nature's wildlife beautiful, safe, and productive.

Resources: her father (a logger/farmer), her mother, www.nfwf.org, www.wisegeek.com www.extension.oregonstate.edu

Coos SWCD's 2011 Outstanding Cooperator of the Year:

Brett Clarno: Clarno Ranch

METTMAN CREEK- Clarno's Riparian Fencing & Planting Project

Before Photo

After Photo

Brett Clarno has 48 acres just east of the old Kentuck Golf Course in North Bend. He runs 10 buffalo year round and 20 beef cows in the summer. Brett also leases 5 additional parcels to run feeder cattle. He knew his place needed fencing upgrades and he had heard about the watershed program and he felt it was a win-win situation. Brett was able to get low cost fencing and was able to protect Mettman Creek and start a new riparian zone with trees that benefit the fish and the aquatic organisms. Brett is satisfied that the project is now self sustained, except for the occasional beaver or nutria damage. Brett says that for the future he would like to talk to owners of his leased properties to get them interested in the OWEB Small Grants Program. Brett would like to thank the Coos Watershed who started this project and the Coos Soil and Water Conservation District, and all beneficiaries who donated time or money to projects like this.

This project was started during the summer of 2010 and completed in January of 2011. This project fenced 3/4 miles of Mettman Creek on one side. The fencing allowed for the management of blackberries, the exclusion of cattle, and the chance to establish a new riparian area with trees and shrubs. Mettman Creek is a Coho creek so the added shade and bank stability will be very important for fish in this creek in the future. The landowner has been very helpful and flexible with this project, and that was very important. This landowner has even been flexible on what type of material he used for fencing, when it was brought to his attention that the small grants team was concerned about putting in creosote railroad ties near a fish stream. These fencing and planting projects are very important for water quality so thanks again to our Outstanding Cooperator of the Year!

LANGLOIS MOUNTAIN RAIN GUAGE SITES:

Lanched August 30, 2011

In the early summer of 2011 Tom Forgatsch (Coos SWCD Zone 2 Director) thought of an idea for a project. He felt that it was necessary to collect data to better determine how much water is actually available to landowners and cranberry growers near the ocean. Tom Forgatsch called around and was able to get approval from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to borrow two rain gauges worth $1,285 each for one year. The agreement was for the Coos SWCD to set up the two devices, collect the data, and share the data with the BLM. Some of the other agencies requesting the rainfall data include The Oregon Water Resources Department and the Curry Soil & Water Conservation District, Oregon State Extension Office and more. Eric Himmelreich will go to the two sites located up Langlois Mountain Road at ~ 2.5 mile marker (Site 1) and 12 miles up the road (Site 2) once every month to record the data and check the condition of the devices and the batteries. The agreement with BLM is for one year, but will most likely continue the agreement at least for a few years.

Site 1: Hildebrand's Property
Elevation: 1,006 ft, HOBO #: 194840

Site 2: Steve Kalina's Property
Elevation: 1,323 ft, HOBO #: 270940

Langlois Mountain Rain Gauges
Rainfall Totals (inches)

Month	Year	Site 1	Site 2
September	2011	0.53	0.30
October	2011	4.23	3.62
November	2011	8.90	7.52
December	2011	3.78	4.51

BEAVER EXCLUDER TEST PROJECT

Rogers Creek – Tributary to S.F. Coos River

This enclosure is an attempt to prevent beavers from damming up in front of and inside of this county culvert on Rogers Creek. The landowner has had repeated trouble with this 8 ft round culvert becoming at least 75% plugged by beaver induced materials. Right now it is a constant battle to keep the road from being flooded during the winter.

The local CREP Technician about a year ago got local agencies together to try to see if information learned about beaver behavior and techniques used back east to manage beaver could be applied on the west coast. There was an immediate response of how important beaver are for creating fish habitat and that it is important for landowners to try to not kill beavers whenever possible. The group also agreed that in the wrong locations beaver can be extremely problematic and can jeopardizes man-made structures and constantly flood landowners field that are essential for them to make an economic profit on their property. The group at that first meeting got cooperation from the Coos & Coquille Watershed Associations, Coos County Roads, and Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife, Coos SWCD, and Curry SWCD. The idea was to find a suitable site where a problem was occurring and build a trapezoid structure to prevent them from bringing dam building materials to the inlet of the culvert. There was a video put out on how to build this type of structure, the only problem was there are no anadromous fish in the location that the video reports on. The ODFW fish biologist mentioned right away that the structure will have to meet ODFW fish passage specifications. This was troublesome because the cattle panels that were the best materials that we could find locally were 6”x8”, which were too small to allow for adult salmon fish passage, and to cut the panels meant that beaver were going to be able to get through the structure.

After some time, coordination, trial and error, and on the ground work and sign-off by the local ODFW Fish Biologist the device was constructed and installed on December 8, 2011. The panel was cut and bent to allow for fish passage. The structure will have to be monitored closely by the landowner and the Coos Watershed Association to make sure no debris is plugging the structure, and that fish can pass. Thanks to everyone involved, especially Barbara Grant (Curry SWCD CREP Technician) and Chris Claire (ODFW)! This design will be modified in the future, but the hope is that this kind of structure can be perfected so it can be used in a lot of situations in our county and others.

Oregon Department of Agriculture's Water Quality Program gains several tools to evaluate effectiveness

Article by Stephanie Page (Oregon Department of Agriculture)

During the 2011 Oregon Legislative Session, Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) received funding for several monitoring activities that will help evaluate changes in agricultural land conditions and water quality. The monitoring activities will complement existing information about water quality improvement activities on agricultural lands. The ODA is already aware of the water quality improvement activities on agricultural lands in Coos County that have been implemented by local agencies such as the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Coos Soil & Water Conservation District, Coos Watershed Association, Coquille Watershed Association, Tenmile Lakes Basin Partnership (TLBP), as well as others. Dave Wilkinson, ODA Water Quality Program Manager stated that "Oregon has accomplished a great deal over the past 15 years and with the help of ODA and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) funding has been administered to landowners to conduct water quality improvement projects such as manure storage facilities, streamside areas fenced and planted with trees, and irrigation efficiency improvements (k-line irrigation)."

Photo by Coos SWCD: k-line irrigation

Photo by Coos SWCD: fenced & planted riparian

"Dave Wilkinson also admitted that it is difficult to say at a watershed or regional scale how these accomplishments have affected land conditions that lead to "good water quality." Dave feels that landowners' efforts have contributed to improved land conditions, but additional data will help the ODA verify assumptions." To help evaluate agriculture's efforts and their impacts on land conditions and water quality, ODA received the following resources for the 2011-2013 biennium."

- The Agricultural Water Quality Program received funding for a water quality monitoring specialist to plan and develop ODA's water quality and land condition monitoring activities, collaborate with other agencies and organizations to maximize efficiency of monitoring resources, and provide recommendations to program staff to make changes based on monitoring results.
- The legislature restored funding for the Water Quality Program to continue aerial photo monitoring and evaluation of trends in streamside vegetation conditions along randomly selected agricultural stream segments throughout Oregon. This will allow the Water Quality Program to collect an additional two years of streamside vegetation condition data and compare this data with photographs taken five years ago of the same stream reaches.
- The Agricultural Water Quality Program received funding to establish additional water quality monitoring sites in agricultural areas throughout Oregon. In the past, the program evaluated water quality trends solely from sites funded and monitored by Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in agricultural watersheds. ODA staff indentified additional sites in predominantly agricultural watersheds that would help provide a more complete picture of agriculture's influence on water quality throughout Oregon. ODA is partnering with the DEQ to conduct the sampling at 19 publicly accessible locations.

  ODA is very pleased to have the additional resources to evaluate the effectiveness of landowners' significant efforts. Program staff believe that these monitoring data, in combination with other agencies monitoring data, can be used to identify area to focus work, develop measurable goals for improvements, and communicate progress to stakeholders.

  Dave Wilkinson concluded that "communication of monitoring results with local advisory committees, landowners, agencies, the environmental community, and the public is critical, and the ODA is pleased to be able to gather additional data to support conversations with their stakeholders about how the ODA can continue to make improvements in water quality and land conditions."

New Sudden Oak Death Site Found in Curry County

Information for article by: Oregon Department of Forestry – www.oregon.gov/ODF/newsroom/newsreleases/2011/NR1162.shtml

Photos Provided by Washing State Department of Agriculture – http://agr.wa.gov/plantsinsects/diseases/sod/

State officials announced that a new site with trees infected by the pathogen *Phytophthora ramorum* – also known as Sudden Oak Death has been discovered in Curry County. The new infection site is over six miles north of a quarantine boundary in Cape Sebastian State Park, about 20 miles north of Brookings established by state and federal officials to stop the spread of Sudden Oak Death (SOD) infection outside of southwest Oregon. State officials are unsure at this point how the pathogen travelled outside the SOD quarantine area established three years ago to contain the spread.

Sudden Oak Death is a relatively new plant disease in Oregon. It was first discovered in July 2001 at five sites on the southern coast near Brookings, although aerial photos of the area indicate that the pathogen may have been present at one site since about 1997 or 1998. The origin of the pathogen is unknown.

Sudden Oak Death call kill highly susceptible tree species such as tanoak, coast live oak, and California black oak by causing lesions on the main stem. Tanoak is by far the most susceptible species in Oregon, and the disease seriously threatens the future of this species.

The symptoms of sudden oak death vary from plant to plant, and may include leaf spots, needle and tip blight, shoot-tip dieback, and canker formations. Many other plant pathogens cause the same symptoms. The only way to confirm the presence of SOD is through laboratory testing. Early detection of SOD is achieved through a combination of aerial surveys, follow-up ground visits, and monitoring the presence of the SOD pathogen in streams. These efforts are critical to ongoing attempts to slow spread of the pathogen in Oregon. Coos County borders Curry so everyone needs to do their part to prevent the spread of this costly disease.

There are several ways to help prevent the spread of SOD:

1) Buy only certified plant stock from a licensed nursery.
2) If traveling in areas with known SOD infestations, clean shoes, vehicles, and pets' feet when leaving the area.
3) Do not gather any plant materials in SOD-infested areas.
4) Do not remove firewood from an infested area.
5) If you suspect a plant may be infected with SOD on property, call 1-800-INVADER.

INVASIVE SPECIES ALERT

Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)

Photo by: Pacific Northwest Handbooks

IDENTIFICATION/DESCRIPTION: Perennial, upright bushy plant reaching up to 8 feet. Flowers are pink to purple, possessing 5-6 petals and are very numerous on a long spike. Stems are angular and flowers usually have 5-7 petals with a small yellow center.

HABITATS INVADED: Freshwater wetlands, wet prairies, meadows, and shorelines of lakes, streams, rivers, ditches and canals. It can survive in drier garden areas with irrigation. Extensive stands can restrict water flow and impede irrigation and recreation.

ECONOMICS: This plant crowds out vegetation required by wildlife for food and shelter. Decreases water fowl production and wetland/watershed habitat is eliminated.

CONTROL:

Cultural control: physical removal of the entire plant is required to be effective. When possible all plant parts removed should be dried and burned.

Chemical Control: applications of glyphosate (Roundup) at full flower stage has been found effective on loosestrife. When treating take care not to damage vegetation around the plant. **Always read and follow the label**.

Biological Control: Four insects are currently available – both Galerucella species show best results in Oregon.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW:

- Spreads from broken stem fragments and seeds that are easily dispersed by wind and water.
- Each plant can produce as many as 100,000 seeds per year.
- **Class B Oregon Noxious Weed – report locations to www.WeedMapper.org**

Resources:

"A Guide to Selected Weeds of Oregon", and "Garden Smart Oregon a guide to non-invasive plants"

Coos SWCD News:

- **Please check out the Coos SWCD's website at: www.coosswcd.org for the most current news, information, and to subscribe to an electronic newsletter!**

Coos Soil & Water Conservation District
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Coquille, OR 97423

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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**
- **Herbicide Cost Share Applications are available at the office**
- **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.