

22055



CLACKAMAS SOIL AND WATER

CONSERVATION
DISTRICT

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**Clackamas Soil and Water
Conservation District
Annual Report
Fiscal Year 2019-2020**



Photo by Jason Faucera

Message from the Board Chair

No matter where we begin a review of our previous year, we inevitably end up discussing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The discipline and adjustments required to continue operations, balanced with the necessity to expand our definition of diversity and inclusion, lead us to evaluate a year with unprecedented challenges. These are the challenges that provided the District with the opportunity to excel.

Like everyone, we had to adapt quickly to enable us to fulfill our mission of responding to the needs of our constituents. Where some saw only roadblocks and obstacles, the staff at Clackamas Soil and Water saw opportunities to develop new avenues for communication. The resulting network has enabled many impressive conversations and the calls for technical assistance have significantly increased. As we tentatively begin to return to more traditional forms of dialogue, these new skills will remain and serve to strengthen the District's outreach.

We must not allow the cloud of this year to overshadow recognition of some major accomplishments:

- **Completion of the Conservation Resource Center** is an achievement that will resonate for generations to come. Major construction ended in the fall of 2019 and staff began the new decade settling into their new home. Of course, only a few months later all that would change as the doors had to close while staff worked remotely; but the building will be there when we are allowed to return.
- **Our ongoing work with the Eagle Creek Community Forest property.** We are lending our efforts to help establish an advisory council to steward the care of this vital resource.

Any recognition of our staff and Board must include sincere gratitude to the citizens of Clackamas County. Our work begins with your desire to improve and protect the land and water resources of our region.

Thank you,
Jeff Becker



CLACKAMAS SOIL AND WATER

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Good dirt. Clean water.

We see the District as a place where our communities, environments, and economy thrive together. Our mission is to help create that future. We provide technical service and support designed to help people use natural resources sustainably today and for future generations.

A Home to Call Our Own

The District realized its vision of a forever home when we finalized and moved into our new building. Called the Conservation Resource Center, this 10,851 sq. ft. building was constructed over 11 months and provides space for our entire staff and operation. Our location on a beautiful 15-acre farm in Beavercreek provides a large conference room for educational events, spacious parking with room for large farm vehicles, and a convenient area to access implements from our Equipment Rental Program.

While we are not open to the public due to the pandemic, we are looking forward to the time when we can greet folks there and provide the services you have come to expect from the District. We are thrilled to have completed this milestone and are excited to begin a new chapter in the history of the District, allowing us to better serve our customers and deliver conservation services to the residents of Clackamas County.

National Water Quality Initiative

Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District received a National Water Quality Initiative grant from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service to assess factors that affect drinking water source quality above the City of Canby intake on the Molalla.

The Molalla River provides drinking water for approximately 26,000 people. While the project focuses on municipal intakes in the Cities of Canby, Molalla, and the community of Colton, we are assessing factors across the entire Molalla River watershed, above Canby's water intake, that have the potential to impact drinking water quality. We're taking a non-regulatory approach to solving issues with water quality before the water enters the municipal system.

Current and historic technical information with input from the public, land managers, agencies, and community organizations tells the story of drinking water source quality in the Molalla Watershed. This will guide where investments of resources will bring the biggest return for drinking water source quality protection and improvement. With an assessment we hope to find funding for projects to protect source water quality.

We have created a website to share information and for folks to provide input. Visit us at <http://molallariverdrinkingwater.com>, and watch for notices of upcoming presentations and listening sessions.

Departure of Our General Manager

After nine years of service, Tom Salzer moved on to share his talents with the Washington Association of Conservation Districts.

Tom's willingness to share his knowledge, time, and his "a rising tide floats all boats" approach to conservation assistance whether within the District or amongst partners across the western region will be sorely missed. He was also the catalyst for our Conservation Resource Center, spending countless hours shepherding the project.

We wish him all the best in his new adventure!



Photo by Jason Faucera



Oak woodland are frequented by acorn woodpeckers - Canby Oak CIS project.



Perched and failing culvert blocked fish passage in this essential habitat stream.



The new culvert has a natural stream bottom and opens access to a half mile of spawning habitat.

Successes in Conservation Planning

Oak Habitat Conservation

Our continued focus to conserve and restore Oregon white oak habitats led to 37 landowners receiving site visits from planners. Those visits resulted in 4 new habitat restoration projects funded by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Completed oak restoration practices included 125 acres of weed control, 21 acres of oak planting, 50 acres of thinning to make space for sun-loving oak trees, and 11 acres planted with native grasses and wildflowers.

One highlight was the restoration of a 23-acre oak woodland. A once weed-infested forest, overgrown with Douglas fir, is now looking like a healthy oak woodland with plenty of sunlight for the oaks.

Competing conifers were removed and invasive weeds sprayed and mowed, to allow the existing native plant community to return. This unique oak woodland will provide wildlife habitat for generations.

Fish Passage Project

Long-time cooperator, DeLano Farms LLC, worked with the District to replace a perched and failing culvert with an arch pipe culvert meeting Federal and State fish passage guidelines. In-stream habitat elements were added and a potential sediment source to this tributary of Clear Creek (in the Clackamas River watershed) was eliminated.

The tributary is designated as Essential Salmon Habitat and Critical Habitat for Lower Columbia Coho Salmon and Winter Steelhead.

The project was funded with retained receipts dollars from the U.S. Forest Service, with contributions from the landowners and a grant from the Conservation District.

Other partners on the project include Clackamas River Basin Council and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Implementation of the project enables the farm to continue operating safely and economically.

In 2019-2020 the Conservation Planning Program provided:

- » Technical resources and assistance to **134 landowners**;
- » Site visits with landowners on **64 properties**;
- » **Twelve** conservation plans on **116 acres** to help guide land management;
- » Implementation of **16 conservation projects** which included these practices:



Before and after oak release logging on Marquam Oak CIS

Conservation Cover - 11.4 acres	Culvert Replacement - 1	Stream Habitat Improvmt - 0.5 acres
Brush Management- 212.98 acres	Forest Stand Improvement - 11 acres	Woody Residue Treatment - 10.9 acres
Critical Area Planting - 0.5 acres	Herbaceous Weed Treatment - 21 ac.	Tree/Shrub Establishment - 22.9 acres
Channel Stabilization - 50 feet	Mulch- 0.4 acres	<i>Not bad for a pandemic year!</i>

WeedWise Highlights

The WeedWise program initiatives focus on the active management of priority invasive weeds as well as assisting Clackamas County residents.

Despite the complications from COVID-19, this past year the WeedWise program has:

- Maintained the *Clackamas Weed List* with **222** weeds and **105** priority weeds;
- Provided technical assistance to **724** residents;
- Maintained permissions with **2,000** landowners responsible for **266,606** acres of property;
- Surveyed **182** properties;
- Carried out **947** treatments on **876** sites totaling **2,096** infested acres;
- Sent targeted mailings to **528** households;
- Partnered with **54** public and non-profit organizations;
- Administered **2** Cooperative Weed Management Areas;
- Tracked **58,062** separate weed observations.

This past year the WeedWise program has also been working on several large-scale projects including:

- Continuing our *Rapid Response* weed control efforts across Clackamas County;
- Partnering with the **Clackamas River Invasive Species Partnership** (CRISP) to control invasive weeds along the Clackamas River;
- Implementing priority weed control efforts with partners from the **Sandy River Vegetation Restoration Coalition** along the Sandy River;
- Assisting with the management of priority invasive weeds on the Mt. Hood National Forest;
- Assisting with the release of a new knotweed biocontrol in the United States;
- Managing vegetation at the District's new Eagle Creek Community Forest;
- Sponsoring the *Backyard Habitat Certification Program* to target invasive weeds in urban areas.



Orange hawkweed is a high priority weed targeted for control.



We assisted in the release of a new knotweed biocontrol this season.



Tansy Ragwort: The cool, wet spring this past season ushered in a massive resurgence of tansy ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*). The WeedWise program provided information to landowners across the county to help address problem infestations .

Financial Summary - How Our Conservation Dollars Return to the Community

Twenty Years of Renting Equipment

Our Equipment Rental Program turned 20 this year! Since the purchase of our first Tye No-Till Drill in 2000 we have provided equipment that property owners need to better manage their land. This equipment is not available to rent elsewhere. The program has many additional pieces of equipment that are kept in good working order.



It all started with a drill.

This year we rented the no-till drill 17 times and 240 acres were seeded. The vineyard drill is a favorite of the wine grape growers; this year it was used to seed 50 acres in Yamhill County. The other five implements combined were rented 7 times, treating 20 acres.

Grants to our partners this year included support grants to 10 **watershed councils** in Clackamas

County totaling \$118,000.

Farmers market support grants were awarded to 7 farmers markets totaling \$25,000.

Local contractors were hired this year to control invasive species totaling \$307,052.

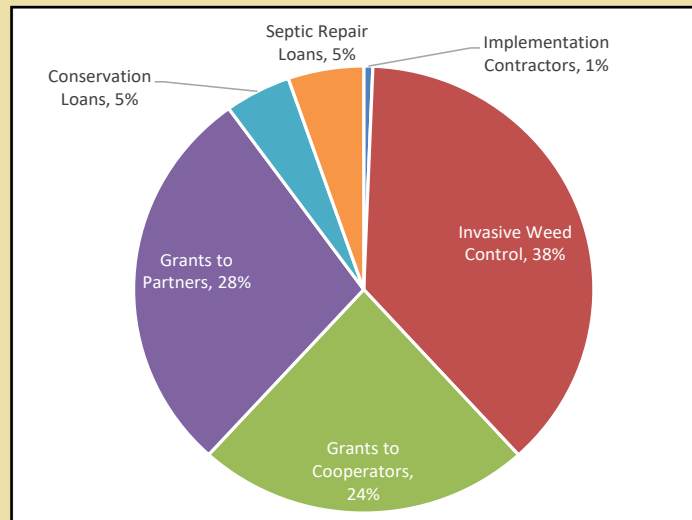
Grants to landowners and contractors hired to install conservation practices this year totaled \$197,029.

The District loan program service

area for septic loan was expanded to include all of Clackamas County and the interest rate was reduced to 0%. These changes dramatically increased homeowner participation. In fiscal year 2019-20, we received 11 applications and made 3 loans (others pending) totaling \$43,400.

Conservation loans for landowners to install conservation practices have always included the entire county and this year totaled **\$38,038**.

Expenditures by Program



Expenditures by Fund

Accrual Basis	General Fund	Conservation Grants Fund	*Conservation Loans Fund	Working Lands	Building Reserve
Beginning Balance 07/1/2019	1,420,975	147,710	251,200	621,487	2,872,718
Income	2,826,416	394,115	119,102	3,480	751
Expenses	-2,784,032	-568,988	-73,608	0	-3,568,343
Transfers Out of Fund	-1,032,282	0	-150,000	(520,640)	0
Transfer Into Fund	670,640	320,000			712,282
Ending Balance 6/30/2020	1,101,717	292,837	146,694	104,327	17,408

Audited Numbers for Fiscal Year Ending 2020

*Conservation Loans Fund income is DEQ Loan distribution, landowner loan payments, plus the interest revenue from loan payments.

Education and Outreach

Serving the Residents of Clackamas County



We offered **4** workshops, gave **8** presentations at area events and meetings, hosted **1** watershed networking meeting, co-hosted the 2019 Small Farm School that boasted **230** attendees, and a Succession Planning series of 4 sessions.



We provided articles and content for 9 editions of the Beaver Creek Bulletin and 3 articles for the Forest Tree Leader.



We tabled or staffed educational displays at **11** events including **5** farmers markets.



We uploaded **90** posts on the District Home, WeedWise, Beaver Creek Farm & Conservation Resource Center, Eagle Creek Community Forest, and Molalla River Drinking Water NWQI websites. We have a combined **1,274** followers on the WeedWise and District Facebook accounts.



We welcomed the public to our beautiful new building with 2 Open House events in January 2020.

Spotlight on Our Favorite

The District hosted its fourth **Soil Health Workshop for School and Community Garden Educators**. This year's topic was soil health and school garden curriculum. Over 40 participants joined guest speaker Kaci Rae Christopher, author of *The School Garden Curriculum*, for a day-long adventure at the Environmental Learning Center at Clackamas Community College. Highlights included creating potting soil; tying curriculum to the garden for year-round, hands-on, student engagement; and learning how to convey soil health principles by "planting" underwear.



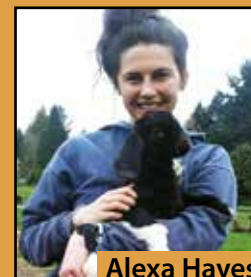
Sara Bauder

Eagle Creek Community Forest

As with everything this year, the COVID-19 virus hindered activities and that included work at the Eagle Creek Community Forest. In Fall 2019 we completed an invasive weed control project. This cleared several "roads" on the property. After the fall, our activities were limited to a periodic download of our wildlife cameras. Here are a few of our favorite "wild" visitors.



Academic scholarships were proudly awarded to Alexa Hayes from Damascus who attends Oregon State University and Maja Rohling from Milwaukie who attends Clackamas Community College. Each student received a \$3,000 scholarship for the 2020-2021 school year.



Alexa Hayes



Maja Rohling



Photo by Jason Faucera

Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District --Board of Directors--

Jeff Becker	Chair	Zone 3
Jesse Nelson	Vice Chair	Zone 1
Roger Fantz	Treasurer	At-Large
Don Guttridge	Secretary	Zone 5
Jim Johnson		Zone 2
Joan Zuber		Zone 4
Jan Lee		At-Large

--Associate Directors--

John Keith	Anna Rankin
PK Melethil	Jim Toops

--Directors Emeritus--

Ron Oberg	Michael Weinberg
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--Staff--

Nicole Ahr	Conservation Specialist
Justin Cooley	Weedwise Specialist
Scott Eden	Conservation Specialist
Jason Faucera	Conservation Initiatives Manager
Doug Fenwick	Engineering Technician
Courtney Gattuso	WeedWise Specialist/ CWMA Coordinator
Tami Guttridge	Office Manager
Lindsey Karr	WeedWise Specialist
Lisa Kilders	Acting General Mgr. - Education/ Outreach Program Manager
Clair Klock	Senior Resource Conservationist
Sam Leininger	WeedWise Program Manager
Cathy McQueeney	Education/Outreach Specialist
Eann Rains	Conservation Investments Coordinator
Jenne Reische	Conservation Planning Manager
Nathan Tucker	Fiscal Administrator
Matt VanWey	Conservation Specialist

The Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the District. The District is an Equal Opportunity Employer.