

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Measure No. 3-221**BALLOT TITLE**

CLACKAMAS COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT PERMANENT RATE LIMIT

QUESTION: Shall the District be authorized to have a permanent rate limit of \$0.05 per \$1,000 assessed value beginning FY 2007-2008?

SUMMARY: This permanent rate limit will enable Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District to provide education and technical assistance to urban and rural residents, farmers, businesses, municipalities, and others to meet rising legal and public expectations for healthy and sustainable management of our land, air and water. The District does not make or enforce regulations.

The permanent rate limit will support current District programs including conservation technical assistance, help for landowners navigating regulations, and cost-share funding for conservation projects to improve the quality of our streams, working lands and natural habitat for fish, wildlife, and people. The District is also responding to citizen demands to implement a countywide weed program focused on education and sustainable control methods.

This measure establishes a permanent rate limit of \$0.05 per \$1,000 assessed valuation. It will cost a property owner a maximum of \$10.00 per year on property valued at \$200,000 and yield an estimated \$1,400,000 to the District. The District may levy a lower rate. This permanent rate is an upper limit that by law can never be raised.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) plays an important role in the conservation and utilization of our natural resources. We work with landowners and local communities to develop opportunities that sustain and improve our communities, economy, and resources. From the scenic beauty of the Mt. Hood Territory to the lush pasturelands of the Willamette Valley, the SWCD balances the County's environmental and economic demands to benefit our natural resources and livability.

"A Nickel for Conservation"

In order to provide a necessary and stable funding base for the important conservation work we do, the SWCD requests a Permanent Rate Limit of 5 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value. This would cost the average taxpayer \$10 a year and generate approximately \$1.4 million in annual revenue to support our conservation education, technical assistance, and outreach programs. You can help Clackamas County remain a sustainable and healthy place to live, work, and play for generations to come.

Demographics

Clackamas County, the third most populous county in Oregon, is a unique mixture of rural farms, timberlands, and urban areas, with a vast array of rivers and streams flowing throughout. Our scenic waterways provide drinking water and recreational opportunities, in addition to supporting agriculture and nursery production, livestock, and wildlife. Properly managing the health and vitality of these watersheds is crucial to the environmental and economic health of Clackamas

County—not to mention the people, fish, and wildlife that call this area home.

How we do it

The SWCD works with landowners of all types—from nursery and produce growers, to livestock operators, hobby farmers, and residents with urban backyards. We educate landowners about farm and conservation practices that improve water quality by keeping mud, manure, and pesticides out of the waterways. Through workshops, habitat enhancement partnerships, urban naturescaping classes, technical assistance, and a new Countywide Weed Control Program, we help landowners increase conservation efforts while realizing the greatest benefit from their resources. We also help landowners gain access to watershed restoration dollars through federal, state, and local grants.

Without our work

Without the SWCD's valuable work, our natural resources and landscape might not remain sustainable. Our goal is to ensure that the Mt. Hood Territory remains clean and vibrant, but that takes a sustained effort and community commitment. Although our work around the County is constant, it is often behind the scenes so it may not always be noticed. But if we were not doing our job, you would definitely notice!

History

Your Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District was created by Clackamas County voters in 1958 as a Special District. SWCD's are non-regulatory agencies. The SWCD is self-governed by non-paid elected directors. We are currently funded through a variety of county, state, and federal sources. The bulk of our dedicated funding expires in 2007, making it necessary for us to find a stable and local funding source in order to continue our countywide conservation work.

Furnished by:

Michael Weinberg, Associate Director
Clackamas County Soil and Water Conservation District