

The Conservation Voice



POLK SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Assistance in Natural Resource Management

Promoting voluntary conservation and the wise use of natural resources in Polk County since 1966!

Winter 2015

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NATIVE PLANT SALE: FEBRUARY 6, 2016!

Understanding Native Plant Sale Stock Types

The new and improved Polk SWCD Native Plant Sale is back in 2016! To make the most out of the sale it is crucial to get to know the species and stock types available. **For species information check out the insert "2016 Plant Species at a Glance."**

Quick tips for planting success:

- Match each plant to a specific location on your property according to sunlight, moisture, and drainage.
- Keep the roots moist (not in standing water) until planting.
- Plant the plants (and give them a good water) in February so that the roots have a chance to establish before the warm weather hits.
- For bare root plants: make sure that the crown is at the soil level and the hole is big enough that roots are not bent back upwards.
- For container plants: make sure the crown is at the soil level, loosen soil below and on the sides of the hole, and loosen the root ball so the plant doesn't become root-bound after planting.
- Plan on watering plants throughout the first summer, and often if it is a particularly hot or dry season.

Our goal is to sell out of plants! This year's inventory will not be limitless; when we sell out of a plant, even during ordering, additional plants will not be added to our availability.

Order early and order online! Plants are available on a first come, first served basis, and online orders will be processed more quickly than paper orders. Native Plant Sale Orders are being accepted now through January 22nd at www.polkswcd.org/native-plant-sale-2 and in person at the District Office.

Plant Pick-Up: Plan on picking up any plants ordered ahead of time at the Polk County Fair Grounds (Building C) on **Saturday, February 6th between 9am and Noon.**

Overstock Sale: Excess bare root stock, books, and container stock will be available for purchase **February 6th from Noon to 3pm** at the Polk County Fair Grounds (Building C). If you're comfortable taking your chances with the inventory that remains after others have reserved their order, or just want to check out the stock that is available, this is the sale for you!

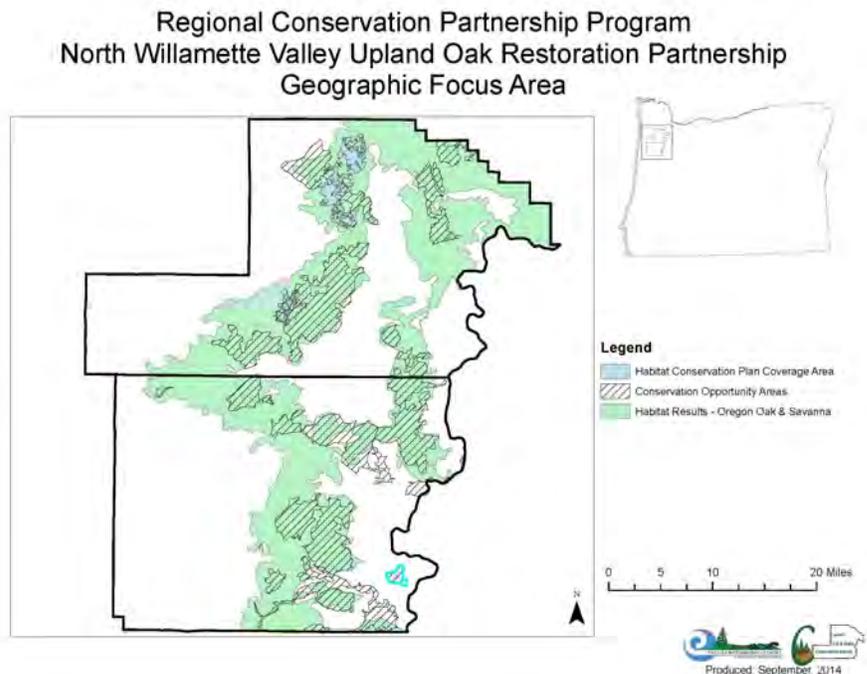
NEW in 2016! Purchase a raffle ticket to win stock that is not purchased by the end of the Overstock Sale!

Continued on page 6



RCPP: North Willamette Valley Upland Oak Restoration Partnership Update

This year the North Willamette Valley Upland Oak Restoration Partnership will be assigning a budget of up to \$270,000 in funding for oak woodland, oak savanna and prairie habitat improvements in Yamhill and Polk Counties. Applications for this program are available at the Polk SWCD and Yamhill SWCD offices in Dallas and McMinnville respectively and will be accepted through January 15th at the latest for consideration. Like most NRCS programs, eligible landowners are provided with comprehensive land use planning, alternatives and reimbursement cost share incentives for agreed upon work.



For those whom haven't heard about this exciting program yet, the Regional Conservation Partnership Program was born within the 2014 Farm Bill. It created a new way to fund high priority targeted restoration efforts and provide landowner assistance through the USDA and NRCS. The first program submitted and funded to Oregon NRCS is the North Willamette Valley Upland Oak Restoration Partnership. Targeting Yamhill and Polk County, the partnership is providing funds to restore oak and prairie habitats leading to improved conditions for critical wildlife species. The goal of inclusive partnerships between landowners, the NRCS, SWCD, and other partners (like the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and land trusts) is to provide a complete approach to land management. Funding for this program will only continue for the next few years before expiring.

Within the Willamette Valley current levels of oak, prairie and savanna habitats have declined to extremely low levels since European settlement; wildlife species adapted to oak and native open grassland habitats have very limited ground to flourish – especially endangered Fender's Blue Butterfly. This program improves remaining habitat and provides incentives to restore land previously dominated by these plant communities and raise populations of many bird species, amphibians, reptiles and vegetation that only occupy open oak and prairie habitat.

If your property includes oaks (*or used to!*), prairie (*or used to!*), or a mix of the two (*or used to!*) and you have a desire to restore those lands to their former state, the Polk SWCD can help provide technical and financial assistance through NRCS funding. If you already maintain these types of habitat, additional restoration efforts could be in order or perhaps it's time to pursue permanent land protection in the form of a conservation easement or other long term habitat protection.

For more information contact:

Marc Bell: 503-623-9680 x 103 or marc.bell@polkswcd.com



Marc

Glenn-Gibson Watershed Council Update

LOGGING AT THE SALEM AUDUBON SOCIETY NATURE RESERVE (by Eugenia Becker): The steep ravine in the middle of the upper part of the Salem Audubon Society Nature Reserve, informally called “The Canyon”, has been eroding, largely because of bikers creating unauthorized biking trails down into the canyon. The Glenn-Gibson Watershed Council obtained a small grant from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board to remedy this.



Photos: Allan King

Repurposed logs cut down on another project were positioned to block the unauthorized bike trails. To accomplish this, horse wrangler Jonathan Jude of Hobby Horse Farm in the Eugene area brought two draft horses to move and place the logs – Josh, a 20-year-old Chestnut and experienced logger horse, and Hal, an 8-year-old Roan just learning the ropes.



The horses dragged the logs through the Reserve and carefully placed them on the steep slopes – an impressive process to view.

A 50-foot chain link fence along the main path was installed to further discourage walkers or bikers from turning onto the informal bike trail. Native plants which have been planted in the area are beginning to thrive. Two new alternate trails created by the Reserve work party make the precipitous bike trails unnecessary, although, of course, less thrilling. Erosion has been diminished and safety increased.

Rickreall Watershed Council Update



FISH PASSAGE IMPROVEMENT (by Lucas Hunt): Skid Creek is a tributary that flows into Rickreall Creek a mile below Mercer Dam. The main road providing access to the basin crosses this creek by means of a culvert that was replaced approximately ten years ago. High flow events caused the culvert to carve out a shallow pool at the outlet, creating a passage barrier for Coho salmon and steelhead returning to spawn in Skid Creek. The culvert is in good condition and not a priority for replacement, however it blocks access to almost 2000 feet of high quality spawning and rearing habitat. Building

upon an existing partnership, Rickreall Watershed Council asked the Salem BLM to design an innovative vortex weir to improve passage at the site. Funding for the work was secured by RWC through the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board’s [OWEB] small grant program.

In October, a contracted excavator placed 2’ boulders in three u-shaped veins under the supervision of Salem BLM hydrologists. Smaller mixed-size rocks were then filled in to the spaces between the veins. The large rocks will hold the smaller rock in place and slow water as it exits the culvert, protecting the outlet from further erosion. Spawning surveys are currently being conducted as adult Coho return to the Rickreall. At the end of the year there should be sufficient data to determine how the weir is functioning.

The Rickreall Watershed Council would like to thank OWEB, Salem BLM staff, and Russ Brown & Sons Excavating of Dallas for making this project possible.



Polk SWCD Open House and Potlatch

Who: All Polk county residents and SWCD Partners

Where: Polk SWCD Office - 580 Main Street, Suite A Dallas

When: **Wednesday, December 9th, 2015 from 12 Noon - 2 PM**

Why: Meet the Polk SWCD staff and learn more about our operations and programs available to the public!



NRCS Update

DEADLINE FOR NRCS PROGRAM REGISTRATION IS JANUARY 15, 2016!!

CALL TODAY TO GET YOUR APPLICATION PROCESSED IN TIME!

Call Tom Finegan at 503-623-5534 x 109

If you haven't yet checked out the new Client Gateway, now is a good time. Client Gateway is a secure website that lets farmers and ranchers digitally sign documents, track payments, and request conservation assistance. At this time only individual clients can use this tool. Entities will be able to use it at a later date. Client Gateway registration is a 2 step process.

GET STARTED HERE: www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/cgate

It seems to be working well. You must make sure that Farm Services Agency has your email address in your Farm Records. A producer recently used it to sign their payment request form and it worked great! Client Gateway is a handy alternative for those producers living away from town. Client Gateway would save on unneeded trips to Dallas just to sign a piece of paper.

Call Sue Reams Soil Conservationist at 503-623-5534 x 114 if you need assistance.

Upcoming Events

December 2015

- 9 - PSWCD Board Meeting: 6pm Dallas
- 9 - PSWCD Open House 12-2pm, Dallas Office**
- 10- LWC Board Meeting: 7pm Volunteer Hall, Monmouth:
- 17 - GGWC Board Meeting: 5pm Location TBD: Call
- 24- RWC Board Meeting: 1pm Location TBD: Call
- 25 - Office Closed**

January 2016

- 1 - Office Closed**
- 13 - PSWCD Board Meeting: 6pm Dallas
- 14- LWC Board Meeting: 7pm Location TBD: Call
- 15- NRCS Program Deadline**
- 18 - Office Closed**
- 21 - GGWC Board Meeting: 5pm Location TBD: Call
- 21 - Native Plant Propagation Workshop: Rickreall Grange, 6pm - 8pm: Call PSWCD**
- 22 - NRCS Local Workgroup Meeting 9am-Noon**
- 28- RWC Board Meeting: 1pm Location TBD: Call
- 31- Feb. 14: OWEB Small Grant Window**

February 2016

- 6 - Native Plant Sale, Polk County Fairgrounds: Call PSWCD**
- 10 - PSWCD Board Meeting: 6pm Dallas
- 11- LWC Board Meeting: 7pm Location TBD
- 14 - Small Grant Window Closes
- 15 - Office Closed**
- 18 - GGWC Board Meeting: 5pm Location TBD
- 25- RWC Board Meeting: 1pm Location TBD
- 27-28 Polk Ag Fest @ Polk County Fairgrounds

For more information on these events please contact Polk SWCD or the appropriate agency/council.

Acronyms:

PSWCD — Polk Soil & Water Conservation District: 503-623-9680 x 5
NRCS—Natural Resource Conservation Service 503-623-5534 x 5
GGWC — Glen-Gibson Watershed Council: 503-623-9680 x 104
LWC — Luckiamute Watershed Council: 503-837-0237
NRCS - National Resource Conservation Service
RWC — Rickreall Watershed Council: 503-623-9680 x 104
GYWC — Greater Yamhill Watershed Council: 503-474-1047
OWEB—Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

Youth Education Update

During these last few months, the Polk SWCD has continued its long tradition of youth education and program development in Polk County. In September we taught a macro invertebrate class for the 4-H center, followed by numerous Salmon Watch classes covering water quality, riparian areas, macro invertebrates and salmon biology. We then went on to coordinate a "Build a Shelter Challenge" at the Willamette Heritage Center's Oregon Trail educational day. Finishing out our teaching for this quarter was a macro invertebrate class for Dallas Community School. We are currently working on setting up for numerous educational projects including a Water Quality monitoring project with LaCreole Middle School, hosting our own Salmon Watch program, as well as teaching a 6 week course for the Dallas Community School. This coming winter we will be attending the Polk County Winter Ag Fest, focusing on youth Farm to Table education. For more information please contact:

Sawyer Finegan: 503-623-9680 x 113 or sawyer.finegan@polkswcd.com

Save the Date: Mid-Valley Winter Ag Fest



It is the perfect time to reconnect rural and urban life through an event that will both promote small farms and be fun and educational for kids. On **February 27 & 28, 2016** the *Mid-Valley Winter Ag Fest* at the Polk County Fairgrounds will do just that. Space is limited, so be sure and get in on the ground floor of this exciting Polk County Event!

There will be a number of fun and educational events throughout the weekend geared to introduce rural and urban children to the joys of farm life. With a special appearance by Claudia Chinook! For more information contact:

Deb Thomas: 503-428-8224 or mvwagfest@gmail.com

Save the Date: NRCS Local Workgroup Meeting

Come give your input and help the NRCS set their priorities and goals for the next year and beyond. **January 22, 2016 from 9am-12pm.** OSU Extension Office: 289 E Ellendale, Suite 301, Dallas OR
For more info call Tom Finegan at 503-623-5534 x 109

Save the Date: Native Plant Propagation Workshop

January 21, 2016 6pm-8pm
Rickreall Grange Hall

Workshop is FREE!

- Propagate native riparian trees and shrubs
from cuttings and seed
- Winter Twig Identification
- Seed Collection Techniques
- Plant Collection and Permit Information



Information presented by the USDA Corvallis Plant Materials Center

Please RSVP by January 19, 2016: 503-391-9927 or office@marionswcd.net

Native Plant Sale: Continued

To understand more about the stock types offered, read on!

The majority of the plants sold at the Polk SWCD Native Plant Sale are *bare root plants*, these plants are pulled after they go dormant for the year (usually within a week or two of the sale) and are kept cold to prevent the plant growing before it reaches its final home in your soil. For herbaceous plants, bare root varieties are labeled as “Root Stock” (for bulbs, crowns, or other roots that include the growing point) and “Bare Root” (if some vegetative growth is retained along with root system).

For woody shrub and tree species the bare root varieties are a bit more complex. First of all they look like a twig with roots, although the evergreens will have visible leaves/needles. Unless otherwise specified, “bare root” stock type are one year old seedlings which have not been transplanted, known as **1/0** to the nursery industry. **C+I** is a cutting transplant; it is cut from existing vegetation and then is transplanted and develops roots for one year. **2/0** is a 2 year old seedling that has been grown for two years in a seed bed and has not been transplanted. **P+I** is a 2 year old plug transplant; it grows for one year in a tray as a plug and then is transplanted and grows on for an additional year. **I/I** is a 2 year old seedling transplant; it grows for one year in a seedbed, and then is transplanted and grows on for one additional year. In general the plants that have been transplanted or grown a second year are more hardy and have a better developed root system than 1/0 stock types. **P/F** is a 1 year old transplant; it grows 3 months as a plug, and is transplanted and grown on for 9 months.

In addition to bare root stock, some species are offered as *container stock*. Polk SWCD sells container stock for the plants that are less likely to survive as bare root transplants, or for growing larger plants which are likely to be used as ornamental plants in yards and gardens. The available container stock includes plugs (~4 cubic inches for herbaceous understory plants and slightly more for the madrone), 3.5 inch pots, 4 inch band pots, and gallon pots, all of which are filled with soil from the nursery and plant roots. The herbaceous understory plugs may appear to be just a cone of soil, however the roots and growing point are waiting underneath for spring to reveal their beauty. In general, container stock requires more watering than that of bare root seedlings because the root and/or plant mass are greater.

Liz is happy to answer your questions about the Native Plant Sale, and if we aren't selling a favorite of yours, let her know what plants you'd like to see in the 2017 sale!



Email: liz.graham@polkswcd.com or call 503-623-9680 x 107

NEW Staff Spotlight



Stacey Garrison - Resource Conservationist

Stacey is the newest member of the Polk SWCD. Her focus is on assisting agricultural landowners in identifying and implementing projects to improve water quality, reduce erosion and increase irrigation system efficiency.

Stacey completed her Masters in Water Resources Engineering from Oregon State University and researched the use of conservation practices in agricultural watersheds to improve water quality, reduce flooding and provide habitat. Prior to working for the District, Stacey worked for the City of Salem as a Watershed Specialist, collected and analyzed water quality data, supervised youth conservation crews and volunteered in the rehabilitation of wildlife.

She graduated from Willamette University with a Bachelors in Environmental Science and a minor in Biology, focusing her studies on water quality, hydrology and aquatic habitat. She also attended school in Quito, Ecuador as an exchange student. When not working, Stacey enjoys spending time horseback riding, fishing and hiking.

Contact Her About: Water Quality, Erosion Reduction, Irrigation Efficiency Drainage/flooding Rotational Grazing, Manure Management and General Land Management Planning

Polk SWCD Board of Directors

Polk SWCD is an Oregon Special District administered by seven locally elected directors who serve without pay for four year terms. Five directors represent landowners from each of the 5 geographic zones outlined in the map of the county to the right, and two at large directors represent the entire district. Directors meet monthly to administer the business of the Polk SWCD. The Directors donate hundreds of hours on behalf of the residents of Polk County and its natural resources.



Directors (left to right): Simmons, Crawford (inset) Gordon, Pender, McKibben (seated), Dalton, Woods

Matt Crawford
Zone 1
polkswcd.zone1director@gmail.com

David Simmons
Zone 2 / Chair
david.simmons@polkswcd.com

Chad Woods
At-Large / Vice Chair
chad.woods@polkswcd.com

Frank Pender
At-Large / Secretary
frank.pender@polkswcd.com

David McKibben
Zone 3
polkswcd.zone3director@gmail.com

Jock Dalton
Zone 4 / Treasurer
polkswcd4@gmail.com

Kelly Gordon
Zone 5
kgordonski@hotmail.com

Directors Emeriti
 Tom Thomson
 Jim Clawson
 Brian Sparks
 Terry Lamers
 Lois Loop

Associate Directors
 Rachel Walker
 Judy Beebe
 Mel Chase

Contact Us

Polk SWCD

Phone: 503-623-9680 x 5
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Marc Bell—Resource Conservationist
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Liz Graham—Resource Conservationist
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Lucas Hunt — Stewardship Forester
lucas.hunt@polkswcd.com Ext. 104

Stacey Garrison—Resource Conservationist
rcl@polkswcd.com Ext. 101

Sawyer Finegan—Youth Outreach
sawyer.finegan@polkswcd.com Ext. 113

Tom Wilson — Office Administrator
clerk@polkswcd.com Ext. 108

NRCS

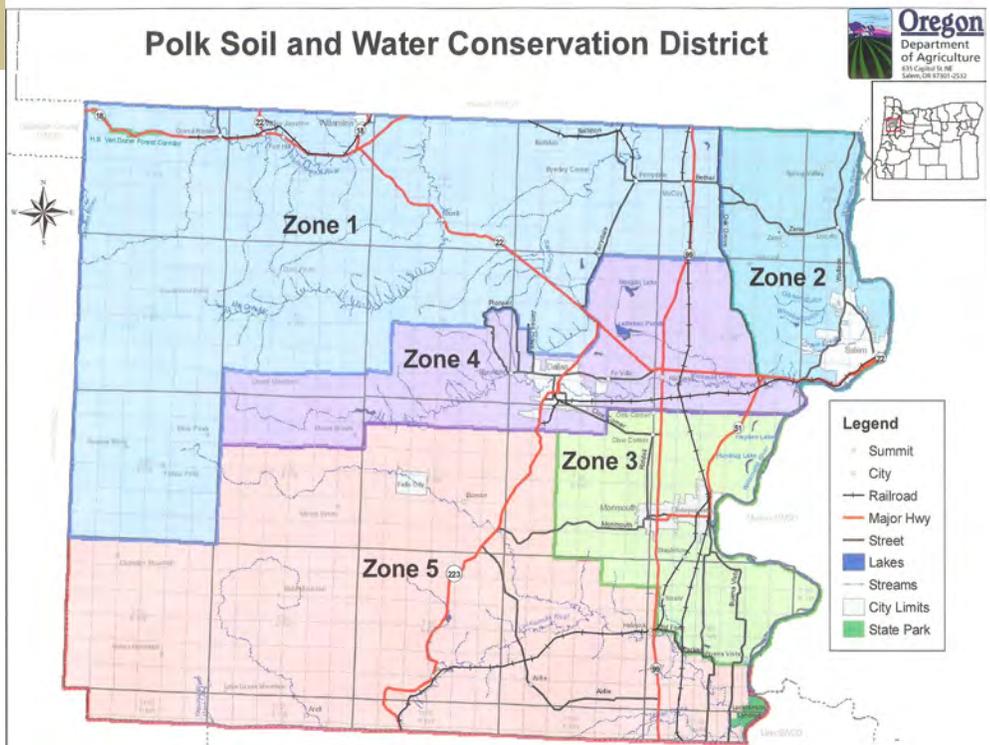
Phone: 503-623-5534 Fax: 1-855-651-8930
 580 Main St. Suite A, Dallas, OR 97338

Tom Finegan — District Conservationist
tom.finegan@or.usda.gov Ext. 109

Sue Reams — Soil Conservationist
sue.reams@or.usda.gov Ext. 114

Billy Burr — Accounting Specialist
billy.burr@wa.usda.gov Ext. 112

Dannelle Aleshire — Wetlands Specialist
dannelle.aleshire@or.usda.gov Ext. 115



Marion-Polk County FSA

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POLK SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Assistance in Natural Resource Management

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Phone: 503-623-9680
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WE ARE ON THE WEB!

WWW.POLKSWCD.ORG



Land Management Problems?

Do you own or manage a small farm, woodland, or wildlife acreage in Benton, Polk, or Yamhill county that needs improved land management practices? An OWEB Small Grant might just be what you're looking for.

OWEB small grants award up to \$10,000 for on-the-ground projects that work to improve the productivity and efficiency of grazing systems, animal waste management, erosion control, forest management practices, irrigation, streamside vegetation, rainwater collection, instream fish & wildlife habitat, culvert replacement, plant or animal pest management, noxious weed control and more...

Offered Quarterly beginning:

- 11/01/2015
- 01/31/2016
- 05/01/2016
- 7/31/2016

Small Grant Team
Contact: Marc Bell

marc.bell@polkswcd.com
503-623-9680 x5

Urban living solutions also available:

Storm water runoff collection systems, Flood storage, Improved surface drainage & Pest management. On the web at OWEB small grants.

Sponsored by:

The Polk Soil & Water Conservation District, Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde, Benton SWCD, Yamhill SWCD, Luckiamute Watershed Council, Greater Yamhill WC, and the Glen-Gibson and Rickreall WCs.

The Polk SWCD is a local public source of information and education on natural resources. We provide a number of services to help with responsible land stewardship such as:

- Technical Assistance - Plant ID assistance, soil and water information, invasive species controls, improvements and protection of wild-life habitat and water quality, manure management, and conservation practices.
- Land Management - Assistance in developing forestry, range, farm, wildlife, wetland, and small acreage management plans.
- Funding Opportunities - Grants, government programs, and coordinated efforts with other agencies are available to assist with habitat restoration and other natural resource related projects. Cost share programs are available to provide assistance with irrigation system improvements, forest stand improvement, and small farm assistance are also available.

Polk SWCD is an equal opportunity provider and employer.