



Conservation Notes

PROVIDING NATURAL RESOURCE LEADERSHIP

District Forms Natural Connections, Inc.

By District Manager: Tim Stieber

Vision

Connect Nature and Community!

Mission

Natural Connections opens pathways to the dynamic wonders of nature by providing places to experience, study, and enjoy our natural environment.

Natural Connections fosters appreciation, enjoyment, and long-term stewardship of our natural resources through education programs, experiential learning opportunities, and open spaces.

Strategies

- Offer “hands on” learning and volunteer opportunities that will allow large numbers of individuals to connect with nature.
- Provide a progression of learning experiences for a diverse audience.
- Secure the expectation of a quality outdoor experience for future visitors by protecting and maintaining Miller Woods and Chegwyn Farms.
- Embody the concept of continuous improvement with measurable outcomes – either quantitative or qualitative – to determine success of programs and activities.



District staff, directors, and volunteers have been working hard the past four years to ready the Miller Woods property for educational use. During that process the demand for outdoor and natural resource education was evaluated and found to be quite high. Teachers, students, adults, and even senior citizens voiced the need for places to learn and study nature, for opportunities to conduct service learning, and for programs capable of reaching significantly larger numbers than are currently being reached. It was also apparent that these needs would be best provided through formation of a community based nonprofit which would give flexible local control and facilitate involvement and fundraising. The district is currently looking for individuals to serve on the initial board of directors. See article on page 3 for details.

What Will Natural Connections Do?

The Yamhill SWCD board of directors envisions that Natural Connections will facilitate development and delivery of educational programs at its 130 acre Miller Woods property located outside McMinnville and eventually at Chegwyn Farms located in northwest McMinnville. In addition, Natural Connections will coordinate volunteer support, raise needed funds, and facilitate public involvement.

Would you like to make a difference in your Community?

Become a Natural Connection’s Director!

Now is your opportunity, Natural Connections is accepting applications for Board Members! See article Pg 3 for more detail or visit us on our website at www.yamhillswcd.org. Have more Questions? Call Tim @ (503) 472-6403

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The Conservation Notes are published by
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Barbara Boyer, Vice-Chair Zone 2

Glen Grauer, Director Zone 3

Jesse Lange, Treasurer Zone 4

Sam Sweeney, Director Zone 5

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Michael Crabtree, Resource Conservationist

Amie Loop-Frison, Riparian Specialist

Josephine Reid, Office Administrator

NRCS STAFF

Leo Preston, Basin Team Leader

Chad Cherefko, District Conservationist

Kim Hudnall, Soil Conservationist

Rachel Russell, Program Assistant

You're Invited!

Yamhill SWCD conducts their regular Board meetings the 2nd Wednesday of each month, beginning at 7:30 AM. Board meetings are open to the public. Citizen attendance and input is encouraged. The Board meetings are held at the Miller Woods conference room, 15580 Orchard View Rd NW, McMinnville, Oregon. For more information or call the District @ 503-472-1474 x102



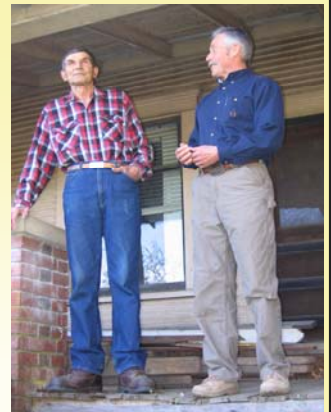
Charlie Chegwyn

Chegwyn Farm Protected

On April 3rd, Yamhill SWCD and landowner Charlie Chegwyn signed a permanent conservation easement protecting his 177 acre farm from development.

About 30 people gathered to witness the signing on April 3rd. Refreshments, a nice spring day, and an air of celebration were enjoyed by all.

The farm is located on the NW edge of McMinnville in the Grandhaven



Jim LeTourneau (SWCD Chair) thanks Charlie Chegwyn for his generous easement donation to the District.

School area. The easement protects the farm from future sub-division and development and protects the riparian forest along the North Yamhill River. The district is currently preparing a management plan for the property which will continue to produce field and nut crops. The site is ideally located to provide open space and educational activities, these will be developed to fit the site over time.



Barbara Boyer (SWCD Vice Chair), Charlie with his sister Agnes Chegwyn.

*****YOUR INPUT NEEDED*****

SWCD Land Use Program Survey

Yamhill SWCD uses the four main approaches to influence land use in the county as outlined below. An online survey was developed to help determine how to focus district efforts.

Approaches Currently Used	Activities Undertaken
1) Conducting education and outreach.	Newsletter articles, workshops, tours, literature distributed.
2) Taking positions on land use applications with the county.	Written comments developed, attend land use hearings.
3) Taking positions on issues.	Written positions developed and distributed.
4) Actual on-the-ground work.	Develop and support conservation easements and property acquisitions.

If you want to provide input – take the time to complete our online survey. Find the link on our web site at www.yamhillswcd.org.

Are you passionate about connecting your community and individuals to nature and helping the public understand our natural resources?

Yamhill Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has formed a nonprofit organization to do just that. Natural Connections, Inc. is now considering applicants to serve on their board of directors. The initial seven member board will be selected by the district with a minimum one year terms. Future selections will be made by the Natural Connections board. Initial financial support needed to form and operate Natural Connections, Inc. will be provided by Yamhill SWCD. The Yamhill SWCD board of directors envisions that Natural Connections will facilitate development and delivery of educational programs and public involvement at its 130 acre Miller Woods property located outside McMinnville and eventually at Chegwyn Farms located in northwest McMinnville.

If you are interested in being a part of the Natural Connections Board of Directors, then please complete the application form located at www.yamhillswcd.org and return to tim.stieber@or.nacdn.net Board member selection is expected to occur during June-July 2008, we will contact you to discuss your interest during that time. Mailing address: 2200 SW Second Street, McMinnville, OR 97128.

The board will be comprised of a diverse group of seven people dedicated to the mission. A Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary will be elected by the group. This is a grass-roots organization. Besides participating in monthly board meetings, board members should be prepared to contribute their skills and energy toward running the organization (financial, fundraising, marketing, volunteer recruitment, committee meetings, events, etc.) and volunteering their presence at events 10 hours per month.

A Note From Chad.....



As the new NRCS District Conservationist for Yamhill County I am so excited for the opportunities I see ahead of me. I have worked in 5 other NRCS offices starting as a student trainee in West Virginia and working my way through the North Coast of Oregon in Tillamook and St Helens and I have never experienced anything as promising as what lays before me now. In the two short months that I have been on the job I have seen an incredible conservation minded community committed to the improvement of Yamhill County. Already I can see the SWCD has the ability to achieve incredible conservation goals by working with so many partners and knowing the needs and desires of the community so well. To have the opportunity to work with such capable professionals with a passion and a vision is a true privilege. I look forward to continuing the NRCS conservation partnership with the people of Yamhill County.



Chad teaching about soils to 5th Graders at the 2008 Woodland Tour!

One of the conservation tools NRCS will be bringing to the table will be programs funded through the 2008 FarmBill. This new legislation has a very strong conservation title that will continue funding for some of the key conservation programs that have been used in the county. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, Wetland Reserve Program, and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program are some of the mainstays for federal conservation funding. Over the next several months we will be looking forward to finalizing the details on how the new FarmBill will be implemented. NRCS will be looking for input from local farmers, landowners and partner agencies to see how to best utilize these programs in our County. To that end, please consider attending our landowner farm and forestry input meeting June 18th. So as your new District Conservationist I look forward to working with you and continuing the conservation legacy that the Yamhill SWCD has kept alive and well.

******Farm & Forest Program Input Needed******

EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentive Program) offers Financial and Technical assistance to help farmers and forest landowners apply conservation measures on their working lands. NRCS & Yamhill SWCD need your input on how to invest EQIP dollars for Conservation in Yamhill County.

How should EQIP funds be allocated? Email your ideas to Chad at Chad.Cherefko@or.usda.gov or for more information on EQIP please call Chad at: 503-472-1474x101

McMinnville FARMERS' MARKET

Thursdays, 1:30pm-6:30pm
May 29th through October 9th

Fresh, locally grown and produced fruits, vegetables, eggs, cheese, meats, nuts, honey, baked goods, herbs, bedding plants, cut flowers and bouquets, quality crafts and art work.

Live music each week along with food cooked right on the spot to take home for dinner from local food vendors.
Taste wine from a different winery each week.

Location: Cowls Street between Second Street & Third Street.



The Kingfisher

News From the Yamhill Basin Council



Newsletter of the Yamhill Basin Council
Working to improve our watersheds
Volume 6, Issue 1

June 2008

Support the YBC!

Purchase a limited edition Kingfisher print (above), painted by local artist Terry Peasley.

Matted 11x14 cost \$30; 16x20 cost \$50. Framed prints available as well. Visit Hidden Treasures Gallery in McMinnville or call the YBC at (503) 474-1047 to order yours today!

Yamhill Basin Council

Officers

Les Zettergren *Co-Chair*
John Betonte *Co-Chair*

Staff

Jean Reiher *Watershed Coordinato*
Denise Schmit *Monitoring Technician*
Corissa Kunze *Monitoring Assistant*

Stakeholder Groups

- Agriculture
- Bureau of Land Management
- Business
- City Government
- Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
- Environmental Groups
- Industrial Forestry
- Natural Areas Parks & Recreation
- Students
- Small & Large Utilities
- Small Woodlands Assoc.
- Watershed Residents
- Yamhill & Polk Counties
- Yamhill SWCD



Water Quality Monitoring Volunteers Needed

Volunteers Needed for Water Quality Monitoring

We just received two grants to conduct Water Quality Monitoring! From now through October we need Volunteers to assist Denise, our Water Quality Monitoring Technician, to collect water samples from selected sites all around Yamhill and Polk County.

Your commitment is only for **one day**, typically about 4 hrs in the morning to early afternoon. If you could do 2 days in a row, or multiple weekends, we would be very happy! Minimum age is 16 (with permission from a parent or guardian for those under 18). No maximum age. The job requires some physical ability to walk over rough terrain and carry sampling equipment, but it's not overly strenuous. It's work, but it's fun! Check out the details below.

If you can commit to certain dates in advance, we would appreciate it. If you are willing to volunteer, but you don't know what days you will be available yet, please just let us know you are interested and we will contact you again at a later date. Once you are scheduled to volunteer, Denise will arrange to meet you at a convenient location. If you are able to volunteer to drive as well, that is welcomed and appreciated, but not necessary. Denise will drive if you can't donate the use of your vehicle for sampling. Some cargo room is needed to carry the equipment.

Project 1: Pesticide Monitoring (we need volunteers ASAP!!!)
Dates: April 13th – June 16th, Every Weekend, Sundays and Mondays
Hours: 9am – Noon (typically)

This project is almost done for the season, but we still need volunteers for June. This field work is pretty easy, but you will need to wear rubber knee boots and be able to carry some sampling equipment while walking over sometimes slippery or rough terrain, and help out with some water quality science on site. You will be trained in the field.

Project 2: Water Quality Monitoring
Dates: Early June – Late October, monthly, Fridays-Mondays (schedule with specific dates to be announced soon)
Hours: 9am – 2pm (typically)

This project focuses on bacteria and other indicators to determine the health of the streams in the Yamhill watershed. This field work is more physically demanding. Some of the data is collected in the streams, and may require chest waders and wading boots. (We have some available for loan, depending on your size.)

If you wish to volunteer for either of these projects, please contact Corissa Kunze, Water Quality Assistant at ybc_monitoring@co.yamhill.or.us or call (503) 474-1047.

Help Stop the Invasion!

I hope you all watched the recent special program on Oregon Public Broadcasting concerning invasive species. "The Silent Invasion" told stories of several plant and animal species that people have brought to Oregon from other places, intentionally or unintentionally. These invasive species are now taking over the landscape in some areas. The invaders have no natural predators in Oregon, so they are able to out-compete native species. Many of the volunteer events we sponsor focus on removing invasive plants such as Himalayan blackberry. It's a constant effort of cutting and spraying to keep them from spreading. Despite all the work, the resulting natural landscape is worth the effort. The YBC encourages gardeners and landowners to plant native species and remove the invasives. In case you missed the show on OPB, we have a copy available for viewing. Please contact Jean at the YBC office at 503-474-1047 for more information.

YBC FROM THE GROUND UP-DATES

Carlton Riparian Restoration Project:

The grant funding this project at Wennerberg Park on the North Yamhill River in Carlton has ended, but we continue to hold volunteer events to help us trim the blackberries away from the trees and shrubs we planted last year. You may have seen the photo of volunteers Nelda and Ron Skidmore in the News-Register on April 1st as they bravely worked in the freezing rain in late March. In April, Kent Harrop, Georgine Benner, Maria and Gerald Blankenship, Andy and Bryce White, and Council Member Dave Riedman showed plenty of enthusiasm despite the freezing temperatures in the morning. Thank you volunteers! We also thank Lyn Carl, Carlton Parks staff, who helped us by spraying herbicide on the vines to kill the roots and retard further growth. Even with all this work, it's a constant battle to control the invasive species until the native plants grow large enough to out-compete them. We hope for no rain or snow during the next volunteer event!

Deer Creek County Park Wet Prairie Restoration Project:

We are gearing up for a big year at Deer Creek Park! We are receiving bids from contractors to do the disking, re-grading, and check dam installation late this summer. We will re-seed or plant the site with native wet prairie species this fall. This project is made possible by Oregon Lottery funds administered by the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB).

Gooseneck Creek Restoration Technical Assistance:

This grant from OWEB allowed the YBC to contract an engineering firm, Swanson Hydrology + Geomorphology, to develop design plans for the restoration of a site above Mill Creek to improve fish habitat and floodplain connectivity. This section of the creek has eroded down to bedrock and has no good habitat for native fish. We have applied for another OWEB grant to implement the restoration plans which include adding boulders and large wood to the creek to capture cobble and gravel which will protect the stream bottom from further erosion and provide pools and riffles for fish habitat. A side-channel will also be restored to provide protected back-water habitat for juvenile fish rearing during low flows, and to help slow flow velocities during high water events.

Riedman Riparian Restoration, Phase 3:

We just received a new Small Grant from OWEB to continue habitat restoration efforts along Muddy Creek. This phase of the project involves removing invasive plant species from the understory of the riparian forest. Work will begin this summer. Later phases will involve planting native species. Small Grants funding is locally administered and is available to assist landowners with seed money to do small habitat improvement projects.

Upcoming Projects:

We are also developing other restoration projects to improve stream health, fish habitat, and floodplain connectivity at various sites in the watershed. We also hope to continue culvert fish passage surveys next summer. Please check our website for the most recent information on projects and volunteer events.

YBC Membership and Volunteers

Welcome new Council Members Skye Landauer, Steve Wegner, and Terry Anthony!



We currently have openings for new Council Members representing Small Cities, Utilities, Students, Agriculture, and Watershed Residents. If you are interested in working to improve the Chehalem and Yamhill watersheds through a collaborative, consensus based group, please attend a Council meeting on the second Thursday of each month from 7-8:30pm at the McMinnville Water Reclamation Facility at 3500 NE Clearwater Drive, McMinnville. New Council Member Application forms are available at the YBC office or on our website.

We are also looking for volunteers to help with water quality monitoring, removing invasive plants, planting native species, mulching and watering plants, cleaning up streams, or doing event planning, fundraising, and office work. Please contact our office at



Camas (*Camassia quamash*)

Comments, questions, submissions? Wish to be added to or removed from the mailing list?

Contact Jean at (503) 474-1047 or ybc_coordinator@co.yamhill.or.us.

800 NE 2nd St

McMinnville, OR 97128

Phone: 503-474-1047 Fax: 503-472-2459

What's Happening At Miller Woods?

Despite a rainy and cool day this past April 22 about 70 people showed up for an Earth Day Celebration at Miller Woods. Staff and Directors lead small groups around the property. Small groups worked on projects.



Earth Day Visitors take a break for a picture!

Too many volunteers to mention here have been involved with the Yamhill Basin Partnership Native Plant Nursery. Irrigation design and installation was made possible through a grant from BLM along with labor from Sunrise Rotary and Ridgeway Irrigation.

The New Native Plant Nursery!



Jeff Phillips began construction of the Trailhead Kiosk as part of his Eagle Scout program. The structure will house property trail maps and membership info.



The New Kiosk designed by Jeff Phillips

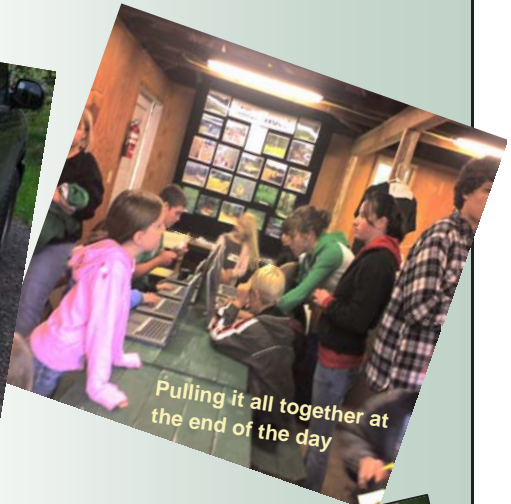
McMinnville HS Outdoor School Group Leaders



A future entomologist works on her field journal.



Pulling it all together at the end of the day



May 17th Ivy Pull



Natural Resource Education is FUN!!!



Connecting to nature — one Newt at a time.



Special Thanks To.....

Several Outdoor School Events were conducted at Miller Woods this spring reaching over 700 students. Special thanks to McMinnville Education Foundation and all the teachers and helpers from McMinnville School District!!!

What's Next?

- Natural Connections Board Formation
- Parking Area Improvements
- Planning a Visitor's Pavilion
- Begin Summer Trail Construction
- Maintain Nursery
- Build Greenhouse
- Plan an August/September Annual Meeting.

Going Local

By Tim Stieber, District Manager

Spring finally arrived this year, although I had my doubts a few times. This is an exciting time of year for the gardener – a time to cultivate the earth, sow seeds, reconnect with nature, eat fresh produce. I have watched a local foods group start up this winter and it is exciting to watch them grow. Come to think of it – there is a whole “go local” movement gaining popularity here in the county and across the nation.

What is the basis for the most recent “go local” movement? Years ago - struggling businesses in small towns promoted a similar concept when faced with better selection and prices being offered by competitors within driving distance. The current go local movement is different since it is more focused on efficient natural resources utilization as a matter of principle and connecting people to their community. Its more than just buying local – although that’s a good side benefit since the money from each local transaction stays in the region.

Networking with others of similar interest is usually very rewarding. Here are a few local minded groups to consider networking with to learn more about Yamhill County and to pursue your interests:

Primary Focus	Group	Contact Information
Climate Change	CoolMac	Coolmac works to raise awareness about livability and sustainability. Sign up for their list serve to stay informed about events and issues. Contact: www.coolmac.org
Local Food	“Slow Food Yamhill County”	This group seeks to raise awareness about local food advantages and to increase local food availability. Contact: lucy.falcy@ci.mcminnville.or.us
Native Plants	Chehalem Chapter Native Plant Society	Meeting the last Thursday of the month (except during the summer) this group hosts speakers, field tours, and educational events related to native plants. Contact: www.oregon-nativeplants.com
Watershed Protection, Wildlife Habitat	Yamhill Basin Watershed Council	Council formed in 1995 as a local advisory group addressing local watershed and habitat issues. Contact: Jean Reiher www.co.yamhill.or.us/ybc
Natural Resources Management	Yamhill Soil and Water Conservation District	Works with private landowners to protect and enhance natural resources through technical service, financial support, education, and on-the-ground projects. Contact: www.yamhillswcd.org or 503-472-6403
Land Use Issues	Friends of Yamhill County	Land protection group working to preserve and protect working resource lands throughout the county. Contact: www.viclink.com/~fyc/
Forest & Woodlands	Yamhill County Small Woodland Owners	Education and informational focus includes monthly speakers, tours, and workshops related to forest management. Contact: www.oswa.org/chapter-yamhill
Gardening	OSU Master Gardeners	Master gardeners deliver education and information to citizens related gardening, plants, and . Contact: http://extension.oregonstate.edu/yamhill/pages/mgs.html
Open Space	Yamhill County Parks	Dedicated to maintaining and expanding county parks as open spaces throughout the county. Contact: www.co.yamhill.or.us



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In this issue: News From...

Yamhill Soil & Water Conservation District, NRCS-USDA, Yamhill Basin Council, and the newly formed non-profit Natural Connections!!!!

Conservation Notes — 8

Roadside Vegetation Project

Yamhill SWCD completed a roadside vegetation enhancement project this past year. The project was funded through Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. Yamhill County Public Works Department vegetated over 20 miles of roadside ditch using supplies purchased with grant funds. Roadside ditches all lead to streams so establishment of filtering grasses along roadways is a good way to protect water quality.

Six sites were monitored to determine project success with three sampling events occurring during December 2007. Samples were collected from vegetated and non-vegetated ditches at each site when sufficient rainfall produced water flow in the ditch areas. Water analysis included temperature, conductivity, turbidity, and total suspended solids.

Results

Five of six sites had cooler runoff water in the vegetated areas compared to adjacent control ditches (see table). Four of six sampling sites had higher conductivity water running in the un-vegetated ditches but the average over six sites varied little. Runoff water in non-vegetated ditches was more turbid and contained double the suspended solids that the vegetated ditches.

Average results from six Yamhill County Roadsides, December, 2007.

Parameter	Non-Vegetated	Vegetated
Water Temperature	7.6	7.3
Conductivity	143.0	144.8
Turbidity (NTU)	28.0	18.5
Total Suspended Solids (mg/l)	24.3	12.2



Creeping Red fescue in a roadside ditch near Dayton.