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Umatilla County Soil and Water Conservation District



“OUT OF THE BLUES”

1ST QUARTER PROGRESS REPORT July –Sept 2006

1 SW Nye
Suite B
Pendleton, OR 97801

Umatilla County Soil and Water
Conservation District

The Umatilla County Soil and Water Conservation District complies with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status.

The Umatilla County Soil and Water Conservation District is an Equal Opportunity employer.

Introduction

The information presented in this report is a compilation of the quarterly activities of the District by category.

Acronyms

- **CAFO** Confined Animal Feeding Operation
- **CREP** Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
- **CRP** Conservation Reserve Program
- **DEQ** Department of Environmental Quality
- **District** Soil and Water Conservation District
- **EQIP** Environmental Quality Incentives Program
- **FSA** Farm Service Agency (formerly ASCS)
- **GIS** Geographic Information System
- **LAC** Local Advisory Committee
- **LMA** Local Management Agency (Oregon SB1010)
- **NACD** National Association of Conservation Districts
- **NRCS** Natural Resource Conservation Service (formerly SCS)
- **OACD** Oregon Association of Conservation Districts
- **ODA** Oregon Department of Agriculture
- **ODF** Oregon Department of Forestry
- **ODF&W** Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife
- **OSU** Oregon State University
- **OWEB** Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
- **RARE** Resource Assistance for Rural Environments
- **RC&D** Resource Conservation and Development
- **SB1010** Agricultural Water Quality Management Act
- **UMCOSWCD** Umatilla County SWCD

Resource Directory

Soil and Water Conservation District

- Umatilla County SWCD 541-276-8131
- Tiichám CD 541-276-7784

USDA Service Center 541-278-8049

- Farm Service Agency ext 2
- Natural Resources Conservation Service ext 3
- Rural Development ext 4

Oregon Department of Agriculture

- Water Quality Planner 541-278-6721

Organizations

- Columbia Blue Mountain RC&D 541-278-6113
- Umatilla Basin Watershed Council–541-276-2190
- Walla Walla Bain Watershed Council– 541-938-2170

Dates to Remember

October

- 11th UMCOSWCD Monthly Board Meeting
- 15th OWEB grant deadline

November

- 8th UMCOWCD Monthly Board Meeting
- 12-15th OACD Annual Mtg

December

- 14th Umatilla County SWCD Annual Meeting & Precision Ag in Umatilla County Seminar

Upcoming Events & Happenings

- The USDA Service Center will be relocating to the John Murray Building @200 S.E. Hailey Ave. between the end of October and middle of November. The groups moving will be: The Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Rural Development, Columbia Blue Mountain Resource Conservation and Development, Umatilla County Soil and Water Conservation District, and The Oregon Department of Agriculture– Water Quality Coordinator , they will be located on the first floor of the building.
- On December 14th the SWCD will be holding their Annual Meeting, for the second year, at the Pendleton Convention Center following the same format as last years meeting. The Precision Ag Seminar will feature more Vendors and more breakout sessions and will include sessions on the Weed Seeker® program, another incentive project. This year the event begin at 9:00am and end at 4:00pm , **attendees must pre-register by December 8th** ,which can be done through our web site www.umatillacountywcd.com or via phone @ 541-276-8131. The registration is vital to get an accurate count for lunch and set-up for the breakout sessions.

- **Please welcome**

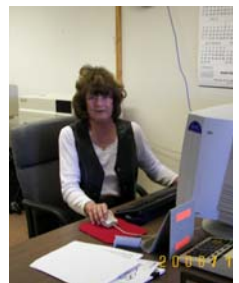
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Umatilla County SWCD

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Management of all natural resources, including water, land, air and other resources are important for sound environmental stewardship. As part of the District Annual Plan of Work, we will conduct programming with the ultimate goal of protecting and enhancing these resources:

Education/Outreach

Promote a healthy, sustainable natural resource based economy by increasing the understanding of water quality issues and problems associated with poor stewardship practices, provide technical and information resources to the public and partners and recognize outstanding contributions to resource conservation.

Activities

- Held 3 monthly Board Meetings 23 attendees
- Hosted the Local Working Group Meeting
- Maintained District web site
- Provided information to landowners
- Held the AgWQMAP rules review meeting



Monitoring

To support the Umatilla Basin TMDL water quality monitoring program, the District has sponsored a Water Quality and Data Analysis project funded through OWEB since 1997. The project monitored sediment, temp, and nitrates through sampling of local waterways.

Activities

- Umatilla Basin Watershed Council received an OWEB grant to manage the monitoring position and products.
- In August the monitoring position moved from the SWCD office to UBWC new location at 920 SW Frazer Ave.
- Current SWCD OWEB grant will end March 07



Forest Restoration

This project is cost-share assistance to improve the watershed function on privately owned forest land in Umatilla County. Areas will be thinned and slash abatement will be applied. Watershed benefits include reduced fuel loads, improved infiltration, and improved water quality. In partnership with ODF

Activities

- Applicants are in process of completing projects
- Treated 100 acres this quarter
- Submitted an annual report for previous grant



Pre



Post

Spring Development

This category includes spring development projects and cross fencing to improve pasture management. Watershed benefits include improved upland vegetation, big game habitat and watering opportunities for livestock and wildlife. One project will improve eight springs and 3 miles of cross fence, the other two are OWEB small grants and will improve 6 springs.

Activities

- Four springs are in completion, the rest are in beginning stages
- Project sign in planning process
- One landowner has seen an increase in game birds and deer
- Cattle aren't concentrated near water,



Before



After

Precision Ag

This project is an incentive to growers in Umatilla County to use technology that promotes more efficient use of agricultural fertilizers while reducing environmental impacts. This includes using soil condition mapping, zonal soil sampling and application of fertilizer using variable rate applicators. Watershed benefits include improved water quality.

Activities

- Funding received from OWEB and DEQ
- 9 growers have signed up for incentive program
- Applicants are in the process of completing required tasks
- Planning has began for the Precision Ag Seminar to be held in Dec. in conjunction with the Districts Annual Meeting.



Water Quality & Quantity

Water Quality and Quantity issues are addressed through The Lower Umatilla Basin Groundwater Management Area Plan and The Agriculture Water Quality Management Area Plan. The District has been awarded 3 grants, one each from; OWEB, DEQ and ODA. These grants will fund education projects and personnel to address the concerns and goals contained in both plans.

Activities

- Held Umatilla Rules revision meeting
- Provided management on current projects
- Completed the NRCS contribution agreement
- Provided fiscal assistance for the WQ Monitoring project
- Contracted with EKO data systems, began inputting data
- Maintained the District Web site
- Created the Quarterly Progress Report
- Seeking an employee, to fill the Districts Natural Resource Specialist open position
- Interviewed four candidates for the RARE position

Weed Control

This project will provide an incentive and demonstration of the WeedSeeker® technology on 8,000 acres of chemical fallow (no-till or direct seed systems) at \$10 an acre. Watershed benefits are improved water quality and reduced erosion.

Activities

- The District received five application, however due to lack of equipment, this project is on a temporary hold.
- The Annual Meeting and Precision Ag Seminar scheduled Dec 14, feature session on the WeedSeeker®

Streamside Restoration

This category includes two different types of projects one addresses replacing stream crossing structures and the other removing an irrigation diversion dam, stabilizing the stream channel and converting 2 gravity flow irrigation systems. Watershed benefits include improved fish passage and stream flow. In partnership with ODF&W and ODF

Activities

- One bridge is in the process of being replaced
- One irrigation diversion has been completed another in process

Rangeland/ Animal Feed Operation

This category includes riparian fencing and livestock management projects. These projects address overgrazing, stream side protection and concentrated animal feeding operations. Watershed benefits include improved riparian vegetation and water quality; controlled livestock access and improved water accessibility for livestock and wildlife

Activities

- Completed annual report to OWEB on CAFO project
- Awarded new OWEB grant on Butter Creek for fencing

Projects and Programs Funded By:

- Oregon Department of Agriculture
- Oregon Watershed Enhancement
- Umatilla County
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Umatilla County SWCD