



Horizons

Fall 2010

Volume 19 Issue 3
SERVING BENTON COUNTY OREGON SINCE 1956

~ Celebrating our 54th year of service to Benton County residents ~

Please attend our
2010 Open House
and
Annual Meeting
on
Monday, October 4
4:30 - 6:30 PM

at our new location
456 SW Monroe Avenue
Suite 110
Office entrance is on 5th Street

Join us for food and fun!

This event is free and open to the public
Questions or comments?
Please call 541-753-7208

Conservation Alphabet Soup

CWC Chintimini Wildlife Center
FWR Finley Wildlife Refuge
OSU Oregon State University
CSS Crop and Soil Science Dept.
4-H OSU Extension 4-H
ONREP Oregon Natural Resources Education Program
USFWS US Fish & Wildlife Service
TNC The Nature Conservancy

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2009-2010 Annual Report

Chair's Note by Tom Bedell

Welcome to the Benton SWCD 2009-2010 Annual Report. The following pages tell the story of the District's service during this year. I am proud to play a role in the District and to have experienced staff members.

Each of the other six directors have special talents that help guide our organization and set direction for our conservation efforts, whether in education and outreach, technical assistance, financial management, or just day to day operations. I am certain they join me in thanking you, the residents and citizens of

the District, for your support and for expressing your needs.

Private landowners and land managers are key in our conservation work as well as the cooperation with numerous local, state and federal organizations and agencies. Very little gets done in this day and age without collaboration (*As you read watch for references to our many partners*). Benton County truly is a special place because of the efforts and work of the many. I trust you will help us continue to be successful in the future.

The Year Ahead

by Jenny Ayotte, District Manager

The upswing in staff productivity and spirits is noticeable as we happily settle into our new offices at 456 SW Monroe, Suite 110! After occupying three offices in three years, we are pleased to be in an employee friendly space that is readily accessible to all of you! We gratefully acknowledge realtor Gary Pond for his patience as he helped us search for a space that would satisfy each and every one of us.

We are located on the corner of 5th and Monroe, east of the City Transit Station and south of the County Courthouse. Enter our office on 5th Street. Free parking is in the lot south of our building.

Some of our ventures in the year ahead are to:

- expand our efforts to address invasive species
- collect more soil quality assessments on agricultural land
- work with Oak Creek landowners on watershed health and protection
- continue work in identified agricultural groundwater limited areas
- scale down our Fish Passage Improvement Program because most of the identified improvements on public roads have been completed
- collaborate with Benton County on local groundwater issues
- hold our Annual Native Plant Sale on February 5, 2011- a beloved annual event for our staff, Board, volunteers and customers!
- and continue working with you, the residents of Benton County, to put conservation on the ground.

Join us!!

Conservation Calendar

Date & Time Location	Event/Speaker	For more information contact:
Monday, October 4 4:30 - 6:30 PM 456 SW Monroe Avenue Suite 110 - enter on 5th Street	BSWCD Open House and Annual Meeting <i>Join us for food and fun!! Tour our new location</i>	<i>Free and open to the public</i> Questions? 541-753-7208
Saturday, October 9 10 AM - 4 PM Benton Co. Fairgrounds	8th Annual Kids Day for Conservation EXPLORE and LEARN <i>Hands-on natural resources activities for the whole family!</i>	Free and open to the public! Dick Powell 541-929-2477 Want to volunteer? Contact Liz McGovern at 541-766-6750
Saturday, October 23 10 AM - 4 PM Corvallis location TBA	Riparian Bottomland Forest: Focus on Insects 4-H Wildlife Stewards Educator Workshop	Preregistration Required - \$20 fee visit http://www.cof.orst.edu/onrep call 541-766-6750
Saturday, November 6 9 AM - Noon Forestry Club Cabin Peavy Arboretum McDonald Forest	Ties to the Land - Session 1 of 2 <i>What will become of your farm or woodland property when your time of ownership comes to a close? What can you do increase the chances that your efforts will be sustained?</i> Examine how to create a strategy to win the inter-generational land transfer battle. The course will meet again in early 2011	Cost: \$50 per family includes the national award winning Ties to the Land workbook Preregistration required by October 20th Call OSU Extension Service 541-766-6750
Friday, January 14, 2011 <i>Order deadline</i> Saturday, February 5, 2011 <i>Order pick-up date</i>	Benton SWCD Native Plant Sale	Don't miss the Horizons Winter Issue with order form and plant descriptions Scheduled for release November 15th



Natural Resource Scholarships

We are pleased to announce the 2010 scholarship recipients:

Annette Patton

a 2009 Corvallis High School graduate
will continue her studies at Whitman College
and

Jahnsam Richardson

a 2010 Corvallis High School graduate
who will attend Oregon State University



5 Years of Scholarships

In the past 5 years, Benton SWCD Native Plant Sale proceeds have helped provide twenty-two \$1,000 scholarships to Benton County residents to help pay for tuition and fees at the schools listed below:

School	Scholarships
Colorado State University	1
Evergreen State College	1
Linn Benton Community College	1
Oregon State University	13
University of Idaho	1
University of Oregon	2
University of Washington	1
Western Washington University	1
Whitman College	1

Left: Claire Fiegner, Greenbelt Land Trust, talked about native plantings at Cliff Hall's property in Kings Valley. The June tour was organized by the Luckiamute Watershed Council in partnership with Benton SWCD.

Technical Resources Report by Donna Schmitz

How do Benton County residents benefit from Technical Resources services?

The Benton SWCD technical program assists Benton County residents by providing solutions to conservation issues. Citizens call our office at 541-753-7208 to schedule an appointment to discuss their resource concerns. The Technical Resources staff may conduct a site visit with the landowner. We work with residents to apply for grant funding, apply for permits, or enroll in federal/state conservation programs that may help with project costs. The photos (below left) document before and after conditions during an erosion control project near Bellfountain Road.

For information on how the Benton SWCD can help address your conservation concerns, call Donna at 541-753-7208.



Concern (above) - Sept. 2009 - runoff created a gully that would get worse with time.

Solution (below) - the area was sloped and erosion control matting was installed and planted with pasture grass species suitable for high water flow.



In the past year, over 150 landowners were assisted by our program via telephone, email or office visits. The details below summarize the 2009-2010 Technical Resources activities.

57 site visits were conducted to better evaluate conservation needs. Resource concerns included:

- manure and mud issues
- irrigation efficiency
- noxious weed control
- soil maps
- native plant recommendations
- dam and culvert removals
- pesticide collection events
- hedgerows
- wetland and riparian restoration permits
- fencing
- water conservation
- soil quality improvement.

Technical Resources Projects

Between 7/1/2009 and 6/30/2010

Over \$54,000 were allocated for 16 projects including:

- 2 drip irrigation efficiency projects
- 2 three-bin horse manure compost facilities
- 4 projects which provided rocked area for horses/cattle to winter and avoid muddy manure issues
- 1 grassed waterway
- 1 cross fencing for better cattle management
- 6 riparian plantings including 2 fencing projects to fence out domestic animals
- 7 water quality projects.

DEQ 319 Grants

A Department of Environmental Quality 319 Grant has provided additional opportunities for on-the-ground projects in Benton County in the last two years. The grant money was dedicated to conservation practices that:

- reduce the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) of various water quality parameters in the Willamette Valley www.deq.state.or.us/wq/tmdls/tmdls.htm
- help reduce Nitrate in the Southern Willamette Valley Groundwater Management Area (GWMA) located between HWY 99E and 99W in Lane, Linn and Benton Counties. <http://gwma.oregonstate.edu/background>

319 Grant Partners included:

- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
- Oregon Department of Agriculture
- Linn SWCD
- Lane SWCD
- Numerous landowners - Over 40% of DEQ project dollars were matched by landowner time and money and/or other grants, including a large contribution of landowner in-kind labor. Sometimes their work exceeded the time they estimated by 50%.

Technical Resources *continued*

Technical Resources Partnerships

We work with local, state and federal agencies and organizations to coordinate conservation activities in Benton County. We assisted:

- the City of Corvallis in reviewing riparian restoration grants to fund 11 landowners' projects.
- Benton County Public Works on stormwater, groundwater, prairie and riparian initiatives in Benton County.
- the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency to implement the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program and Wetland Reserve Program and to promote federal farm programs to interested individuals.
- Greenbelt Land Trust, City and County Parks and

Natural Areas and Cascade Pacific RC&D to strategize on initiating Willamette River projects and targeting Jackson-Frazier for restoration opportunities.

Looking Ahead

Technical Resources staff received grants from the Governor's Fund and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to conduct a landowner outreach project in the Oak Creek area. These funds will help landowners plant riparian areas and install fencing to keep animals out of Oak Creek. This outreach project will piggyback nicely with the OSU Animal Science riparian plantings which occurred on Oak Creek during the past several years.

We currently have access to other grants, such as the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board's Small Grants and the Benton SWCD Conservation Incentive Program money.

Financial Report

Our annual budget is approved each spring by a Budget Committee, comprised equally of BSWCD Directors and community members. We would like to thank the following community members for participating in our budget process and helping us to remain fiscally responsible: Kent Daniels, Steve Smith, Dave Schmedding, Peter Kenagy, Rick Fletcher, Gail Glick Andrews and Liz Brooks.

The FY10 budget year ended June 30, 2010 and had two funds, as reflected in the financial report (*right*). The Project Fund is for grants that have been secured for fulfilling a specific project. This year we received funding from DEQ, BLM, NRCS, Oregon Tilth, and OWEB as cited in the project reports throughout this document.

Our General Fund includes our office operations, our Community Conservation Programs and most of our personnel. Our personnel costs often provide important project match, allowing us to leverage grant funds for our conservation work. Another important part of our technical staff funding comes through Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) for our work on agricultural water quality. These

funds are available as a result of a voter initiative in 1998 that designated 15% of Oregon Lottery funds for parks and habitat. If not renewed this November, this initiative will expire in 2014.

2009-2010 Financial Report	General Fund \$	Project Fund \$
Beginning Balance 07/01/09	254,363	3,952
Income		
Benton County Property Taxes	308,664	0
Benton County Public Works	5,000	0
Grants	77,880	182,773
Interest	1,837	0
Other	4,195	0
Native Plant Sale	31,580	0
Total Income	429,157	182,773
Expenses		
Community Conservation Programs	22,196	0
Operations	97,556	0
Personnel	263,726	52,078
Project Expenditures		125,232
Native Plant Sale	18,829	0
Capital Outlay	3,891	0
Total Expenses	406,199	177,310
Net Income 06/30/10	22,958	5,463

General Election Nov. 2

Benton SWCD Directors are seven elected volunteers (*listed on page 8 under our mission statement*) who support the staff and direct conservation efforts; four will be running for re-election on November 2nd.

**Thanks to our Directors,
Tom, Cliff, Anne, Frank, Jeni, Henry and Bobby,
for your guidance and community representation!**

NRCS and Farm Bill Programs *by Tom Snyder*

Tom Snyder, right, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) District Conservationist, plays a key role in the District's connection with agricultural land managers. Through Farm Bill Programs NRCS provides federal funds to implement a variety of conservation practices. During the fiscal year 2010, Tom wrote 10 Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) Contracts for about \$459,000 for conservation practices on 34,387 acres in Benton County.

The Farm Bill Program process begins when a motivated landowner contacts NRCS to set up a meeting. Tom often schedules a site visit to discuss the landowner's conservation concerns and may encourage them to submit an application for Farm Bill funding. Submitted applications are ranked and contracts are written according to available federal resources. During Benton SWCD board meetings, Tom presents EQIP contracts for Directors' review and advice.

Two conservation priorities steered this year's EQIP application ranking. The 2008 Farm Bill made assistance to organic producers a priority. NRCS will cost share on practices, such as nutrient management, residue management, pest management, and conservation crop rotation, that assist producers who transition from conventional to organically certified production.



The Southern Willamette Valley Groundwater Management Area (GWMA) has been deemed a NRCS priority where practices that reduce the percolation of nitrates to groundwater, such as irrigation efficiency

and nutrient management, are recommended.

In addition to GWMA, the 2011 EQIP priorities will include improving grazing systems to benefit pollinator species, specifically the endangered Fender's Blue Butterfly, and invasive weeds in forest stands on the East slopes of the Coast Range.

To learn more about the Farm Bill Program visit Oregon NRCS <http://www.or.nrcs.usda.gov/>

or contact Tom Snyder 541-967-5925 ext. 118 thomas.snyder@or.usda.gov

Thank You Volunteers *by Teresa Matteson*

HUGE THANKS to the 108 individuals who stepped up to volunteer 663 hours with the District last year. To read every name and get a grasp on their many efforts, visit the summer issue of *Horizons* (page 2 *Volunteer Thanks!*) at http://www.bentonswcd.org/publications/2010_Summer_Horizons.pdf

Willamette Riverkeepers (WRK) are a dedicated crew of local residents who volunteer monthly to collect samples, perform water quality assessments and submit data to Willamette Riverkeepers headquarters in Portland. Volunteers' data help agencies, such as the Department of Environmental Quality, in the following ways:

- Fill data gaps for agencies that have limited staff resources for water quality monitoring
- Flag sites for potential listing on the EPA's 303(d) list of water-quality impaired streams
- Track water quality trends over time to identify violations of water quality standards
- Show significant departure from "normal" conditions and prompt early action, and trigger further restoration or other actions for the river upstream when it shows consistent problems in a specific place.

In addition, the volunteer data can provide hard facts for

public education.

For more information visit Willamette Riverkeepers www.willamette-riverkeeper.org/WRK/index.html

Contact:
Julia DeGagné
julia@willametteriverkeeper.org
503.223.6418



WRK Volunteer, Jim Sackinger performs dissolved oxygen test near the Stahlbush Island Bridge.

Thanks to the following volunteers for monitoring these Willamette River sites:

Volunteers	Site
Alice Bailey & Vivian Byers	Hwy 34
Joshua Geck & Jim Sackinger	Stahlbush Island
Tucker Selko & Ellen Tappan	Marys River
Colleen Llewellyn & Ed Llewellyn	Kiger Island
Jan Bottjer & Paula Minear & Chris Surfleet	Long Tom River

Education and Outreach Report by Heath Keirstead & Teresa Matteson

Our efforts to engage Benton County residents in the awareness and practice of natural resources conservation are highlighted on pages 6 and 7. We continue to cultivate time-honored activities, such as the annual Native Plant Sale (see page 8), youth hands-on education, workshops for educators and coordination of the Corvallis Willamette Riverkeepers. In addition, we have expanded our contacts with two efforts; the Weed Spotters Program and the Soil Quality Project. To read a detailed report on the Soil Quality Project see the summer Horizons at http://www.bentonswcd.org/publications/2010_Summer_Horizons.pdf



Youth Hands-on Education

Have you noticed how water ponds on compacted soil or felt the stickiness of clay? Do you know how soil filters and stores water or why a soil scientist delineates a wetland? Last year we made over 2650 contacts as we helped local youth explore the science behind these fascinating concepts and more during these events: Kids Day for Conservation (1700 contacts), RESTORE at Muddy Creek (25), 509J Outdoor Experience (60), Forest Camp (175), 4-H Wildlife Stewards Summit (150), Envirothon (135), Spring Field Days (315).

We are honored to work amid a thriving network of **Benton County Natural Resources Professionals** who dedicate their specialized skills, time and energy to youth education. Their names and organizations would fill this page. **You know who you are.** Stand up and take a bow! **Thanks!** to each and every one of you for all that you do to inspire our work and support efforts to build the knowledge base of tomorrow's decision makers. Included in the partner group are 25 volunteers who donated 156 hours (sometimes for exhausting 8-hour shifts in foul weather) to introduce conservation to kids.

Reaching Out to Adults

We use publications and events such as tours and workshops to engage adults in conservation.

Publications - Benton SWCD distributed two newsletters last year. One Making Ripples education newsletter was distributed to about 140 educators. Find it online at http://www.bentonswcd.org/teachers/MRP_V3_i1%201pgsht.pdf.

We also distributed three issues of this newsletter, *Horizons*, for a total of 3,817 hard and 1,017 electronic copies.

We used three mailing lists: *Benton SWCD Announce*, *BSWCD Newsletter Only*, and *BSWCD Jobs* to share conservation related announcements and job information with interested community members.

Get connected with conservation!

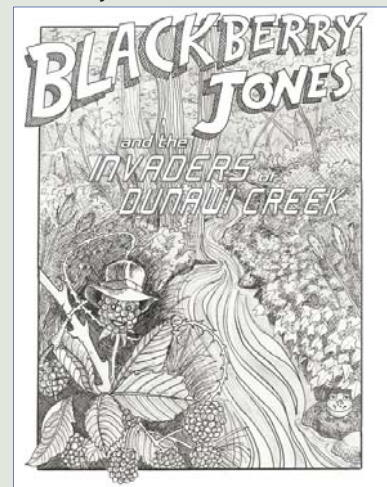
Join our educator mailing list - email [Heath Keirstead](mailto:Heath.Keirstead@bentonswcd.org) at hkeirstead@bentonswcd.org

Join our announcement and job listservs at www.bentonswcd.org/mailling_lists

Events - We work with many partners to share conservation information with adults. Collaborative efforts are more interesting to participants, easier on all of us, and way more fun.

The Third Annual Urban Creek Tour - Blackberry Jones and the Invaders of Dunawi Creek - was coordinated by Gwenn Kubeck of the City of Corvallis Stormwater Program with planning assistance from Willamette Watershed Productions and Benton SWCD. Every year, volunteers help make the tour a safe and organized event. About 40 people attended the tour, despite intermittent downpours, and were rewarded with locally relevant, fact-filled presentations by the experts listed below.

If you missed the tour, take the self-guided version using the brochure available at our office.



Dunawi Creek Art by Kathleen Hill

Expert

Laurel Byer
Bruce Moser
Larry Thornton
Iris Benson
Xan Auger

Affiliation

Benton County Public Works
City of Corvallis Stormwater
First Congregational United Church of Christ
Corvallis Natural Areas
Marys River Watershed Council

Attendees learned that the confluence of Dunawi with the Marys River was rerouted, as evidenced by the unnatural angle at which Dunawi enters the river. We also learned that the Sunset Park restored wetland was replanted with native plants traditionally used by the Kalapuya for basket making. Special thanks go to Kathleen Hill for the cover art, Taber Burton for the tour map, all of our partners, the 5 speakers and the 9 volunteers for a successful tour.

Weed Spotters *by Heath Keirstead*

Invasive species are one of the top three causes of habitat destruction in Benton County's prairies and woodlands, so Benton SWCD has increased our efforts to combat these alien invaders.

In 2009, 32 volunteers completed the Benton SWCD Weed Spotters training and became experts at identifying high priority invasive species. Weed Spotters performed weed inventories on 49 properties last spring and summer, covering over 240 acres! Funding for the program's first year was provided by National Audubon's TogetherGreen Program.

This year, our partners at Corvallis Parks & Recreation and the Community Services Consortium brought the Oregon Youth Conservation Corps to 14 of the inventoried properties (more than 100 acres) to assist landowners with manual weed removal.



Weed Spotters learn to identify meadow knapweed

In the upcoming year **Weed Spotters** will work with adults and teens to map and remove invasive species in parks, natural areas and Greenbelt Land Trust's properties and to talk to hikers about how to avoid the spread of invasive species. We are also planning to expand our invasive species program by working with many local partners to better coordinate our weed control efforts.

Whether we work together on projects in designated high priority areas, or work across the county to target the same species for Early Detection and Rapid Response, we will be able to maximize our effectiveness by strengthening our communication.

Visit our Invasive Species Web Page
www.bentonswcd.org/invasive_species/index
 for more information
 then contact Heath Keirstead
hkeirstead@bentonswcd.org or 541-753-7208
 to get involved!



***Yellow Archangel** is an escaped ornamental that thrives in Benton County. If you have it in your yard, pull it out and bag it or burn it.*



Conservation Education Grants

Benton SWCD provided 11 educators with grants totaling \$8,934 for natural resources education projects during the 2009-2010 school year. Grants were awarded to educators at 6 public schools, 2 private schools, 2 non-profit organizations and one university.

Students learn by doing and retain concepts through hands-on conservation activities, like these activities funded by Conservation Ed Grants: field trips with Avery House Nature Center and Starker Arts Garden for Education, water quality study, efficient irrigation system, school science nights, propagation and planting of native plants.

Educator Workshops provide us with an effective means of reaching both youth and adults. The educators, in turn, incorporate conservation into their lessons. The workshops and collaborators in the table below helped broaden our reach to 49 educators and offered a direct avenue for promoting BSWCD Conservation Education Grants (*right*).

Workshop	Partners
OSU CSS599	OSU CSS
Alien Invasion: Plants on the Move	4-H, ONREP, TNC
Learn About the Locals Project Wild	4-H, ONREP, USFWS FWR, CWC



Postage

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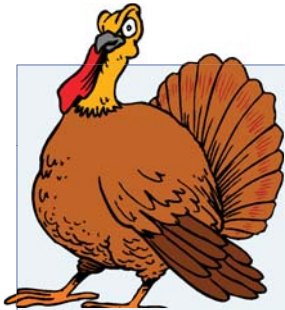


Looking ahead for conservation!

Help us save valuable resources two ways...

1. Switch from snail mail to email by sending an email to tmatteson@bentonswcd.org with e-news in the subject line.
2. If you don't want to be on the paper mailing list, call us at (541) 753-7208 and we will remove you.

Please recycle this newsletter
or better yet, pass it to a friend!



Time to plan for the
2011 Native Plant Sale!
Don't be a Turkey!
Order your Native Plants
before Thanksgiving!

Four ways to get the order form **in mid-November**:

- hard copy of *Horizons* in your postal mailbox
- electronic form at www.bentonswcd.org/projects/treesale
- call our office at 541-753-7208
- email a request to treesale@bentonswcd.org

Order deadline - January 14 , 2011

Plant pick-up date - Saturday, February 5, 2011

Some plants have limited availability and will be sold on a first-order first-filled basis

Watch for 4 new plants!
Ranunculus occidentalis - Western Buttercup
Ceanothus thrysiflora - Blue Blossom
Adiantum pedatum - Maidenhair Fern
Asarum caudatum - Wild Ginger

The Native Plant Sale pick-up day, our most popular volunteer event, has become an annual gathering of troops loyal to the attack against invasive species, botany enthusiasts and spouses/offspring persuaded into service. *Join the fun and volunteer!*

THE BENTON SWCD MISSION
is to provide leadership to Benton County residents through education and technical assistance for conservation and responsible use and management of soil, water and related resources.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DIRECTORS (ZONE)

- Cliff Hall, Treasurer (1)
- Anne Rigor, Vice Chair (2)
- Tom Bedell, Chair (3)
- Bobby Bewley (4)
- Frank Nusbaum (5)
- Jeni Richardson (At Large)
- Henry Storch (At Large)

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

- Rana Foster
- Mark Taratoot
- Tim Dehne

EMPLOYEES

- Jennifer Floro, Office Manager
- Jennifer Ayotte, District Manager
- Donna Schmitz, Resource Conservationist
- Taber Burton, Fish Passage Program Coordinator
- Heath Keirstead, Education and Outreach Coordinator
- Alice Fairfield, Native Tree and Shrub Sale Coordinator
- Teresa Matteson, Education and Outreach Director & Horizons Editor

The Benton SWCD is an equal opportunity employer, providing services to the public without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status.