



Annual Report

Greetings all, we hope this report finds you well. We here at the Hood River SWCD want to keep you updated on the activities of the last fiscal year, while also looking forward to exciting things happening in the next year.

This year has been full of changes. After 26 years together, the Hood River Watershed Group has recently formed their own, unique non-profit organization and we are no longer acting as their fiscal and employment sponsor. As we untangled the two organizations, we realized there is opportunity to focus more clearly on SWCD activities and programs while maintaining close ties with the Watershed Group. We hope this will lead to more services and opportunities we can provide to the community.

As is always the case, we work to serve you and

appreciate everyone who reached out to us this year. Our success comes from community members like you who value and steward the natural resources of Hood River County.

We will continue to work with local partners to implement projects and provide educational opportunities that benefit natural resources, promote water and soil conservation, and agricultural productivity. As always, we invite your feedback and look forward to working with you!



Thank you for your continued support!

Heather Hendrixson & Kris Schaedel



Orchard Air Blast Sprayer Calibration Training

On a snowy day in March, instructors from the Washington State Department of Agriculture came to Hood River to teach two, all day airblast sprayer calibration workshops in both Spanish and English. Participants got classroom and field experience in understanding the function and maintenance of sprayer parts, practical ways to calibrate equipment, configuring sprayers to plant height and canopy density, and evaluating equipment effectiveness by checking coverage in orchards. Calibrating sprayers allows for targeted and effective pesticide applications for better pest and disease control. It also reduces pesticide drift and mitigates the impacts of pesticides on the environment. There were over forty-five people who attended the workshops.

We will be offering this workshop again in both Spanish and English on March 14 and 15, 2023. Check our website: www.hoodriverswcd.org for updates and registration information.

HOOD RIVER SWCD

“To provide educational, technical, and financial assistance to our community for the protection, conservation, and restoration of natural resources.”

The Hood River Soil & Water Conservation District is a legal subdivision of state government and is governed by a locally elected, volunteer Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors meets on the first Thursday of each month from 4pm - 6pm. Meetings held in person at the OSU Extension conference room or via Zoom. Call ahead for accommodations.

Meetings are open to the public. For information or agendas, contact us by phone or email or stop by at 3007 Experiment Station Dr., Hood River. Office hours are Monday-Friday, from 8 am to 4 pm.

Directors
 Brian Nakamura, Chair, Zone 2
 Rick Ragan, Vice-Chair, At-Large 2
 Pete Siragusa, Secretary/Treasurer, Zone 1
 Ben Saur, Zone 3
 Andrew Halliday, At-Large 1

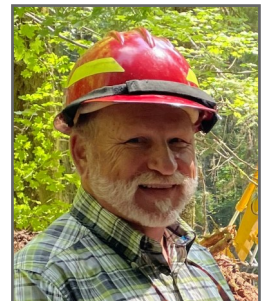
Associate Directors
 Chuck Gehling
 Larry Martin
 Richard Larson

SWCD Staff
 Heather Hendrixson, District Manager
 541-386-4588 heather@hoodriverswcd.org
 Kris Schaedel, Conservation Specialist
 541-386-4588 kris@hoodriverswcd.org

Financial Report	
Hood River Soil & Water Conservation District	
July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022	
<u>Beginning Fund Balance:</u>	<u>\$148,194</u>
<u>REVENUES:</u>	
Intergovernmental	
ODA grants	87,907
OWEB grants	285,791
Other grants	84,091
Contracts	
Irrigation District support	25,500
CTWS support	807,715
Miscellaneous	10,432
Tree sales	11,121
<u>TOTAL REVENUES:</u>	<u>\$1,312,556</u>
<u>EXPENDITURES:</u>	
Salaries and Benefits	225,903
Professional Fees	18,799
Materials and Services	31,302
Tree and Plant Sale	4,921
Projects	1,022,554
<u>TOTAL EXPENDITURES:</u>	<u>\$1,303,479</u>
<u>Ending Fund Balance:</u>	<u>\$157,272</u>

SWCD Board Member Moving On

Rick Ragan, longtime Hood River SWCD board member, is stepping down from the board in January. Rick joined the board in 2013 and was involved in the formation of the Watershed Group in 1990s. His local expertise in hydrology and assistance with both SWCD and HRWG programs has been invaluable. We will miss working with Rick as a board director and look forward to seeing him at events, volunteer activities, and on the mountain!



Technical Assistance Round-Up

The SWCD is a non-regulatory provider of financial and technical assistance. In the last year we fielded over 70 phone calls, went on 33 site visits, exchanged 97 emails, and followed up with over 100 technical guides and information for landowners and land managers. Topics covered everything from weeds, water, and irrigation, to oaks, pollinators, and livestock. Those calls and visits often led to projects – we wrote and received 10 grants. We also assisted over 200 people during our annual plant sale. We are always available to help county residents become better stewards of their land, free of charge. We look forward to hearing from you!



This year the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) secured funds for the East Fork Dukes Valley and Main Canal

branches for irrigation improvements. The East Fork Watershed Restoration Project secured additional funding for on-farm irrigation upgrades in the East Fork Irrigation District. Funds continued to be available for improving forest health, planting pollinator habitat, and removing smudge pots across Hood River County.

Looking forward to 2023, NRCS will have an opportunity for Middle Fork and Farmers Irrigation District patrons to apply for irrigation improvement funding. The pollinator/beneficial insect habitat funds and air quality funding pools will also still be available.

Last year...

- 54 smudge pot removal projects
- 7,434 feet of irrigation pipeline installed
- 140.8 acres of micro irrigation system installed
- 55.9 acres of irrigation water management applied
- 20 acres of cover crop planted
- 17.2 acres of forest improved
- 263 feet of hedgerow planted for pollinators

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funding is still available for many of these programs! Funding programs are anticipated to return in FY23 so stay tuned for further announcements.

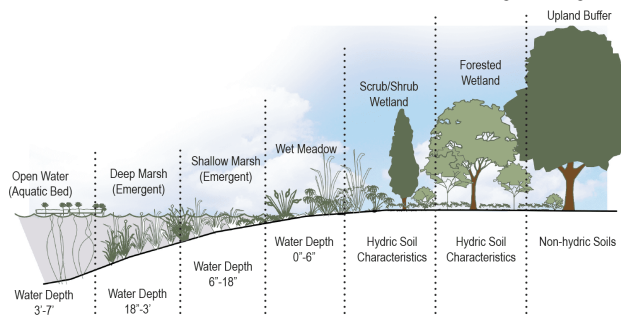
For more information on these and other programs, contact District Conservationist Carly Heron at 541-352-1037 (carly.heron@usda.gov) or visit www.or.nrcs.usda.gov.

OWEB Small Grants

The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board's Small Grant Program provides \$100,000 in Oregon Lottery funds to the Hood River team every two years. These funds are distributed in grant amounts up to \$15,000. Last year \$79,988 in small grant funds were used to upgrade 36.5 acres of orchard to more efficient irrigation systems and improve riparian areas in the Powerdale Corridor. Grant funds were matched by \$41,775 in local funding.



Eligible projects include irrigation system upgrades, streamside livestock fencing, manure storage facilities, riparian plantings, and other on-the-ground projects. Contact the SWCD for more information.



RIPARIAN PLANTINGS

Is there a stream or waterway running through your property? Is the riparian area sufficiently vegetated to be able to shade the water and intercept pollution entering the water from land nearby? If not, we have funds available to add vegetation to any waterway, no matter how small, with native plants.

The goal of establishing a vegetative buffer around waterways is to intercept any pesticides or sediments that may run-off or drift into waterways. The vegetation also provides shade to keep water temperatures cool.

We recently received funding from the Tri County Hazardous Waste Small Grant Program and the Oregon Department of Agriculture Pesticide Stewardship Program to implement riparian planting projects that are adjacent to orchards. We are matching these funds with contributions from the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board to offer pesticide BMP trainings and workshops to complement our efforts to reduce pesticides in our streams. The combination of providing education with on the ground restoration and monitoring streams for pesticides means we can show that these projects work.

Landowners in Hood River are already doing a great job keeping pesticides out of streams; this effort just expands on the good work already being done. Call us today to discuss your potential project!



Puncturevine Pulling Work Party at the Hood River Waterfront

On a warm, sunny morning in late August, 12 volunteers met with staff of the SWCD at the Hood River Waterfront to tackle a thorny issue...puncturevine! Puncturevine, also known as goat head, is a very invasive, low growing weed that does well in neglected fields and roadsides. Once you've stepped on one of its many spiny seeds, you will know it and want to get rid of it. We had so much fun and felt like we accomplished so much in a few hours that we plan to have more puncturevine pulling parties next summer. Join our mailing list to get an email and join in the fun!



Groundwater

The SWCD monitored groundwater levels through a partnership with Hood River County and the Oregon Water Resources Department. Groundwater levels in the Hood River Valley remain stable with small seasonal fluctuations. Long term data will be used for future modelling work to assess trends related to climate change and future groundwater development.



PARTNERSHIPS

The SWCD works closely with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs on a number of projects, including assisting with their annual fish monitoring. This fall, Kris assisted with several surveys along the West Fork Hood River and its tributaries. Surveyors looked for spawning salmon and redd nests and counted spawning salmon. Fall 2022 saw a banner number of spring chinook spawning high up in the watershed. What to look for in a redd – telltale shape and cleaner rocks. Avoid disturbing them or you might accidentally crush or smother the eggs!



Soil Moisture

Interested in learning about soil moisture monitoring? We have a donated electronic probe installed at the OSU field station and are happy to show you how it works and the real time soil moisture data that it gathers.

[Contact Kris for more info.](#)



Irrigation Assessment Grant Awarded

The Hood River SWCD was recently awarded \$78,000 from the Oregon Department of Agriculture for a project to assess the status of irrigation upgrades in Hood River County. Upgrading irrigation systems from outdated handlines and impact sprinklers to polytubing and microsprinklers has the potential to save up to 34 cfs of water a year. Identifying the status of sprinkler systems at the farm level will help us focus technical assistance and funding to reach basin-wide water conservation goals. Water conservation is a key action of the Hood River Basin Partnership’s 20 year strategic action plan (Watershed 2040) that we recently helped develop.



Are you tired of seeing our old logo? We are! SWCD is rebranding! For input on the new logo, send us a note or check the website in spring...

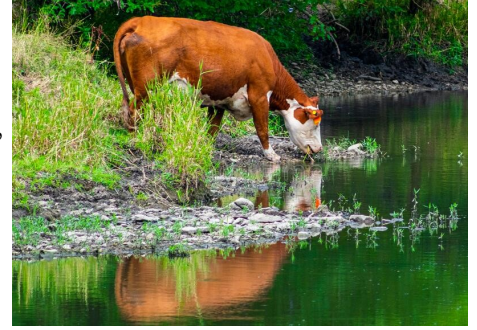
SWCD and Hood River Forest Collaborative Work to ‘Clear the Air’

The SWCD and Andrew Spaeth (Hood River Forest Collaborative) were awarded \$103,000 this year to help prepare communities for future wildfire events. Oregon Department of Environmental Quality’s (DEQ) “Alternatives to Burning” grant program was established in 2021 following the devastating wildfire season of 2020. The funds will support landowners in Hood River County remove woody debris from their property and create defensible space. Mount Adams Resource Stewards, a gorge-based non-profit, has chipped small branches, trees, and other woody debris for private landowners during six events this spring and fall. Mastication and chipping of forest thinning materials by Redtail Forestry, another Hood River contractor, occurred on 24 acres of Hood River National Forest lands and there are plans to move to county forest lands next. The grant also provided orchardists in Hood River County options to get rid of orchard waste using an air curtain incinerator (ACI). Valley Environmental out of Canby OR owns and operates the ACI under permit from DEQ. ACIs efficiently burn wood waste, reduce emissions and particulate matter and create bio-char. To date, orchard waste from over 100 acres has been cleanly burned in an ACI. This “all-lands, all-hands” approach will result in key partners and landowners implementing alternatives to burning and addressing hazardous fuels in Hood River County. Reducing emissions from open burning will result in an estimated savings of one ton of particulate matter emissions, clearing the air in our community.



Agricultural Water Quality Update

The Oregon Department of Agriculture's (ODA) Agricultural Water Quality Program focuses on voluntary and cooperative efforts by landowners to protect water quality. The Area Plan and Rules are reviewed and updated every two years; we will be updating in person on January 4, 2023. The Plan describes desired conditions on ag land and details the Best Management Practices that landowners can use to prevent water pollution. To view the 2020 version of the plan and rules on our website visit www.hoodriverswcd.org/resources. We are always looking for local residents to assist with the review and updates. Contact us if you would like to be involved in the update coming up on January 4th – lunch is on us!



Pesticide Stewardship Partnership

This year marked the 23rd year of working with landowners to monitor and reduce pesticide levels in local waterways through the Pesticide Stewardship Partnership (PSP). PSPs identify potential concerns and improve water quality affected by pesticide use. PSPs combine local expertise and water quality sampling results to encourage voluntary changes in pesticide use and management with the goal of making our waters safer for aquatic life and humans. Data can now be viewed online with the Department of Environmental Quality's online data viewer

([Pesticide Stewardship Partnership \(state.or.us\)](http://PesticideStewardshipPartnership.state.or.us)). The data viewer provides access to current and historic pesticide data. The PSP program in Hood River highlights the benefits and successes of good pesticide practices by landowners. Anyone interested in non-regulatory pesticide reduction work in Hood River is welcome to join a meeting. Contact the SWCD for more information!



Check out this OPB article and radio story about the Oregon PSP program, featuring SWCD Board Chair Brian Nakamura and Conservation Specialist Kris Schaedel - [Which pesticides are polluting Oregon streams? New site shares state findings - OPB](#)

Partners we would like to recognize for their years of collaboration:

- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- OSU Mid Columbia Agricultural Research and Extension Center
- Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs
- Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
- Oregon Department of Agriculture
- Hood River Watershed Group
- OSU Central Gorge Master Gardeners
- Columbia Gorge Cooperative Weed Management Area
- Hood River Forest Collaborative
- Columbia Land Trust
- Oregon Department of State Lands
- Hood River County
- US Forest Service
- Oregon Department of Water Resources
- Oregon Association of Conservation Districts
- National Association of Conservation Districts



GARLIC MUSTARD

You may be growing wearisome reading about our efforts to eradicate garlic mustard year after year. You may not have to endure or much longer because the end is hopefully in sight!

2022 marks the 12th year of garlic mustard abatement work. Garlic Mustard was discovered throughout a Parkdale orchard



in 2010. At one point in time the infestation was so extensive we could only control the perimeter to prevent further spread. But after years of committed, diligent work by the SWCD, Oregon Department of Agriculture, the US Forest Service, contracted hand-pulling crews, and landowners, we are now treating the infestation in its entirety. This marks the second year we have pulled *every* known plant in Hood River County, thus preventing any plants from setting seed.

Garlic mustard seeds can be viable in the soil for up to 8 years; therefore, in six more years we can switch into monitoring mode. Garlic mustard is a prolific herbaceous plant that spreads by seed and turns diverse wild landscapes into monocultures, threatening the diversity and beauty of the place we call home! This plant is widespread just west of here in Multnomah

County, so we need everyone to keep an eye out for this burdensome weed!

Watch for our annual **Weed of the Month** educational project in the newspaper and on our website. This is designed to help residents identify common noxious weeds and provide info on how to get rid of them!

PLANT SALE PLANT SALE PLANT SALE PLANT SALE PLANT SALE PLANT SALE

We will again be hosting the SWCD annual **Native Plant Sale** in Spring, 2023. Orders will be taken online beginning [December 1st](#) - check out our website www.hooddriverswcd.org for species information, availability, and planting tips. Pre-ordering ensures availability, but this year we will be offering all our plants for sale on pick-up days as well - Friday March 31st and Saturday April 1st.

We are always happy to provide you with technical assistance when selecting plants or planning your planting project so please reach out anytime.

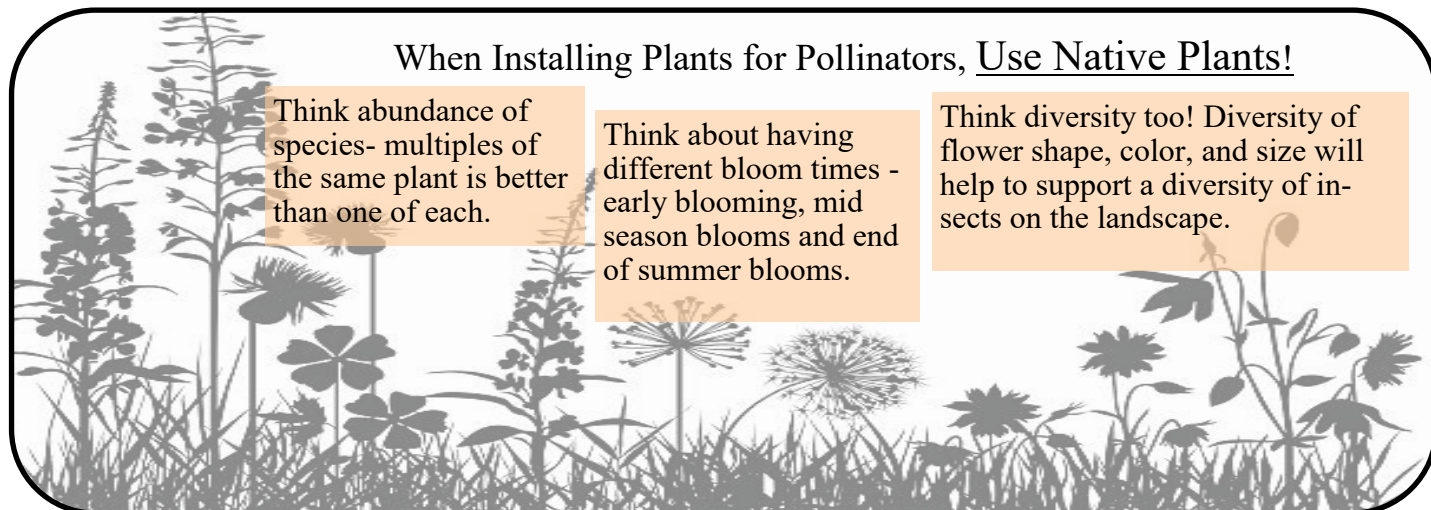
PLANT SALE PLANT SALE PLANT SALE PLANT SALE PLANT SALE PLANT SALE

When Installing Plants for Pollinators, Use Native Plants!

Think abundance of species- multiples of the same plant is better than one of each.

Think about having different bloom times - early blooming, mid season blooms and end of summer blooms.

Think diversity too! Diversity of flower shape, color, and size will help to support a diversity of insects on the landscape.





Hood River Soil & Water CONSERVATION DISTRICT

3007 Experiment Station Rd.
Hood River, OR 97031

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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Native Plant Sale Now with Online



Need ideas of what to plant this spring? Give us a call, we are happy to help you select species suitable for your site!

Order yours online—we are now accepting credit cards!

**Order in
December**

Ordering!



- Doug Fir
- Grand Fir
- Noble Fir
- Western Red Cedar
- Ponderosa Pine
- Western Hemlock
- Giant Sequoia
- Western Larch
- White Pine
- Vine Maple
- Quaking Aspen
- Beaked Hazelnut
- Showy Milkweed
- Common Camas
- Tall Oregon Grape
- Redstem Ceanothus
- Woods Rose
- Snowberry
- Douglas Spirea
- Twinberry
- Mock Orange
- Oceanspray
- Osoberry
- Red Osier Dogwood
- Serviceberry
- Red Flowering Currant
- Pacific Ninebark
- Golden Currant
- American Cranberry
- Smooth Sumac
- Salmonberry
- Thimbleberry
- Kinnikinnick
- Salal
- Sword Fern

Check out www.hoodriverswcd.org
To place your order and get more info!

Orders will be available for pick up
March 31 & April 1, 2023