

Soil & Water Conservation Districts Work for You!

Soil and Water Conservation Districts are working in every county of the state providing many public benefits and services, such as:

- ◆ They help landowners control wind and water erosion on construction sites, farms and public lands.
- ◆ They help communities and individuals prevent mudslides and damage to homes.
- ◆ They plant trees and other land cover to hold soil in place, provide wildlife food and cover and beautify neighborhoods.
- ◆ They help protect beaches, streams and rivers.
- ◆ They help with flood control and drought management program.
- ◆ They teach young people about natural resources and why they must be protected.
- ◆ They protect farmlands to assure an ample supply of high quality food.
- ◆ They help prevent water pollution.
- ◆ They encourage protection of our best farmlands from conversion to non-farm uses.

- ◆ They help provide recreational opportunities for public enjoyment.
- ◆ They help improve and establish habitat for fish, and wildlife.
- ◆ They help manage and conserve water supplies for all beneficial uses.

How Are They Funded?

Funding for Soil and Water Conservation Districts is available from a variety of sources, but not all Districts are successful in acquiring them. For example:

- ◆ Oregon's Department of Agriculture provides each District with yearly operating funds **IF** the District can match them locally.
- ◆ Some Districts have conservation equipment they rent to local landowners.
- ◆ Grants are sometimes available through the state or federal government and other sources.
- ◆ Some Districts receive county funding.
- ◆ Some receive local contributions.
- ◆ Districts can, by law, seek to establish a tax base or operating levy through local election processes.
- ◆ State law allows Districts to issue general obligation and special assessment improvement bonds.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD):

The SWCDs were created gradually in Oregon following the establishment of the Commission in 1939. Presently there are 45 districts in the state, each of which is governed by either a five or seven member board of directors. These District directors are elected on Oregon's general election ballot and serve terms of four years without pay.

The District's major concern is conservation and wise use of renewable natural resources. Conservation practices benefit all Oregonians by protecting our food and fiber resource - the soil. The result is cleaner water, more productive crop, pasture, range, forestland, and improved wildlife habitat.

SWCDs are involved in efforts to improve the environment. They assist state agencies, as well as councils of government and counties in developing water quality plans under the Federal Clean Water Act. They help farmers and ranchers develop conservation plans that control erosion, conserve water and improve crop and forage production. They also help communities and land developers obtain soils information and other resource data to help develop comprehensive plans.

The Polk SWCD is a source of public, local information and education on natural resources.

We can provide assistance in the following areas:

Technical Assistance — Site specific land, plant, soil, and water information.

Land Management — Plan and implement conservation practices to improve ecosystem health.

Funding Opportunities — Grants and programs coordinated with other agencies to accomplish habitat restoration.

Conservation — Helping landowners protect important wetland, riparian, and oak savanna habitats.

The Polk SWCD hosts, or participates in a number of community events each year such as:

Native Plant and Fall Bulb Sales — Each February, get native plants, and in the fall bulbs, for landscaping at great prices.

Board Meetings — Second Wednesday of each month. Call the office for time and location. Public attendance and input is encouraged.

Polk County Fair — Come see the Polk SWCD booth at the fair every August.

Annual Meeting — A look at Polk SWCD accomplishments for the past year.

Workshops — Sharing information with the public and partners.

GET INVOLVED

Volunteer

The Polk SWCD welcomes all volunteers and works hard to find a position that will be mutually beneficial.

Volunteer positions include:

Associate Director — Officially appointed by the Board to provide knowledge and experience.

Intern — Positions range from paid, school credit, and regular volunteer hours.

- Outreach and Education
- Fieldwork
- In the office

Volunteers assist at Polk SWCD events, at the office and more!

Donations — Money or material donations go toward scholarships, educational materials, Annual Meeting, or the SWCD General Fund.

Contact Information

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Oregon's Soil and Water Conservation Districts are Equal Opportunity Employers, providing services to the public and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital or family status, or disability.

CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

What's A Soil & Water Conservation District?

Soil and Water Conservation Districts are legally defined as subdivisions of state government, but they function as local units led by a locally elected board of directors who serve without pay. **District Directors are your neighbors, men and women from your business and agricultural communities who understand the ecological relationships of soil, water, plants, animals and humans.**

Much of the District's work involves matching government assistance with local conservation needs and influencing land managers to use conservation practices.

Who Are These People?

School teachers, business leaders, government leaders, landowners, farmers, ranchers, senior citizens, students and other volunteers who care about our natural resources and who want to do something to help protect, conserve and restore them.



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