

# Rural Living in Polk County

**A Handbook for Country Living and Land Stewardship**

**Prepared and Distributed by  
Polk Soil and Water Conservation District**



# Polk County Resource Directory

## **Polk Soil and Water Conservation District**

[www.polkswcd.com](http://www.polkswcd.com).....503-623-9680

## **United States Agencies**

### *Natural Resources Conservation Service*

[www.or.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.or.nrcs.usda.gov).....503-837-3693

### *USDA Farm Service Agency*

[www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).....971-273-4801

### *US Forest Service*

[www.fs.fed.us](http://www.fs.fed.us).....541-750-7000

## **Department of the Interior**

### *Bureau of Land Management, Salem District*

[www.blm.gov](http://www.blm.gov).....503-375-5646

### *US Fish & Wildlife Service*

[www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov).....503-623-2749

## **Polk County Departments**

[www.co.polk.or.us](http://www.co.polk.or.us)

*Community Development*.....503-623-9237

*Fairgrounds*.....503-623-3048

*Public Works*.....503-623-9287

*Public Health*.....503-623-8175

*Sheriff and Animal Control*.....503-623-9251

## **Oregon State Agencies**

### *Department of Agriculture -*

#### *Natural Resources Division*

[www.oregon.gov/ODA](http://www.oregon.gov/ODA).....503-986-4700

#### *OSU Extension*

[www.Extension.oregonstate.edu](http://www.Extension.oregonstate.edu).....503-623-8395

#### *Department of Environmental Quality*

[www.oregon.gov/deq](http://www.oregon.gov/deq).....503-229-5696

#### *Department of Fish and Wildlife*

[www.dfw.state.or.us](http://www.dfw.state.or.us).....541-757-4186

#### *Department of Forestry*

[www.oregon.gov/ODF](http://www.oregon.gov/ODF).....503-623-8146

#### *Department of Transportation*

[www.oregon.gov/ODOT](http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT).....888-275-6368

#### *Water Resources Department*

[www.wrd.state.or.us](http://www.wrd.state.or.us).....503-986-0889

## **Watershed Councils**

*Luckiamute* ([www.luckiamutelwc.org](http://www.luckiamutelwc.org))...503-837-0237

*Rickreall* ([rickreallwc.org](http://rickreallwc.org)).....503-623-9680 x 104

*Glenn-Gibson*.....503-623-9680 x 104

*Yamhill Basin* ([www.gywc.com](http://www.gywc.com)).....503-474-1047

*Spring Valley*.....503-371-6552

## **Disposal/Recycling**

*Republic Services* ([www.disposal.com](http://www.disposal.com))..503-623-2552

*Brandt's Sanitary Service*.....503-838-0464

*Valley Recycling and Disposal*.....503-585-4300

## **Polk County Fire Departments**

In case of emergency **DIAL 911**

*Dallas & SW Polk Rural Fire District*....503-831-3533

*Falls City*.....503-787-3767

*Independence, Monmouth, Pedee, Buena Vista,*

*Airlie & surrounding areas*.....503-838-1510

[www.polk1.org](http://www.polk1.org)

## **Cities**

*Dallas* ([www.ci.dallas.or.us](http://www.ci.dallas.or.us)).....503-623-2338

*Monmouth* ([www.ci.monmouth.or.us](http://www.ci.monmouth.or.us))...503-838-0722

*Falls City* ([www.fallscityoregon.gov](http://www.fallscityoregon.gov))....503-787-3631

*Independence*.....503-838-1212

([www.ci.independence.or.us](http://www.ci.independence.or.us))

*Salem* ([www.cityofsalem.net](http://www.cityofsalem.net)).....503-588-6255

## **Other**

*Polk County Historical Society*.....503-623-6251

[www.polkcountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.polkcountyhistoricalsociety.org)

*North Willamette Research and Extension Center*

[www.oregonstate.edu/dept/NWREC](http://www.oregonstate.edu/dept/NWREC)....503-678-1264

*Call Before you Dig*.....811 or 503-332-2344

[www.digsafelyoregon.com](http://www.digsafelyoregon.com)

*Prepared and distributed by:*



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## Disclaimer

The material in this handbook is presented by the Polk Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and other contributors as a convenient reference. **The book is not intended to provide legal advice and should not substitute for specific technical advice from county, state, or federal agencies.** Neither the Polk SWCD nor its members make any express or implied warranties in regard to the accuracy or use of the material presented.

*Polk SWCD is an equal opportunity provider and employer and prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information should contact the district office at 503-623-9680.*

# Introduction

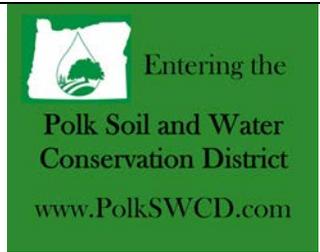
One of the great joys of living in the Willamette Valley is the predominately rural character of the communities. The fields, orchards, wildlife habitats, and timbered lands all exist within easy reach of urban centers and well-developed small towns. This closeness to nature attracts many people to the Willamette Valley, but it also creates some unique issues for landowners.

This document is only a point of beginning to get the most from your land. The issues to be considered in owning land can range from construction and engineering, to business practices, animal care and management, and government regulations. Many questions that may arise are complex, and individual situations often require interpretation and unique solutions. Sources of information listed at the end of some sections may help direct your questions to the correct agencies or businesses.

Stewardship of the land and its resources is an important aspect of rural life. This handbook has been prepared so landowners have an easy way of identifying subjects they need to address in using their land. This book provides easy access to sources of additional information, however laws and regulations can change at any time. It is your responsibility to ensure you are up to date with laws and regulations. Contact appropriate agencies for up-to-date information.

Use this handbook as a resource in determining if rural life is for you or before making land use decisions on your property. The **Polk Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)** helps landowners identify the questions they need to ask and where to start asking, so life in the Willamette Valley is as enjoyable and rewarding as possible. Every county in Oregon has a Soil and Water Conservation District, so if you are outside Polk County and have any questions or comments, contact your local SWCD office.

**Throughout the book important contact information and links will be in blue.**



## Polk Soil and Water Conservation District



POLK SOIL & WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Nearly 3,000 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) across the United States are helping local people conserve land, water, forest, wildlife, and related natural resources. SWCDs are charged with directing programs to protect local renewable natural resources. Polk SWCD was formed in April 1966 and promotes erosion control, reduction of invasive species, improvements to farms and forests, control of animal waste, as well as improving wildlife habitat and water quality/quantity issues in Polk County. The Polk SWCD is administered by 7 locally elected volunteer directors representing 5 zones and 2 at-large positions within the county. District goals, activities, and programs are set forth in the Polk SWCD Annual Work Plan. The SWCD is funded by tax revenue, grants, fundraising, and contributions from the county, state, and private sources. The Polk SWCD is a source of information and education on natural resources. The SWCD provides:

- **Technical assistance** - For land management, conservation practices, plant assistance, soil and water information, invasive controls, improvements to wildlife habitat and water quality, and conserving and restoring Polk County's natural resources.
- **Funding opportunities** - For landowners in the form of grants, programs, and coordinated efforts with other agencies that assist with improvements to farms, forests, and habitat restoration.

**The SWCD hosts a number of workshops and events throughout the community.**

**Contact the Polk SWCD with questions relating to natural resources at**

**503-623-9680 or [www.polkswcd.com](http://www.polkswcd.com)**

# Polk County

## County History



Polk County was officially created from the Yamhill District of the Oregon Territory, on December 22, 1845. The county

was named after President James Knox Polk and originally included the entire southwestern portion of present day Oregon to the Californian border. Polk County today contains 745 square miles and stretches from the Willamette River on the east to the Coast Range on the west. It is bordered by Yamhill, Lincoln, Benton, and Marion Counties. The historic Applegate Trail was created decades before pioneers came to Oregon by trappers who passed through the oak groves and grassy plains of the future Polk County in search of beaver for pelts. The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Community was established in 1856, as local Native American tribes were forced to resettle there by the U.S. Government. By the 1860's, during the period of pioneer settlement, various small industries emerged including grist mills, woolen mills, saw mills, flour mills, a tannery, a fanning mill factory and several machine shops. After pioneer settlement, grains, cattle, sheep, prunes and hops were among the important rural industries. During these times river navigation was the principal means of transport for goods, later displaced by railroads. For a more in depth history of Polk County, please visit the Polk County Museum, or check out the county and tribal websites at [www.co.polk.or.us](http://www.co.polk.or.us) and [www.grandronde.org](http://www.grandronde.org).

## Polk County Board of Commissioners

The Polk County Board of Commissioners makes public policy and manages county affairs in an open and efficient manner. The Commissioners' job is to manage county assets responsibly to enhance their value and benefit to citizens, to oversee county planning and permits, and provide essential and mandated county programs in accordance with the wishes of Polk County citizens. The Commissioners meet every Tuesday at 9 a.m. and every Wednesday at 9 a.m. in the Polk County Courthouse. This is the opportune time to voice your input on current activities in the county.

### **Polk County Courthouse**

**850 Main Street**

**Dallas, OR 97338**

**503-623-8173**

**[www.co.polk.or.us/BOC](http://www.co.polk.or.us/BOC)**

## Polk County Facts

The major industries of the county are agriculture, forest products, manufacturing, and education. The county's major university, Western Oregon University, is located in Monmouth. Some other points of interest are the covered bridges, historic courthouse, Basket Slough Wildlife Refuge, wineries, National Historic Trails (California and Applegate), Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Headquarters, and Spirit Mountain Casino.



**AG WEST**  
SUPPLY



**HARRISBURG**

**RICKREALL**

**WOODBURN**

**HILLSBORO**

**MADRAS**

# Polk County

## Historical Society

The Polk County Historical Society (PCHS) was formed in 1959. It is an all volunteer organization operating with donated funds, grants, membership dues, fundraisers, and museum admission fees.

### **Polk County Museum**

The Polk County Museum has a unique collection of historic maps, exhibits of agriculture, logging, the Kalapuya tribe, historic town sites of Polk County, and more. The museum is 14,000 square feet of remarkable displays and artifacts. It also offers a large library of historical information and photographs.

### **The Brunk House**

The Historic Brunk House is an 1861 farmstead listed in the National Register of Historic Sites in 1975. It was designated a Century Farm in 1959. Currently PCHS maintains the house and grounds with the assistance of the Master Gardeners Program.

**For more Polk County history  
check out the PCHS website at  
[www.polkcountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.polkcountyhistoricalsociety.org)  
503-623-6251**

## County Fair

Fairs developed for the purpose of exchanging goods, information, and making social contacts. Agriculture being extremely important to Oregon, territory settlers founded local agricultural societies to discuss farming practices and resources. Fairs have been an integral part of Oregon culture since 1854.

The Polk County Fair began in 1913 by selling stock for \$1 each to build the fairgrounds. The Polk County Fairgrounds is dedicated to the idea of providing the general public and the local community with the space, buildings, and equipment needed to engage in events that promote fun, learning and social activity, especially where children can benefit.

The fair is held in early August each year. The fairgrounds are located in Rickreall. Every fair has a variety of events and competitions including agricultural, 4-H showing and auctions, art, crafts, flowers, foods, poetry, photography, hobby, and textiles. There are also several booths featuring information or products for fairgoers to enjoy.

**For more info on the Polk County Fair visit at  
[www.co.polk.or.us/Fair](http://www.co.polk.or.us/Fair).**



## **Polk County Fairgrounds & Event Center**

520 S. Pacific Hwy • Rickreall, OR  
503-623-3048

**Polk Co. Fair ~ August 10 - 12, 2017  
“Moo at the Moon”**

**Yearly Events:** Craft Shows, Quilt Show, Gem & Mineral Show, Gun Shows, Auto Swap Meet, 4-H Horse Show, Polk Home & Garden Show, Holiday Fair, RV Rallies, Winter AgFest.

*The fairgrounds facility is also rented out for private use: Meetings, Weddings, Birthday Parties, Anniversaries, Reunions, Dances, Memorial Services, Tool Sales, and Storage. Call to reserve your event today.*

# Is Rural Living for You?

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Living in the country can be a wonderful and rewarding experience, but encountering the unexpected can be disheartening. Below are some issues you can potentially encounter.

- You discover that you don't have access to the irrigation water that runs through your land.
- You lose a pet or livestock to a predator.
- You are responsible for a fire that starts on your land and spreads to other properties.
- The deer eat everything you have just planted.
- There is no garbage service where you live.
- You are responsible for the quality of the water that leaves your land.
- You are surprised at the cost of building structures needed to protect livestock from predators.
- You don't have enough time or energy to mow fields, maintain fences, spray weeds, feed livestock, deal with muddy facilities, doctor sick animals, or vaccinate healthy animals.
- Your domestic or agricultural water source dries up.
- Minerals or pollutants enter your well.
- It takes more time and money to drive to town than you ever expected.
- It takes a lot of time to learn about and maintain domestic wells and pumps, sewer systems, irrigation pumps, ditches, hand lines, etc.
- You discover that the access road to your property is not publicly maintained and it is your responsibility to maintain it.
- You learn that the forested land next to yours will be logged.
- Your neighbor applies pesticide that drift onto your land.
- You discover that there are laws regulating what you can and cannot do with your land.



## Polk County Zones

This section provides a very brief description of broad zone types in Polk County. For more specific information on zoning ordinances in Polk County check out the county website at:

[www.co.polk.or.us/cd](http://www.co.polk.or.us/cd) or call the **Community Development office at 503-623-9237**.

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Every piece of property is zoned. There are many different zoning districts in Polk County, each with a list of permitted and conditional uses that outline how the property can be developed. Information on zoning can be found at [www.co.polk.or.us](http://www.co.polk.or.us).

As a landowner you should become familiar with the rules of any zones relevant to your property. Make sure any property you are interested in will support what you want to do. For example, if you want to build a house on a property you would not want to buy a property zoned commercial because you may be unable to build a residence.

There are many types of zones. Some of the more common general zones are listed below with a basic description of their use. **See inside back cover for map.**

- **Exclusive Farm Use** - zoned agricultural land for farming and conservation of agriculture.
- **Farm/Forest** - mixed use for farming and forestry.
- **Timber Conservation** - used for forestry and timber production.
- **Commercial** - zoned for businesses.
- **Industrial** - used for operations such as factories and mills.
- **Residential** - zoned for living quarters.
- **Public Areas** - such as parks and common areas that are open to the public.
- **Resource Areas Overlay Zone** - ecologically and scientifically significant natural areas, protects wildlife habitat, restricts building and development.

# Buying Country Property

Living in the country can be very satisfying. Whether you raise crops and livestock or just enjoy cleaner air, open space, and solitude, this section offers some tips to help first time rural property buyers, or those new to the Willamette Valley, with their acquisition plan.

*\*See page 39 for different financing options\**

Before buying country property understand your expectations of rural living. If you have not lived in the country, you might try renting before investing in a piece of land. What do you want and need from your land?

If working with a realtor, be sure they are familiar with land use restrictions, aware of water problems, and know where to get answers to your questions. Many rural buyers find it helpful to hire an attorney who is an expert on rural property sales to represent them in the closing process.

## Water and Septic

Unlike city property with water and sewage connections, you will need to know if there is a reliable water source and rights for home use and farm irrigation. If a well is present, it should be professionally tested for purity and adequate flow. If there is no well, it may make sense to make the sale of the property contingent on successfully drilling a well. It may be less expensive to pay for a dry well than to buy the property and find out there is inadequate water. Who pays for the tests can be negotiable. If there is a septic system, it should be professionally tested to assure it works. For a new septic system, percolation tests should be done professionally (administered by the county) before buying to assure approval.

## Power

Power hook-ups can be expensive in the country. If you are on a tight budget, check your options prior to making an offer on the property. Some people try the "off-the-grid" option and generate their own power. For information check [www.homepower.com](http://www.homepower.com).

## Challenges

Understand land use rules that apply to the parcel you are considering and others in the vicinity. Rules can change. Some properties can be sub-divided, agricultural lands often use pesticides, forests can be logged, and farm animals or equipment could produce noise or odors at any hour.

Check and understand **easements** that pertain to the property. Utility and access easements allow others some legal use of your property. Not all rural property has been recently surveyed, so fences and driveways that appear to be on a parcel may not be. If this is important to you, **make the sale closure subject to the completion of a survey that satisfies your understanding of the boundaries**. If you find the driveway is not on the property, you may want sale closure dependent on securing an easement from the legal owner. Have the current owner walk the property line with you and show the corner survey markers. Country living often requires cooperation between neighbors, so try to meet them and get their take on the neighborhood before buying.

Look at what equipment is needed to maintain the property if the current use is similar to what yours will be. The seller may be willing to include equipment in the sale. If a property does not have a satisfactory home, be sure you will be allowed to build a new one or remodel the old one.

## Polk County Community Development

850 Main Street  
Dallas, OR 97338  
503-623-9237

<http://www.co.polk.or.us/cd>

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Web: [www.yolandazuger.com](http://www.yolandazuger.com)



Windermere/Western View Properties 484 NE Bovard Rd., Dallas, OR 503-623-2333

# Planning and Building

Check with your local county offices to find permit information specific to your location and desired projects. **Always call 811 before you dig!** Oregon has a statewide land use planning program, established by state law and implemented at the county level. Each county maintains a Comprehensive Plan and a Zoning Ordinance. While administered at the county level through local land use plans, statewide goals are set by law and administered by the Department of Land Conservation and Development.

You can obtain information such as prior building, zoning, septic permits issued, sales information, plat maps and tax assessment records, maps of your property with overlays (zoning, flood plain, soils, aerial views, etc.), and many other useful tools online at [www.co.polk.or.us](http://www.co.polk.or.us). If you do not have access to the internet in your home, local libraries often provide free internet workstations for public use.

All proposed buildings on your property must be reviewed and approved by the County Planning Division. Depending on the size and use of a structure you may need a building permit. Submit complete and accurate application information for timely processing. You will also need to submit an accurate to-scale plot plan showing your proposal. Include all existing structures, septic drain field and tank, well, and any proposed new structure or addition with distances to property lines.

## Fire Safety and Fuel Breaks

A 100 foot fuel break may be required around each structure on your property in fire hazard areas. Consider access standards for driveways, address signs, and steep slopes in planning for fire safety.

## Overlays

Overlays are areas of special concern such as wetlands, vernal pools, floodplains, airport approaches, wildlife habitat, city Urban Growth Boundaries, and more. Plan for additional time to acquire permits through planning or other agencies if you propose to develop in or near these overlays.

## Access

For development purposes, parcels must have legal access in accordance with requirements in effect at the time the parcel was created. Practical physical access to the development site must be possible.

## Setbacks

Structures must comply with the standard structural setbacks for the zone in which it is located. Additional setbacks may be required if the property is adjacent to or near a Resource Zone Boundary or in a designated Fire Hazard Area.

## Lawful Parcel Creation

To be developed, a parcel must have been lawfully established. Existing structures also must have been properly permitted if further development is to be allowed. Once the Planning Division has authorized your proposal, you may apply for your building, electrical, plumbing, and sanitation permits.



The major components involved in a farm enterprise decision and how these factors interact with each other.  
*Illustration: Chrissy Lucas, © Oregon State University*

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720 NW 4th Street, Corvallis, OR 97330  
541-757-9050

# Resource Management Plans

There is a lot to know about owning and managing land and you'll need to know even more if you're raising livestock. With a little time, knowledge, and a modest amount of money, you can have a place in the country you can be proud of, while protecting the Willamette Valley's natural resources.

## Management Plans

A Management Plan is the first step to successful land and natural resource management. It is easy to design, starting by simply spending time on the property you propose to buy, looking around, making a sketch and taking notes on property features such as boundaries, fences, corrals, pastures, buildings, wells, septic system, water sources, bare ground, roads, driveways, soil types, cropland, weeds, trees, shrubs, lawns, gardens, land uses, and topography.

Next, define your management objectives. Determine your goals. Visualize how the land will be used and then how it should look. Decide what is important, what to avoid, and what you want from the resources on your property. A management plan will address the objectives that you outline and define. Plan for short, medium, and long term goals to be met.

Remember to be aware of how the plan fits in with other land uses in the neighborhood. Even if your plan does not make many alterations to the existing use of the land, you will need to plan to keep weeds from becoming too invasive. Know that doing nothing is also a plan, and 'leaving it to nature' will result in severe infestations of invasive species which are harmful to the environment, reduce or eliminate wildlife habitat, and are problematic to neighbors. *Land must be managed in some way, even if it isn't for human use.*

## Help Developing Your Management Plan

Your local Soil and Water Conservation District and the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) have staff that can assist you in developing forestry, range, farm, wildlife, and wetland management plans. In addition, NRCS administers a number of cost share programs to provide assistance with irrigation system improvements, wildlife habitat restoration, and forest stand improvements.

## Types of Plans

**CSP - Conservation Stewardship Program** helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority concerns.

## Types of Plans (continued)

**CREP - Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program** is a land set-aside program that helps agricultural producers protect environmentally sensitive land along streams and wetlands to decrease erosion, restore wildlife habitat, and safeguard ground and surface water. CREP is administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), with SWCD & NRCS staff providing conservation planning.

**EQIP - Environmental Quality Incentive Program** provides financial and technical assistance for conservation practices to solve natural resource concerns on working agricultural lands.

**CRP - Conservation Reserve Program** provides technical and financial assistance to eligible farmers and ranchers to address soil, water, and related natural resource concerns on their lands in an environmentally beneficial and cost-effective manner. CRP is administered by the FSA, with NRCS providing conservation planning.

**RCPP - Regional Conservation Partnership Program** in Polk County aims to protect, conserve and restore endangered upland oak habitat in the northern Willamette Valley. The program will also implement long-term land conservation strategies to further protect short-term investments, such as land acquisitions and conservation easements.

**WRE - Wetland Reserve Easement** is a land easement program helping people restore, enhance, and protect wetlands.

### USDA Service Center

**The Polk Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)** is housed in the USDA Service Center in Polk County with the **Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)**, which can assist landowners with information and/or programs relating to natural resources, conservation, and agriculture.

**580 Main Street Suite A, Dallas, OR 97338**  
Please drop-in or call **503-623-3693** for more information about the NRCS and its programs.

# Living on Rural Roads

Landowners accept the presence of roads which border their property as part of a community transportation system. The design of private roads must consider emergency vehicle access, water management practices (erosion control), and connections to existing roads. Counties issue a permit for new private road and driveway access that connect to county roads. Permit applications outline the requirements for access and culvert designs.

**Maintenance on rural roads is often the responsibility of landowners.** Road crews will be out during inclement times and quickly act on calls of hazardous situations. Please respect flaggers, temporary cautionary signage, and flashing warning beacons.

## Rain

Road crews regularly clean roadside ditches and clear the ends of culverts. During heavy rain, culverts can be plugged by debris or overwhelmed by water causing water to flow across the road or accumulate in the road. When driving during heavy rain, decrease your speed and be cautious of water in the road. If you have a driveway with a culvert, clean the ends prior to the rainy season to prevent the possible loss of your driveway. On paved roads, an accumulation of dust, oils and film can cause a slippery road when the first rains occur after any dry period of time.

## Snow and Ice

Road crews will respond 24/7 if storm conditions are persistent. The main roads are treated for traction during icy weather. The valley doesn't generally get enough snow to warrant plowing. At times of heavy snow, resources are stretched. During snowstorms, it is recommended to use or at least carry traction devices if travel is a must, but to stay off roads all together if possible.

## Wind

County road crews or contractors remove dead and dying trees, trim trees, and clear brush along roadways to maintain sight lines, horizontal and vertical clearance, and reduce fire danger. Heavy wind can loosen and knock down limbs or entire trees onto the roadway. Be cautious while driving in heavy wind, especially at night.

## Gravel Roads

County road crews grade, rock, and perform maintenance activities on gravel roads. Minimally, they grade in the fall after adequate rains, throughout the winter, and into the spring prior to the dry season. They may add more material if required to get a smooth even surface. **On some roads the landowner is responsible for maintenance.**

Gravel roads can be hazardous. They usually do not have posted speed limits and are designed for slower speeds. Driving gravel roads requires a high degree of attention and respect for others traveling and living along the road. Many gravel roads don't have marked centerlines though most will have enough width for two vehicles to travel safely. Drivers tend to crowd the center of the road resulting in loose rock along the sides of the road which can be hazardous. Please slow down when you approach pedestrians, wildlife, equestrians, cars, and road crews.

Gravel roads are dusty. The County applies a dust control material to some gravel roads and will arrange to apply the material to other roads under a shared cost arrangement.

### Polk County Public Works

820 SW Ash Street, Dallas, OR 97338

503-623-9287

<http://www.co.polk.or.us/pw>

**YOUR POLK COUNTY REAL ESTATE SOURCE**

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# Being Neighborly

Though the importance of neighbors is heightened in rural areas, it can often present unique circumstances. Get to know your neighborhood before you move to an area. Conflicts, both real and perceived, between new and existing rural landowners have always existed. By getting a better understanding of the causes of these conflicts, some may be avoided.

---

## Advice on Being a Good Neighbor

- Recognize that being neighbors is a two way street and that it is important to respect your neighbors' endeavors.
- Cooperatively build and maintain boundary fences to keep livestock from trespassing. Keeping livestock off of private and public property is the responsibility of the livestock owner, not the property owner.
- Polk County is a livestock control district, meaning there is no open range.
- Realize that moving livestock and farm machinery on country roads is necessary. Be cautious and prepare for delay.
- Control your dogs so that they will not harass or harm your neighbors' livestock or enflame tensions.
- Understand that some practices, such as burning along irrigation ditches and running machinery after dark are common farming practices and are necessary at certain times of the year.
- Prevent noxious weeds from moving from your property to your neighbors' land via wind, water, animals, equipment or other means.
- Always know whose land you are on. Ask permission to be on someone's property.
- Keep in mind that people who live in rural areas prize their privacy and their space.

## Fences

Fences and property lines are potential sites of conflict. Working with your neighbors to maintain these areas is a great opportunity to improve relationships. **It is the duty of each landowner sharing a fence to maintain half the existing fence and equally share in constructing a new fence.** Properly maintained fences are important for the protection of livestock, domestic animals, and wildlife, and to prevent entanglement, injury and/or death.

**Fences do not always indicate property lines; know where your boundaries are!**

## Dogs and Cats

Polk County is a dog control district. Dogs must be under control and on your property at all times. Free roaming dogs are a threat to livestock and wildlife. Farmers and ranchers have the right to protect their livestock and in some cases will destroy animals that threaten their livestock. If your dog is responsible for the injury or death to livestock you will be held financially responsible and your pet may be euthanized. It is also your responsibility to license and vaccinate your dogs against rabies. Your pet should have a collar, be licensed, and have identification tags.

For information on pet regulations call:

**Polk County Animal Control**  
**503-623-9251**

<http://www.co.polk.or.us/sheriff/doganimal-control>

**Willamette Valley Humane Society**  
**503-485-5900**  
<https://whs4pets.org>

## USDA's Certified Agricultural Mediation Program

The Oregon USDA Certified Agricultural Mediation Program (OCAMP) is the official United States Department of Agriculture certified agricultural mediation program for Oregon. **OCAMP's services are free to the agricultural community** on many issues. Mediation is a way to resolve disputes using an impartial person to assist parties to negotiate their differences. OCAMP can provide an opportunity for you to meet face to face and discuss your situation, the circumstances that led to the conflict and any ideas you would like to explore for solutions.

Request mediation in one of three ways:

- Mail: PO Box 1594 Hood River, OR 97031
- Email: [office@6rivers.org](mailto:office@6rivers.org)
- Phone: 888-628-4101

**For more information visit:**  
<http://www.6rivers.org/oregon-agricultural-mediation-program.html>

# Soils

The Willamette Valley has a wide variety of soil types. When purchasing a property you should have an idea of what your goals are to determine if a property is suited to your needs. A soil test is essential for determining soil type and fertility on your rural property.

## Soil Basics

Soils are developed over geological time. Climate, water, temperature, and parent materials such as bedrock, volcanic ash, and glacial outwash all contribute to soil creation. It can take 500 years for natural processes to create one inch of top soil. Without productive soils we would not be able to grow plants which provide us with food, medicine, products, and wildlife habitat.

- Soils are susceptible to erosion when not adequately protected.
- Soils have different textures including silts, sands, and clays.
- The depth of the soil to bedrock or the water table is often a factor that determines land use.
- Steepness or position on the landscape affects soil stability and sustainability.

These characteristics, and how they affect the potential productivity of a soil, are outlined in a document called a **soil survey**. Consulting your soil survey is a great place to start when you want to know the general properties of the soils comprising your land.

Find information about soils on your property with the online resource NRCS Web Soil Survey (WSS). WSS provides soil data and information produced by the National Cooperative Soil Survey: [websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov](http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov).

## Soils Testing

Test your soils to determine what will grow, the nutrient levels, as well as their acidity and alkalinity. Performing a soil test can save you a lot of money by eliminating unnecessary irrigation, over application of fertilizers, and loss of crops due to incompatible soil types. Common nutrient deficiencies in our area include nitrogen (N), potassium (K), and phosphorus (P). Your local SWCD and OSU Extension office can provide a list of soil testing labs where soil samples can be tested. When results are returned, the staff can help you interpret them.

## Erosion Control

Soils are precious and without them life as we know it would be impossible. Our country's top soils, combined with intensive technological management, are the

most productive soils on earth. This has improved our standard of living and made our country thrive in the global economy. Without deep, healthy topsoil we would find ourselves in a wasteland of desert-like conditions. Eroded soils are not able to support desirable plant roots. Without the intricate network of plant roots and lifeforms below the surface, water and snow would not penetrate and percolate throughout the watershed restoring ground water and fertile soils would wash away with rain or snow and blow away with the wind.

We can maintain our natural resource base by using sustainable management practices such as maintaining grass or native ground cover, planting native plants in riparian and wet areas, and managing grazing and other activities for healthy vegetated cover.

Vegetation will protect the soil from erosion by rain, runoff, and wind. Vegetation also increases the uptake of water and holds soils in place on slopes and along streams.

## Soil Saving Tips

- Keep all soils on your property well covered with vegetation year-round.
- Cover crops, sod-forming grasses, native plants, and ground covers are excellent soil protectors. The SWCD can help select native plants suited to your property. Most SWCDs hold a Native Plant Sale around the beginning of each year ([www.polkswcd.com](http://www.polkswcd.com)).
- Reseed immediately with weed-free grass seed after any earth disturbing activity.
- Grade and reshape roads and building sites to direct water to safe outlets and prevent standing water on soils.



ASK YOUR INSURANCE FOR WHITE'S!

# Polk County Ag Water Quality

Polk County has two Agricultural Water Quality Management Areas (the Middle Willamette and Yamhill) with rules regulating water quality. As a landowner you should be aware of the water quality areas and rules. Area plans were developed by a Local Advisory Committee (LAC) comprised of agricultural landowners, other watershed interests, and help from Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA).

In 1993 the Agricultural Water Quality Management Act (formerly known as SB1010) was created with assistance from the agricultural industry and the State Board of Agriculture. This act and further legislation in 1995 made the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) responsible for water quality issues related to agricultural and farming practices. The ODA worked with SWCDs and Local Advisory Committees (LAC) composed of local farmers, ranchers, and community leaders to create 38 geographically distinct Area Plans and Rules. **See inside back cover for map.**

## Middle Willamette

The Middle Willamette Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan and Rules cover most of Polk County. Lands covered by this Area Plan and Rules include non-Federal and non-Tribal trust lands in the drainage area of the Luckiamute River, Ash Creek, Rickreall Creek, Spring Valley Creek, Glenn Creek, and other small streams that flow directly to the Willamette River.

## Yamhill Basin

The Yamhill Basin Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan and Rules cover Polk County North of Dallas. Both areas focus on the issues of temperature, nutrients, and sediments.

For more information please contact:

**Polk SWCD at 503-6323-9680 or  
polkswcd@polkswcd.com**

or

**ODA Natural Resource Division  
503-986-4700**

## Soil Erosion

Erosion is not allowed from agricultural lands due to management practices where sediments have the potential to impact the waters of the state and cause pollution. Short-term activities which will eventually enhance long-term soil stability are permitted. Sedimentation of nearby waterways can occur with any type of activity that disturbs the soil, including home building, and measures should be undertaken to avoid runoff and erosion.

The intent of this rule is to prevent erosion from agricultural and land development practices. One of the main concerns is the ground being left bare going into the winter without adequate vegetation to prevent soil erosion. Grass filter strips can be used to settle out sediments from water leaving the bare areas.

## Pollutants

Water quality is degraded when pollutants increase or decrease characteristics to levels above or below what is needed to support uses. For example, too much sediment can harm salmon eggs and damage irrigation pipes. Pollutants can be from natural or human sources. The most common agriculture pollutants are:

- Sediment: soil particles from erosion
- Nutrients: nitrogen and phosphorus from manure and synthetic fertilizers
- Temperature: from lack of shade along streams

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## Barn and Farmstead

Buildings and paved areas create impervious surfaces on farms. These are important to allow year-round operation in the Willamette Valley, but also create a 'fast-track' for pollutants. Pollutants from these areas can include pesticides, stored fertilizer, stacked manure and fuel/oils from equipment. **Best Management Practices (BMPs) for barns & farmsteads:**

- Routine inspection of chemicals (pesticides and fertilizers)
- Keep chemicals out of the flood zone
- Properly dispose of at Hazardous Waste Collection Event.
- Create a manure storage area
- Have a spill clean-up kit and plan
- Do Regular maintenance and repair of farm equipment to prevent leaks
- Have Vegetative filter strips along streams and waterways
- Create Rain gardens and bioswales
- Have properly graded and maintained roads

## Crops

Field crops include annual and perennial crops, such as hay, alfalfa, wheat, and grass for turf and seed. Tilling a field creates a risk of soil erosion.

Row crops can be annual like beans and corn, or perennial like orchards and vineyards. A challenge in preventing pollution with row crops is the bare space between the rows that can be eroded and compacted.

Bare areas with no vegetation or residue are vulnerable to erosion, which not only pollutes streams but also reduces soil quality for production of crops.

### BMPs for crops:

- No till or reduced tillage
- Residue management, cover crops and conservation cover
- Vegetative filter strips along streams



## Pasture

A well-managed pasture has a low potential of becoming a source of pollutants to waterways. Bare ground from overgrazing and trampling can lead to erosion, and transport of bacteria and nutrients from manure. **BMPs for pasture:**

- Exclude livestock from waterways and stream banks
- Rotational grazing
- Vegetative filters along streams
- Heavy use area for winter livestock confinement
- Manure storage and application at agronomic rate

## Pasture Plants That Protect Soil

The following pasture plant species are commonly used in Western Oregon for a healthy field consisting of a well balanced mixture of grasses and legumes.

### Grasses

- Orchard Grass is a productive grass good for hay or pasture on well drained soils.
- Tall Fescue is a grass that grows well in a wide variety of conditions.
- Perennial Ryegrass is a "cool season" grass used in pasture or hay production. It works in a wide variety of soil conditions.

### Legumes

- White Clover is a long-lived highly palatable perennial clover well adapted to pasture production in Oregon.
- Red Clover is a cool season perennial legume that is very adaptable and complements tall fescue and other grasses.



967 Main Street, Dallas OR  
503-623-4943

# Managing Riparian Areas, Wetlands, and Water Quality

A riparian area is the interface between land and water. These buffers are found along streams, lakes, and wetlands, and are made up of unique plant communities. They comprise only a small portion of the landscape yet are critical areas of plant and animal diversity. Riparian areas occur in many forms such as grassland, forests, woodland, and wetland.

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## A Healthy System

A healthy riparian area has lush and diverse vegetation along the water's edge which reduces water pollution by filtering out sediments, chemicals, and nutrients from runoff. Water retained in the soil releases slowly, enhancing stream flows and groundwater recharge. Slower water reduces erosion and property loss. Vegetation along a creek depends on where you are. Native plants such as willow, red alder, and salmonberry function well in riparian areas to provide shade (which keeps water cool in the summer), fish and wildlife habitat, and hold soils to prevent erosion. **We recommend establishing a 25 foot buffer on each side of the creek.**

## Practices to Enhance Riparian Areas

Some ways to improve riparian areas include increasing buffer width around open water (studies show that widths of 50 feet trap eroded soils, 100 feet filter pollutants and 200-300 feet provide wildlife corridors), fencing livestock out of riparian areas, and removing noxious weeds. Mechanical removal of weeds is best, but some chemicals are approved for use near water. Be sure to replant with native plants as soon as possible. Check with the SWCD for state and federal riparian enhancement programs such as CREP, and/or contact your local watershed council for alternative options (see page 40.)

## Floodplains

Flooding is a natural stream process. A floodplain is the land inundated with water during high flows. Water slows as it spreads out, reducing its erosive force and helping aquifer recharge as water seeps into the soil. These areas are nutrient rich from accumulated sediment deposits, building fertile soils.

## Wetlands

Wetlands are unique ecosystems that often occur at the edge of aquatic or terrestrial systems. They may be wet year-round, during certain seasons, or just part of the day.

The Clean Water Act define wetlands as "those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas."

Wetlands also include tidal marshes, forested wetlands, and seasonally ponded sites, such as vernal pools. Seasonal wetlands often dry out and may not appear to be wetlands.

Because they exist where land and water meet, wetlands are often used by animals from both wet and dry environments. A number of invertebrate, fish, reptile, and amphibian species depend on wetlands to survive or complete their lifecycles. For example, nearly all amphibians and at least 50 percent of migratory birds use wetlands regularly.

Wetlands provide important benefits some of which include support for fish and wildlife, erosion control, flood damage reduction, water quality, aesthetics, and recreation. For more information you can look online at [water.epa.gov/type/wetlands](http://water.epa.gov/type/wetlands).

**Army Corps:** [www.nwp.usace.army.mil/missions/regulatory/contact.aspx](http://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/missions/regulatory/contact.aspx)

**DEQ:** <http://www.oregon.gov/deq/wq/Pages/default.aspx>

## Crop Nutrient or Animal Waste Management Problems

**You must prevent manure and fertilizers from leaving your property.** Small acreage landowners are especially vulnerable to this rule. Stored waste from barn cleanings or feeding areas could leave the property if water gets in it from rain, runoff, or if stored in a floodplain. Paying attention to where you put your manure pile, covering it, and diverting clean water away from it are all easy ways to stay in compliance with this rule.

The best way however is to use it right on your property or share some with your neighbors.

*Just don't send it to them by way of your stream!*

# Water Rights Primer

## Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD)

A water right is legal authorization to use a quantifiable amount of water, at a specific location, for a particular use. The Oregon Water Resources Department requires users of public water to obtain approval prior to use of the water. The approval is granted in the following forms: Permit, Certificate, Limited License, or a Registration. The water right will indicate the season of use and the maximum diversion rate, the place of use and point of diversion or appropriation (for a well), and if for irrigation, the number of acres. Find out about the water rights of a given property before purchasing it. Once it is established that there is a water right prospective buyers should inquire about the historical use of the water right.

**If a water right has not been exercised for five successive years within the last twenty years, then the right may be subject to forfeiture.**

In general, very few new water rights are available. A water right search can be conducted by local Watermasters or the OWRD to determine if a parcel has an existing water right. To search on your own about water rights visit the Oregon Water Resources Department website at [www.oregon.gov/owrd](http://www.oregon.gov/owrd) or call 503-986-0900.

### Surface Water Right

A surface water right is necessary to divert any amount of water from surface water such as lakes, streams, rivers, and springs. A few exemptions exist and it is your responsibility to make sure they apply to your specific use.

Examples of exemptions include:

- The use of a natural spring that under natural conditions arises on a parcel and the waters of that spring do not flow into a well defined channel that flows off that parcel. This must be determined by OWRD and is very rare.
- Where livestock watering occurs directly out of the stream and there is no diversion or modification of the source. Also, use of water for stock watering from a permitted reservoir to a tank or trough, and certain use of water piped from a surface source to an off-stream stock watering tank or trough.
- Water used for fish screens, fish ways, bypass structures and egg incubation projects under the Salmon and Trout Enhancement Program (STEP).
- For certain forest management activities such as slash burning and mixing pesticides. To be eligible, a user must notify OWRD, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Oregon Department of Forestry.

- In land management practices where water use is not the primary intended activity.
- The collection and use of rainwater from an impervious surface.
- The withdrawal of water for use in or training for emergency fire fighting.
- Reservoirs and ponds are **NOT** exempt; they require a water right.

### Ground Water Right

A ground water right is necessary for withdrawal of water from a well or sump. Submittal and approval of a transfer application to OWRD may provide changes to a water right. Exempt uses include:

- Stock watering.
- Irrigation of less than 1/2 acre of **non-commercial lawn or garden.**
- Single commercial or industrial use of less than 5,000 gallons per day (does not include irrigation).

Each use is a separate exemption. For example, irrigation of lawn and garden is not included in the 5,000-gallon-per-day exemption. One well could serve multiple exempt uses.

Part of Polk County is within the Eola Hills Groundwater Limited Area. This area severely restricts one's ability to obtain a water right from a well constructed in the basalt aquifer.

**Water Resources  
Department**  
725 Summer Street NE,  
Suite A  
Salem, OR 97301  
**General Inquiries  
Phone: 503-986-0900**



# Irrigation

Proper irrigation water management will save money when producing crops. Knowing when and how much water to apply at the correct rate is invaluable.

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Irrigation can be very challenging in western Oregon. Irrigation water management (IWM) skills can overcome these challenges.

- In the spring our productive soils are cool and saturated, but within 45 days time rain can cease and soils begin to dry.
- Soils vary in texture, water holding capacity, and application rate.
- Get to know your crop. Different crops require different amounts of water.

Here are a few tips to keep your irrigation efficient, saving money and resources:

- Maintain hardware by replacing worn gaskets and nozzles annually. Check the application uniformity with 3 or more cans. Create an effective irrigation schedule.

- Manage irrigation like a check book. Know your soil water holding capacity (size of bank account), your crop (withdrawals), and the system application rate (deposits).
- Keep good records! Use a daily log to review and get help to evaluate areas in need of improvement.



## Ponds

Investigating and planning to build a pond on your property will be a complex and time consuming effort. The permit and approval process can take years to complete. Most ponds require a water right to store water. A water right is also required to use the water stored in the pond. There are many aspects to understand, such as the rules, permits, planning, design, and building of a pond on your property. Once your dream pond is complete, it will likely have been worth the wait.

---

### Key Points When Considering a Pond

- Determine the pond purpose and type.
- Evaluate the land for a suitable pond site.
- Investigate the need for permits and what regulations might affect the pond.
- Understand the basic pond design process.
- Investigate sources of technical and financial assistance.
- Understand the construction process.
- Record all information throughout the process of planning and building a pond.

### Maintenance

A great deal of maintenance is required with keeping a pond. Proper maintenance will include keeping dikes clear of livestock and vegetation as well as keeping your control structures in good working order.

### Pond Resources

**Ponds - Planning, Design, Construction, USDA Handbook 590** <https://nrcspad.sc.egov.usda.gov/distributioncenter/product.aspx?ProductID=115>

**Woodland Ponds - A Field Guide.**

Steve Bowers, OSU Extension, EM 9104.

[Steve.bowers@oregonstate.edu](mailto:Steve.bowers@oregonstate.edu). 541-737-1605



# Raising Livestock in the Willamette Valley

According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture, Polk County has 1,143 farms, with an average farm size of 127 acres. The livestock sales of over \$33 million make up 22% of the county's agricultural income, with the other 78% coming from crop sales totaling over \$116 million. Polk County is ranked 10th in the state for gross farm sales. Source: Oregon Agricultural Information Network (OAIN), Extension Economic Information Office, Oregon State University & USDA Census of Agriculture, Volume 1, Geographic Area Series

## Cattle

Cattle are the leading livestock type in Polk County. The operations include beef, dairy, and cow/calf operations. According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture:

- There are 15,365 head of cattle and calves in Polk County.
- Polk County ranks 25th in the state for cattle and calf production.

Cattle typically prefer grass and clover over other broad leaf plants. By grazing cattle with sheep or goats you can utilize different forage plants, increasing efficiency of pastures. Good pasture management is essential for a productive and profitable operation. **The Polk SWCD can assist landowners in developing a sound grazing plan.**

## Poultry

The Willamette Valley's mild year-round climate is ideal for growing broilers. Most Oregon broilers are grown on family farms distributed west of the Cascades. According to the 2012 Census of Agriculture:

- Polk County ranks 8th in the state for poultry production (eggs, broilers, layers, and other meat-type chickens).
- Poultry and egg production brings in ~ \$13.9 million annually.
- There are ~ 4,101 layers in Polk County.

## Swine

Swine production in Polk County has steadily been declining over the past several years. Though there are still swine operations in Polk County, one of the more consistent populations is maintained through the 4-H community. Many of the pigs raised throughout the year are sold at the Polk County Fair each August.

## Sheep

Well-suited to grazing on the valley floors and the surrounding foothills, sheep are conducive to small landholdings. As of the 2012 Census of Agriculture: Polk County ranks 16th in the state for sheep and lamb production. Sheep numbers total 3,425.

Sheep tend to prefer forbs over grass. When grazed properly, sheep can be an excellent tool to help eliminate invasive weed species. They tend to be more tolerant of certain toxic plants than other livestock.

## Horses

Polk County is home to a growing population of horses, which are often on small acreages. If managed properly, horse owners can maintain healthy and productive pastures, reduce mud and weeds, protect valuable water resources, and improve their horses' well-being.

Wild horses may roam up to twenty-five miles a day for food, water, and shelter. Their continual movement disperses manure and urine allowing for re-growth of vegetation. However, with domestic horses, relatively large numbers of horses are kept in considerably smaller areas and responsible owners provide food and shelter. If not carefully managed, manure and sediment from horse facilities can pollute waterways, ground water, drinking water, and the environment with unhealthy bacteria and nutrients.

## Other

Polk County is home to a growing population of non-traditional livestock and exotics. Llamas, emus, alpacas, meat goats, and others are meeting with various degrees of success. These animals can work well on small acreage farms. Some of these require niche markets for success, while others can easily adapt to traditional marketing methods.

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# Grazing as a Pasture Management Tool

Proper grazing is one of the best tools available for improvement and maintenance of healthy, productive pastures. Increased infiltration rate, water quality, organic matter, rooting structure, plant health, and animal production, as well as decreased weed invasion, soil erosion, and pesticide use are benefits of proper grazing management.

## Grazing Methods

Timing, intensity, and duration of livestock grazing can have a dramatic impact on individual plant vigor and overall pasture production and rotational grazing.

### Continuous Grazing

Continuous grazing typically employs a fixed number of animals grazing a certain number of acres for a given length of time. Continuous grazing, although less labor intensive, creates pastures that can be overgrazed and depleted. This is a result of livestock being able to selectively graze the more desirable plant species, similar to letting a child choose between ice cream and a serving of vegetables.

### Rotational Grazing

Rotational grazing requires more intensive management. Livestock typically are allowed to start grazing in a field when the forage is 8-10 inches tall. After the forage is eaten down to approximately 4 inches, livestock are removed and put in a different field or a sacrifice area allowing the plants a break from grazing pressure to grow. This leaves adequate plant leaf area to maintain the photosynthetic capability of the plant. The more energy the plant receives from the sun the less energy it needs to extract from root reserves. Rotational grazing also results in more uniform grazing of all plant species to a desirable stubble height (length of leaf blade) increasing per-acre production. Rotational grazing allows for more efficient harvesting of sun light.

### Pasture Weeds

Weeds compete with desired forage plants for space, nutrients, and light. Healthy pastures are more resistant to weed encroachment, which benefits you, your animals, and your neighbors. Identify weeds before taking action against them. Some weeds are toxic to livestock. Remove weeds before they seed.

## Management Techniques

- Determine goals and objectives in a management plan.
- Divide pastures into small units/paddocks.
- Move grazing animals between paddocks to allow recovery time for forage species.
- Drag pastures to break up and evenly distribute manure following grazing.
- Irrigate paddocks following grazing rather than prior to grazing.
- Take soil samples and apply nutrients based on the results of the soil test.
- Have water, salt, and minerals available and dispersed throughout the area to help distribute livestock evenly across pasture while keeping them healthy.
- Adjust animal numbers and management based on pasture production and regrowth.

Producers should not allow livestock continuous access to the entire pasture. Avoid grazing on saturated soils or during late fall, winter, and early spring, as soil compaction and plant damage will reduce the productivity and health of your pasture. Horses only need 2-3 hours of grazing per day, allowing for partial intake of their daily nutrient requirement and for exercise.

Good grazing management should produce healthy pastures, reduce overgrazing and the need to seek outside feed, reduce invasive weeds, and keep livestock healthy.

### Mud

Create an all-weather sacrifice area for heavy use, and rotationally graze your pastures. Keeping the grass in your pastures at least 3-4" tall will help ensure the health of your grass and reduce wear. Use pasture areas only when they are dry so that you do not turn them to mud.

<https://attra.ncat.org/>  
<http://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/>  
<http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/Pages/default.aspx>  
<http://www.sare.org/>

# Livestock and Poultry Producers

The Clean Water Act regulations for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations were recently revised, changing the permit requirements for some livestock operations. Some facilities that did not need permits before are now required to have them. Make sure you know the law.

**Whether you need a permit or not, you still cannot pollute.**

---

## Animal Feeding Operations (AFO)

Animal Feeding Operations are agricultural operations where animals are kept and raised in confined situations. AFOs congregate animals, feed, manure, urine, dead animals, and production operations on a proportionately small land area. Feed is brought to the animals rather than the animals grazing or otherwise seeking feed in pasture or rangeland. An operation is AFO if animals are confined for at least 45 days in a 12 month period and if no grass is in the confinement area during the growing season.

## Confined Animal Feeding Operations

A Confined Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) is the concentrated confined feeding or holding of animals. CAFO includes but is not limited to horse, cattle, sheep, poultry, or swine. Areas can be for feeding, confinement, shipping terminal holding pens, egg production facilities, and fur farms in buildings with prepared surfaces of concrete, rock, or fibrous material to support animals in wet weather. These facilities must prevent their livestock waste from polluting ground and surface waters. It is prohibited to place any wastes in locations where they are likely to escape or be carried into the waters of the state by any means.

Along with the permit, all CAFOs must prepare an animal waste management plan which is a detailed description of the waste containment, treatment, storage, and handling. The plan describes how compliance will be achieved and maintained.

## Composting

Compost is organic matter that has been biologically decomposed under aerobic conditions. It is decomposed to a state that is safe to handle and apply to the land. Common components can include manure, leaves, sawdust, coffee grounds, ash and more. Benefits of composting include conserving natural resources, reducing pollution, and improving soil quality and nutrients, water retention, and infiltration.

You can use compost to create a mulch to protect plants in your yard and garden, have less household garbage, reduce the amount of waste that enters landfills, and save money on trash bags and fertilizer.

## Manure Management

Mud and manure are two realities of having livestock that require constant management. Be informed and proactive. Be careful about drainage on your property. Analyze possible water quality impacts on your property before and during rains, and implement conservation practices if needed. Any fresh water that makes contact with manure has negative impacts on watershed health. When setting up your facility consider potential water quality problems and plan for proper drainage. Install roof gutters, improve drainage channels, set up a covered manure storage system, and plant areas that are bare, near bare, or in drainages.

Managing manure effectively includes keeping it covered and having a plan for what you will do with the manure as it builds up. Composting is one method of manure control, which keeps it covered and can benefit operations in several ways:

- Composted manure kills off parasites.
- Great for use as a fertilizer on pastures.
- Reduces odors and flies.
- Reduces volume of piles by as much as 50%.

## Manure Share Program

The Polk SWCD has a Manure Share Program to connect people who have extra manure with those who want some for gardening and fertilizing.

The Polk SWCD website has a list of supplier contact information, type of manure, type of bedding used, manure to bedding ratio, age of manure, pile size, seasonal accessibility, and a form to fill out if you would like to join the list.

<http://www.polkswcd.com/polk-manure-exchange.html>



# 4-H in Polk County

4-H offers diverse, fun, and hands-on programs to Willamette Valley youth from ages 5 through 19. Programs range from art to natural science to technology. Animal Science projects continue to remain among the largest and most popular of these programs.



Through 4-H activities and club meetings, members learn skills that help them to become productive, healthy citizens. They learn leadership, a sense of responsibility, public speaking, meeting etiquette, sportsmanship, and people skills. The animal projects teach proper animal husbandry, showmanship, and handling techniques.

Youth and adult volunteers can join 4-H starting in October of each year. For more information, call your local County Extension Office or visit the 4-H website at: [oregon.4h.oregonstate.edu](http://oregon.4h.oregonstate.edu).

## OSU Extension

The Oregon State University Extension Service engages the people of Oregon with research-based knowledge and education that focus on strengthening communities and economies, sustaining natural resources, and promoting healthy families and individuals.

Extension leads OSU's outreach mission by interacting with Oregon's people and communities to have positive impacts on community livability, economic vitality, natural resources sustainability, and the health and wellbeing of people. Based on these positive impacts, the OSU Extension Service is recognized as one of America's top 5 Land-Grant University Extension systems. OSU Extension has five core program areas: 4-H Youth Development, Agriculture, Family and Community Development, Forestry, and Marine Science/Sea Grant Program.

**OSU**  
Oregon State  
UNIVERSITY  
Extension Service

OSU Extension Service  
Polk County  
289 E Ellendale, Suite 301  
Dallas, OR 97338  
Phone: 503-623-8395  
[extension.oregonstate.edu/polk](http://extension.oregonstate.edu/polk)  
[facebook.com/OSUExtensionPolkCounty](https://facebook.com/OSUExtensionPolkCounty)

There are other Extension activities such as Master Gardeners, Food Preservers, Woodland Managers, and Watershed Stewardship, as well as Sustainable Living, Oregon Small Farms, and 4-H projects.

**OSU Extension promotes sustainable resource management and excellent land stewardship.**

## Helping Underserved Clients

The traditionally underserved client base reaches across human demographics and includes a diverse group of people who have not traditionally received services from conservation districts and their partners. They may be low-income residents of urban areas, underserved minority agricultural producers, or immigrant or non-English-speaking populations seeking a foothold in rural or urban settings. Historically underserved include these categories:

- **Beginning Farmer/Rancher** (operating less than 10 consecutive years)
- **Socially Disadvantaged** (African-Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Asians, Hispanics, Pacific Islanders)
- **Limited Resource Farmer/Rancher** (farm sales less than \$176,800 and family below poverty level)
- **Veterans**



Oftentimes, the work of districts helps enrich lives of people as local resource priorities are addressed. Terms such as “locally led” and “every acre counts” are used to describe the work of districts. It is accomplished with a lengthy list of partners. Some of them are traditional, such as the Natural Resources Conservation Service and other federal and state conservation agencies. But as the range of natural resource challenges grows, many new partners have joined in the efforts. They have helped strengthen and enrich the conservation movement.

# Successional Farm Planning

Source = <http://www.fosterswift.com/communications-Succession-Planning-Family-Farm.html>

## What is Succession Planning?

Succession planning is the process of formally transitioning management and ownership of an agricultural business from one generation to the next. There is no single plan that every family or every business should use. Some plans involve an outright sale of the family farm to the younger generation (or to a third party). Other plans rely primarily on gifting or on life insurance. Some simply involve the formation of business structures that will help make a transition possible in the future. Others involve expanding a farming operation to help support more families, or dividing a large operation into discrete parts to support different families.



**Why is it important?** Succession planning is important because it permits a farming family to transfer management and ownership of their business how they want. It also permits the family to address legal, tax, and family relationship issues in advance, rather than being forced to react to those issues after the death of a member of the older generation.

**When to start?** It is never too early! Increasingly, members of older generations wish to retire at earlier ages, perhaps to pursue other business opportunities, or to just enjoy living without the stress of work on the farm. Many of the younger members of farm families are unwilling to wait until their parents' deaths to take an ownership interest in the farm and prefer to have the security of ownership earlier in life. An effective plan often takes many years to fully implement, and may change as the family and the farm grow and change. A well-designed plan can accommodate this flexibility. The earlier you start, the easier it is to remain flexible.

**Who should be involved?** A comprehensive succession plan requires the participation of several parties, such as the family members (often including both on-farm and off-farm family members), professional advisors, such as the family's attorney, accountant, and financial and/or business advisor. In some situations, a single group of advisors can effectively represent the entire family. In others, separate representation of the parties will be helpful and will facilitate a smoother transition. Select advisors with experience in agriculture and succession planning.

**What does a good succession plan cover?** A comprehensive succession plan addresses many different issues, such as:

- Relationships among family members, for example, whether members of the younger generation can work effectively together for the foreseeable future, and whether on-farm and off-farm children should be treated equally, or simply "fairly."
- Legal matters relating to the ownership and transfer of assets.
- Financial matters, such as the income needs of the older generation, and the financial capacity of the younger generation.
- Federal tax matters, such as the impact of any income, gift tax, estate tax, and generation-skipping transfer taxes.
- Issues related to income-tax basis in family assets. Many family farms that have been informally transferred have tremendously complex tax issues.
- Business entity selection and formation.
- Medicaid issues for members of older generations.

## For more information contact:

### OSU Ties to the Land

109 Richardson Hall, Corvallis OR 97331

541-737-1727

[www.tiestotheland.org](http://www.tiestotheland.org)



# Going Organic

With a growing interest in eating healthier, many farms and ranches opt to gain organic certification through a number of different programs. Products can only be called '100% organic' if they have a certified organic stamp, as opposed to a product being labeled 'natural' which does not have a set of standards.

## What is Organic?

Organic for the purposes of this book is referring to food or livestock produced by standards that prohibit the use of irradiation, sewage sludge, or genetically modified organisms (GMOs). Organic agriculture builds the health of the soil, providing the foundation for healthy crops and a livelihood for good stewards of the land.

National organic standards require producers to use organic agricultural methods and materials that cover soil fertility, the application of manure, crop rotation, and composting. These standards prohibit the use of municipal solid waste as compost ingredients.

Organic producers must follow a *National List of Acceptable and Prohibited Materials* concerning pest control treatments, fertilizers, and seed treatments that they use. All agricultural materials must be evaluated for their long-term effects on the environment and not simply whether they are synthetic or natural.

Organic agriculture protects the health of people and the planet. It reduces the overall exposure to toxic chemicals from synthetic pesticides that can end up in the ground, air, water and food supply. Exposure to chemicals has been associated with health consequences from asthma to cancer.

In a nutshell, organic operations should be committed to and motivated by:

- Safe and fair working conditions
- Healthy and humane livestock care
- Conserving soil and water resources
- Protecting and enhancing wildlife habitat
- Improving management practices



## Standards

Organic standards are geared toward the conservation of soil and water resources. If you are considering becoming certified, here are some things you should plan to address:

- Control and minimize soil erosion
- Build soil health and productivity
- Reduce tillage practices
- Increase crop rotation, and recycle organic residues back into the soil
- Adopt water-conserving strategies
- Protect water quality by soil erosion control, careful management of nutrients, agrochemicals and manures, as well as the use of landscape features such as buffer strips and riparian buffers.
- Raise livestock with access to pasture or range when possible and a system of rotational grazing to prevent overgrazing and erosion

## Evaluation

Being certified organic usually entails being evaluated to ensure that you are meeting the conditions of your certification program. Some things that you can expect to be evaluated on are:

- Continuing education for soil and water conservation
- Buffer strips around waterways
- Soil erosion prevention
- Tillage practices and preventing soil compaction
- Irrigation systems
- Irrigation water conservation
- Nutrient management
- Soil organic matter management



## To Be Certified

In order to be certified organic, crops must be grown on land free of prohibited substances for at least three years prior to harvest. Crops grown on land in transition to organic (during the first three years after switching from conventional farming) cannot be labeled as organic. The values of being certified can include a price advantage in the market, meeting niche market demands, and maintaining a share of the market.

## Why Certify?

Use stewardship of the land as a marketing advantage. Certification helps ensure products are of a certain quality and meet required specifications. All certification programs have the common element of providing reference to a standard. A credible standard separates facts and reliability from marketing hype. Credible certification standards will define specifications that can be clearly measured.

As a buyer or a seller, benefits of certification are reassurances of product quality:

- Set standards for sustainable agriculture
- Verify producer compliance with standards
- Help connect sellers and buyers

## Organic Livestock Operations

Livestock operations manage pasture or crop ground as well as animals. Since there are two systems in production there must be an organic management plan in place for both. Any health treatment that is to be given to organic animals must contain allowed ingredients. For more information on raising livestock organically, look on [www.tilth.org](http://www.tilth.org).

## Organic Certifications Available

There are many organizations who certify for organic status. For more information visit these organization websites:

- **USDA NOP (National Organic Program)** - regulates the standards for any farm, wild crop harvesting, or handling operation that wants to sell agricultural products as organically produced. [ams.usda.gov/nop](http://ams.usda.gov/nop)
- **Oregon Tilth** - a nonprofit research and education membership organization dedicated to biologically sound and socially equitable agriculture. [www.tilth.org](http://www.tilth.org)

## Sustainable Certifications Available

- **Food Alliance** - a third-party certification program and a market development program to connect sustainable growers with food businesses. [www.foodalliance.org](http://www.foodalliance.org)
- **Salmon Safe** - a nonprofit devoted to restoring agricultural and urban watersheds so that salmon can spawn and thrive. [www.salmonsafe.org](http://www.salmonsafe.org)
- **LIVE (Low Input Viticulture & Enology)** - a nonprofit organization that provides education and certification for vineyards using international standards of sustainable viticulture practices in wine grape production. [www.livecertified.org](http://www.livecertified.org)

## Direct Marketing

Direct marketing is a good way to promote local products. Producers sell farm-grown produce directly to consumers at farm stands, farmers' markets, u-pick farms, consumer-supported agriculture (CSA), agritourist venues, and other ever growing innovations in direct producer-to-consumer agricultural marketing methods.



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# Weed Management

If not managed properly, your property could be a source of weeds causing problems for you and your neighbors! Be proactive and develop a weed management plan for your property.

---

## What is a Weed?

A weed is defined as a plant growing in a place in which it is not wanted. Many weeds are harmful to people, the economy, livestock (some are toxic), and the environment. Almost any plant could be classified as a weed if found growing in the wrong place. Most plants called weeds are persistent and hard to keep out of areas they are not wanted. Weeds decrease the value, productivity, and use of your property. Weeds can range from pests to damaging.

## Prevention

Prevention is the most effective and least costly form of weed control. Proper land management practices such as controlled grazing and maintaining unused areas can promote desirable and healthy vegetation. Purchase weed-free hay, plant certified seed, and wash your vehicle or boots after being in weed infested areas. Respond quickly to weed infestations.

## Weed Control

The best way to combat weeds is to provide strong competition from desirable plants. Having healthy, vigorous perennial plants to compete for the space, moisture, and nutrients reduces weed establishment.

Annually cropped fields and gardens are difficult to manage because they do not maintain a stable population of plants to compete with weeds. Many weeds can be controlled by either mowing or grazing them before they go to seed.

The use of herbicides is one way to kill off new weeds before they spread. Using mulches, cultivation, and other management is usually lower cost and also often very effective. Whenever you have a disturbed site, seed desirable plants before weeds take over.

### **Never leave soil bare.**

When controlling weeds be aware that some plants will still produce seeds even after being pulled, requiring you to bag and remove the seed heads from site. Some seeds can remain viable for up to 50 years.

## Invasive and Noxious Weeds

An invasive species is one which invades a habitat to the detriment of native species. Noxious weeds are ones designated by State or Federal Agencies as harmful to the environment, crops, livestock, and people.

Infestations start from a source. Be responsible, do not unwittingly become the source or a contributor. Choose native or non-invasive plants for landscaping to help prevent escape. Some invasions begin by discarded plants taking hold on a dump site or brush pile. Plants can spread by roots or over distances by seeds via wind or birds, so you may not see the spread occurring. Rapid response to infestations is very important. To find out more about noxious and invasive plants visit:

[www.cascadepacific.org/western-invasives-network](http://www.cascadepacific.org/western-invasives-network)

[www.pnwhandbooks.org/weed](http://www.pnwhandbooks.org/weed)

Landowners are encouraged to learn to identify plants common to the area. Information on weeds and plant identification is available from Polk SWCD, OSU Extension Office, and other local government agencies.

## Polk SWCD Native Plant Sale

Native plants require less care and water than most non-native plants. The Polk SWCD holds an annual Oregon Native Plant Sale each February, usually the first Saturday. The sale offers a great opportunity to get trees, shrubs, and flowers. Pre-orders are accepted leading up to the sale. Call or go online for the next sale date.



# Weeds to Watch for in Polk County

There are many weeds in the Willamette Valley. Several varieties of weeds dominate areas that they inhabit, greatly reducing habitat value. This is a partial list of weeds that are in danger of ruining valuable habitat in Polk County. **For more information on plants, identification, possible funding for eradication, or removal techniques please contact the Polk SWCD.**

- **English Ivy** is an ever-green climbing vine often used as groundcover. It forms a thick canopy that carpets forests, climbs and smothers trees, encourages tree rot, and outcompetes native species eliminating diversity and habitat.



English Ivy

- **Butterfly Bush** is planted as an ornamental. It is an invasive that escapes yards and takes over riparian habitat. There are many appealing alternative natives to this plant that attract beautiful species of butterflies and hummingbirds.



Butterfly Bush

- **Hawthorne** comes in both native and non-native varieties. Non-natives are invasive and should be controlled. Be sure to have a positive identification of species before removing.



Non-Native Hawthorne

- **Armenian Blackberry** is the most wide-spread of the noxious weeds in Oregon. It is an aggressive perennial that displaces native plant species, dominates habitats and has a significant economic impact on maintenance along roads and on private property.



Armenian (Himalayan) Blackberry

- **Knotweeds** are perennials native to Asia. Two main varieties here are Japanese and Himalayan. They are highly invasive crowding out native vegetation with dense bamboo-like stands.



Japanese Knotweed

- **Reed Canary Grass** forms thick monoculture areas choking ditches, wetlands, and streams.



Reed Canary Grass

- **Scotch Broom** is an evergreen shrub that spreads aggressively. When in bloom it has yellow flowers. Other types of broom are also invasive, such as Gorse.



Scotch Broom

- **Spurge Laurel** is a serious threat to native forest ecosystems. This shrub takes over entire forest floors if given the opportunity. It is toxic to humans and livestock, so avoid contact with skin.



Spurge Laurel

- **Tansy Ragweed** invades poorly managed pastures and road-side areas. It is toxic to livestock.



Tansy Ragweed

- **Cutleaf Teasel** is native to Europe and was brought here for making flannel. If treated early this very aggressive weed can be easily controlled manually.



Teasel

- **Thistles** spread rapidly, degrade habitat, and inhibit recreation. Ten species of thistle are listed as noxious by ODA.

- **Yellow Flag Iris** takes over riparian areas and pond edges and spreads by floating seeds, rhizomes, and fragments. It is toxic to livestock. Protect skin from rhizome and leaf resins when pulling.



Yellow Flag Iris



Bull Thistle

# Growing a Healthy Forest

A healthy forest is characterized by vigorous trees that are resistant to disease, insect infestation, and animal damage. Trees are spaced far enough apart to allow sunlight to reach plants on the ground and are comprised of a diversity of species.

## Tips For a Healthy Forest

By maintaining a diversity of trees appropriate to the site, you will encourage the overall health of your forest. Tree species should be selected for the soil conditions and climate of your land. New trees will have a higher survival rate if fenced to prevent foraging. The removal of competitive vegetation from around saplings will also improve their survival rate. Good management practices, including harvesting, thinning, brush and weed control, and erosion control allow for healthy forests.

Thinning trees will improve the growth, health, and vigor of your forest. While reducing the loss of trees due to pathogens, thinning will allow more light, water, and nutrients for the remaining trees. In turn, thinning will also increase forage for livestock and wildlife. Thinning is the opportunity to encourage species diversity and improve resistance to wildfire. Heavy accumulations of downed material should be disposed of to reduce fire hazards.

The healthiest trees should be left as seed stock for future trees. Snags, or standing dead trees, should be left except where they pose a risk of falling on a house or other valuable areas. Large logs and a few brush piles should be retained to provide habitat for predators and facilitate forest nutrient cycling.

## Forest Practices Act

The Oregon Forest Practices Act (FPA) sets standards for all commercial activities involving the establishment, management, or harvesting of trees on Oregon's forestlands.

Oregon law gives the Board of Forestry primary responsibility to interpret the FPA and set rules for forest practices. ODF is responsible for enforcing those requirements by:

- Reviewing pre-operations plans
- Overseeing operations
- Ensuring reforestation
- Investigating complaints
- Enforcing corrective actions when violations occur

ODF works with landowners and operators to help them comply with the requirements of the FPA.

Access roads should be located away from streams. Cut slopes should be reseeded promptly to reduce erosion, water pollution, and weed infestations. Continuously grazing livestock on forest land will compact soils and damage trees. Replanting soon after harvest helps to prevent erosion and weed infestations by keeping soil covered.

## Forest Insects & Diseases of Oregon

Some of the most prevalent threats to trees in western Oregon include Swiss needle cast, laminated root rot, bark beetle, and other diseases related to stress. Good management practices will help keep trees healthy, reducing the risk of disease and insect infestations.

## Help In Managing Your Forest

Private forestry consultants can help you conduct inventories, set up timber sales, and help you achieve your forest management goals. Some consultants have multi-resource specialists on staff. They are usually well versed in federal and state cost-share programs, laws, and regulations. A directory of consultants is available from the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF). Additionally, the ODF offers both technical assistance and financial programs for forest landowners. The USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service provides technical and financial assistance through the **Environmental Quality**

## Incentives Program (EQIP) .



**OSU Extension**  
[extension.oregonstate.edu/Programs-Forestry&NaturalResources](http://extension.oregonstate.edu/Programs-Forestry&NaturalResources)

**American Tree Farm System**  
[www.treefarmssystem.org](http://www.treefarmssystem.org)

[www.Trout Mountain.com](http://www.TroutMountain.com) (planning services)

**Oregon Department of Forestry**  
2600 State Street  
Salem, Oregon 97310  
503-945-7200

# Small Woodland Management

If you have recently purchased 20 or more acres of forest land, you may be faced with the daunting task of managing these resources. Luckily, unlike seasonal farming or gardening, small woodlands tend to operate over longer time frames of years rather than months.

## Developing a Management Plan

To begin planning, walk your land. Legal boundaries and access to the property should be well established. Inventory and familiarize yourself with the resources on your property. You can educate yourself with the help of classes and programs offered through OSU Extension, and local small woodlands associations, or neighbors can assist in identifying resources. Afterward begin to formulate and outline a set of objectives. The decisions you make regarding the management of the property will have short and long-term ecological and economic consequences. There is less need to make immediate decisions due to the longer time parameters of managing a woodland.

## Information Sources

OSU Extension Service is one of the first places to look for advice with managing your small woodland. The foresters focus on education and outreach to landowners and have direct contact with faculty at OSU. They offer many programs and training sessions, including the Master Woodland Manager program for small woodland owners. See information about programs on the website at [extension.oregonstate.edu](http://extension.oregonstate.edu).

The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) is a regulatory agency of forest management. It administers the Oregon Forest Practices Act, which regulates all forest activities in the state. A Notification of Operations from the ODF is required for all owners initiating a forest operation. The ODF also offers technical advice and cost share programs for various non-commercial forest and resource management. For additional forestry program information visit the ODF website at [www.oregon.gov/ODF](http://www.oregon.gov/ODF).

**Oregon Small Woodlands Association:**

[www.oswa.org](http://www.oswa.org)

**Bureau of Land Management:**

**Salem District– Mary's Peak Resource Area**

[www.blm.gov](http://www.blm.gov)

**503-375-5646**

Other sources of information include local chapters of Oregon Small Woodland Association, watershed councils, trade publications, and federal agencies such as the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management.

## The Next Step

The natural systems and processes that operate in forestlands do not recognize property lines. Talk with your neighbors as you will need to work together to address problems such as insects, disease, water, wildlife, and fire. Only through cooperative work and collaborative effort will you be able to effectively address these concerns.

Cost-share assistance through ODF and NRCS can help pay for preparation of a forest stewardship plan by a consulting forester or other trained professional. These plans should provide an initial inventory of the various forest resources on your property.

Based on that inventory and your objectives, a management plan should include:

- Wildlife management
- Soil protection and erosion control
- Fuels reduction
- Pertinent forest insects and diseases
- Reforestation and management for timber and other marketable resources
- Protection of riparian and aquatic biodiversity
- Long-term site productivity
- Roads and access concerns



# Fire Prevention

Each year more people move into previously uninhabited forested rural areas which have dry, hot summer weather and an increased danger of wildfire. These remote areas have just as high a risk of structural fires as urban areas, but an increased risk of losing your home to fire due to longer response times, limited water hydrants, and unpaved roads.

## Fire Ecology

Fire is a fundamental and essential component of a healthy forest ecosystem. Oregon forests have co-adapted with fire which is an integral part of forest regeneration, cleansing and renewal, and the maintenance of plant and animal diversity.

Away from homes and communities, fire is needed to remove undergrowth that chokes trees and facilitates disease. Burned trees replenish nutrients to the soil. Standing burned snags and downed trees in streams create habitat for wildlife. Many plants require fire as part of their life cycle.

A defensible area is 30 to 200 feet around your home where firefighters can safely make a stand to protect your house during a fire. If your home and landscape are properly maintained, it is likely to survive a fire even without fire department intervention. The exact size of your defensible space depends on the slope of the land and the type of vegetation around your home.

## Simple Fire Prevention Measures

- Maintain 30' of short green lawn or fire-resistant plants around your home.
- Remove fuels under large trees.
- Trim branches away from your house. Keep gutters clean of debris.
- Trim branches along your driveway at least 14' tall and wide.
- Replace wood shake roofs. Screen vents and areas under decks with metal mesh.
- Store firewood away from your house.
- Water and firefighting tools should be available and ready.
- Maintain good access to your home and ensure that your address is highly visible.

For more information visit [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org).



## Firebreaks

A firebreak around your home and along your driveway is important to protecting your property. Initially this can be a major undertaking, so start a little at a time. Once complete, annual maintenance is much less demanding. Since protecting your home is the primary concern, start there and work outward.

**Fire burns 16 times faster uphill** so start on the downhill side of your home.

## Fire Season Preparation

During fire season both the public and industrial operators are required to follow the Oregon fire prevention laws. Fire season typically begins in mid-June. The end of fire season varies and is typically around mid to late September. It only takes about one hour for light fuels such as grass to dry out enough to cause a fire. ODF determines the fire season each year.

When fire season is in effect, all open burning is prohibited. If burn barrels are allowed, a permit from the local fire department or ODF is needed to use them. Subject to change, a Public Regulated Use Closure prohibits or regulates times that the public can perform various activities on forest land. These activities include off road vehicle use, campfires, smoking, dry grass mowing, use of chain saws, fireworks, and welding.

**CALL 911 FOR ALL FIRE EMERGENCIES.**

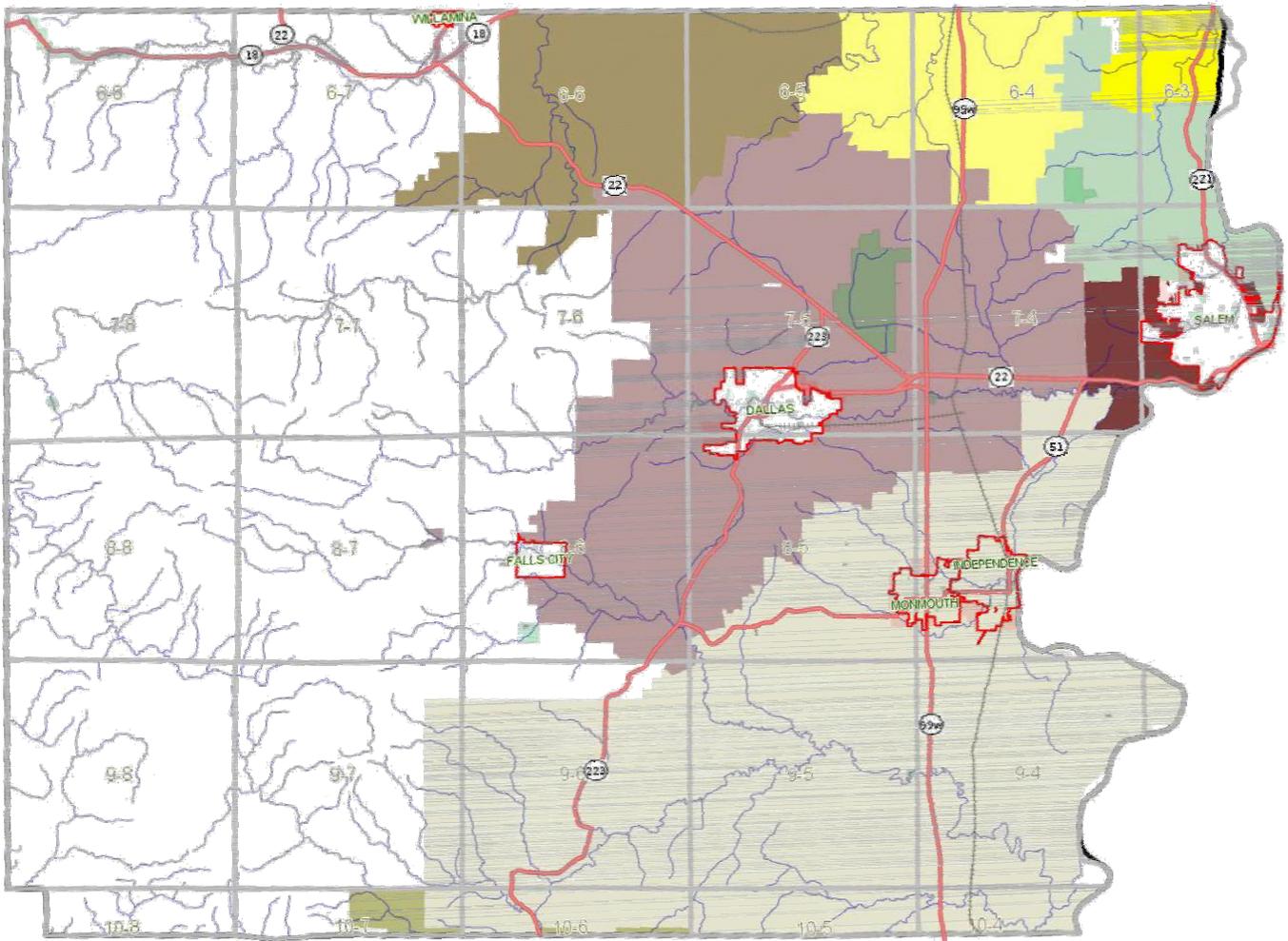


# Fire Areas

Local fire departments are listed in the directory at the front of the book. This section is to provide information on fire fighting entities available in Polk County and their areas of responsibility. This is only a guide, for current information call your local fire department. **Be aware that if you live in the country, outside of a rural fire district's area, your house is not protected from fire.**

- ODF will respond to fires outside of rural fire districts, but is only equipped to control fire on vegetation, not homes.
- ODF is the agency responsible for slash disposal and burning for timber operations.
- It is very important to have a fire management plan.
- Keep maintenance current for your defensible area and access to your property for fire crews.

## Polk County Fire Districts



- AMITY RFPD
- SHERIDAN RFPD
- DAYTON FIRE DISTRICT
- SPRING VALLEY RFPD
- DALLAS FIRE DISTRICT
- SOUTHWEST RFPD
- SALEM SUBURBAN RFPD
- POLK COUNTY FD #1
- HOSKINS-KINGS VALLEY RFPD
- WILLAMINA FD

# Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI)

Most of Polk County is forestland, and with an increasing movement of people to rural homes, there is an increased risk of wildfire if proper management is not practiced.

## About the Wildland-Urban Interface

The Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) is the area where houses meet or intermingle with wild land vegetation. The WUI is where wildfire poses the largest risk to humans and structures. It is also an area of widespread habitat fragmentation, introduction of invasive plant and animal species, and great loss of biodiversity. Practicing fire prevention methods will greatly reduce your risk of loss in case of fire. See [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org).

## WUI in Polk County

Polk County has thousands of acres located inside areas classified as Wildland-Urban Interface. The expansion of the WUI in recent years has significant implications for wildfire management and strategies. The WUI creates a situation in which fire can move without difficulty between structural and vegetative fuels. Its recent growth has exponentially increased the likelihood that wildfires will threaten structures and people.

## Christmas Trees

Polk County is home to many Christmas tree operations. A prospective Christmas tree farmer should do the research into the work and risks involved with this type of operation. In most cases the typical person may only see a Christmas tree farm once a year to get their holiday tree, or drive by farms when traveling. Having a Christmas tree farm takes a lot of work and requires year-round management. Many Christmas tree farms need to be properly licensed through Oregon Department of Agriculture.

## Tips on growing Christmas Trees

In order to maintain sustainable tree farming, you must practice good land stewardship.

- Make sure that your site is appropriate for the trees you plan to raise.
- Have your soils tested. Well-drained fertile soils are best.
- Good access, permanent well-built roads are longer lasting for annual operations.
- Control weeds, some may be hazardous to the health of your plantation.

- Prevent erosion beginning with pre-planting planning such as having your trees planted along the contours of the hill, having a low-growing grass cover between rows, and erosion control methods for any problem areas that arise.

## Hunting & Fishing

Throughout Polk County there are many opportunities for hunting and fishing. Be aware that most of the county is private land, so permission is required to hunt or fish in most places.

## Rules and Regulations

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) publishes an annual synopsis for hunting (big game and birds), and fishing. Wildlife laws and regulations are enforced by the Oregon State Police, Game Division. If a landowner is experiencing trouble with hunters or fishermen, they should first contact their local ODFW office or the County Sheriff.

## Gaining Access to Lands

Hunters and fisherman can only enter private land with the owners' permission. Remember to be courteous when on, or asking to use, private property. Many landowners may grant access to their land for hunting or fishing if asked nicely and if you keep their property how you found it or better. Some landowners may prefer not to grant access, but remember that it is their right to choose, and be respectful of their wishes.



# Gardens and Landscaping

Areas of the Willamette Valley have rich, fertile soils that can produce an abundant garden. Time in the garden can reduce stress, save money, create an aesthetic environment, and provide wildlife habitat. Landscaping with native plants can be an attractive and cost effective alternative to traditional landscaping. Natives reduce maintenance and attract wildlife.

## Climate

The Willamette Valley growing season is mild, with warm days offset by cool nights, and an annual average rainfall of 50 inches. Winter temperatures can drop below freezing and in summer months can reach over 90° F.

Native plants are recommended for landscaping. They are suited to the local climate and are usually more tolerant of disease and require less water than non-natives.

## A Good Garden Spot

Quality garden produce comes from having good soil. Loamy soil provides drainage and nutrients for plants. Adding organic matter, like sand or vermiculite, improves the texture and production of your soil. It is important to add compost regularly to maintain healthy soil. If you purchase soil or manure for your garden, be sure that it has not been treated with a long-term residual pesticide, and that the manure is aged.

## Pests

Pests come in many forms. Some can be easily addressed with inexpensive homemade solutions. The OSU Extension Polk County Master Gardeners can help with insect identification and provide useful do-it-yourself control methods.

Deer are abundant in the Willamette Valley. They will be found in suburban gardens regularly. They will treat your vegetable garden like a salad bar. The best defense is a tall fence, at least 8 feet high. For ornamental gardens that cannot be practically fenced, plant varieties that deer find less appealing.

Some pests can be controlled through natural predation. Working *with* wildlife instead of *against* it helps to avoid unintended consequences. The use of poisons can be a short-term solution with long-term consequences. They can poison pets, absorb into plants, and leach into water supplies. Live traps can be rented to capture and relocate small animals, and large perches can be installed to encourage birds of prey to target problem areas. You can check with your local SWCD for more valuable tips.

## Fertilizers and Mulches

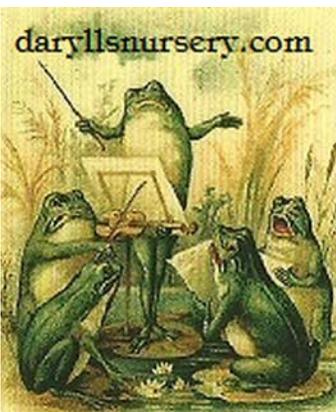
Fertilizers and mulches can come in many forms, including chemical, composted, and organic. Home composting can be an inexpensive and effective fertilizer for your garden and landscape. Often you can find local livestock owners willing to give away or sell manure or compost, which is excellent for fertilizing. Over-fertilizing can damage plants, pollute streams, and pose a health hazard to children and pets. Always follow the recommended application rates listed on the product.

## Hunter Arboretum and Botanical Garden

This beautiful park offers visitors a chance to admire native northwest plants and trees. The arboretum nestles against the Rickreall Creek creating a rich riparian biome that complements the many species of plants and trees. Benches are located throughout the arboretum to offer the visitor a chance to relax and appreciate the many aspects of the park's setting.

**631 SW Park St Dallas, OR 97338**

**[www.delberthunterarboretum.org](http://www.delberthunterarboretum.org)**



## DARYLL'S NURSERY Since 1992

**Growers of Drought & Deer tolerant plants,  
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15770 W. Ellendale Road Dallas, OR. 97338 (503) 623-0251*

# Things You Should Know and Expect When Living Next to an Orchard or Vineyard

---

## Orchards

Orchards are private property on which orchardists are dependent for making their living. If you have backyard fruit trees, you can do your neighbor a big favor by controlling insects and disease.

**Winter** (November through February): Pruning time. There will be workers throughout the orchard. In early February you will hear the high pitched whine of orchard sprayers as they cover the dormant trees with oil and sulfur to control insects and diseases. Expect to see signs warning about the chemical use and entry restrictions.

**Spring** (March through June): Frost control, bloom time, and insect and disease control season. From dusk until past dawn you will hear the wind machines and possibly feel the blast of air as they turn in circles moving the cold air from the orchard. In late March to early April you will again hear the whine of the orchard sprayers just before, during, and after bloom, protecting the fruit from insects and disease.

**Summer** (July & August): Growing, irrigation, and harvest time. The orchard sprayers will be doing the last sprays for worms and other damaging insects. Harvest season depends on the type of orchard. Forklifts will be gathering fruit bins and loading trucks in the orchard to haul the fruit.

**Fall** (September & October): Harvest time continues into early October, after which you will again hear the sprayers while they apply foliar nutrients (fertilizer chemicals) to the leaves and again applying oil and sulfur to control overwintering insects. Other fertilizers are applied to the ground.



## Vineyards

In recent years vineyards have gained popularity throughout the Willamette Valley. Polk County maintains its place with the second largest number of vineyard operations in the Willamette Valley. Like other farming operations, vineyards generate noise from field equipment such as tractors and sprayers in the spring, and bird control devices (cannons and bird distress calls) near harvest. **Homeowners living next to a vineyard should recognize that these are normal operations and are protected by the state Right to Farm Law.** This law protects growers from court decisions based on customary noises, smells, dust, or other nuisances associated with farming. It also limits local governments and special districts from administratively declaring certain farm and forest products to be nuisances or trespasses (ORS 30.930).

## Vineyards and Pesticides

The most common pesticide used in local vineyards is sulfur for control of powdery mildew. It may be applied numerous times during the spring and summer and is only a problem if one has an allergy to it. It does however omit an odor that could be considered offensive.

If living next to a vineyard you should know that phenoxy-type herbicides (such as Crossbow) used for poison oak, wild blackberry, and thistle control are devastating to vineyards. Even small quantities can volatilize during high temperatures and carry on the wind for miles. You should be very careful with herbicides. **Oregon Department of Agriculture can fine for spray drift and require violators to pay for all damage and losses incurred by the vineyard.**



# Vineyard Establishment and Management

Oregon is known as a world leader for quality wines, especially for the much vaunted pinot noir grape. Polk County is one of the best areas in the state for growing high quality fruit. Whether you are new to viticulture and will establish a vineyard or will manage an existing one, here is some information to bring success to your hard work while protecting the natural resources that contribute to the fame of Oregon wines.

## Vineyard Establishment

When establishing your vineyard, be aware of laws that could affect your project. If you need to clear trees and shrubs from your property to establish the vineyard, make sure you contact the local Stewardship Forester with the Oregon Department of Forestry. Foresters will provide guidance for safe and legal removal of vegetation. Visit [www.livecertified.org](http://www.livecertified.org) for a network of vineyard information.

After trees have been removed you will need to comply with agricultural water quality laws. Your Regional Water Quality Specialist with the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) Water Quality Program can go over ways to create your vineyard while protecting soil and streams and keeping your neighbors happy.

The Willamette Valley has an average rainfall of 50 inches per year. When planning a vineyard, be aware of the timing, amount, and frequency of precipitation events. Rainfall amounts will vary throughout Polk County. Elevation and slope exposure are important determinants of rainfall patterns. From October through May one may expect to see 2 - 9 inches of rain in a month. Rainfall over a 24-hour period can reach extremes of over 4 inches. Events like these on unvegetated hillsides will result in excessive and costly erosion, and potential law violations.

When designing a vineyard layout that minimizes erosion and protects streams, consider these management ideas:

- Construct roads to specified engineering standards. Include culverts, rocked or grassed roads, and grassed or lined drainage ways.
- Make Filter and buffer strips to protect streams.
- Install straw mulch contour strips, wattles and bales.
- Establish a cover crop between rows and on uncropped areas.
- Create sediment control basins and other water control structures.
- Use deep ripping to break up any restrictive soil layers, especially when planting farm ground that was conventionally tilled.
- Install drainage tile if tests indicate excessive water accumulates in the soil profile.
- Establish adequate stream setbacks with permanent and appropriate riparian cover.
- Put in all soil erosion Best Management Practices by October 1.

## Vineyard Management

Once your vineyard is established, maintaining a cover crop between rows and on uncropped areas is one of the most effective and cost efficient ways to minimize erosion. Keeping your riparian setbacks healthy with a variety of trees and shrubs will protect water quality and fish habitat.



The advertisement features a central image of a red tractor in a farm setting. To the left is the AG WEST SUPPLY logo, which consists of a stylized leaf inside a red and gold diamond shape. To the right is the CASE II AGRICULTURE logo. Below the tractor image is a row of five black boxes with red borders, each containing a location name in white capital letters: HARRISBURG, RICKREALL, WOODBURN, HILLSBORO, and MADRAS.

# Habitat Restoration

The Willamette Valley has historically been well populated with unique and sensitive habitats that are now becoming rare or threatened. Often these are linked to threatened and endangered species of plants and wildlife. There are several programs that landowners can sign up with that provide technical and financial support for habitat restoration.

## Oak Savanna

One of Polk County's and the Willamette Valley's most charismatic trees is the Oregon White Oak (*Quercus garryana*). The foothills and lower elevations of Polk County contain some of the best examples of Oregon White Oak habitat in the Willamette basin. These habitats are critical to supporting a wide variety of plants and animals, and are second only to riparian areas in the amount and diversity of wildlife use. For a number of reasons, the oak habitat is disappearing. There is a growing awareness of the importance and scarcity of White Oak habitat.

Polk County's Oregon White Oak can be considered a living cultural resource, as oaks were supported and maintained by Native American use of fire. The acorns from oaks were an important food source, and the understory was used to grow camas, other bulbs and corns, and grass seed that was used as grain. Many of the same food sources were also important to wildlife, creating food plots attracting deer, elk, and other game to Native American hunters. Once European settlement occurred, fire became unwanted, and competing vegetation that had been controlled by fire began to grow.

Oaks savannas are also important habitat for Fender's Blue Butterfly, listed as endangered in the Willamette Valley.

Today, oak stands throughout the Willamette Valley are encroached upon by competing vegetation such as conifers (especially Douglas fir), maples, other hardwoods, and even young oaks. Traditionally the threat of encroachment would have been eliminated through regular burning that had taken place for thousands of years.

Most oak savanna has been cleared and converted to agriculture or forestry. When a Douglas fir overtops a neighboring oak, the sun-loving oak becomes shaded and is essentially doomed. Without logging to eliminate the Douglas fir, and maintenance to replace traditional use of fire, the oaks will eventually become completely shaded and die.

Recognizing that most of the last remnant oak stands are disappearing, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife declared Oregon White Oak woodlands and savanna to be a Strategy Habitat needing protection and restoration under the Oregon Conservation Strategy. For more information on the Conservation Strategy, visit the ODFW website at [www.dfw.state.or.us/conservationstrategy](http://www.dfw.state.or.us/conservationstrategy).

Polk SWCD and the NRCS have programs and grants available to help landowners restore oak, riparian, and other habitats.

### Polk Soil and Water Conservation District

[www.polksacd.com](http://www.polksacd.com)  
503-623-9680

#### The Nature Conservancy:

[www.conservationgateway.org/  
ConservationPlanning/ToolsData/Pages/  
stewardshipcalculator.aspx](http://www.conservationgateway.org/ConservationPlanning/ToolsData/Pages/stewardshipcalculator.aspx)  
or [www.nature.org](http://www.nature.org)

#### Greenbelt Land Trust:

[Greenbeltlandtrust.org](http://Greenbeltlandtrust.org)



Fenders' Blue Butterfly



Streaked Horned Larks are birds of wide open spaces with no trees and few or no shrubs. The streaked horned lark nests on the ground in sparsely vegetated sites dominated by grasses and forbs. It is a threatened species.

# Pollinators

When you think of pollinators you may only think of honeybees. There are many types of pollinators important to our economy and natural landscape. Pollinators come in many forms including native bees, European honey bees, bats, butterflies, and hummingbirds. They play an important role in pollination for plants to fruit and reproduce. When you add plants to your property, consider using native plants that will attract or are critical host plants for our local pollinators. Many of these plants and the pollinators they attract are beautiful and you will be pleasantly rewarded with their presence.

Many of these plants are very attractive additions to an area, as well as providing other functions such as shade, stream bank stabilization, pleasant fragrance, and benefiting other wildlife by providing important feed sources. When landscaping, try these beneficial native plants:

Kinnikinnik	Mock-Orange	Pacific Crabapple	Douglas Spirea
Willow	Bleeding Heart	Indian Plum	Madrone
Currants	Ocean Spray	Salmonberry	Red Columbine
Cascara	Oregon Iris	Serviceberry	Big Leaf Maple
Salal	Wild Rose	Oregon Grape	Snowberry
Yarrow	Dogwoods	Vine Maple	Thimbleberry
Lupine	Elderberry	Snowberry	



*Bleeding Heart*

## Feral and Invasive Species

A feral organism is one that has escaped from domestication and is living as if wild. An invasive species is one which invades a habitat to the detriment of native species. Invasives can be plants or animals. **To learn about invasive plants see page 24-25.** Many feral animals are considered invasive. All invasive plant and animal infestations start from a source. Be responsible and do not unwittingly become the source or contribute to invasive problems. They cause damage to ecosystems and spread beyond managed areas. Invasive animals such as bullfrogs and nutria are extremely destructive to native wildlife and habitats. Nutria can cause problems such as pond dike failure and carrying diseases. Bullfrogs kill birds and native amphibians such as western pond turtle and red-legged and pacific tree frogs.

Feral animals are becoming a danger to many habitats and the food native wildlife need. If you have animals you can no longer care for, take them to the local shelter or use free advertising in the paper or online to re-home them. Abandoned or dumped domestic animals such as cats, rabbits, or pigs can cause great harm to the environment. Feral cats are responsible for killing numerous threatened birds each year. Rabbits can reproduce rapidly and cause hardships on vegetation, dilute the wild gene-pool, and spread diseases. Feral hogs are extremely destructive. They destroy habitat, contribute to population declines of wildlife, ruin crops, and spread disease. Pigs are very prolific and revert to a 'wild' version within a couple generations.

**If you see feral animals (especially pigs) or would like more information, please contact ODFW or Polk SWCD immediately! Rapid response to a potential infestation is of utmost importance to preventing its spread!**



**1-866-INVADER**



# Backyard Wildlife

One of the benefits of living in the country is having an abundance of wildlife. While most wildlife can be quite enjoyable to have around, some can become nuisances. Learn about attracting desirable wildlife.

## Wildlife Habitat

The three basic components of wildlife habitat are food, water, and cover. Food requirements will naturally vary by wildlife species, from seeds and berries for birds to the grasses, forbs and shrubs preferred by deer and elk. Water on or near your property in the form of a pond, stream, or developed stock-water will increase the variety of wildlife you will attract. Cover is needed for hiding from predators, traveling, nesting and shelter.

## Creating Wildlife Habitat is Easy

Whether you live on a small place or a large ranch, you can help increase the amount of wildlife habitat by making a few simple changes to your backyard environment. By growing a diversity of native vegetation and maintaining a water source, you will provide the necessary elements of good wildlife habitat. The type of plants you use to provide food and cover will determine the type of wildlife species that are attracted to your property.

## Dead, Dying, and Hollow Trees and Logs

Many people are not aware of the value of dead, dying and hollow trees, as well as logs for wildlife. Dead trees provide homes to dozens of species of birds, mammals, reptiles, and amphibians in our area. Fish, plants, and fungi also benefit from dead and dying trees. Consider leaving snags and downed, woody material on your property unless they pose a safety hazard.

## Livestock

While larger animals are rarely attacked, smaller animals are more vulnerable. All animals need shelter from the elements with smaller animals needing protection at night when most predators are active. A solid barn or other sturdy enclosure that can't be entered by predators will be needed to protect your animals. Keep in mind that if you have chickens, skunks and other small predators can enter through even small spaces.



## Tips

- Consider planting native plant species first. Wildlife prefer them to non-native species.
- Plant a diversity of vegetative types and heights.
- Select plants that flower and bear fruit at different times of the year.
- Leave snags and some downed, woody material for perching, hiding, and nesting.
- Plant small grains or large-seeded grasses for wildlife food.
- Develop ponds, stock water tanks, or other watering facilities.
- Bat boxes raptor next structures, and bird nest boxes can encourage species that often feed on insects and rodents.

## Predators and Pests

Many predators are common in the Willamette Valley including bears, cougars, bobcats, coyotes, and foxes. It is important to keep in mind that many species have "territory" that you are moving onto. While most wild animals will avoid humans, their natural instinct is to kill easy prey, which often includes livestock and pets. Precautions can be taken to avoid or minimize conflict.

## Pets

Avoid attracting predators and pests by not leaving pet food outdoors. Also, keep pets in at night. In some areas, house cats and small dogs can fall prey to predators even during the day. It is best to keep cats indoors (also for the sake of declining bird populations) and keep pets from roaming. Larger dogs can sometimes become predators, especially if roaming in packs, *and can be legally shot if found chasing livestock.*

### Monmouth/Independence Area Chamber of Commerce

309 N. Pacific Ave  
Monmouth, OR 97361  
503-838-4268

[micc@micc-or.org](mailto:micc@micc-or.org) / [www.micc-or.org](http://www.micc-or.org)

The Chamber works with every means available to maintain and improve the livability of the Monmouth and Independence area so that people will want to establish their homes and businesses here.



## Birds

In the Willamette Valley pests can come in the form of birds. Every winter thousands of geese frequent Polk County. Wintering Canada geese primarily eat grass, most of which is grown for grass seed production. They can cause a lot of damage to crop production. Other birds are also known to be obnoxious, such as the European Starling. These birds are native to Europe, but have naturalized in the United States. They are detrimental to native birds here by competing for feed and nesting sites.

## Dealing with Pests

When you move into rural areas, you are moving into areas populated with deer. While deer are beautiful to watch, they are also attracted to gardens and landscaping. You may wake up to find your prize roses were browsed by hungry deer, or that everything you planted in your garden has disappeared. Netting can be draped over roses and ornamentals as a deterrent, but you can also select landscaping varieties that deer do not prefer to dine on (*see the Sunset Western Garden Book for such varieties*). A tall fence around a vegetable garden is recommended.

Ground squirrels and other small animals can also pose a problem. It is not recommended that poison be used to eliminate them since non-target species and pets can die from eating the poison or poisoned animal. **Be very cautious if you use poison.**

For tips on dealing with nuisance animals and how to avoid wildlife conflicts, consult the book *Wild Neighbors: the Humane Approach to Living with Wildlife*, by John Hadidian, or call the

**Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
(ODFW) at 503-947-6000**

or

[www.dfw.state.or.us](http://www.dfw.state.or.us)

## Living With Wildlife

Wildlife is an important component of the rural lifestyle in the Willamette Valley. As a rural landowner, you can apply a number of simple practices to enhance the natural habitat and diversity of wildlife on your property. A variety of vegetation including small grains, native grasses, shrubs, and trees are important habitat for wildlife. A year round water supply on your property will increase the variety of wildlife on your land. Remember, domestic animals prey upon wildlife. They can also be preyed upon by wildlife. You can get advice from the ODFW on measures to take to protect your pets, as well as the wildlife that surrounds you. Please refer to the Resource Directory on the inside front cover for contact information.

## Found Wildlife

If you find a wild baby it is important to realize that its best chance for survival is to be raised by its natural parents and that it is probably not abandoned. If you find injured wildlife, contact Chintimini Wildlife Rehabilitation Center (North Corvallis) or Turtle Ridge Wildlife Center (South Salem) for more information on what to do.

**Chintimini Wildlife Rehab Center**

[www.chintiminiwildlife.org](http://www.chintiminiwildlife.org)

**541-745-5324**

**Turtle Ridge Wildlife Center**

[Turtleridgewildlifecenter.org](http://Turtleridgewildlifecenter.org)

**503-540-8664**



## Specialty Organizations

There are many professional organizations that work in Oregon to promote conservation of natural resources, wildlife, and native species. In addition to various state and federal agencies, some of these specialized organizations are active in Willamette Valley. For more information about these groups visit their websites. **This list is not all-inclusive.**

- **The Wildlife Society** enhances the ability of wildlife professionals to conserve diversity, sustain productivity, and ensure responsible use of wildlife resources for the benefit of society. [joomla.wildlife.org/Oregon](http://joomla.wildlife.org/Oregon)
- **Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation** (RMEF) mission is to ensure the future of elk, other wildlife, and their habitat. [www.rmef.org](http://www.rmef.org)
- **Oregon Foundation for Blacktail Deer** (OFBD) promotes knowledge of and raises money for black-tailed deer, wildlife, and their habitat. [www.blacktail.org](http://www.blacktail.org)
- **Ducks Unlimited** conserves, restores, and manages wetlands and associated habitats for North America's waterfowl, also benefitting other wildlife and people. [www.ducks.org](http://www.ducks.org)
- **The Freshwater Trust** is a not-for-profit organization that actively works to preserve and restore freshwater ecosystems. [www.thefreshwatertrust.org](http://www.thefreshwatertrust.org)
- **The Xerces Society** is a non-profit organization that protects wildlife through the conservation of invertebrates and their habitat. [www.xerces.org](http://www.xerces.org)
- **Native Plant Society of Oregon** works to promote, conserve, and study native plants and habitat in Oregon. [www.npsoregon.org](http://www.npsoregon.org)
- **Oregon Oak Communities Working Group** promotes the conservation and restoration of oak ecosystems. [www.oregonoaks.org](http://www.oregonoaks.org)
- **Associated Oregon Loggers** (AOL) provides services to logging related businesses and information about the industry and forestry to the public. [www.oregonloggers.org](http://www.oregonloggers.org)
- **Society of American Foresters** (SAF) is a national scientific and educational organization representing the forestry profession in the United States. [www.safnet.org](http://www.safnet.org)
- **Association of Consulting Foresters** (ACF) promotes good and ethical stewardship of forest resources with landowners through consultation. [www.acf-foresters.org](http://www.acf-foresters.org)
- **Sustainable Forestry Initiative** (SFI) promotes sustainable forest management. SFI works with conservation groups, resource professionals, and landowners. [www.sfiprogram.org](http://www.sfiprogram.org)
- **SOLV** is a non-profit organization that brings together agencies, businesses, and individual volunteers in programs and projects to enhance the livability of Oregon. [www.solv.org](http://www.solv.org)
- **Institute for Applied Ecology** (IAE) is a non-profit organization with a mission to conserve native ecosystems through research, restoration, and education. [appliedeco.org](http://appliedeco.org)

## Programs to Help with Financing

Farm financing assistance can come in many forms other than traditional loans including:

### Federal programs

- USDA Farm Service Agency
- Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)

Resources to help you navigate these and other financing options include:

### Friends of Family Farmers:

<http://www.friendsoffamilyfarmers.org>

### Center for Rural Affairs:

[http://www.cfra.org/resources/beginning\\_farmer/fundingsources](http://www.cfra.org/resources/beginning_farmer/fundingsources)

**USDA Small Farm Funding Resources:** <http://ric.nal.usda.gov/small-farm-funding>

**Polk/Marion Farm Service Agency (FSA):** <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/Oregon/index>

### State programs

- Beginning and Expanding Farmer Loan Program (Aggie Bond Program)
- Individual Development Accounts (IDA)
- Microloans
- Local Small Business Development Centers



The FSA administers and manages farm commodity, credit, conservation, disaster and loan programs as laid out by Congress through a network of federal, state and county offices. These programs are designed to improve the economic stability of the agricultural industry and to help farmers adjust production to meet demand. **650 Hawthorne Ave. SE, Suite 130, Salem, OR 97301 or call 971-273-4801**

## Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde



At the western extremity of Polk County along the Yamhill River lies the Grand Ronde Reservation. This area was first occupied by the Yamel Kalapuya Indians. In the 1840's settler farmsteads were established, but in 1855 the U.S. Army and the Office of Indian Affairs bought most of the property and established the Grand Ronde Indian Agency as part of the Coast Reservation. The agency consisted of a blockhouse fort for a military garrison and several agency buildings at Fort Yamhill. In 1855, Indian tribes from southwestern Oregon, the Willamette valley, the Umpqua Valley and the Columbia River were removed to the agency and settled in encampments around the Yamhill River. In all there were about 27 tribes from seven ratified treaties who came to Grand Ronde.

In late 1855 additional tribes from southwestern Oregon were removed to the agency for about two years while awaiting the construction of the Siletz Agency, where they moved to in 1857. Also in 1857 President Franklin Pierce signed an Executive Order establishing the Grand Ronde Reservation, with approximately 90,000 acres of land. For the next 100 years the tribes lived together and formed a common ancestral relationship as a community. In 1891 many of the tribal members gained allotments under the Dawes Indian Allotment Act, while the rest of the unallotted land was sold. In 1954 the reservation was terminated under Public Law 588, The Western Oregon Indian Termination Act. Termination caused poverty, dissociation, and a loss of cultural continuity and for almost 30 years tribal members worked towards restoration. In 1983 The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon was restored. In 1988 the tribe was given the Grand Ronde base of over 9000 acres as its reservation.

### Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde

9516 Grand Ronde Road  
Grand Ronde, OR 97347  
503-879-5211

[www.granderonde.org](http://www.granderonde.org)

Today the tribe is developing a thriving community through economic development, housing and jobs. The tribe, with its prestigious Spirit Mountain Casino and Spirit Mountain Community Fund, are a benefit to the entire region.

# Major Watershed Councils of Polk County

## Luckiamute River

**The Luckiamute River** is a major drainage in the southern portion of Polk County. The basin includes both the Luckiamute River to the south and the Little Luckiamute River to the north. The watershed area encompasses approximately 368 square miles. The two primary land uses within the watershed are agriculture and forestry.

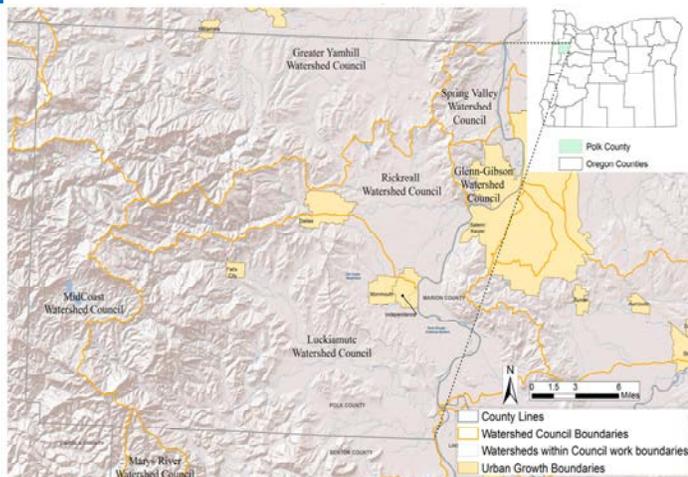


For more information regarding programs and volunteer opportunities on both Ash Creek and the Luckiamute please contact:

**Kristen Larson - Council Coordinator**  
226 S. Main, Suite L, Independence, OR  
503-837-0237  
info@luckiamutelwc.com  
http://www.luckiamutelwc.org

## Ash Creek

**Ash Creek** is located in the east central portion of Polk County. The creek flows generally west to east from the foothills near Dallas to the Willamette River at Independence. The watershed drains approximately 36.4 square miles and flows through portions of Monmouth and Independence. The highest point of the drainage is about 900 feet in elevation and the lowest is at 130 feet where Ash Creek enters the Willamette River. *Ash Creek is under the jurisdiction of the Luckiamute Watershed Council. Please contact them for more information on programs or volunteer opportunities.*



## Glenn and Gibson Creeks

**Glenn and Gibson Creeks** originate in the West Salem Hills. Draining an area of 10.4 square miles of West Salem, the upper reaches flow through undeveloped property and are located along steep terrain with flatter slopes near the basin outlet. Streams associated with this drainage system flow down steeper gradients than on the valley floor and channels tend to be narrow and lack broad floodplain or riparian areas. *The Glen Gibson and Rickreall share a coordinator.*



## Rickreall Creek

**Rickreall Creek** originates in the Coast Range at an elevation of about 3,500 feet and flows eastward to an elevation of 140 feet at its confluence with the Willamette River. The watershed includes forested areas in the Coast Range, the Dallas urban area, and agricultural areas further east. The Rickreall watershed area encompasses approximately 98 square miles.



For more information regarding programs and volunteer opportunities at both the Glen Gibson and Rickreall please contact:

**Lucas Hunt - Council Coordinator**  
580 Main Street, Suite A, Dallas OR  
503-623-9680  
Lucas.hunt@polkswcd.com

## South Yamhill River

Approximately one-sixth of the **Yamhill River** basin is located within Polk County. The Bureau of Land Management claims that approximately 307 stream miles exist within the Yamhill River watershed, with mainstream tributaries generally flowing south toward the South Yamhill River.

For more information on programs and volunteer opportunity please contact:

**Luke Westphal - Council Coordinator**  
NE Ford Street, Suite 9  
McMinnville, OR 97128  
503-474-1047  
www.gywc.org



# Acknowledgements

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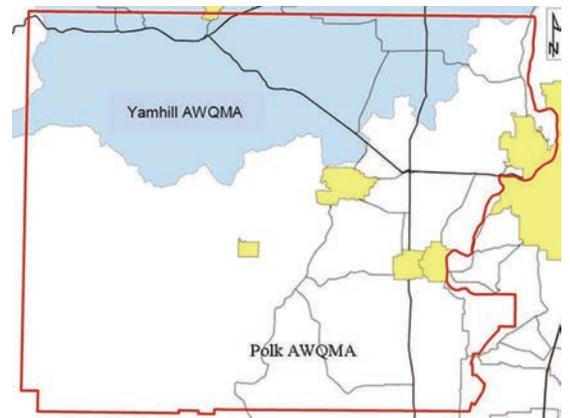
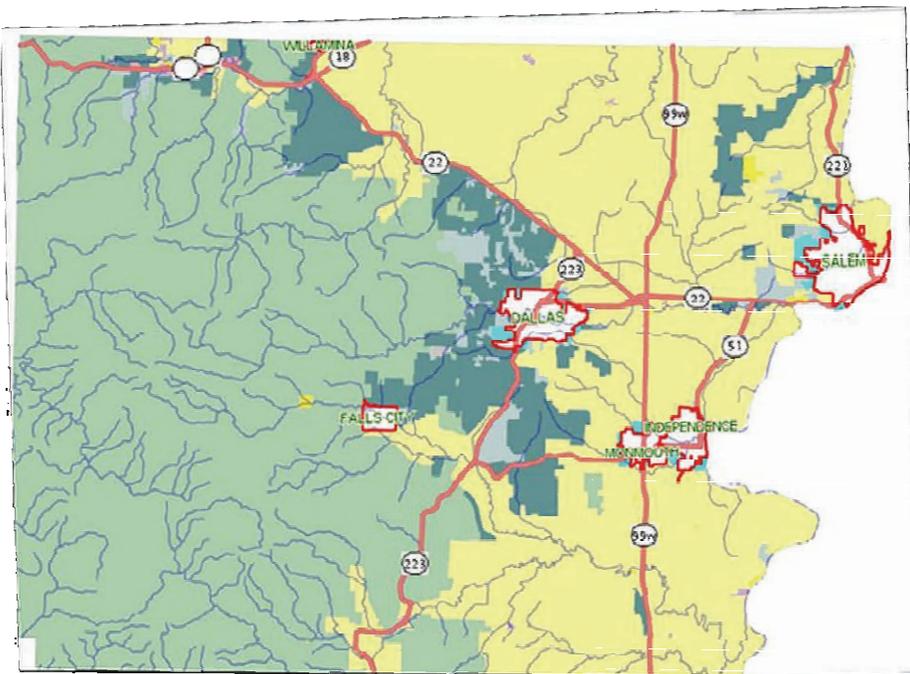
**Thank you to the following agencies:**

Natural Resource Conservation Service  
 Oregon Department of Agriculture  
 Oregon Department of Forestry  
 Oregon Department of Water Resources  
 Oregon State University Extension Service  
 Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde  
 Dallas Chamber of Commerce  
 Salem Chamber of Commerce  
 Polk County Public Works  
 Polk County Sheriff Department, & Animal Control  
 Monmouth-Independence Chamber of Commerce

*Special thanks given to Jackson Soil and Water District for allowing Polk SWCD to use their Rural Living Handbook as a guide and format.*

**Polk County Zones (page 5)**  
<http://maps.co.polk.or.us/geomoose2p>

**Ag Water Quality Management Areas (page 12)**



- |             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| Agriculture | Public        |
| City        | Quarry site   |
| Farm/Forest | Urban Reserve |
| Farm        |               |

*Note: While every attempt has been made to correctly paraphrase and/or quote laws, codes, and regulations, if any discrepancy between this handbook and the official wording should arise, the official wording prevails.*

The Polk Soil and Water Conservation District complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Any one who needs special accommodations and wishes to attend a meeting or workshop please call the District office at 503-623-9680, 48 hours in advance.

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Conservation District**

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The mission of the Polk SWCD is to promote the conservation and the wise use of natural resources in Polk County. Anyone who is interested in knowing more about the SWCD should call the office in Dallas at **503-623-9680** or email **[polkswcd@polkswcd.com](mailto:polkswcd@polkswcd.com)** for more information.