

200 SE Hatley Ave, Suite 108
Pendleton, OR 97801

Umatilla County Soil and Water
Conservation District



Umatilla County SWCD



Umatilla County
Sustainable Agriculture



“OUT OF THE BLUES”

1st QUARTER PROGRESS REPORT
July - October 2008

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.

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PENDLETON, OR #22

Acronyms

- **ARS** Agricultural Research Service
- **BOR** Bureau of Reclamation
- **CAFO** Confined Animal Feeding Operation
- **CREP** Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
- **CRP** Conservation Reserve Program
- **CSP** Conservation Stewardship Program
- **CTUIR** Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
- **CWN** Clean Water Neighborhood Program
- **DEQ** Department of Environmental Quality
- **District** Umatilla County Soil & Water Conservation District
- **EQIP** Environmental Quality Incentives Program
- **FSA** Farm Service Agency (formerly ASCS)
- **GIS** Geographic Information System
- **LMA** Local Management Agency (Oregon SB1010)
- **LUB** Lower Umatilla Basin
- **NRCS** Natural Resource Conservation Service
- **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
- **SOLV** Stop Oregon's Litter & Vandalism
- **UMCOSWCD** Umatilla County SWCD
- **USDA** United States Department of Agriculture

Resource Directory

Soil and Water Conservation District

- Umatilla County SWCD 541-276-8131
- Umatilla County SWCD CWN office 541-289-9980
- 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 541-278-8049
- Umatilla Basin Watershed Council–541-276-2190
- Walla Walla Bain Watershed Council– 541-938-2170

Dates to Remember

- Umatilla County SWCD Board meetings are the second Wednesday of each month in the SWCD conference room
- November 12, 2008 District Operations Review in conjunction with the board meeting from 7:00-9:00 p.m. in the SWCD conference room
- TBA - District Long Range Planning session

Upcoming Events

- October 16, 2008 - Umatilla County SWCD Sustainable Ag Sustainable Living Workshop at the Pendleton Convention Center from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- October 31 - November 3, 2008 - OACD Conference in Newport, Oregon
- November 5 - 7, 2008 - OWEB Conference in Eugene, Oregon
- Oregon/Idaho Grains Conference Dec. 10-12 at the Coeur d'Alene Resort, Idaho

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

- **The Board of Directors held three public board meetings in July, August and September with a total of 42 attendees**
- **The District hosted a Horse Management Workshop in Hermiston and provided education/outreach to approximately 80 participants regarding land management techniques.**
- **The District featured an informational booth at the Umatilla County Fair in August.**
- **The District participated in the CTUIR Salmon Walk where we displayed information on land management, water quality and SWCD services.**
- **The District is preparing for the 4th Annual Sustainable Ag Sustainable Living Workshop in October.**
- **The District houses a “kiosk” outside of the office offering brochures and fact sheets to the public on natural resource issues, SWCD & partner programs and agricultural regulatory issues.**
- **The District web site is updated frequently www.umatillacountyswcd.com**

Sustainable Agriculture

The District offers incentive programs to help off-set the costs associated with making the transition into more sustainable ag practices. The Variable Rate Fertilizer Application (VFRA) Program encourages growers to apply fertilizer more efficiently to increase intake and reduce run-off/leaching. The Wildhorse Basin Direct Seed Program encourages conventional farmers to try direct seeding while reducing risk. Watershed benefits include improved water quality and soil health, reduced erosion, fertilizer application and run-off/leaching. Reduced farming costs and less fuel consumption is also a benefit.

Activities

- **The VRFA incentive program enrolled 10 producers for a total of 2,358 acres**
- **An article was published in the *Agri-Times NW* mentioning the District’s Variable Rate Fertilizer Incentive Program.**
- **The Wildhorse Basin Direct Seed Incentive Program enrolled 2 growers converting from conventional tillage to direct seed on 400 acres.**
- **This District is in the planning stages for this winter’s Wildhorse Basin direct seed workshops.**
- **Continuing program management of VRFA & Direct Seed in the Wildhorse Basin Incentive Programs.**

Water Quality

Approximately 40 river/stream segments, in the Umatilla River Subbasin, have been declared “water quality limited” by DEQ. ODA developed the Ag Water Quality and Rules for, Umatilla River Subbasin to address possible nonpoint sources of pollution: eroding Ag and forest lands, eroding streambanks, runoff and erosion from roads and urban areas, runoff from livestock and other Ag operation and septic systems.

Activities

- **OWEB grant for an irrigation improvement project.**

- **OWEB grant on Umatilla River for off-channel watering project.**
- **OWEB small grant for erosion control project.**
- **OWEB small grant irrigation efficiency project.**
- **District website and e-NOTES newsletter pages dedicated to water quality/quantity.**

Clean Water Neighborhood

In recent years, Umatilla county residents have improved some natural resource management techniques. These changes have been the result of programs and outreach offered by local organizations. These changes have suggested progress toward sustainable management of the county's natural resources; however, sustainability has not yet been reached. This program assist residents in understanding how they contribute to pollution and encourages residents to take personal responsibility for their contributions to water quality.

Activities

- **Support for Westland Estates Development including: agency and homeowner meetings, site visits, questionnaires, research of funding and low interest loan possibilities.**
- **Increased awareness of the LUB GWMA**
- **Clean Water Neighborhood Newsletter**
- **Held 2 Roundtable Discussions one in Hermiston and one in Umatilla addressing nitrates in drinking water solutions.**
- **Further development of a “toolkit” designed to offer landowners information on water quality best management practices.**
- **Hired Teresa Walchli as the Clean Water Neighborhood Coordinator.**
- **Opened a satellite office at the Hermiston Irrigation District building for the CWN Coordinator as of October 1, 2008**
- **Became active members in the Pendleton, Hermiston and Milton-Freewater Chambers of Commerce.**

Weed Control

The Umatilla County SWCD is partnering with local, state and federal agencies such as the County Weed Dept, BLM, BPA and OWEB to spearhead on the ground weed treatments in localized areas. Watershed benefits are improved water quality through herbicide reduction.

Activities

- **Ten producers participated in the Creatively Controlling Cropland Weeds program totaling 9,404 acres in the Umatilla & Walla Walla Basins.**
- **District website features ID of local noxious weeds.**

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

- **OWEB grant on Butter Creek for riparian fencing.**
- **Potential OWEB grant for livestock watering in the Battle Mountain area.**

Projects and Programs Funded By:

- **Oregon Department of Agriculture**
- **Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board**
- **Umatilla County**
- **Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife**
- **Environmental Protection Agency**
- **Oregon Department of Environmental Quality**
- **Natural Resources Conservation Service**
- **Wildhorse Foundation**
- **Umatilla County SWCD**