



Coos Soil & Water Conservation District

Summer Newsletter July 2008

Coos SWCD Staff

Eric Himmelreich.....Watershed Technical Specialist

Coos SWCD Board of Directors

Dan Varoujean.....Chairman
 Jim Maitland.....Vice-Chair
 Sharon Waterman.....Secretary
 Fred Wiebe.....Treasurer
 Charlie Waterman.....Director
 Arlene Guerin.....Director

District Office

371 N. Adams Street
 Coquille, OR 97423
 (541) 396-6879
coosswcd@aol.com



COOS SWCD New Address

The Coos Soil & Water Conservation District has recently moved from 382 North Central to the upstairs building located at 371 North Adams Street.

The office hours are from 8am to 4:30pm Monday through Friday and anyone is welcome to come by.

Pamphlets, brochures, and packets are available right when you enter the office. So feel free to come in and get any information you need related to agriculture, farming practices, water quality, pesticides and so on. Please stop by any time.

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2008 Elections – Coos SWCD Director Positions

Positions to be on the 2008 General Election ballot:

| <u>Position</u> | <u>Current Director</u> | <u>Term Length</u> |
|-----------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Zone 1 | Vacant | 4 years |
| Zone 3 | Charlie Waterman | 4 years |
| Zone 4 | Arlene Guerin | 4 years |

Important Election Dates:

July 17, 2008

- First day for district candidates to file Declaration of Candidacy and Petition for Nomination Signature Sheet with ODA, Natural Resources Division.

August 26, 2008

- Last day for district candidate to file the *Declaration of Candidacy and Petition for Nomination Signature Sheet* forms with ODA, Natural Resources Division.
- Last day for district candidates to file the *Withdrawal of Candidacy* for general election with ODA, Natural Resources Division no later than 5:00 p.m.

August 27, 2008

- First day for district candidate to file *Declaration of Intent and Request for Write-In Votes to be Tallied* with ODA, Natural Resources Division.

October 21, 2008

- Last day for district candidate to file *Declaration of Intent and Request For Write-In Votes to be Tallied* with ODA, Natural Resources Division no later than 5:00 p.m.

November 4, 2008

- **ELECTION DAY!**

January 1, 2009

- First day newly elected directors may take the Oath of Office.

LARGE OR SMALL, AGRICULTURAL WATER QUALITY RULES APPLY TO ALL AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS

Agricultural producers in Coos County, whatever the size and type of operation and whatever the impact on water quality, are stewards of our state's water resources. Since 2002, there have been rules in place to assist and guide producers in protecting Coos County's water quality using a variety of management practices.

Agricultural water quality rules were developed individually for Coos County by a Local Advisory Committee (LAC) because Oregon's agriculture community is very diverse and a 'one size fits all' approach would not work. The rules prohibit water pollution and activities that degrade or can lead to impaired water quality, but the rules do not specify how each agricultural landowner must do this. Instead, the agricultural water quality management plan suggests several solutions and options that are available and are

crafted to meet Coos County's unique water quality issues. Each landowner or operator can decide which solution best suits his or her operational needs.

Many small acreage farm owners already use Best Management Practices (BMPs), which minimize their impact on water quality but many agricultural practices can have serious and unintended consequences:

- Bacteria and nutrient runoff from animal waste degrades water used for drinking and recreation.
- Sediment from eroding pasture lands and streambanks reduce water quality.
- Erosion and runoff from roads degrades water quality.
- Pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers from agricultural operations get into and harm waterways used for drinking water supplies, recreation, and fish and wildlife habitat.
- Removal or reduction of streamside (riparian) vegetation increases bank erosion, destroys wildlife habitat, and contributes to increased water temperatures that harm salmon, steelhead, trout and other cold-water fish, as well as the insects they eat.
- Uncontrolled livestock access to streams results in reduction of riparian vegetation, streambank erosion, and degrade water quality from erosion and manure going into the stream.

It is up to each individual landowner to ensure that his or her operation does not pollute Coos County's waters and is in compliance with the local management area rules. ODA investigates complaints associated with erosion and water quality problems. If violations are found, ODA first works with producers on a voluntary basis to solve problems through education and technical assistance. Those who are asked to solve a problem, but who refuse to do so could be subject to enforcement actions, including the assessment of civil penalties.

Help with a variety of solutions is available from many sources. Technical assistance from Coos Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Watershed Councils, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency, OSU Extension and ODA is available at no charge to the landowner. In some cases, funds are available through special grants and programs that deal specifically with water quality issues. Plus, technical expertise can show farmer's production alternatives that are not only helpful to the environment but can make operations more productive and profitable!

For more information concerning your specific management areas plan and rules contact Coos Soil and Water Conservation District, visit the ODA water quality web site at http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/NRD/water_quality_front.shtml or call the local ODA water quality specialist at 541-302-3043.

By: Eric Nusbaum (ODA Water Quality Specialist)

Tide Gate Fish Passage Study by two OSU Graduate Students on two Local Streams in the Coos Watershed

Tide gates are installed throughout Oregon's bays and estuaries to promote drainage and prevent the encroachment of salt water. Many different styles of tide gates exist to meet a variety of installation conditions. Construction has not been standardized since landowners can often easily construct a functional tide gate on their own. As a result, little is known about how tide gates impact fish movement and habitat access.

Oregon State University Department of Fisheries and Wildlife and Coos Watershed Association have partnered on a project to study how two tide gates impact fish movement and habitat use. This work is funded by an Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board research grant acquired by the OSU Fisheries Extension professor, Guillermo Giannico, and the director of Coos Watershed Association, Jon Souder. The work is broken into two projects which will serve as Masters thesis's for two students, Arthur Bass and Adam Weybright (who also works for the Coos Watershed Association as monitoring coordinator).

The end goals of these projects include; 1) provide thorough, well collected data on fish movement and habitat use for two tide gated systems as well as a reference 2) provide information to inform the imminent replacement of a top-hinge tide gate at Palouse Creek 3) inform future experiments to evaluate the impact of tide gates on salmonids.

The study sites are situated on Haynes Inlet where an older top-hinge tide gate is used at Palouse Creek and a newer side-hinge tide gate is used at nearby Larson Creek. These side by side gates will allow for an informal comparison of the function of two of the more prevalent tide gate types. Winchester Creek in South Slough will serve as a reference location. Palouse and Larson have been productive coho salmon streams for many years and the Coos Watershed Association has been collecting a variety of habitat, water quality and salmon life cycle data in these streams for several years. Landowners on these watersheds have granted access to stream reaches where sampling occurs. Landowner input and local knowledge have been and continue to be valuable assets for this project.

This project utilizes PIT (passive integrated transponder) technology, which is a form of radio frequency identification. Small tags are implanted in juvenile salmonids (primarily coho salmon). These tags have an individual code and will remain functional throughout a salmon's life. Stationary, in-stream antenna activates the tag and retrieval individual code so the researcher knows when a particular fish moves through an antenna array. Currently, six antennae are situated around the Palouse tide gate so that passage conditions can be determined. Water level, water quality, and angle data loggers situated on and around the tide gate provide information on the conditions at fish passage. In the next year, additional antennae will be installed at the Larson tide gate, in Winchester Creek and at several freshwater locations in the study streams.

In addition to data collected at the tide gates, data will be collected to reflect juvenile salmon use of the lower sections of the study systems. When closed, tide gates create still-water reservoirs which are somewhat unnaturally large freshwater ponds adjacent to the bay. The researchers will seek to understand how juvenile fish use this habitat. A combination of snorkel surveys, seining and PIT antenna arrays will be used to understand fish habitat use in the lower sections of each stream.

By: Arthur Bass (OSU Graduate Student)

FARM BILL 2008



It took a (317-109) vote by the house and a (80-14) vote by the senate to override the President's veto on both the first and second version of the 2008 Farm Bill. This action by Congress finalizes enactment of all titles of the 2008 Farm Bill, ensuring that the trade provisions are now law.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has implementation plans underway and should begin preparing rule and regulations to implement the provisions of the new laws. This legislation includes the following provisions:

The Farm Bill for 2008 increases a financial commitment to working lands conservation programs, with increases to the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, the Conservation Stewardship Program and the Farmland Protection Program. It would rewrite and streamline the Conservation Stewardship Program (formerly the Conservation Security Program) to allow for nationwide participation. The elimination of the tier structure should ease program delivery and understanding by producers. New enrollment based on acreage providing for an annual enrollment of almost 13 million acres. It allows for increases for provisions for the eligibility of non-industrial private forest land in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, the Conservation Stewardship Program and the Farmland Protection Program. It Provides funding for the Healthy Forest Reserve Program and maintains a strong Forestry Title. It also provides funding to continue the Wetlands Reserve Program and the Grasslands Reserve Program. These programs will expire without the provisions and funding in this bill. WRP appraisal issues are also addressed in the bill. Although the CRP acreage cap was decreased to 32 million acres, the bill allows for continued enrollment through continuous sign-up and CREP. The bill defines technical assistance as technical services provided directly to farmers, ranchers, and other eligible entities, such as conservation planning, technical consultation, and assistance with design and implementation of conservation practices and technical infrastructure. Including activities, processes, tools and agency functions needed to support delivery of technical

services, such as technical standards, resource inventories, training, data and technology, monitoring and effects analyses. The bill clarifies third party technical assistance (technical service providers) and allows for eligible payments for technical services such as conservation planning, education and outreach and assistance with design and implementation of conservation practices. The bill allows for “technical assistance only” contracts for producers for the propose of planning, design or installation of an eligible practice under the conservation programs. It exempts Local Work Group from the Federal Advisory Committee Act. This commitment to the locally led conservation program delivery process specifies local work groups in the law, and allows for greater transparency and participation in natural resources priority setting.

Jeremy Peters
Grassroot Coordinator (*National Association of Conservation Districts*)

INFORMATION ABOUT PURS (PESTICIDE USE REPORTING SYSTEM)



What is a Pesticide?

A pesticide is any substance or mixture of substances intended to prevent, destroy, repel, or mitigate any pest. The term pesticide is often misunderstood to mean insecticide. However, pesticide also refers to herbicides, fungicides, and various other substances used to control pests and therefore must be reported.

PURS is a Legislative bill that was passed in 1999 which requires web-based reporting of all pesticide applications conducted in Oregon for course of business, for a government entity or in a location intended for public use or access. Reporting for the use of chemicals on or in your private residence is not required.

The pesticide reporting system will obtain actual pesticide use information according to water basin and ZIP code. The goal of the program is to collect information that will help to ensure public health and safety, and protect Oregon’s water and environment.

PURS must be filed once per year at the minimum. All 2007 pesticide use must be

reported by January 31, 2008. It is important to keep track of the correct information that is required for reporting, therefore make sure you keep your old containers with the label information. The data must be submitted electronically in XML format because PURS cannot accept paper reports.

Filing your PURS on time is very important because the penalty for not reporting pesticide use could be severe. Depending on the circumstance the penalty could result in the Department issuing a notice of violation, a civil penalty, or the loss of pesticide related licensing.

Oregon Department of Agriculture-Pesticides Division

New Watershed Technical Specialist for the Coos Soil & Water Conservation District

The Coos Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) recently hired Eric Himmelreich from the Coquille Watershed Association as their new Watershed Technical Specialist as of May 28, 2008. Eric has worked in Coos County for the past seven years doing environmental surveys and conservation work for Plum Creek Timber Company, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), and Coquille Watershed Association.

The office has recently moved to 371 N. Adams St. Coquille, OR 97423. Everyone is welcome to come in and talk to Eric personally or pick up water quality, farming information, noxious weed information, or to ask any questions concerning water quality, agriculture and or pasture management.

This year Eric plans to do his best to make himself and the Coos SWCD active in the community and available to all interested landowners. His goal is to work together with local agencies and watersheds associations to improve, conserve, and protect the pastures and riparian habitats that encompass hundreds of acres in Coos County. His plan is to be friendly and competent in all his dealings with the public and landowners while taking part in as many

training and educational opportunities that are available this year to better prepare



him to assist as many people as he can.

With the financial and technical support from Oregon Department of Agriculture and their Water Quality Specialist, Eric Nusbaum we feel he can accomplish a lot this year and improve this area of the Oregon Coast for far into the future.

He looks forward to hearing from all Professionals in the natural resource field as well as any concerned citizens or landowners. He is willing to go out to landowner's farms or ranches and assist in any way possible. He is also willing to write grants to assist the landowners with small to large projects. Please call the Coos Soil & Water Conservation District at (541) 396-6879 or e-mail the district at coosswcd@aol.com.

BMP (BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES) PAGE

FARMER'S

Cultivation Practices- Use cultivation practices that reduce runoff, such as contour farming, inter-seeding, growing winter cover crops and using crop residues to protect bare surfaces. These management practices can significantly reduce water erosion of soils and chemicals that might be attached to sediment.

Compaction- Avoid tilling, harvesting or grazing when soils are wet and most vulnerable to compaction. Compaction restricts rooting depth, which reduces the uptake of water and nutrients by plants. Compaction decreases infiltration therefore increases runoff and water erosion.



Fertilizer use- Use only the amount of fertilizer required by the crop. Test soils on a regular basis to monitor soil conditions and crop needs, allowing adjustment and reduction of fertilizer use when possible.



Crop rotation- Rotate crops where feasible or necessary to use excess nutrient, nitrogen or phosphorus that may build up in soils. Efficient use of nutrients present in soils can help reduce fertilizing needs and nutrient runoff to groundwater stores and surface waterways.

Buffer Strips- Where possible, protect or create buffer strips between crops and waterways. Native wetland and streamside vegetation acts to stabilize stream banks and provide habitat.



Photo by ODA

The Oregon Plan for salmon and watersheds

NOXIOUS WEED/PLANT ALERT

JAPANESE KNOTWEED (*Polygonum cuspidatum*)



History and Impact

Japanese knotweed is a native of Eurasia and was introduced to the United States as an ornamental. Plants grow vigorously along roadsides, waste areas, streams and ditch banks and create dense colonies that exclude native vegetation and greatly alter natural tree regeneration. Established populations are extremely persistent and do not respond to mowing/cutting.

Biology and Morphology

Japanese knotweed is perennial and blooms from July to October. It grows four to nine feet tall and has long creeping rhizomes. It has stout stems reddish-brown, nodes that are slightly swollen. The leaves are short stalked, truncate, broadly ovate and 2-6" long by 2-4" wide. Flowers are greenish-white to cream in large plume-like clusters at the ends of the stems. Hybrids with giant knotweed are common.

Control and Management

Large infestations can be eliminated with approved herbicides, but treatments are costly and time consuming. It poses a significant threat in riparian areas, where it disperses during flood events rapidly colonizing scoured shorelines, islands and adjacent forest land.

Native Plant Alternatives

Native willows (*Salix spp.*), Ninebark (*Physocarpus capitatus*), Oceanspray (*Holodiscus discolor*), Goat's beard (*Aruncus dioicus*). Ornamental alternatives include Dappled willow (*Salix integra*), Clumping bamboo (*Fargesia spp.*), Tatarian dogwood (*Cornus alba*) and Summersweet (*Clethra alnifolia*).

Garden Smart Oregon a guide to non-invasive plants
<http://oregon.gov/ODA/PLANT/WEEDS/profile.japknweed.shtml>



**Coos Soil and Water
Conservation District
371 North Adams St.
Coquille, OR 97423**

UPCOMING EVENTS & PROGRAMS

(A Work in Progress, Check In With Us for Additions and Updates!)

- **Regular Meetings:** 4th Thursday of every month
- **Coos County Fair-** July 22-26
- **Landowner Resource Guides available at office**
- **Conservation/Farm Planning**
- **Technical & Financial Assistance**