



COOS SWCD

COOS SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Coos SWCD Newsletter

February 2018

Coos Soil & Water Conservation District (Coos SWCD) works directly with landowners to implement on-the-ground restoration projects and encourage voluntary conservation practices. In addition to offering free technical assistance to local landowners, we can also help to secure financial assistance to fund those conservation practices through grant programs. The majority of our grant funding comes from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) Small Grant Program. The Small Grant Program is a competitive grant application process with awards of up to \$15,000 for projects on private land.

The Coos SWCD provides technical assistance to improve water quality by helping landowners decrease soil erosion, reduce runoff into waterways, improve fish habitat and fish passage, use less water, and promote all-around best management practices for agricultural lands.

Examples of projects include building riparian fencing to exclude livestock from creeks, culvert replacement, riparian planting, stream bank stabilization, and putting wood and boulders in creeks to help improve fish habitat.

Please contact our office at 541-396-6879 or email us at info@coosswcd.org to find out what your local SWCD can do for you!

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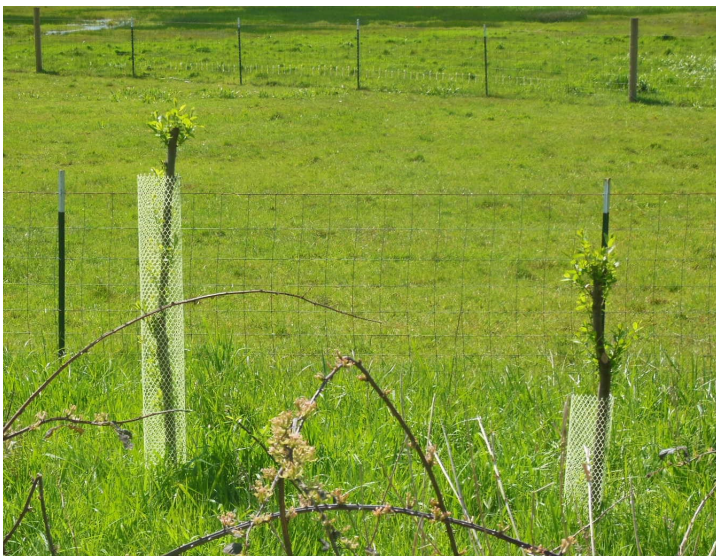


Winter is Willow Planting Season!

If you have areas of streambank erosion on your property, want to improve riparian habitat, or are looking for a way to shade out those pesky blackberries that so often grow along every ditch or creek, you may want to consider planting willows. Willows are abundant in our area, and cuttings can often be obtained for little or no cost (especially if you cut them yourself!). Coos Soil & Water Conservation District may be able to assist you with planting willows for riparian restoration, but you can also do this on your own. If you are thinking of planting willows or other native trees, please contact your local SWCD for a site visit and cost-share options.

DIY Guide to Planting Willows & Cottonwoods:

- Willow & Cottonwoods can be grown from unrooted cuttings, called 'stakes.' Cuttings should be harvested from live, dormant willows either after leaf fall in late fall, winter, or very early spring before the buds start to break.
- Stakes should be cut in 4' to 6' lengths with a sharp bottom end for sticking into the ground. A diameter of approximately 1 inch seems to work well, but you can use thinner or thicker stakes also.
- Unrooted cuttings can be planted on sites that range from flat to near vertical slopes. Risks of wash-out and mortality increase as the slopes become steeper.
- Management must be in place to maintain or improve riparian vegetation. You may need to control surrounding weeds in the first few years after planting to allow the trees to establish. You may also need to fence off livestock so that they do not graze young trees.
- If you have a wide channel, you can plant willows right on the bank. However, if you have a narrow channel, it is best to plant willows at a distance of approximately 10 feet or so from the bank so that roots do not eventually encroach into the stream channel.

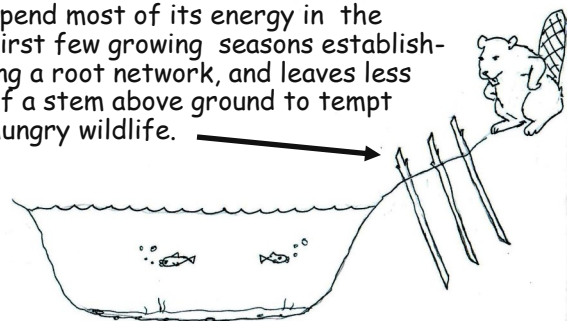


These willows were planted in February, 2017. Photo taken April 2017

Where the ground is soft enough, you can push stakes directly into the soil. Aim for about 2/3 of the length of the cutting to be underground. If the soil is very hard or compacted, you may need to use tools or equipment to dig a hole.



Helpful Tip: If there is heavy beaver activity at a site, consider leaving less of the cuttings exposed above ground. Plant stakes deeper, leaving only 4-6" exposed above the soil surface. This allows the tree to spend most of its energy in the first few growing seasons establishing a root network, and leaves less of a stem above ground to tempt hungry wildlife.



2017 Winners

Guerin Memorial Essay Contest Winners

For over three decades now, Coos SWCD has sponsored the Guerin Memorial Essay Contest. The contest is open to all students in Coos County, grade 7th through 12th. The 1st Place winner's name is added to the traveling plaque, which is displayed at their school for the year. The top three students win cash prizes and each receives a certificate with their name, award, and title of their essay. The contest promotes an opportunity to engage Coos County youth in research and reflection on natural resources issues.



Tom & Dorothy Guerin

1st place: Jack Isenhart

Myrtle Point High School

Topic: Erosion on the Coquille River

2nd place: Preston Drake

North Bend Middle School

*Topic: How Farming Practices have Changed
Over the Last 100 Years*

3rd place: Jeffrey Varga

(Homeschool)

Topic: Cranberry Production Over the Years

(To read the full essays, please visit our website at
www.coosswcd.org)



Need Help with Manure Management?

Coos Soil and Water Conservation District may be able to assist you with manure management. We often work closely with landowners to improve manure management on agricultural operations. We can assist you with planning and designs based on your specific needs. We can even apply for an Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) small grant to aid with funding to complete your project. For more information and to find out if your project qualifies for cost-share assistance, please contact us at 541-396-6879 or email us at info@coosswcd.org.



The next deadline to submit small grants is March 23rd, 2018, but there are still opportunities for cost-share anytime of the year. So please don't hesitate to give us a call!

Contact Us

Contact us for more information about what your local SWCD can do for you.

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Visit us on the web at
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