



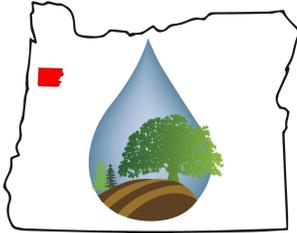
THE CONSERVATION VOICE

POLK SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

580 MAIN STREET, SUITE A, DALLAS, OR 97338
 503-623-9680 OR POLKSWCD@POLKSWCD.COM

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

Winter 2016



RICKREALL CREEK GETS FACELIFT *By Gail Oberst*

A distant helicopter rises suddenly from a Coast Range forest above Dallas. A long load dangles beneath it, hanging from a cable. “It’s a bonus!” says Lucas Hunt, project manager for the Polk Soil and Water Conservation District and the Rickreall Watershed Council. “There are two logs in that load!”



Hunt has reason to be excited. This project will help control sedimentation that is slowly filling Mercer Reservoir, the City of Dallas’ drinking water source. To accomplish improvements on nearly five miles of upper Rickreall Creek, Hunt, 28, is coordinating activities and resources between nearly a dozen parties, including permitting agencies, granting organizations, and private and public timber management companies. Improving a creek is no small feat, as watershed council members all over Oregon can attest. Next summer, a mile downstream of where Hunt is watching this Vertol 107 helicopter move logs, the Rickreall Watershed Council will implement a similar project using an excavator. While the average log placement project includes 6-10 structures and takes a week, this project placed 522 logs in 34 structures over a 4 day period.

“It’s a massive project,” Hunt said of the latest installation from an SWCD program that only had \$15k and 160 logs when he took it over in January 2013. Logs are positioned across or in the creek to slow waters and create pools that trap silt and gravel moving downstream. The structures serve a double purpose, providing habitat and spawning beds for native salmon. Log placements such as those in the Rickreall have been successful in mimicking what might have occurred if streams had not been scoured to bedrock and logged to the banks during the early 1900s. State and federal rules adopted in the 80s and 90s now regulate forest practices, and many timberland managers are willing to do even more than laws require for the waters that flow through their lands, said Hunt.
(Continued on pg. 9)

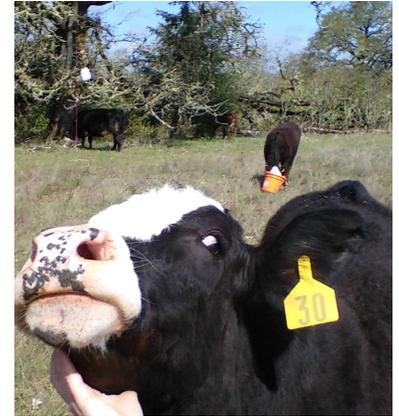
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Manager's Message

In October of 2015 my husband and I purchased a 113 acre ranch with 40 acres of crop producing ground and 73 acres of rangeland, in the foothills of the Oregon coast range. Over the last year our family and friends have spent countless hours repairing fences, the cattle barn, bringing utilities to the property, moving in a manufactured house, building up a small cow-calf herd of Angus cross beef cattle (15-20) (including; buying, setting up paddocks, breeding cows and heifers, and weaning 4 calves in our first year); and spraying/mowing many overgrown weed patches. Needless to say it has been a very tiring, but rewarding experience. And we know things will settle down soon! Ha!

Although my family has been in the grass seed industry for over 25 years, raising beef cattle and ranching is new for us. As the District Manager I like to practice what I preach, so my husband and I began the journey of creating an NRCS Conservation Plan. This plan will help us compare the goals we have as land managers, to the natural resource issues specific to our property. We will use it as a guide to help us produce the most income from crops and our small cattle operation, while maintaining the sustainability of our oak savannah style rangeland. Some new challenges the plan addresses are: manure management, pasture improvements to prevent overgrazing and to help reduce the purchase of hay for feeding, passive water storage/collection for off channel watering (and the possible permitting requirements for collecting water), reducing electricity costs of pumping water from our well, and beefing up our intermittent creeks with healthy riparian buffers.



Besides needing to address grazing on rangeland and crop production, we have a significant amount of mixed conifer and oak tree cover that needs management after 20 years without any. We asked Trout Mountain to create a forest management plan that would address this 73 acres. Our goals are to improve a slightly overgrown oak savanna, allowing a small mix of conifers, and using the rotational grazing of our beef cattle to control understory and maintain grassland. As land managers we recognize the benefits of allowing a rare ecosystem like Oregon white oak savannah to thrive, and all the benefits it provides to a unique set of wildlife.

Managing this amount of land is time consuming and requires thoughtful planning. As two middle class people who need to weigh the costs of property taxes, income tax, wildlife management, and land sustainability, in proportion to making a decent income, we are very happy to have wonderful resources like we do here at the Polk Soil and Water Conservation District. The District strives to help landowners make the best natural resource decisions that make the most sense for individual landowners. The District has two NRCS certified Conservation Planners in the office to serve you. One who focuses mainly on natural habitat restoration and another who focuses on farm planning for all sizes of agricultural producers. Please come by and talk with them soon. It's free, and we can find cost share programs and grants to offset costs of improvement.



Happy Holidays to Everyone!



**Karin Stutzman
District Manager**

Beneficial Bugs

Beneficial bugs are native insects, arthropods, crustaceans and a variety of other creatures that assist behind-the-scenes with pollination, pest control, and soil productivity. They provide an estimated \$4.5 billion value service annually in the United States. They fall into four basic categories: pollinators, predators of pests, parasites of pests, and soil builders. Most of us are familiar with pollinators, like butterflies and bumble bees. Predators include hoverflies, lady beetles, and spiders. Parasites of pests, called parasitoids, include wasps and tachinid flies that lay eggs in their hosts. Soil builders include earthworms and other tunneling creatures that aerate the soil and cycle nutrients.

Beneficial bugs need a few things to really provide their full suite of services: (1) food source, (2) shelter, (3) reduced or eliminated use of pesticides. For food sources, blooming native plants provide pollen and nectar to pollinators, as well as predators and parasitoids. Many predators and parasitoids of crop pests require pollen or nectar as a food source during a portion of their life cycle, or when pest levels are low. For shelter, beneficial bugs need an area that isn't disturbed by tilling, planting, discing, mowing, or other activities. Pesticides can harm or kill beneficial bugs.

Some ways to increase the presence of beneficial bugs on your property are to plant field borders with native blooming plants, reduce or eliminate mowing in non-crop areas, and minimize your use of pesticides. Many of these practices also improve water quality, create habitat, and can beautify the landscape. For more information, contact Stacey Garrison at 503-623-9680 extension 101 or rcl@polkswcd.com. **Also, register for our workshop on January 12 2017, "Beneficial Insects for Willamette Valley Crops".**

WWW.POLKSWCD.COM



Scaphinotus marginatus, a predatory ground beetle that eats slugs and snails. Other types of ground beetles eat weed seeds, aphids, rootworms, larvae of pests, and others.

Lady Bugs - Fun Facts

You may have seen clusters of ladybugs during the cold seasons and not thought much of it. These clusters may have been in various places such as on or under plants or even near your home. We saw this on one of our projects and it peaked our curiosity. This caused us to look into why they were doing this, leaving us fascinated.

Ladybugs are usually solitary in nature, however during the cold seasons they group up as shown in the photo. To discover the reason for this we need to look at an individual ladybug first. The ladybug is colored red and black not just for ascetics but to warn potential predators that they aren't good prey. This is a common defense mechanism in nature. Frogs, bees and numerous other creatures use this defense. The warning indicates to a predator that the prey in question will be poisonous or unpleasant to eat. In the ladybugs case it is the later. Ladybugs contain a bitter tasting fluid they can secrete from there joints and that is in there body. If a predator ignores the warning from the ladybugs colors it is met with a very unpleasant taste, sometimes causing the predator to release the ladybug. Ladybugs can excrete almost a quarter of their body weight this way; however this uses a lot of energy to do.

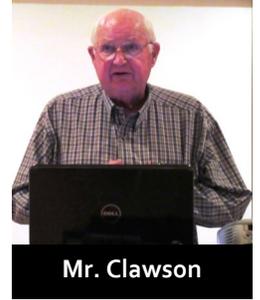


During the winter ladybugs go into a semi-hibernation state where they don't consume food and this prevents them from having the energy to excrete the foul fluids in self-defense. Their next best defense is just the warning their colors provide. To help protect each other, they group up for the cold season so that the warning is very noticeable to the potential predator and it increases size making them look larger.

2016 Annual Meeting

On September 15, the Polk SWCD held its **50th year anniversary and Annual Meeting**. The event was well attended as many people enjoyed the bluegrass string band *Wild Hog in the Woods* and the wonderful views and atmosphere of Beckenridge Vineyards in Dallas. An excellent steak dinner from Capricorn Catering was enjoyed by all who eat meat!

Chair David Simmons started off the night with introductions of directors and staff. District Manager Stutzman told the group of all the accomplishments the District staff had achieved last year, and highlighted the work to be done in the future. Director Emeritus James Clawson presented the history of the district, and provided context for the hard work involved by many people in its creation. Then Ken Jacroux, the viticulturalist for Beckenridge Vineyard gave a talk and tour, and answered questions about his agricultural operation. The evening concluded with dessert and the **2016 Polk SWCD Awards Ceremony**. **This years winners were:**



Mr. Clawson

- **Partners of the Year: Craig and Yolanda Zuger**
(Cornerstone Project Easement)
- **Intern of the Year: Stephanie Foster**
(Farm to Table Education Outreach)
- **Lifetime Achievement Award: Tom Finegan**
(NRCS, retired)
- **Lifetime Achievement Award: John Hansen**
(Founding member, Polk SWCD)



The Zugers



Ms. Foster



Mr. Finegan

The Polk SWCD would like to extend its thanks to everyone who attended, and **especially all of those that have worked over the last 50 years to help establish and run the Polk SWCD**. Because of their hard work, Polk County is much better place for us and future generations.



Beckenridge Vineyard

*Special recognition goes out to:
Wild Hog in the Woods,
Beckenridge Vineyards,
and Capricorn Catering.*



Wild Hog in the Woods



Mr. Jacroux



Manager Stutzman, Chair Simmons and Mr. John Hansen

Large Wood Placement on the Rickreall *(continued from pg. 1)*

Although constructed log jams are often placed by excavators, this project required moving logs from a mature forest with no roads to a sensitive and equally inaccessible creek. A helicopter proved to be the perfect blend of speed, precision, and mobility required to protect both resources. In three or four minutes, the Vertol 107 moves large logs from a thinned forest across the valley to upper Rickreall Creek, where a waiting spotter directs the pilot. After a minute or two of subtle positioning, the helicopter dips briefly to gently set the logs in place without damaging the banks or streambed. The cable goes slack as it disconnects, and the helicopter roars away for another load.



Lucas Hunt

Rickreall Creek has long been the subject of local improvements, both for the people of Polk County who depend on it for drinking and irrigation, and for fish. Local groups banded together to help slow sediment loosened by the 1987 Rockhouse Creek fire that left hills exposed above the reservoir. In 2003, the RWC worked with the City Arboretum to install 2 engineered log jams in Dallas City Park. In 2011, RWC helped a farmer replace a low water ford to improve fish passage. In 2013 the Polk SWCD used an excavator to install 160 logs in 8 structures in Upper Rickreall creek. This project, Hunt hopes, will continue to improve the waters that run from the Coast Range through Dallas and into the Willamette east of Rickreall. Since Mercer Reservoir was built, returning salmon native to the 12,300-acre watershed have been trucked above the reservoir's dam to maintain populations. As proof that the structures are forming pools and trapping sediment, the salmon appear to be thriving. Below the ridge, from a bridge near a structure built three years ago, Jason Dunkin, a watershed council member who grew up riding motorcycles and fishing in these hills, said he looks forward to the day when his council's work will create a place for young fish to grow, and older ones to spawn. "See that," he points to the tell-tale rolling wave in a shaded pool formed behind the structure. "There's one already."

It takes a village to restore a stream, and by "village" we mean the owners and agencies that manage the property surrounding the stream, and the groups that sponsored the project. In Rickreall Creek's case, participants included lands managed by Hancock Forest Management, Mid-Valley Resources Inc., Weyerhaeuser Co., and public lands managed by the federal Bureau of Land Management. About 10 percent of the funds for this \$504,000 project came from the landowners and another 18 percent came from local or state organizations. The rest came from federal funds. Specific contributors not already mentioned include the Drinking Water Providers Partnership, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, the Rickreall Watershed Foundation, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Oregon Department of Forestry, the City of Dallas and Polk County Community Development, among others.

Save the Date: Successional Planning Workshops

Succession planning is difficult at the best of times. Many family farms and families who want to keep their land in conservation have no succession plans in place if the current owner retires, dies or is disabled. **To help families plan, Polk SWCD is holding a series of workshops, starting on January 17, 2017.**

Passing of farm land on to the next generation or to an entity for conservation is a process of financial, legal, and emotional dimensions. The average age of farmers in Oregon is now over 59 years and many family farms are facing a transfer between generations or to someone outside of the family. There are many important issues to consider when retiring from farming or to prepare your property for perpetual conservation. Can the current owners afford to retire, do the kids want to keep farming, and how to transfer the farm's assets, are some of the important issues that have to be addressed. Come learn more at our series of Successional Planning Workshops. Call Karin at 503-623-9680 x 110 for more information.

Register Online at WWW.POLKSWCD.COM - \$50/family of 5, Lunch Provided

January 17, 2017: 9:30 AM-11:30 AM

February 28, 2017: 9:00 AM - Noon

1:00 PM - 4:00 PM

Where: WOU Pacific Room

Where: Chemeketa CC Eola Hills

Congratulations!

The Polk SWCD would like to congratulate the election winners for our Board of Directors!

- **Matt Crawford (Zone 1):** Appointed July 2015, will serve a four year term.
- **John “Jock” Dalton (Zone 4):** First elected in 1998, he was appointed in January 2015, will serve a four year term.
- **Chad Woods (At Large):** First elected in 2007, will serve another four year term.
- **Mike Wilson (Zone 5):** Elected 2016, will serve a 2 year term.

Directors will be sworn in at the January 11th, 2017 Board Meeting

Thank you for your dedication and service to conservation in Polk County!

Save the Date: OWEB SMALL GRANT WINDOWS

January 29 - February 12
April 30 - May 14

For more information contact the Polk SWCD:
503-623-9680 or polkswcd@polkswcd.com



Upcoming Events

December 2016

- 6 - GYWC Board Meeting: 6pm
McMinnville Public Library
(Carnegie Room), Northwest
Adams Street, McMinnville,
- 14 - Polk SWCD Open House
3-5pm**
- 21 - Glenn-Gibson WC Board
Meeting: 5:30pm Salemtowne
Breezeway Room
- 22- Rickreall WC Board Meeting:
1pm Delbert Hunter Arboretum,
Dallas
- 26 - HOLIDAY: OFFICE CLOSED**

January 2017

- 2- OFFICE CLOSED**
- 3 - GYWC Board Meeting: 6pm
McMinnville Public Library
(Carnegie Room), Northwest
Adams Street, McMinnville
- 11 - Polk SWCD Board Meeting:
6pm NRCS Meeting Room**
- 12 - Polk SWCD “Beneficial
Insects” Workshop, OSU
Extension Office, 10am**
- 12- Luckiamute WC Board Meeting:
7pm TBD
- 16- HOLIDAY: OFFICE CLOSED**
- 17 - Successional Planning
Workshop: WOU Pacific
Room 9am - Register Online**
- 18 - Glenn- Gibson WC Board
Meeting: 5:30pm Salemtowne
Breezeway Room
- 26- Rickreall WC Board Meeting:
1pm Delbert Hunter Arboretum,
Dallas
- 29 - OWEB Small Grant Window

February 2017

- 4 - Native Plant Sale @ Polk
County Fairgrounds. Pre-
orders pick up 9am-12pm,
open sale after 12pm.**
- 7 - GYWC Board Meeting: 6pm
McMinnville Public Library
(Carnegie Room), Northwest
Adams Street, McMinnville,
- 8- Polk SWCD Board Meeting:
6pm NRCS Meeting Room**
- 9- Luckiamute WC Board Meeting:
7pm TBD call 503-837-0237 for
more info
- 15 - Glenn-Gibson WC Board
Meeting: 5:30 pm Salemtowne
Breezeway
- 20- HOLIDAY: OFFICE
CLOSED**
- 23- Rickreall WC Board Meeting:
1pm Delbert Hunter
Arboretum, Dallas
- 28 - Successional Planning
Sessions, Chemekata Eola
Hills Campus 9am-3pm**

“Past and Present I know well, each is a friend and sometimes an enemy to me. But it is the quiet, beckoning Future, an absolute stranger, with whom I have fallen madly in love.”

Happy New Year

— Richelle E. Goodrich

PSWCD — Polk Soil & Water Conservation District: **503-623-9680**

GGWC — Glenn-Gibson Watershed Council: **503-623-9680 x 104**

LWC — Luckiamute Watershed Council: **503-837-0237**

RWC — Rickreall Watershed Council: **503-623-9680 x 104**

GYWC — Greater Yamhill Watershed Council: **503-474-1047**

Polk SWCD Board of Directors



Directors (left to right): Woods, McKibben, Simmons, Dalton, Crawford, and Pender

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

Vacant
Zone 5

Directors Emeriti

Tom Thomson
Jim Clawson
Brian Sparks
Terry Lamers
Lois Loop

Associate Directors

Rachel Walker
Judy Beebe
Mel Chase

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.

Contact Us

Polk SWCD

Phone: 503-623-9680
580 Main St. Suite A, Dallas, OR 97338

Karin Stutzman— District Manager
manager@polkswcd.com Ext. 110

Marc Bell—Resource Conservationist
marc.bell@polkswcd.com Ext. 103

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

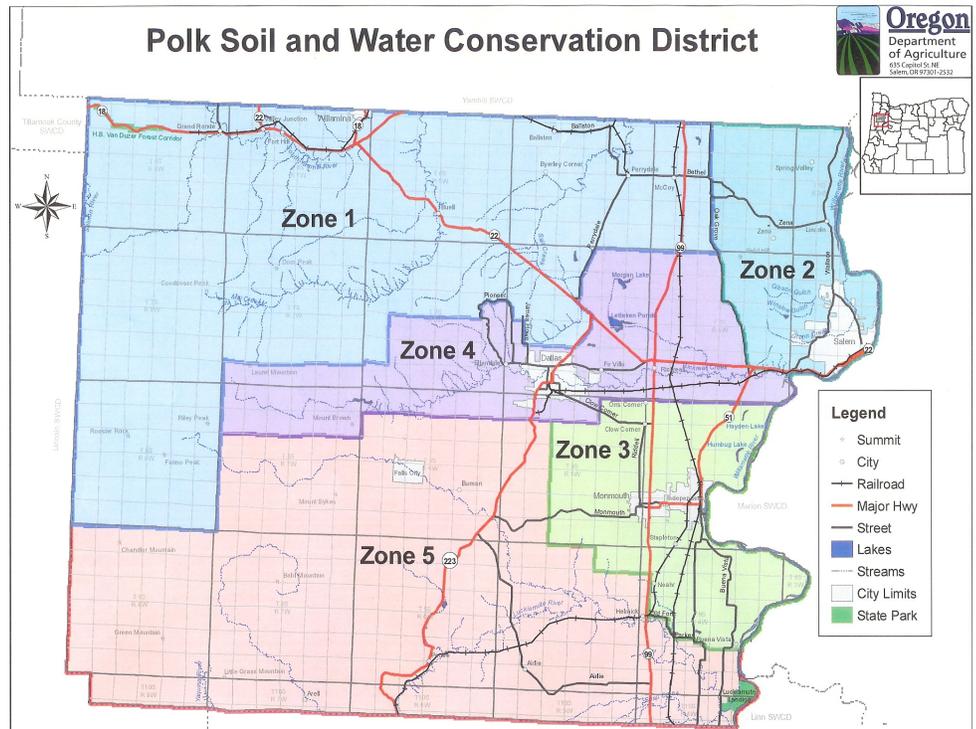
Please note new direct lines!

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

Sue Reams— Soil Conservationist/Acting DC
sue.reams@or.usda.gov 503-837-3693

Billy Burr— Accounting Specialist
billy.burr@wdc.usda.gov 503-837-3691

Dannelle Aleshire— Wetlands Specialist
dannelle.aleshire@or.usda.gov 503-837-3694



Marion-Polk County FSA
Farm Service Agency has a New Phone Number!

Phone: 971-273-4822
650 Hawthorne Ave. SE, St 130,
Salem, OR, 97301

Janelle Huserik— County Executive Director
janelle.huserik@or.usda.gov Ext. 4807

Debbie Pothetes— Program Technician
debbie.pothetes@or.usda.gov Ext. 4810

Beverly Schmidt— Program Technician
beverly.schmidt@or.usda.gov Ext. 4801

Scott Nieman— Farm Loan Manager
Scott.nieman@or.usda.gov

Stuart Butsch— Farm Loan Officer
Stuart.butsch@or.usda.gov

Lora Surmeyer— Farm Loan Program Tech.
Lora.surmeyer@or.usda.gov

The Polk SWCD is a local public source of information and education on natural resources. We provide a number of free 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 wildlife 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.

Oregon farmers, by the numbers

Drop in Percentage of Oregon Farmers 2007 to 2012

All Farmers
6% less male farmers
15% less female farmers

-8%

Farmers Age 44 or Younger

-22%

New Farmers
(farming 9 years or less)

-25%



Average Age of Oregon Farmers | 2007 2012
58 60



All figures based on 2012 Census of Agriculture, USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service

Although no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start from now and make a brand new ending.

— Carl Bard

Have a Safe and Happy New Year from all of us at the Polk SWCD!!!



POLK SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

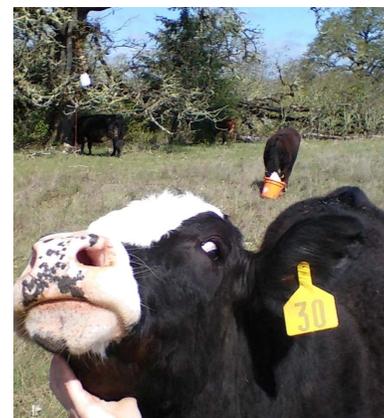
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**Karin Stutzman
District Manager**