

## **Monthly Update 2020**

### **November**

#### **Providing Thanks!**



Hello Colleagues,

It is a little more difficult in these times of crisis to pinpoint what we have to be thankful for, but over the past year, projects have moved forward and we have kept our staff intact but often remote, even with the fire, the virus and a downturned economy. Thanks to all of our perseverance, conservation work continues.

We appreciated your attendance at the 2020 OACD Annual Meeting and Workshops. The PowerPoint presentations and Zoom recordings are located on [our website](#) under the events tab. Advocacy documents referred to are in the member only section. (The password remains the same—if you need it, let me know.) We added membership to both our Advocacy and Working Lands Committees during the annual meeting and we thank those stepping up and look forward to the work these committees will be sharing with the members in the future.

We at OACD hope you have an enjoyable Thanksgiving celebration, even though smaller and far different this year, as we continue to fight virus conditions.

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Jan Lee, Executive Director; OACD Officers Terri Preeg Riggsby, Jeff Rola, Ken Bailey, and Tim Newton; and OACD Directors Tom Straughan, Jason Faucera, Justin Ferrell, and Ken Masten



## Upcoming Events

### December 7-10: Legislative Interim Committee Meetings

See [Oregon Legislature website](#) for which committees are meeting, agendas, and time and day. Then go to "committees." Meetings are virtual.



### December 8-9: Sage Con Virtual Summit

Visit a virtual summit on topics related to Oregon's sage grouse program--from 8:00–12:00 each day on December 8 and 9. Details and registration for the fifth annual event found [here](#).

### December 10: ORCP Webinar - Drinking Water Providers Partnership 2:00-3:30

This webinar will feature Julie Harvey, Oregon DEQ's Drinking Water Protection Program Coordinator, who will provide an overview of grant opportunities for projects that have a federal nexus and address environmental conservation and restoration projects in community/municipal drinking water source areas. This is a great opportunity for councils, districts, and land trusts to work with our federal partners and public water systems on projects that are mutually beneficial. We will also feature a panel of current

member organizations who currently partner on DEQ projects.

**December 14: OACD Board Election**

Ballots due by 5:00 p.m. Send to [jan.lee@oacd.org](mailto:jan.lee@oacd.org).

**December 16-17 OWEB Virtual Meeting**

**December 16: 8:00-2:35; December 17: 8:00 to 2:10 p.m.**

Check OWEB's website for link to meeting.

**December 17: OACD Virtual Board Meeting**

**1:00-3:00 p.m.**

At this meeting, the new board will be seated and will select its officers. A link to the virtual meeting will be provided in December to district managers. Be sure to get the link from your manager if you are interested in attending. There is always a time at the beginning of the meeting to provide public comment.

**JANUARY 29<sup>th</sup>: OACD Advocacy Training**

**9:00-11:30**

The new legislature will meet to organize January 11-16, 2021, and the 2021 session will begin on January 19. This advocacy training will update members on the makeup of relevant committees, leadership, and other information to encourage your participation in the 2021 session. A recording of the basic legislative/regulatory training is available at the



members website and you might want to refamiliarize yourself with that in the interim if you didn't attend the webinar earlier.

**NACD Annual Meeting**

The meeting, originally scheduled for New Orleans, will now be a virtual meeting. Registration has been reduced to \$50. The first week of business meetings is scheduled for February 1-5; and the second week featuring speakers and workshops is scheduled for February 8-10. [Register now](#).

## Funding Opportunities

**Watershed Restoration Funding**

The Drinking Water Providers Partnership shares a common vision that watershed restoration is an important and effective way to provide clean, inexpensive drinking water

to communities while protecting native fish populations. Conservation practitioners in the Pacific Northwest are invited to apply for the program, which has a cap of \$600,000.

Applications are due by January 8 2021: <https://geoinstitute.org/initiatives/dwpp>. The program is a partnership among GeoS Institute, US Forest Service, Oregon DEQ, US EPA, BLM, and WA State Dept. of Health.

### **OWEB Wildfire Response Grant Offering**

The OWEB Board approved on October 30<sup>th</sup> a new grant offering for responses to wildfire. Applications are now being accepted, offering a maximum of \$75,000 per grant with funds required to be spent by June 30, 2021. This grant does not displace or reduce other grants awarded in the remainder of this biennium. Only one application will be accepted per fire of the 13 major fires this year, requiring coordination among partners at the local level. Local governments, conservation non-profits and tribes can work together to elect one eligible applicant per identified fire. There is a list of the applicable fires at the OWEB website. Funding is limited to those entities not eligible for USDA NRCS and FSA Farm Bill funding programs.



For the eligible funding activities, contact Kathy Leopold at OWEB for further information: [Kathy.leopold@oregon.gov](mailto:Kathy.leopold@oregon.gov) or visit [this page](#).

### **NACD Technical Assistance Grants**

Another round of grants will be offered in the spring of 2021. More details to come. Consider projects that might meet your needs. See the [NACD website](#) for the history of projects granted.

## **News Updates**

### **State Revenue Forecast**

The Office of Economic Analysis issued the state's third quarterly revenue report earlier this month. The current forecast did not show any significant changes since September with projected revenues increasing very modestly. Most of the conversation focused on downside risk:

- Oregon has seen significant job losses in manufacturing and there are fears those job losses will not recover quickly.
- Reduction in labor force and need for financial assistance has been driven by

350,000 workers unable to work due to school closures and inability to work at home.

- While the stock market has been on a historic upward trajectory, there are fears of a coming market crash that would reduce revenues and trigger a double dip recession.
- Anticipated significant impacts on state resources will occur if there is not a federal relief package.

Lottery funds have increased in the last quarter, but with restrictions on bars and restaurants as a result of the freeze, those revenues will decrease in the next quarter. “Even with the acceleration in growth following a widely available medical treatment next year, it will still be a couple of years before the overall economy returns to health”, the [last quarter report](#) concludes.

### Gilliam SWCD NRCS Grant



NRCS granted \$14.6 million nationally this month in Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) to develop new technologies for agriculture. One of the Oregon projects funded will allow Gilliam SWCD to evaluate and develop innovative methods of inventorying NRCS conservation practices on landowner properties and certifying implemented practices using unmanned aerial systems. A step-by-step guide to collect safely and efficiently needed in-field information relevant to

practice compliance will be developed to share with partners. The manual would share how the project will allow for certification of acres treated, linear feet of fence installed, etc.



### East Multnomah SWCD's New Executive Director

“I could not be more honored to work with the extraordinary team of professionals at the EMSWCD,” said Nancy Hamilton. “The organization is doing critical work across such a broad spectrum of priorities, and with a strong commitment to seeing how we can contribute to addressing the looming climate crisis, I’m looking forward to getting started.” “The board has full confidence in Nancy’s ability to lead the organization,” said Board Chair Carrie Sanneman. “District staff have continuously shown their resilience, creativity, and compassion through the COVID pandemic. We know they will continue to thrive with an experienced and empathetic leader like Nancy.” Nancy started work with EMSWCD on November 16.



### Poll Shines Positive Spotlight on Farmers

Farming is the most respected profession in the U.S., garnering the highest rating of any

industry in a nationwide poll. Farming and agriculture topped Gallup Inc.'s annual Business and Industry Sector Ratings for the first time in the poll's 20-year history. Ratings were boosted by a COVID-19-fueled jump in public awareness of food and how it gets to the table, according to Gallup. Overall, farming and agriculture received a 69% positive rating and an 11% negative rating; the 58% net-positive is up 17 points from 2019. Read more [here](#).

### **500 'Murder Hornets' Found in Nest Eradicated in Washington**

Seattle — Washington state entomologists confirmed Tuesday they discovered more than 500 Asian giant hornets — including nearly 200 queens — in the nest they pulled from a tree last month. The Washington State Department of Agriculture, or WSDA, announced that one of its teams had found the nest, the first in the United States, inside a tree near Blaine, Whatcom County. A team of WSDA workers set out to destroy it the following day in hopes of preventing the invasive insects from establishing a foothold here and decimating vulnerable bee populations. [More...](#)

### **Updated OSHA Rules**

Two sections of the OSHA Temporary Rule Summary have been updated since it was originally published. The full [temporary rule](#) is going into effect on **November 16, 2020** to address COVID-19.

SDAO shares that the use of masks, face coverings, or face shields is mandatory:

- **Indoors at all times** unless you are alone and inside a private workspace such as an office with a door.
- **Outdoors** any time you cannot “consistently assure” that the 6-feet of physical distance is maintained between all individuals. Said another way, if you can guarantee that 6-feet will be maintained between people, you can choose to not use face coverings or face shields outdoors.
- **Applies to all associates** - requires your district to “*ensure that all individuals (including employees, part-time workers, temporary laborers, customers, vendors, patrons, contractors, etc.) at the workplace or other premises subject to the employer’s control wear a mask, face covering, or face shield as source control in accordance with the requirements of the Oregon Health Authority’s Statewide Mask, Face Covering, Face Shield Guidance.*”
- **In Vehicles** - Face coverings or face shields are required to be worn inside a vehicle. Commercial and emergency response drivers can adjust or remove their masks if the mask becomes a hazard or visual impairment.
- **District must enforce** - Your district must ensure that your “code of conduct” policies allow you to enforce these rules. It would be in your best interest to engage in a discussion with your district’s local attorney to ensure your supervisory staff understands how to accomplish this.

### **Senator Merkley unveils ag bill that includes tens of millions for Oregon priorities**

Sen. Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., who serves as the top Democrat on the Senate Appropriations

Subcommittee on Agriculture, announced Tuesday that he has won support in the Senate agricultural spending bill for a wide variety of agriculture, housing, food assistance, and rural business priorities that will benefit Oregon's farms and families throughout the state. Merkley will now push for this bill to pass and be signed into law as Congress negotiates a spending package to avert a government shutdown in December. Read [this article](#) for more details.

## New State Requirements under "Freeze"

The governor announced last week a statewide "Two-Week Freeze" to take effect November 18 and last through December 2. However, some counties such as Multnomah, will be in a 4 week freeze, depending on the progress of case numbers. "Maybe we thought the fight was over, but it's not," said Dr. Dean Sidelinger, the state epidemiologist. "This is likely the most dangerous time in Oregon." [guidance document](#).

### Restrictions under the new framework apply statewide, including:

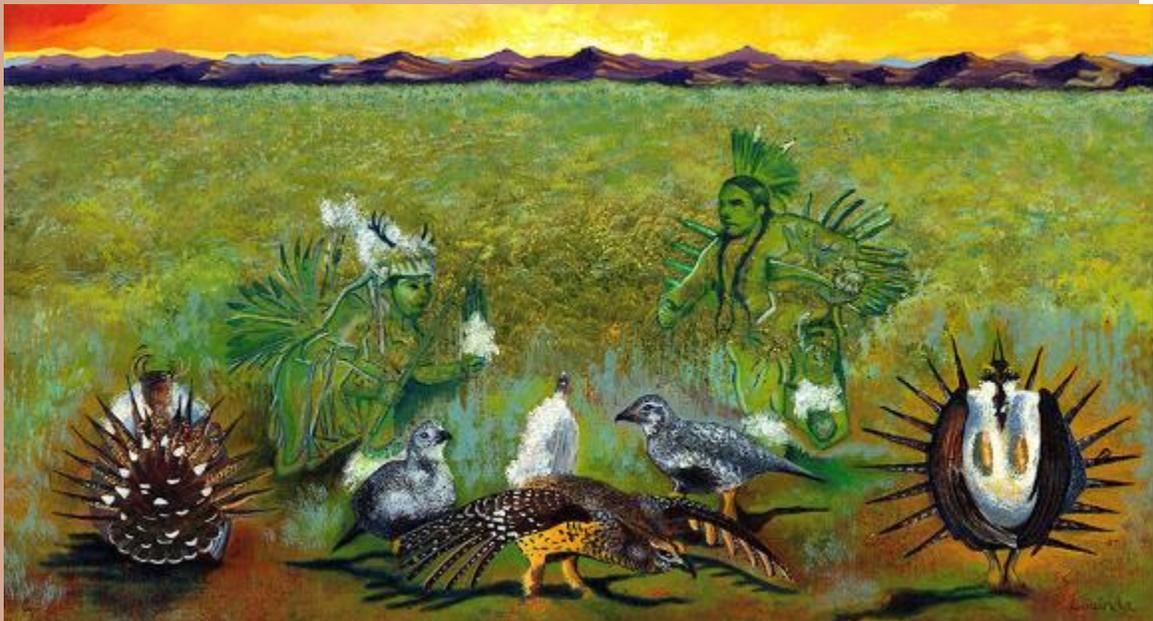
- Limiting restaurants and bars to take-out only.
- Closing gyms and other indoor recreational facilities, museums, and indoor entertainment venues.
- Closing outdoor recreational facilities, such as zoos, gardens, outdoor pools, and entertainment venues. *Note that City parks and playgrounds will remain open.*
- Requiring all businesses to mandate that employees work from home when possible and to close offices to the public.
- Limiting grocery and retail stores to 75% capacity and encouraging curbside pickup.
- Prohibiting visits at nursing homes and long-term care centers.
- Limiting social get togethers to no more than 6 people from a maximum of 2 households.
- Expanding mask guidelines to outdoor and indoor settings, except when eating or drinking.
- Limiting worship services to 25 people when indoors, 50 people when outdoors.

## Native American Heritage Month

November is Native American Heritage Month. Working with our tribal neighbors to complete conservation projects has been successful in expanding conservation work in several areas of the state. Recently at the OACD Annual Meeting Jason Robison, Land,

Resources, and Tribal Program Officer of the Cow Creek Band of the Umpqua Tribe of Indians, spoke to guidelines to use in working with tribes. This is a great piece with lots of relevant information. Take a look at the [PowerPoint at our website](#) as we join in celebrating Native American Heritage Month with our neighbors.

## NRCS Honors Native Americans with New Brochure, Story Map



**Across the West, the NRCS is working with Native Americans to restore sagebrush range for wildlife, indigenous food systems, and livestock.**

November is Native American Heritage Month and the NRCS is highlighting its growing partnerships with Native Americans through a new brochure and story map. The brochure features Washoe Tribal member Louinda Garity's artwork on one side, with both Western Tribal Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and successful partnership stories with NRCS on the other side. Many of these partnerships are part of SGI conservation projects that have helped simultaneously improve sagebrush rangeland for sage grouse and other wildlife while making tribal lands more productive for livestock.

We've proudly incorporated both the brochure, which can be downloaded, and the story map on our website. Scroll down to the Tribes section to explore the map and download the brochure. We've also included links to four of the NRCS-Tribal partnerships that focus on sage grouse habitat restoration.

[LEARN MORE](#)

## NACD Seeks Response to DEI Survey

### Investing in Farming for Resiliency with Oregon's Farmers and Ranchers

OACD has been working with OrCAN regarding working lands incentives and other issues. OrCAN participated in a working lands panel at the OACD annual meeting, along with the Oregon Agricultural Trust (see presentations at the OACD website <https://oacd.org/oacdpress/annual-meeting/>). I asked OrCAN to share information about their programs for landowners and that follows. - Jan

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Oregon Climate and Agriculture Network is about the implementation of on-farm solutions, rooted in science, that store more carbon in the soil *and* work for a farmer's bottom-line. In collaboration with farmers, our goal is to help build a regenerative agricultural economy for Oregon that can thrive through disruptions big and small.

How will we get there? We are focused on supporting the implementation of best conservation practices on working farms and ranches in Oregon. These best management practices include: no till, cover cropping, composting, other organic amendments like biochar, hedgerow and riparian plantings, rotational grazing, silvopasture and agroforestry, and alternative manure management.

To see these best practices out on our coastal dairy farms to eastern wheat fields, from Hood River's Fruit Loop orchards to nurseries and diverse vegetable farms throughout the state, OrCAN has identified three key interconnected needs: a producer driven network, a robust education program and policy advocacy that works for farmers on the ground.



*Improving soil health is central to OrCAN's work. Photo of Blue Raven Farm by Studio VIII Photography*

### ***Building a Collaborative, Inclusive, Producer Driven Network***

The scale and scope of implementing these solutions will require focus, collaboration, and information sharing that can happen best through a strong network. We are interested in better connecting policy, research, education, and the work of farmers and ranchers on the ground so they work together. We've found a unique enthusiasm and readiness for this network over the past six months from a variety of partners, including: state agency staff, NRCS, non-profit partners and OSU Extension staff.

### ***Building Capacity of Oregon's Producers***

Farming for resilience looks different depending on what crops a farmer is growing, at what scale, and which markets they are selling to. We recognize that the best pathway to catalyze change on farms is for farmers to hear from other farmers, whom they trust and can relate to. We'll identify producers in each region of the state, representing a variety of farm sizes and types, who can provide *farmer-to-farmer education*, sharing best practices with their peers. There are also existing farmer education programs in Oregon that farmers also trust and rely on, from OSU Extension to beginning farmer education programs. We will collaborate with these partners to develop educational materials to fit the challenges our farmers face.

### ***Policies & Programs That Fit Farms***

OrCAN is advocating for strong climate change mitigation on Oregon's farms and ranches through the state-wide directives set in motion by Governor Brown's Climate Action Plan. The Plan directs state agencies to take action on climate change and will intersect with agriculture in several ways. OrCAN is particularly focused on the work of

the Global Warming Commission and Oregon Department of Agriculture to propose state goals for climate change mitigation on Oregon's natural and working lands. In collaboration with our agricultural stakeholders, OrCAN is providing input to ensure that the state goals are strong on climate mitigation, practical for farmers, protective of farmworkers, and supportive of a resilient food economy.

### ***Collaboration is Essential***

We look forward to building partnerships with SWCDs throughout the state—some of our most trusted farm service providers. You could join the natural and working lands policy listserv or policy discussions with other SWCD leaders and collaborate with us on our education program on soil health workshops. Contact Ashley Rood for more information, [ashley@oregonclimateag.org](mailto:ashley@oregonclimateag.org)

## **OCEAN Receives NRCS Grant Award**

This month, the Oregon Conservation and Assistance Network (OCEAN) received a five-year \$500,000 grant from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). This award allows OCEAN to aid Conservation Districts in delivering Farm Bill program activities in their communities through coordination and training. NRCS benefits by OCEAN facilitating more efficient partnerships with Conservation Districts in Farm Bill Conservation Program delivery.



According to OCEAN president, Jeremy Baker, this grant will deepen and enhance its relationship with NRCS and will increase the number of on-the-ground conservation projects here in Oregon. "OCEAN has demonstrated considerable experience and expertise in delivering quality educational opportunities to conservation staff here in Oregon," says Baker. "Our organization has a strong history of providing the most comprehensive professional development for conservation district employees and other valued conservation partners in our region."

The funding from this grant will be used for a number of deliverables, including:

- Coordinate and track Conservation Planning Certification for District and Watershed Council employees
- Help District and Watershed Council staff manage their Job Approval Authority (JAA) by providing tracking and training
- Provide a yearly, state-wide Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

(CREP) training that focuses on both the programmatic and technical requirements

- Facilitate access to the USDA-NRCS information technology system including eAuthentication and LincPass card access and yearly Information Security Awareness training
- Advise Districts who hold contracts with NRCS in compliance with policy, regulations, and procedures, including how to navigate federal grant management systems
- Increase public and partner awareness of successful collaborations between NRCS and Conservation Districts/Watershed Councils by researching and writing collaboration success stories that highlight locally-led Farm Bill conservation projects

OCEAN is currently accepting applications for an Executive Coordinator who will oversee the implementation of these grant deliverables. An Assistant Coordinator position is expected to be filled as these services become available to ensure Districts' needs are effectively met.

OCEAN is a membership organization dedicated to providing capacity building, education, and professional development opportunities to District and Watershed Council employees and will continue to grow to meet future educational demands. The OCEAN board of directors encourages all District staff to become members in the organization, help maintain their District's information in the [OCEAN District Directory](#), and to provide feedback that reflects the needs and interests of conservation employees in their region.

## USDA Announces Updated Conservation Practice Standards

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has completed and published updates to its set of national conservation practice standards, which offer guidelines for planning, installing, operating, and maintaining conservation practices used by farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners nationwide. 58 standards have been updated or revised since August.

[Read the news release](#)

## Soil and Water Conservation Commission Appoints New Member

The SWCC appointed Al Hrynyshyn from the Upper Willamette SWCD as its newest commission member at its November 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. In other commission business the SWCC discussed the recent survey completed by SWCDs regarding board eligibility requirements for election of directors. This summary can be found at the [member section of the OACD site](#).

Further discussion of the eligibility requirements will be discussed at the commission's future meetings.

## Conserving Water and Power through Irrigation Water Management

By Todd Peplin, Deschutes SWCD

A Landowners Perspective - In the heart of the Three Sisters Irrigation District lies an area spotted with several small farms that produce hay under the clicking sounds of impact sprinklers. On one such farm lives Lisa Worcester, who raises horses and produces hay. For Lisa, irrigating is not just a process of applying water to plants; it is a science of determining the right amount of water needed for the crop.

Partnerships are the key to successful conservation - Complex problems require diverse solutions. To solve these resource issues, a partnership formed among the Three Sisters Irrigation District (TSID), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), **Deschutes Soil and Water Conservation District (DSWCD)**, and the local agricultural producers to utilize USDA's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). Through RCPP, Lisa and her neighbors were able to replace the antiquated irrigation delivery system and take advantage of pressurized water made available from a recent canal piping project near their properties. In addition, landowners received assistance from the Deschutes Soil and Water Conservation District (DSWCD) in developing their irrigation water management plans.

More can be found [here](#).

## Potpourri

- [How the West's wildfires impact crops](#) | High Country News
- [Chances for a La Niña winter in Pacific Northwest a 'sure bet,' meteorologists say](#) | [king5.com](#)
- [How the pandemic might play out in 2021 and beyond](#) | Nature
- [Northwest leaders urge holistic approach to four-state salmon recovery process](#) | WAWG
- [The group excluded from diversity programs](#) | Management Issues
- [Wildfires Emerge as Threat to Water Quantity Across Parched West](#) | Bloomberg
- [National Pickle Day: 5 facts that make pickles a big dill](#) | CNN
- [Soils offer solution to climate change, expert says](#) | [capitalpress.com](#)
- [Study finds salmon survival rates same with, without dams](#) | [capitalpress.com](#)
- [New research reveals flawed approach to salmon recovery programs](#) | WAWG
- [Like Movie Alien Pods, Murder Hornets are Extracted \[VIDEO\]](#) | 1027 KORD
- [Harvesting Trees in the Right Place at the Right Time](#) | USDA
- [Forest management is one tool for combatting climate change in Eastern Oregon](#) | [capitalpress.com](#)

**Please let OACD know of district projects or issues we can feature in future newsletters.**

**Best,**



**Jan Lee, Executive Director**

**Oregon Association of Conservation Districts**

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<https://oacd.org>

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**Thank you for your engagement in OACD!**

If you have questions about OACD and the services we provide Districts, or would like to provide feedback, contact OACD leadership:

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503-545-9420

**Terri Preeg Riggsby**, OACD Board President

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**Who we are:**

OACD serves and represents Oregon's 45 Soil and Water Conservation Districts through advocacy and partnership with state agencies, legislators, and other not-for-profit organizations. We support the work SWCDs do in promoting voluntary conservation of Oregon's natural resources across the state.