Reminiscing Tenure with the District
By Tim Stieber, Executive Director
(1999-2012)

It is hard to believe that I have served as head of Yamhill Soil and Water Conservation District (YSWCD) for over 12 years! Time flies when you’re having fun and it has been a fun and very positive and rewarding experience. At the end of April I’ll be moving to Minnesota to assume the position of Division Director of Soil and Water Conservation, the Planning Department, and the GIS Services Department for Todd County. I will miss the Willamette Valley and all the people I have been fortunate to work with. I have had a great experience working with the Board of Directors. They have allowed staff and myself the flexibility to be as productive and forward thinking as possible.

When I accepted the position of district manager in 1999 I had big shoes to fill. My predecessor, Larry Ojua, had worked under Stan Christensen (SWCD Chair) to build one of the best SWCD’s in Oregon. Larry was the first District Manager and Stan had been the Chair since 1953! It was like a fast moving treadmill that I had to quickly jump on and start running. I listened to directors, staff, and landowners about what they believed was important. We surveyed over 600 people in 2002 and it revealed that over 75% of people wanted water quality to be a top priority and over 50% wanted wildlife habitat to be a top focus. These areas remain some of our top priorities today. We rank projects highest that protect or improve water quality or habitat.

One challenge as a manager over the years has been to vertically integrate Yamhill SWCD from top to bottom. I developed a strategic business plan then structured annual work plans, job descriptions, and even monthly and daily plans and actions to ensure they were in alignment with our mission and long term goals. Our planning process and format have been copied and are being used by many other SWCD’s throughout the state. A major benefit of this planning is the district became more efficient. Processes improved related to finances, personnel management, and outreach activities. The tree sale used to put the entire staff into a coma for a few weeks. Now the...
BARBARA’S FAREWELL TO TIM

By Barbara Boyer
Yamhill SWCD Board Chair

I first met Tim in 2004 when the District acquired Miller Woods. My earliest memory of Tim that sticks with me to this day is the way he gracefully embraced the new jargon of conservation. It was indicative of his personality because I saw that in him day in and day out. His open approach to working cooperatively with all of us was always present while we navigated new horizons as the District was presented with them, including bringing new partners to the table to discuss Chegwyn Farms, and setting more land aside for conservation easements. The progress the District made during Tim’s tenure as our leader is remarkable and leaves a wonderful legacy to our county as well as the global conservation community. Thank you on behalf of the Board and the people of Yamhill County, some of who aren’t even aware of what Tim did, and who benefit from it in recreation spaces and cleaner rivers.

God speed as we send you in to the loving arms of your families.

Calendar of Events

April

• April 21
  Earth Day at Miller Woods

May

• May 9—10
  51st Annual Woodland Tour

• May 17
  Annual Prairie Field Day
  8 am at Yamhill SWCD

• May 24
  *Farmer’s Market Opening

June

• June 23
  Summer Event at Miller Woods
  Be watching for details

• June 28
  *Farmer’s Market Booth

* Farmer’s Market is located in downtown McMinnville on Cowlis between Second and Third Streets. Thursdays 1 - 6:00 pm May 24 through Mid-October

Conservation Notes
Published by
Yamhill SWCD
2200 SW 2nd Street
McMinnville, OR 97128
Phone 503-472-6403
www.yamhillswcd.org

MILLER WOODS
Earth Day 2012
Saturday, April 21,
10:30 am - 2:30 pm
15580 Orchard View Rd. - McMinnville

10:30 am
Landslides-The Mountains at your Doorstep
presented by Sheila Afsen - Sheila’s presentation will include an outdoor geological tour of Miller Woods

Kid’s Guided Nature Trail Hike lead by naturalist Laura McMasters

Limited spaces so reservations are recommended. Call 503-472-6403.
Visit www.yamhillswcd.org for more details

Please visit www.yamhillswcd.org for more information and event details
sale is more organized and is largely run by volunteers. It is an important fund raising event for Miller Woods and brings close to 500 people to the office annually. Any time you have a chance to meet and greet that many people and those people aren’t carrying pitch forks it is a great thing. I’ll miss the annual tree sale.

In addition to quantity I have always strived to increase the quality of work completed by the district. If we decided to write a grant, I wanted the grant to be among the best ones submitted, not only to gain funding but also to ensure our reputation with the funders was continuously strengthened. After receiving funding I worked to make certain that we delivered the outlined work products on time and on budget – further building our reputation and relationship with funders. Putting this into practice I established a funded grant success rate of over 90% during my tenure, having submitted 100 plus grants to approximately fifteen funding agencies. When Governor Kulongoski created the Governor’s Fund for the Environment in 2007 YSWCD had the highest ranked proposal. The district also received this award in 2009. Staff have developed their skills and are now writing successful proposals that bring in much needed funds.

Often times it is the strong will of one person that remains resolute and determined and pulls an entire organization along with them. I am proud that Yamhill SWCD became the first SWCD in Oregon to hold a conservation easement. It was Lucien Gunderman’s desire to protect his land in perpetuity that drove me to establish the easement on Crown Hill Farms. Since then, the district continued to work on land preservation with two more conservation easements and two property acquisitions that totaled 1235 acres of land protected from development. Now, other SWCD’s can also hold easements and several of them are working on easements around the state.

Frieda Miller desired that her land be used to educate the public about forestry, nature, and wildlife. Miller Woods, acquired in 2004 through Frieda’s donation, became a critical part of the McMinnville School District outdoor education program with over 2000 students visiting the property annually. We established miles of trails on the property with the sole purpose of providing the opportunity for residents to connect with nature on the site. These trails are now used daily by hikers and runners. Much of the actual work at Miller Woods has been accomplished through volunteers who contribute thousands of hours annually. It was very rewarding to see Frieda’s vision realized so quickly after her passing. I will miss being a part of Miller Woods.

Charlie Chegwyn wanted to keep the productive soils on his farm in production since they have produced crops for the local community for over 100 years. His determination kept me working on a conservation easement for his land that first required building a partnership of other individuals and organizations. In the end, not only was the farm protected but a four acre community park was made available to the public; 10 acres were added to Grandhaven Schools future middle school site, and McMinnville Water and Light obtained a needed substation site. Chegwyn Farms is now owned by Yamhill SWCD and will be used in the future to help connect community to agriculture and its food supply.

I’d like to extend many thanks to everyone who has assisted me during the past 12 years. There are so many people who have helped me I cannot even list them here. Please offer the same friendly help to my successor.

DO NOT TRY THIS AT HOME!
Forever the joker, Tim feeds a fake bear.

Frieda Miller Open House
12 - 2:30 pm
SECOND ANNUAL PRAIRIE FIELD DAY

Tour Stops:
- Private Property in Gopher Valley
- Private property in Muddy Valley

Guest Speakers:
Scott Black, Xerces Society and Jeanne Taylor, Taylor Gardens

Transportation: Provided by Yamhill SWCD

What to Bring: Water, boots & weather appropriate clothing

Cost: Free!

Registration: Contact Amie at 503-472-1474 ext.113 or email amie.loop-frison@or.nacdnet.net

Come and join us for a day in the field where we will visit and learn about one of the rarest habitat types in the county: upland prairies. Less than 1% of native prairies still exist within the Willamette Valley. These prairies support many unusual species of plants and animals including federally listed Kincaid’s lupine and Fender’s blue butterfly. We will be looking at these species as well as learning about what some landowners within the county are doing to enhance their prairies and what you can do to help these species on your property.

PRAIRIE FIELD DAY
Visit our website for final details!

Date: May 17, 2012
Time: 8 am – 1 pm

Meeting Place:
Yamhill SWCD office,
2200 SW 2nd St. McMinnville

~Aldo Leopold,
A Sand County Almanac
(1949)

2012 Kincaid’s Lupine Survey Sign-up

It’s that time of year again! We will be conducting our second year of surveys for Kincaid’s lupine on private lands within Yamhill County, beginning on May 1st. These surveys are part of our efforts to develop a Habitat Conservation Plan for the endangered Fender’s blue butterfly. Kincaid’s lupine is the larval host plant to the Fender’s blue. Our 2011 surveys were highly successful with 130 landowners who allowed us to survey over 6500 acres! It was a great start to our inventory work.

You can be an important part of year two for us by signing up your property for a survey. We are looking for properties which have open grassy areas which are not heavily managed. Areas which are cropped or are lawn have a low likelihood of supporting lupine, but grazed pasture and hayfields are possibilities. Even if you don’t think you have this species of lupine, you can still sign up. Confirming absence of lupine is important to our inventory work. We are focusing on rural properties which are generally 5 acres or more.

As a private landowner, it’s important that you know if you have a threatened or endangered species on your property. This is a no cost, low risk method of determining that. All surveys are free and there are no obligations after receiving a survey. Under the federal Endangered Species Act, listed plants on private lands do not have protection rights meaning that landowners are not obligated to protect these plants. The surveys are for data collection purposes. Landowners who do have confirmed Kincaid’s lupine will be eligible to receive a free survey for Fender’s blue butterfly and may be eligible for restoration and land improvement funding.

Signing up is easy! Sign-up now before it’s too late!

Website: www.yamhillswcd.org
Email: amie.loop-frison@or.nacdnet.net
Phone: (503) 472-1474 ext.113
WOODLAND TOUR CELEBRATING 51 YEARS

Scheduled May 9 & 10

Next month 645 fifth grade students from various Yamhill County private and public schools along with volunteers, educators, and teachers will visit Cruickshank Farms Woodland Tour.

Started in 1961 the farm has been host to over 10,000 fifth grade students. The premise of the tour is to teach them about forestry and to prepare students for outdoor school in sixth grade.

Thank you to the many organizations, volunteers, and the Cruickshank family who have made this wonderful outdoor educational experience available to Yamhill County students.

2012 Native Plant Sale

Volunteers Drive Success of Yamhill SWCD Native Tree and Plant Sale.

The Yamhill SWCD 27th Annual Native Plant Sale was held in February with sales beginning on the 9th and wrapping up on Saturday, February 11. A rainy, albeit successful sale included many varieties of coniferous and deciduous trees and shrubs, and various flowering plants. Presales comprised for about 75% of total sales which volunteers helped by filling orders and assisting customers. It is always a fun, yet busy time for all.

The success of the sale is highly dependent on our many volunteers. For years they have come and given of their time, rain or shine. The district would like to shout out a public thank you to the many volunteers who help in so many ways with conservation in Yamhill County.
RIPARIAN BUFFERS PROVIDE GREAT BENEFIT

By Josh Togstad, Riparian Specialist

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) continues to help landowners put riparian restoration projects on the ground. Eight landowners planted a combined 18,000 trees and shrubs this spring along Yamhill County streams with the assistance of CREP. These trees and shrubs will help improve water quality in our streams. Established trees provide shade, keeping water temperatures cool for native fish. They also help protect soils from erosion and filter run-off during storm events. You can also add improved wildlife habitat to the list of benefits that riparian buffers provide. An estimated 70% of Willamette Valley wildlife species spend at least part of their life within riparian buffers. That makes riparian areas the most important habitat type in the Willamette valley.

How can CREP help you establish a riparian forest buffer on your property? The program provides technical and financial assistance to eligible and willing landowners. If you are interested in learning more feel free to contact me for a no-obligation site visit. I’ll build a conservation plan tailored to you and your property and help you get enrolled in the program. Enrolled landowners receive access to 75% cost-share for removing invasive weeds, planting, fencing, and off stream watering facilities if needed. Incentive payments and annual rental payments as high as $270/acre are also included. Some riparian areas aren’t really profitable to farm or suitable to graze so why not enroll them in CREP?

You can contact me (Josh) by phone 503-472-1474 x104 or by email josh@yamhillswcd.org for more information.

A newly planted CREP project.
Over 5000 trees and shrubs were planted along this small unnamed perennial stream.
Garlic mustard is a pervasive weed problem throughout most of the Northern US. This invader is a cool weather biennial European native that immigrants brought with them for an early season edible green and medicinal herb. It has since flourished, taking over understory ground cover in forests and disturbed sites. According to ODA, this weed is in limited distribution in Hood River, Clackamas, Columbia, Polk and Tillamook counties and abundant in Multnomah County. Unfortunately, its spread in Yamhill County seems inevitable.

This weed is an early bloomer and usually begins flowering in April and May. The plant has a 2 year life cycle with a first year rosette stage and a second year flowering stage. It can thrive in both sun and shade and is usually found in disturbed understory forest habitats. Garlic mustard only spreads through seed distribution and seed viability is estimated to last around 5-7 years. It has allelopathic traits, poisoning the soil around it, which depresses growth of surrounding competition. In fact, it has been estimated that Garlic Mustard patches can grow in size about 20 ft a year. First year rosettes are usually low to the ground with 3-4 kidney shaped, scallop edged leaves that resemble the native fringecup. In its second year it can grow to be 1-4 ft tall in maturity with little white flowers with 4 separate petals that form a distinct cross. True to its name, its leaves and stems smell like garlic when crushed.

Garlic mustard can be hand pulled if seen, but should be disposed of in bags because seeds can continue to ripen after plants are pulled. Any root fragments left behind will most likely resprout, which means sites will need to be monitored after weeds have been pulled. Mowing is NOT an effective control of Garlic Mustard because this will encourage the plant to bolt and may lead to additional seed head creation. This is especially true after seeds are present (May – September) and will actually lead to greater infestations. Chemical application is encouraged in April or May when the plant is bolting or beginning to flower which can be problematic if there is wet spring weather.

If spotted in Yamhill County, we urge you to report it immediately to the Invasive Species Hotline (1-866-INVADER). Early detection and rapid response is critical in limiting this weeds spread into Yamhill county.

Please also be aware this summer, especially if you are returning from areas such as Portland or the Columbia Gorge hiking trails, that this plant is spread by seed. Use trail head boot brushes if they are provided. Please help us keep Yamhill County free of Garlic Mustard!
The SWCD Earth Day activities will include trail hikes, presentations, guided trail hikes, and outdoor and some indoor activities for all ages. There will also be an open reception to come and say goodbye to a great friend and leader of the Yamhill SWCD. An open house will be held in his honor from noon - 2:30 pm inside the conference room at Miller Woods.

The Earth Day festivities will begin at 10:30 am and wrap up at 2:30 pm. We look forward to seeing you there!

Come and Say Goodbye to Tim!

April 21 Earth Day
(see page 2)
Miller Woods
15580 Orchard View Rd.
McMinnville

DIRT SHIRTS ARE HERE!

PICK YOURS UP TODAY AT THE
DISTRICT OFFICE!

They will also be available at the Earth Day event on April 21.