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# Groundwork

May / June 2023

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## Splinters from the Board

**April:** The board met April 5th and held their annual meeting where the Annual Report and audit for fiscal year 2021-2022 were presented. The board approved to admit Jensen Drilling to the qualified driller pool for Mosier Million #2 and to contract with them on a one well at a time basis. A DCS was approved for cross fencing, and the board discussed bridge funding for the MUS project. Wasco County Tax Assessor, Jill Amery provided an update on the future tax outlook. Tyler Holeman with the Lower Deschutes CWMA gave a presentation on the program, and the board agreed to increase the SWCD contribution from \$10,000 to \$15,000. Scott Susi also led a discussion on weed control and the SWCD's plan to develop the program in the future. Partner and project updates were also shared.

**May:** On May 3rd the SWCD board met, as well as the budget committee. The budget committee approved the budget as presented and approved the tax levy at the maximum amount of \$.25/\$1,000. The SWCD board approved continued funding to Wy'East for the FAST program, annual support to the Lower Deschutes CWMA, and the USGS Moser Gaging Station. The board also approved the Annual Work Plan for 2023-24, sponsorship to the Sherman and Wasco County Crop Tours with porta-potties, coffee and donuts, as well as approved signing the SDAO letter to FEMA about flood plain restrictions. The board reviewed the climate resiliency plan, as well as the SDAO Best Practices checklist. Project, partner and committee updates were also provided.

# PROJECT

*Updates*

## 15 Mile MUS Pilot Project

The Managed Underground Storage project wrapped up its first round of pilot testing, returning unfavorable results. At the conclusion of the Limited License permit period, consultants and SWCD staff have decided that one more year of testing is needed to address some of the concerns with the facility in an attempt to sure up uncertainties before pursuing full buildout. SWCD Staff worked to submit a grant application for continued Technical Assistance funding through OWEB on May 1st, in hopes of securing more funding for pilot testing that will take place during the next water year.



## FAST / Irrigation Season

As you drive along Fifteenmile or Eightmile Creeks you have probably noticed that irrigation season is in full-swing. This year is a record for number of acres enrolled in the Fifteenmile Action to Stabilize Temperatures (FAST) Program, with over 1,400 acres of surface water rights enrolled.

The email forecasts started being distributed in May, which include stream temperature, air temperature, and stream flow at five sites throughout the Fifteenmile basin. If you would like to receive the emailed stream and air temperature forecasts please email Drake Gilbert at [drake.gilbert@or.nacdnet.net](mailto:drake.gilbert@or.nacdnet.net)

## Watershed Council Updates

- The Dalles met in March. E.coli sampling is underway in addition to the regular fish monitoring that takes place annually on Mill Creek. The council will meet again in September.
- Bakeoven Watershed Council plans on meeting in June (date TBD) to discuss spring implementation of projects funded by the Bakeoven Rangeland Restoration project. This will allow council members the chance to discuss project progress, ask questions and determine if any additional projects need to be considered for upcoming funding cycles.
- White River does not have a meeting date selected at this time. Josh Thompson is in the final steps to closing out the 2020 White River Fire grant and working with landowners affected by the Miller Road Fire.
- Mosier WC met in April and received an update on groundwater levels within the basin, in addition to updates on the Mosier Million #2 project. They will meet again for an informal summer social gathering in July.
- Fifteenmile council maintained focus on addressing temperature concerns through the FAST program and MUS project. See back page for additional project details.

# CHERRY FESTIVAL



Did you catch us there?



This year Cherry Festival landed on Earth Day, and to celebrate, Samantha Filbin partnered with Nicole from Nicole's Nursery. To celebrate the Earth day event as well as all of the festivities that come with Cherry Festival, Samantha set up a fantastic booth and chatted with folks as they strolled through the festival about Earth Day, conservation and what the SWCD does here in Wasco County.

This year the SWCD has made it our goal to get out into the public in hopes of reaching those who may not know about Soil and Water Conservation Districts and what we can provide through technical and financial assistance. If you were there I hope you stopped by our booth and said hello!

## Service Center News

The USDA Service Center has undergone a much needed facelift. The entire office interior was painted in April with a fresh coat of paint. We apologize for any inconvenience while we were closed to the public for those days but we hope you enjoy the new look.

Please visit the Wasco SWCD website for full meeting minutes and announcements. [www.wascoswcd.org](http://www.wascoswcd.org)

## Upcoming Meetings & Events

Listen for SWCD & Partner updates on the KODL Coffee Break the first Monday of each month at 10:07 AM on 1440 AM Radio, 100.7 FM or streaming online at [kodl.com](http://kodl.com)

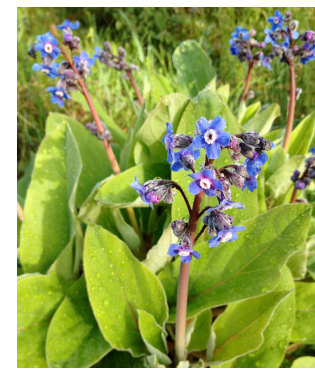
The next SWCD Board meeting will be held June 7th, 2023.

If you would like to receive this newsletter digitally please email [wasco@wascoswcd.org](mailto:wasco@wascoswcd.org)





Oregon State University  
Extension Service



Pictured left is Native hound's tongue.



The pictures below are the invasive Common hound's tongue.



# Wildflower Talk

## Common hound's tongue *Cynoglossum officinale*

“Common hound's tongue is a Eurasian species that is invasive in our area. Typically biennial, it dies after flowering and producing copious amounts of velcro-like, finely barbed seeds about the size of a small pea that latch onto clothing and animal fur thus ensuring the spread of the species. The entire plant is hairy and its flowers are reddish purple. If attempting to eradicate this plant, be careful not to confuse it with our beautiful native Pacific hound's tongue (*Adelina grandis*), which also produces velcro-like seeds but has smooth stems (somewhat hairy leaves) and flowers that are typically blue with white centers, but may at times also be reddish purple.

Article by Kristin Currin at Humble Roots Nursery

## Farm Service Agency

### Important Dates:

- June 2, 2023: Emergency Relief Program (ERP) Phase 2 and Pandemic Assistance Revenue Program (PARP) signups close.
- NAP (Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program): Report losses within 15 days of event. Notify FSA of event within 72 hours for hand-harvested crops.
- Acreage reports are due by July 15th.

For more information on any of the above programs and to learn more about eligibility requirements or how to apply contact the FSA office.

## NRCS

Wasco NRCS is submitting 2 funding proposals this summer, one for rangeland enhancement in south county and another to assist landowners with fish screen replacement along 15 mile. If these proposals are approved, financial assistance will be available for private landowners in 2024.

You may still submit an application any time for assistance with forest health and fuels reduction projects on forestland for our 2024 funding cycle.

Please call us with any questions at 541-298-8559 ext. 3 or email [Emily.huth@usda.gov](mailto:Emily.huth@usda.gov).

## Wy'East RC&D

Wy'East recently attended a statewide rural energy summit in Lake County and were honored to receive the Oregon Rural Energy Development Award. Wy'East is currently working with Forth (their nonprofit partners) to develop a Wasco EV Charging Plan. This plan will help the region be first in line to secure state and federal funding for EV infrastructure which will help to increase tourism and business development in Wasco County. Local Stakeholder meetings and planning conversations will kick off in June. USDA Rural Energy for America Program grants for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects recently increased to 50% of total project cost. This program is available for all agricultural producers and any rural small businesses. For more information or application assistance please reach out to Michael at [mkluz@weeast-rcd.org](mailto:mkluz@weeast-rcd.org).



## OSU Extension

### 2023 OSU Extension Crop Tours and Experiment Station Field Days

- Sherman County Crop Tour –Thursday, June 1st from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm starting at and finishing at the Wasco School Event Center (903 Barnett St, Wasco, OR 97065). Please register here: <https://beav.es/ipS> or call 541-565-3230. The tour will conclude with lunch catered by the Dirty Cowgirl.
- Wasco County Crop Tour – Thursday, June 8th, 8:30 am to noon, starting at the wheat trials next to the Dufur Community Cemetery off of Hwy 197 and finishing at JTI in The Dalles with lunch provided by Paco's Tacos again this year. Please register here <https://beav.es/iGW> or call 541-565-3230.
- Sherman Experiment Station Field Day – Wednesday, June 14th, starting at 7:30 am at the Sherman County Fairgrounds and ending at 1 pm with free lunch sponsored by MCP. All attendees are asked to register for free here: <https://beav.es/Syh>

## (ob)noxious weeds

Article by Scott Susi

### Tumble mustard (aka Jim Hill Mustard) *Sisymbrium altissimum*

Tumblemustard is found throughout much of Wasco County. Seedling plants are low-growing rosettes of deeply lobed leaves. Mature plants can grow between 2-5 feet tall and have stems that are simple below, and many-branched above, providing a bushy appearance. While lower leaves are coarse and divided into broad leaflets, upper leaves are finer with narrow segments. The flowers on tumblemustard are small and a pale yellow. Fruit are thin 2-valved capsules 2 to 4 inches long. Their seeds are small, numerous, yellowish-brown, and oblong with a groove. The plant often breaks off at soil level when mature and spreads its seed while "tumbling" in the wind.

(Information provided by wsu.edu, photos from swcoloradowildflowers.com and ipm.ucanr.edu)



## Pesticide Stewardship Partnership

(PSP)

The Pesticide Stewardship Partnership (PSP) Program is entering into its 13th consecutive year of monitoring. The SWCD is working with Project Managers from ODA and DEQ to draft a Strategic Plan for project implementation and monitoring. While Wasco County isn't an area of large concern for pesticides in waterways, we are still seeing in-frequent but high levels of Malathion in the Mill Creek basin. Stay tuned for details and dates for an upcoming workshop / outreach and education event that we will be collaborating on with our partners at OSU Extension.



## District Cost Share Program

Spring is here and its time to start thinking about all your summer conservation projects. Starting on July 1 there will be another pool of funding available for landowners through the SWCD District Cost Share program. We have made a few changes to the program including an increase from \$5,000 to \$7,500 for the total award amount for general conservation projects; as well as increased the maximum award amount for the haul road program to \$3,000. A 50% match is still required on all projects.

Examples of eligible projects include cross fencing, livestock water, irrigation system upgrades, cover crops, haul roads, manure storage facility, spring developments, juniper removal, etc. If you have a project in mind, now is the time to reach out to program manager Abbie Forrest (541) 296-6178 x102 or at [abigail.forrest@or.nacdn.net](mailto:abigail.forrest@or.nacdn.net) to schedule a site visit and start on your application. The July board meeting will be when the SWCD board will review any submitted applications and, once approved, projects can start immediately.

Above are photos of some recently completed District Cost Share projects.

