



Wasco County Soil and Water  
Conservation District  
2325 River Road, Suite 3  
The Dalles, OR 97058

Address Correction Requested

**NONPROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
THE DALLES, OR  
PERMIT NO. 157**

A publication of the Wasco County Soil & Water Conservation District



# Groundwork

July/Aug & Sept/Oct 2022 Volume 45 Number 5

## In This Issue

- A note to our readers (1)
- Splinters from the Board (1)
- Watershed Council Updates (2)
- Garden Plot (2)
- Newsletter Sponsors (2)
- Wildflower Talk (3)
- Partner Updates (3)
- Tree Sale Order Form (insert)
- Fire Wise Tips (4)
- Service Center News (4)
- Upcoming Events (4)

## A note to our readers

We've changed the format of our newsletter and also replaced the July/Aug edition with our FY 21-22 Annual Report. Our goal remains to provide you with the best and most current information on SWCD activities and partner updates. We welcome your feedback & contributions. Please contact us via email at [wasco@wascoswcd.org](mailto:wasco@wascoswcd.org) if you would like to receive this newsletter via email or if you have requests for future updates. We also thank our sponsors and look forward to bringing them more visibility going forward.

## Fire Wise Tips Part 1

Article and photos provided by Shilah Olson

Whether you have a small lot or a large acreage, you can implement environmentally friendly land management strategies to reduce fire danger and prevent future catastrophic loss. First, you must understand fire behavior. With that knowledge, inventory your land and assess the risks to create a site-specific plan that reflects your personal land management goals. All fire requires heat or an ignition source, fuel, and oxygen. Once a fire starts, its behavior is influenced by weather, topography, and fuels. Each of these factors must be considered to develop an effective management plan. Weather and topography are largely out of our control, however there are tools to help understand how a fire may respond on your land. A good aerial photo and topographical map can help you understand how fire might move on the landscape. Fire will typically move more quickly uphill than downhill or on flat terrain. It is also important to determine the prevailing wind direction as this will influence the path that a fire will follow.



**For an aerial photo or topographic map of your property contact the SWCD to schedule a time to work with any one of our conservation planners.**

**The East Cascades Oak Partnership will be hosting a field tour on October 25th in Mosier to look at Contrasting Wildfire and Prescribed Fire.**

## Service Center News

- TREE SALE INSERT IN THIS EDITION! New this year: order online at <https://wascoswcd.square.site> We will have a one-day pickup on March 18th from 9am-1pm.
- There is a new pot of money for the District Cost Share program, contact Abbie Forrest at 541-296-6178 x102 for more information.
- Josh Thompson has been promoted to Assistant District Manager. Tammy Tripp retired and Jennifer Sampson has been promoted to Office Administrator.
- The Service Center has been getting a makeover. Landscaping has been taking place outside, and the inside is getting a fresh coat of paint.

## 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 October 5th.

Wasco County Coordinating Board meeting will immediately follow.

## Splinters from the Board

**JUNE:** The Board met on June 1st. They convened the Budget Hearing and adopted the FY 2022-23 Budget. Two District Cost Share projects were approved and the board updated cost share rates for the fiscal year. The board received updates on the Fifteenmile Managed Underground Storage project, Mosier Wells & Tygh Valley Irrigation projects. They also heard updates from local partners and had a presentation from Alice Williamson from Oregon Agricultural Trust.

**JULY:** The July 6th meeting was the first of the new fiscal year. Three District Cost Share requests were approved for Haul Roads, as well as hiring a new Auditor, updating the credit card payment acceptance policy, and two staff promotions. There were updates on ongoing projects, partner updates, and Committee reports.

**AUGUST:** The board met Aug 31 due to a conflict with the Sept schedule. The board heard an update on the 15mile MUS Stakeholder Engagement project and decided to hold a board workshop to discuss next steps. The board approved the 2021-22 Annual Report, Six District Cost Share applications, and heard the usual updates from agency partners.



Irrigation Demo Project with funding provided through the District Cost Share Program

# Watershed Council Updates

The Fifteenmile Watershed Council will resume meeting again this fall after taking the summer off to focus on implementing projects within the watershed. Despite a strong start to the water year, the FAST program ended up issuing 7 days worth of water temperature alerts this season. The Mosier Watershed Council met on August 2nd for a short watershed council meeting followed by a summer get-together. The council will meet again this fall to continue discussing the outreach and implementation of the Mosier Million #2 project to fix and repair commingling wells within the watershed. The Dalles Watershed Council will resume meeting again this fall after taking the summer off. Much of the data that the council meets to discuss is collected during the summer, so generally much of that information is presented at the fall and winter meetings. Be on the lookout for E.coli and fish monitoring data on the agenda at the next few meetings. The Bakeoven Watershed Council met in March to work on plans for a grant application for rangeland restoration within the watershed. That grant was recommended for funding; the council plans on meeting again in November to create a plan for implementing projects funded by the grant. The White River Watershed Council plans on meeting again this November, which should give enough time for some of the major irrigation projects they've been working on over the summer to wrap up.



Photos from recent watershed council tour on Bakeoven



# Wildflower Talk

By Kristin Currin, Humble Roots Nursery

## Hairy Goldaster

*Heterotheca villosa*

Hairy goldaster is a late season bloomer that is exceptionally drought tolerant, blooming profusely in sunny, dry, rocky sites from summer into fall. Growing mainly east of the Cascade Mountains, its yellow flowers provide vital forage for butterflies and pollinators when most other plants have finished blooming. The hairiness of its foliage, a quality that helps it survive in harsh environments, gives it a silvery sheen and plants produce attractive mounding clumps. Finches and other seed-eating birds may be attracted to the copious amounts of seed this continuously blooming native perennial produces.



# Partner Updates

## Farm Service Agency (FSA)

County Committee nominees are Tim Morelli and Mary Ann Foreman. NAP deadline will be in November, and the LFP and ELAP deadlines are January 30th. ECP is available for the Miller Road Fire. The County Committee met most recently on September 13th. Contact the FSA office with any questions on program eligibility or deadlines.

## Wy'East RC&D

Wy'East hired Sara Sweetser as administrative assistant and Pat Davis to help move the e-tractors around the state. Michael Kluz from Wisconsin is a RARE Student who started work here on September 12th. Robert and Michael headed to Missoula on September 12th to do a presentation on the e-tractor program at the University of Montana for the Rural Electric Co-op. Robert has been working on various energy efficiency projects state-wide, and currently looking for match funds for the congressional directed funding that was designated for the e-tractor project.

## Natural Resource

## Conservation Service (NRCS)

EQIP application deadline: November 18th, 2022 (there will be only one sign up again). Funding available for establishing pollinator habitat, enhancing forest health and reducing forest fuels, as well as the Food Security Initiative which has a focus on small farms that are contributing directly to their local community. -The CSP application deadline is in April, but NRCS can accept applications throughout the year.



E-Tractor

## OSU Extension

OSU Small Farm School was held on September 12th, Clackamas Community College Small Farm School is a full day event with hands-on workshops and classroom sessions for beginning and experienced small-scale farmers and land stewards. More information and past presentations are posted online at: <https://blogs.oregonstate.edu/smallfarmschool/>  
OSU Online Fire Classes for Ag Producers Available on Demand  
The Agricultural Wildfire Behavior and Suppression course covers wildfire behavior in rangelands and field crops, along with wildfire suppression tactics and safety. Firefighting equipment to consider for the farm and ranch is also covered. Find out more at <https://beav.es/ibX>.  
The Wildfire Preparedness in Agriculture course focuses on creating emergency wildfire plans, defensible space, and considerations for reducing ignitions from farming equipment. Find out more at <https://beav.es/w92>. The class is online and on demand.

# The Garden Plot

By Shilah Olson, District Manager

Tammy Tripp has retired from the District following 26+ years of service. Tammy served as the Groundwork newsletter editor for much of her career, and she often penned the regular Garden Plot article. Her articles focused on a wide range of topics and were primarily geared for new or nontraditional landowners or backyard gardeners. Much of her inspiration came from the many years she spent as an OSU Master Gardener. Tammy was one of my key mentors when I started with the District and it didn't take long before she had me signed up to become a Master Gardener as well. I learned a great deal during the years that I participated in the program, and I still head straight for their library of resources whenever I have a plant pest or disease question, or really want to know anything relating to the art & science of growing and caring for plants. They have a wealth of info available, all for free! You can find them online at <https://extension.oregonstate.edu/mg>



Tammy Tripp, Garrett Duyck and Shilah Olson (2018)