

District Priorities for Fiscal Year 2020-2021

The following priorities for the period from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021 complement the priorities outlined in the Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District's 5-year plan. For fiscal year 2020-2021, the District will focus on several operational and conservation goals.

Operational goals

- Maintain capacity to provide assistance to small farms and rural landowners
- Leverage relationships with partners for mutual benefit
- Finalize landscaping/irrigation of the new District headquarters and meeting facility
- Develop funding options for the Working Lands Legacy Fund
- Maintain funding assistance programs to help private landowners and partners
- Enhance outreach regarding manure management, erosion control, water quality, invasive weeds, small farms, pesticide reduction, and protection of working lands
- Establish an action committee to explore issues around diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Continue to implement the Septic System Loan Program
- Continue implementation of the Eagle Creek Community Forest Plan

Conservation goals

Our primary goals continue to revolve around water quality, water quantity, wildlife habitat, weed management, and soil health, as expanded upon in the included focus sheets.

Who are we?

The Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District (District), is legally defined as a subdivision of state government authorized by Oregon Revised Statutes Chapter 568. We function as a local special district. A locally elected board of directors leads the District.

In 2006, the voters of Clackamas County authorized a property tax levy to fund the conservation services of the District. In addition, we leverage outside funding sources and form strategic partnerships to accomplish our work.

What do we do?

We work cooperatively with private landowners to conserve natural resources today and for future generations.

Who do we work with?

We work with private landowners to help them use natural resources in ways that help conserve them for others. We help people become better stewards of the natural resources they manage.

To ensure that we are not inadvertently discriminating and that we include everyone fairly, we have formed an action committee. This group will examine our programs and the way we operate to find ways that we can improve. Natural resources belong to everyone.

We are not regulators

We do not have statutory authority to adopt regulations or issue citations. Soil and water conservation districts were formed to work with willing landowners to help conserve our renewable natural resources. This is what we mean when we say we work cooperatively with private landowners.

Our work benefits public resources

Unlike most governmental entities, we are charged with helping to conserve natural resources by working on both public and private lands. Our conservation work primarily benefits public natural resources, and may provide incidental benefits to participating landowners.

Vision, Mission, and Values

Through the formation of the Strategic Plan, the District developed the following statements covering the District’s vision, mission and values for the organization.

Vision — The Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District is a place where our creatures and communities thrive:

- Farms have healthy soils to grow the crops we need
- Invasive weeds are controlled to prevent problems for farming and wildlife
- Irrigation systems are efficient, saving water and energy
- Streams are shaded with native trees and shrubs, and streambanks are stable
- Precious soil stays in fields instead of blowing or washing away
- Water is clean and healthy for wildlife and for people

Mission — To provide technical and practical services designed to conserve and use resources sustainably today and for future generations.

Values — We strive to maximize community, environmental, and economic benefits simultaneously through our projects and programs:

- We reduce, reuse, recycle, and restore our natural resources
- We listen to, and are accountable to, our voters, taxpayers, and residents
- Our help to landowners is based in science and time-proven practices
- We form and nurture strategic partnerships with others to accomplish our work
- We leverage District resources through outside funding when possible
- We work as members of a flexible and responsive team
- We treat everyone with respect
- We support continuous learning and professional development

District Board and Staff

The District values its board and employees. We emphasize professional growth and development and are committed to recruiting and retaining the best people in the industry.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jeff Becker, Chair, Zone 3 Director

Jesse Nelson, Vice Chair, Zone 1 Director

Roger Fantz, Treasurer, At Large Director

Don Guttridge, Secretary, Zone 5 Director

Jim Johnson, Zone 2 Director

Joan Zuber, Zone 4 Director

Jan Lee, At Large Director

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

P. K. Melethil, Associate Director

John Keith, Associate Director

Anna Rankin, Associate Director

Jim Toops, Associate Director

DIRECTORS EMERITUS

Ron Oberg

Michael Weinberg

DISTRICT STAFF

ADMINISTRATION AND DISTRICT MANAGEMENT

Tami Guttridge, Office Manager

Lisa Kilders, Acting General Manager

Eann Rains, Conservation Investments Program Coordinator

Nathan Tucker, Fiscal Administrator

CONSERVATION PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Nicole Ahr, Conservation Specialist

Scott Eden, Conservation Specialist

Jason Faucera, Conservation Initiatives Manager

Doug Fenwick, Engineering Technician

Clair Klock, Senior Resource Conservationist

Jenne Reische, Conservation Planning Manager

Matt VanWey, Conservation Specialist

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH DEPARTMENT

Lisa Kilders, Education and Outreach Program Manager/Asst.
Mgr.

Cathy McQueeney, Education and Outreach Specialist

WEEDWISE DEPARTMENT

Justin Cooley, WeedWise Specialist

Courtney Gattuso, WeedWise Specialist/ CWMA Coordinator

Lindsey Karr, WeedWise Specialist/CRISP

Sam Leininger, WeedWise Program Manager

Technical Assistance

When landowners access our knowledge, skills, and abilities, we call that technical assistance. Our assistance is available at no cost to any landowner in Clackamas County. We listen to the landowner's goals and concerns. Once we understand the landowner's needs and the condition and availability of natural resources, we can help identify sound conservation practices that improve water quality and quantity, promote soil health, enhance wildlife habitat, control invasive weeds, and protect working lands.

Financial Assistance

We have several tools that can be used individually or in combination to help landowners install conservation practices that benefit the natural resource and achieve the goals of the landowner. Our tools for funding implementation of conservation practices include:

Grants — Grant awards are determined by availability of funds, project type, and environmental benefits. Grants may be considered taxable income and we explain that during our meetings with the landowner.

Cost Share — Cost-share arrangements are determined by availability of funds, project type, and environmental benefits. Cost sharing is where the District grants some funding and the landowner provides some resources (time, materials, or money). The grant portion of a cost-share is generally at 50% of eligible costs.

Loans— We may provide low-interest loans to landowners and land managers for implementation of targeted conservation practices that have significant environmental benefits. We sometimes provide a loan for the landowner's share in a cost-sharing agreement.

Through our residential septic system loan program for failed or failing septic systems, the District will provide 100% loans up to a maximum of \$25,000 for eligible homeowners within Clackamas County to repair or replace their failed or failing systems.

Local Partner Support

We provide financial and support to many of our local partners such as watershed councils, non-profit organizations, and other conservation organizations that undertake conservation work that advances our natural resource goals. We also support local Farmers Markets that in turn provide opportunities for local farmers to succeed.

Working Lands Program

This is a voluntary program to protect, enhance, and restore important working lands such as farms, fields, and forests. Several tools available include conservation easements, donation to the District, bequests that leave land to the District upon the passing of a landowner, and purchase of property. We work with landowners, land trusts, and easement holders to realize these goals.

Conservation Priorities

The District provides technical assistance to landowners (rural acreages, small and large farms, nurseries, woodlots, forests, private, public, institutional, and non-profit) in a variety of conservation priorities. These priorities are listed below:

Water – protecting water quality and water quantity

Weeds – managing invasive weeds

Wildlife – restoring riparian and upland habitat for fish and wildlife, plus promoting habitat corridors in urban and rural landscapes

Working lands – protecting our best farms, fields, and forests from conversion

Soil health– promoting soil health and fertility

Conservation Priority— Water Quantity

CONCERNS

1. Adequate water quantity for habitat and agriculture
2. Active soil erosion
3. Insufficient stormwater control

PRIORITIES

1. Promote irrigation efficiency practices
2. Provide technical assistance for irrigation water management

Planned actions:

- Promote more efficient application of irrigation water
- Promote energy conservation
- Promote rainwater harvesting for small scale irrigation and stormwater control
- Promote soil moisture monitoring
- Provide financial assistance through our loan program for irrigation conversion, setting up soil moisture monitoring systems, and variable frequency drives pumps



Other benefits of this work:

- Increased water available for wildlife
- Protection of drinking water for communities in Clackamas County
- Reduction of irrigation-induced erosion
- Reduced stormwater runoff and increased infiltration to groundwater

Key partners:

- State of Oregon
Department of Environmental Quality
Water Resources Department
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
- Energy Trust of Oregon
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Local watershed councils



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Conservation Priority - Working Lands

CONCERNS

1. Conversion of high-value farmland to non-farm uses
2. Protection of forest, farm, and field land near urban centers

PRIORITIES

1. Be a vocal proponent for the protection of working lands
2. Continue to develop a conservation easement program
3. Promote succession planning
4. Acquire lands for preservation



Key partners:

- Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts
- Columbia Land Trust
- Greenbelt Land Trust
- The Trust for Public Lands
- Oregon Department of Agriculture
- Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
- Oregon State University Extension Service
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Willamette Valley Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Planned actions:

- Protect land by holding conservation easements
- Promote succession planning for farm and woodlot owners
- Acquire farm and forest land when needed to assure preservation
- Continue to develop a community forest management plan for the acquired forest land and provide maintenance on the forest property.

Other benefits of this work:

- Increased local food production
- Assuring that farm land is available for future farmers
- Demonstrating habitat protection and working forest land in Clackamas



Conservation Priority - Weeds

CONCERNS

1. Displacement of native vegetation
2. Reduction of crop yields
3. Impairment of fish and wildlife habitat
4. Threat to human and livestock health
5. Reduction of forage for livestock
6. Decrease in property values
7. Acceleration of streambank erosion
8. Threat to water quality
9. Limitation of land use

PRIORITIES

1. Provide early detection and rapid response to new infestations
2. Educate landowners
3. Provide control for targeted species
4. Lend tools for manual control of invasive weeds
5. Participate in activities with regional entities engaged in invasive species issues
6. Build regional coordination and education to better contend with new and continuing threats
7. Provide live plant specimens to partners for educational purposes



Key partners:

- Bureau of Land Management
- Clackamas County
- Clackamas River Invasive Species Partnership
- Columbia Gorge Cooperative Weed Management Area
- 4-County Cooperative Weed Management Area
- Metro
- Oregon Department of Agriculture
- Oregon State University Extension Service
- Oregon Invasive Species Council
- Sandy Basin Vegetation Restoration Coalition
- USDA Forest Service
- Watershed councils

Planned actions:

- Provide early detection and rapid response to new infestations
- Educate landowners on identification and control of invasive weeds
- Provide free chemical, manual, and bio-control for target species
- Lend tools such as weed wrenches for manual control of invasive weeds
- Reach out to landowners in areas where invasive weeds have been identified
- Respond to landowners contacting the district with concerns about weeds



Conservation Priorities—Soil Health

CONCERNS

1. Depletion of soil organic matter causing reduction in water holding capacity and nutrient retention in soils
2. Increased erosion of soil with poor structure and low infiltration rates
3. Susceptibility of crops growing in poorly functioning soils to pests and disease requiring more chemical application

PRIORITIES

1. Support soil health workshops
2. Include soil health considerations in conservation plans
3. Provide soil testing for farm fields as part of a plan development
4. Support the NRCS Multnomah/Clackamas Soil Health Conservation Implementation Strategy
5. Make conservation equipment available

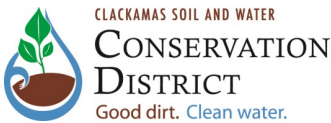
Planned actions:

- Deliver soil health workshops focusing on the four soil health principles to build high functioning soils:
- Promote soil building practices that support the four principles of soil health
- Provide no-till drill to cooperators
- Provide soil testing as a service in conservation planning
- Support the NRCS Multnomah/Clackamas County Soil Health Conservation Implementation Strategy
- Promote conservation actions that reduce soil loss
- Promote awareness of soil health through a “Soil Your Undies” campaign



Key partners:

- The Dry Farming Institute
- Oregon Department of Agriculture
- Oregon State University Cooperative Extension
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Oregon Chapter of The Soil and Water Conservation Society



Conservation Priority - Wildlife

CONCERNS

1. Loss of habitat for native wildlife
2. Loss of oak habitats in the Willamette Valley
3. Loss of contiguous travel corridors for wildlife
4. Gaps in food sources for wildlife

PRIORITIES

1. Outreach to landowners with oak habitat in our priority areas.
2. Work with landowners interested in oak habitat restoration.
3. Support in-stream and riparian restoration work
4. Promote native plants and pollinator habitat
5. Present workshops on native wildlife habitat

Planned actions:

- Incorporate fish habitat features into stream restoration projects
- Provide financial assistance for streamside and in-stream restoration projects
- Present workshops on streamside plantings and bank stabilization
- Install raptor poles
- Promote native plant use in landscapes, hedgerows, and riparian plantings
- Install practices for native pollinator habitat
- Present workshops on native wildlife habitat
- Support urban wildlife by supporting the Backyard Habitat Certification Program in Clackamas County



Key partners:

- Audubon Society
- Clackamas County Water Environment Services
- Columbia Land Trust
- State of Oregon
 - Department of Agriculture
 - Department of Environmental Quality
 - Department of Fish and Wildlife
 - Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Watershed councils
- Xerces Society



Conservation Priority— Water Quality

CONCERNS

1. Warm temperatures of surface water
2. Pesticides in water
3. Soil particles in water
4. Manure in water
5. Sewage in water

PRIORITIES

1. Better manure management
2. Reduce pesticide use and drift
3. Increase streamside and field borders
4. Reduce sewage in water
5. Make conservation equipment available



Planned actions:

- Support streamside planting
- Promote filter strips and ground covers
- Reduce pesticide usage and drift
- Provide conservation equipment to cooperators
- Promote better manure management
- Provide financial assistance for septic system inspections and repairs in Clackamas County.
- Promote conservation actions that reduce soil loss
- Continue to analyze and prioritize the best practices to protect source water in the Molalla River Watershed.

Key partners:

- Clackamas County Water Environment Services
- Clackamas County Septic and Onsite Wastewater Program
- Clackamas Pesticide Stewardship Partnership
- Clackamas River Water Providers
- State of Oregon
 - Department of Agriculture
 - Department of Environmental Quality
 - Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
- Oregon Association of Nurseries
- Oregon Christmas Tree Growers Association
- Oregon State University
 - Extension Service
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Local watershed councils



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Key Partners

The District collaborates with multiple partners. Key partners and descriptions of their relationships with the District follow:

Clackamas County – The District works collaboratively with the County, including Water Environment Services, on a variety of projects including outreach and education, invasive weed management, and urban conservation.

Clackamas River Invasive Species Partnership (CRISP) - The District, with the Clackamas River Basin Council and additional funding from Metro collaborate to improve the management of invasive species within the Clackamas River watershed. Additional partners in this important initiative include: the 4-County Cooperative Weed Management Area, Bureau of Land Management, Clackamas County Parks, Clackamas County Water Environment Services, Natural Resources Conservation Service, North Clackamas Parks and Recreation District, Oregon Department of Agriculture Noxious Weed Control Program, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, Portland General Electric, and the United States Forest Service.

Educational institutions – The District works with local educational institutions and students to implement projects and provide educational information. Institutions include the Sabin-Schellenberg farm, Springwater Environmental School, Clackamas Community College, and others.

Local business and other conservation organizations – The District continues to work with a diverse set of partners from both the public and private sectors. For example, the District has collaborated with Audubon of Portland and the Columbia Land Trust to expand the Backyard Habitat Certification program to the urban areas of the Portland Metropolitan region in Clackamas County.

Metro – The District works with Metro to support Low-Impact Development practices and designs. The District also partners with Metro to control invasive species on projects in Clackamas County.

Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) – The District serves as the local management agency to support ODA’s Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plans and provides technical assistance to landowners who may not be in compliance.

Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) – The District has received grant and loan funding from DEQ to implement a variety of water quality projects.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) – The District partners with ODFW on riparian restoration projects and relies on their expertise for many other projects and funding applications.

Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) – The District works with ODF to promote sustainable forest management, fuels reduction, and wildfire prevention.

Oregon State University Cooperative Extension – District staff and Board members have worked cooperatively with Extension staff on a variety of Extension programs. The District continues to field referrals from the extension office for many small farm conservation practices.

Oregon State University Integrated Plant Protection Center (IPPC) – District staff work with the IPPC on pesticide reduction projects.

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) – The District, in partnership with USFS, worked with TPL to negotiate the purchase and transfer of the Eagle Creek Community Forest.

US Bureau of Land Management (BLM) – The District in partnership with the BLM and a number of the organizations already listed form The *Clackamas River Invasive Species Partnership (CRISP)* to improve the management of invasive species within the Clackamas River watershed.

USDA/Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) – The District works with NRCS staff on a number of initiatives, including sharing training, technical information, and conservation tools.

USDA/U.S. Forest Service (USFS) – The District works with the USFS primarily through the Clackamas Stewardship Partnership to support a collaborative model of forest health and restoration activities.

Watershed Councils and Land Trusts – The District provides outreach, technical support, monitoring, conservation planning, and some financial support to watershed councils and land trusts in Clackamas County.