

# Yamhill Soil and Water Conservation District

## Annual Work Plan 2022-2023

**Purpose:** The purpose of the annual work plan is to provide an overview of the Yamhill Soil and Water Conservation District's (district) anticipated work priorities for the current year. It is not intended to provide a complete analysis of workload and/or activities, but rather provide an overview of the major program areas, and several examples of planned work tasks that represent the majority of the district's anticipated workload. Because of changing priorities, the district board may direct staff to take on new work responsibilities, shift priorities to fulfill commitments and obligations in grant agreements, respond to emergencies and unanticipated work, and meet other public needs.

The district operates its programs and services using revenues from a local tax assessment, grant resources, dedicated stewardship funding, and resources from income-generating enterprises such as the native plant sale and Miller Woods nursery. Grants provide funding for many projects, with resources dedicated to specific work responsibilities and deliverables. The Oregon Department of Agriculture and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) provide grants for programs such as the Agricultural Water Quality Program, OWEB Small Grants, restoration projects, and education/outreach projects. The district implements work associated with various grants and cooperative grant agreements with US Fish and Wildlife Service, local and state governments, tribes, and other conservation districts. Grant agreements and associated work plans are available at the district and can be reviewed for additional details.

**Leadership:** The district is governed by seven elected board members. The current board members for fiscal year (July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023) are:

Barbara Boyer, Chair	Pat FitzGerald
Dave Cruickshank, Vice-Chair	Leo Krick
Sam Sweeney	Gordon Cook
Ximena Orrego	

**Contact Information:** Office Address: 2200 SW 2nd Street, McMinnville, Oregon 97128  
Website: [yamhillswcd.org](http://yamhillswcd.org) Telephone: 503-472-6403

**Conservation Program Areas:** The primary program areas in the 2022-2023 annual work plan include:

1. District Operations and Fiscal Management
2. Agricultural Water Quality
3. Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)
4. Oak and Prairie Habitat Conservation: Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)
5. General Technical Assistance, USDA programs, and Other Conservation Programs
6. Education and Outreach
7. Noxious Weed Control and Vegetation Management
8. Conservation Easements and Long-term Land Protection
9. Conservation Partnerships

## 1. District Operations and Fiscal Management

The district is classified as a special district and local government entity, and therefore must comply with a variety of state laws and administrative rules relating to financial management, public records, employment, public meetings, ethics, and reporting.

To provide quality service and adhere to the statutory requirements of a local government, the district implements a variety of administrative and fiscal responsibilities to ensure effective district operations. Work tasks for the year include:

- Regular board meetings, held on the second Wednesday of each month.  
  
The district holds its monthly meetings at the Yamhill Valley Heritage Center, located at 11275 SW Durham Lane, McMinnville, Oregon. It also offers virtual attendance through Zoom meetings and other video and telephone alternatives. Meeting notices are posted on the district's website and provide details on meeting time and location, agenda, and options for virtual attendance. Citizens may request to be included on the district's mailing list for meetings. Contact the office at (503) 472-6403.
- Preparation of agendas, board meeting materials, and completion of meeting minutes.
- Preparation of an annual budget that complies with Oregon Local Budget Law.
- Completion of various public meeting notices, public hearing notices, and elections notices.
- Completion of annual financial audit contracted through a qualified accounting firm.
- Record keeping and reporting for grants, board meetings, fiscal agreements, project status, and other requirements.
- Create, publish and distribute an annual report.
- Provide ongoing financial accounting and bookkeeping.
- Payroll reporting and management of employee benefits programs.
- Preparation and approval of an annual work plan.
- Employee management, annual reviews, and administrative and supervisory responsibilities.
- Maintain personnel and policy handbooks.
- Assist walk-in clients.
- Maintain the district website.
- Utilize staff and safety meetings to ensure good communication and safe work environment.
- Identify and provide training as needed.
- Maintain district equipment and vehicles.
- Conduct filing, database, and computer maintenance.

## 2. Agricultural Water Quality

The district provides local leadership to implement the Yamhill Agricultural Water Quality Plan. This work is supported by and implemented in cooperation with the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA). The district will continue to pursue cooperation and engagement with landowners and managers to implement conservation measures, demonstration projects and land management activities to control erosion and protect water quality. The district will continue to make its no-till drill rental program available to landowners, and encourage adoption of conservation tillage practices, straw mulching, cover crops, filter strips, and other conservation practices through USDA programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Conservation Implementation Strategy, Conservation Innovation Grants, and other state and federal programs.

The district will employ and contract with technical staff to conduct outreach, provide technical assistance, and coordinate partnership efforts with USDA, landowners, and conservation partners. Outreach is implemented through the district website, informational meetings, field tours, Local Work Group meetings, and other venues. The goal is to inform agricultural landowners and managers about the water quality plan rules, and of opportunities to participate in conservation projects, USDA Farm Bill Programs, the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) small grant program, and other programs offered by the district and its partners.

A summary of technical assistance and outreach for the Agricultural Water Quality Program includes:

- Newspaper/newsletter articles and direct mailings
- Site visits and technical assistance (soils, nutrient management, and manure management)
- Conservation planning assistance
- Project design and implementation, construction inspection and project monitoring
- Interagency partnerships (grant opportunities, communications, and referrals)
- Participation in water quality complaints and ODA site visits
- Grant reporting/request for payments & grant financial tracking and monitoring
- Workshops, tours, and trainings
- Outreach events (agriculture shows, school groups, farmers markets, industry events, etc.)
- Volunteer coordination
- Hosting the Local Advisory Committee Meeting
- Engagement with agricultural community to problem solve and explore conservation solutions

### **3. Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)**

The district continues to support and encourage the use of CREP for riparian restoration projects. Technical assistance for CREP is provided through the Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District (CSWCD) under a multi-district agreement. Drew Donahue provides assistance to landowners in Clackamas, Yamhill and Marion counties, and may be reached at (503) 998-1738, or by email at [drew.donahue@or.nacdnet.net](mailto:drew.donahue@or.nacdnet.net)

### **4. Oak and Prairie Habitat Conservation: Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)**

The district received approval from USDA for a renewal of a five-year RCPP grant which extends through 2026. This allows the district to provide planning assistance to landowners and oversee on-the-ground implementation work for oak and prairie restoration. The RCPP program complements habitat work associated with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) *Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program*, the district's long-term lands protection program (conservation easements and acquisitions), and the objectives of the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for Fender's blue butterfly.

In summary, the district will provide conservation assistance to implement oak and prairie habitat work through the following objectives:

- Implement the RCPP program and restoration on priority oak properties in Yamhill County
- Promote the *Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program* in cooperation with USFWS
- Conserve and enhance Fender's blue butterfly habitat at known sites and explore options to enhance suitable habitat at other suitable sites
- Evaluate oak and prairie sites, and landowner interest regarding long-term lands protection

### **5. General Technical Assistance, USDA Programs, and other Conservation Programs**

The district utilizes its General Fund, grants, and other resources to provide technical assistance to landowners and operators to help them implement improvements in wildlife habitat, water quality, water conservation, and other areas of natural resource management. Technical assistance and services include:

- Site visits, consultations and conservation planning
- Planning assistance relating to erosion control, water conservation, soil health, riparian restoration, invasive species management, wildlife habitat, organic transitioning, carbon sequestration, and other projects
- Design assistance, specifications for conservation practices, and on-site project inspection
- Educational and outreach information and materials
- Mapping and database management
- Grant writing and management

## **6. Education and Outreach**

Education and outreach to landowners is an important part of the district's service model. Education and outreach events inform landowners of natural resource issues such as soil health, water conservation, invasive species management, agricultural water quality, wildlife habitat, and other conservation issues. Events provide opportunity to connect interested landowners with district staff, USDA, local watershed council representatives, agricultural industry groups, local business, neighboring conservation districts, and other conservation partners. The district plans to offer more in-person events as state rules and requirements related to Covid-19 are lifted. Increasing the usefulness and improving the content of the district website is also planned this year. Education and outreach work for the coming year includes:

- Cruickshank Woodland School
- Earth Day Event at Miller Woods
- Educational Workshops for Service Groups and Industry Groups (various topics)
- Annual Meeting
- Native Plant Sale
- NRCS/District Local Work Group
- Newsletters and Website Information
- Other Events (as needed and prioritized by the district board)

## **7. Noxious Weed Control and Vegetation Management**

The district has strong interest in noxious weed control and management of invasive species. The district will continue its partnership with the Yamhill County Public Works on roadside management projects and noxious weed control. It will also implement two Oregon State Weed Board grants secured in 2022 to implement invasive species control on target weeds including Garlic Mustard, Knotweed and Mouse-Ear Hawkweed. The district works in cooperation with the Greater Yamhill Watershed Council, ODA, USFWS, Yamhill County, and other partners to advance and implement noxious weed control efforts.

Work for the coming year includes:

- Implementation of two Oregon State Weed Board grants
- Host Annual Weed Committee Meeting
- Newsletter articles and other outreach efforts in local publications
- Information and educational information provided on the district website
- Participation in Yamhill County Roadside Vegetation Committee
- Implementation of the Early Detection Rapid Response program for high priority weeds
- Control efforts on known locations of Garlic Mustard, Knotweed, Mouse-Ear Hawkweed

## **8. Conservation Easements and Long-term Land Protection**

The district's Long-term Land Protection Program includes two primary components: 1) Holding Conservation Easements, and 2) District-owned Conservation Property.

### Conservation Easements

The district holds conservation easements on four properties. The district will fulfill its responsibilities to conduct annual site visits, meet with landowners to review easement conditions, and document compliance through photo-points and written reports. Site visits provide an opportunity to review landowner's goals and objectives and discuss potential projects to consider in the future.

### District-owned Properties

The district owns several conservation properties acquired by bequeath, donation, or grants. Properties protect natural resources for future agricultural and forestry production, water quality protection, wildlife habitat, education, and other public benefit. District-owned properties and management goals for the year include the following:

#### Miller Woods

The district continues to manage the Miller Woods property, a 130-acre parcel bequeathed to the district in 2004 by Frieda Miller, for long-term sustainable forestry, and other public benefit such as environmental education and open space. Work priorities for the year include:

- Miller Woods volunteers: Provide assistance, resources, coordination and direction, training, and other support needed to help implement projects.
- Property Management: Maintain trails, access, facilities and other property features in good condition to provide safe use of property. This will be accomplished with district staff, contractors, and volunteer contributions.
- Miller Woods Nursery: Operate the nursery to grow native plants for local conservation projects, the annual native plant sale, and for conservation partners.
- Maintain the Miller Woods Residence and Other Property Infrastructure.
- Maintain and Explore Partnership Opportunities: Work cooperatively with partners and seek support through donations, fund raising, grant writing and other avenues.

#### Chegwyn Farm

The 170-acre farm was donated by Charlie Chegwyn under a life-estate agreement, with the goal of keeping farmland in agricultural production and managing riparian and non-farmed areas for conservation. The district will continue to lease land for crop production, manage non-farm areas for wildlife habitat, control noxious weeds, make improvements to the farmstead as budget resources allow, and work with Betty Chegwyn who continues to reside on the property. The board will finalize its plans to sell or trade a small parcel that is no longer adjacent to or associated with the primary farm.

#### Yamhela Oak Conservation Overlook

The 173-acre property was acquired in 2016 utilizing funding from the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program and Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). The anticipated workload for this year is to implement stewardship activities outlined in the long-term management plan for the property. This includes mowing, noxious weed control, and follow up on a recent forest thinning project.

#### Muddy Valley Habitat Reserve

The 540-acre property was acquired in 2016 utilizing funding from the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program and Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). Project work for the coming year includes implementation of a wetland enhancement project in cooperation with US Fish and Wildlife Service. Annual stewardship work includes mowing, noxious weed control, maintenance of small ponds and dams, coordination of volunteer groups, monitoring, and other related stewardship.

Yamhill Oaks (Masonville and Gopher Valley)

The district finalized work with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in January 2019 resulting in the transfer of two conservation properties located near Masonville Road and the Gopher Valley area. TNC transferred ownership of 628 acres at no-cost and funded a stewardship endowment to support long-term care and maintenance of the property. Priorities for this year include noxious weed control, mowing, placement and maintenance of signage, home and homestead improvements, and monitoring, and other general stewardship.

Dupee Valley Habitat Reserve and Seven H Habitat Reserve

The two properties were acquired in 2021 and 2022 utilizing funding from the Willamette Wildlife Mitigation Program and Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). Annual stewardship work includes mowing, noxious weed control, forestry management, road maintenance, and other related stewardship.

**9. Partnerships**

The district works regularly with many conservation partners, volunteer organizations, non-profits, local businesses, and various state, federal, and local governments.

District members and employees will maintain partnerships with conservation partners including:

- Local landowners and managers
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Farm Service Agency
- Oregon Department of Agriculture
- OSU Extension
- Greater Yamhill Watershed Council
- Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde
- Yamhill Partners for Land and Water
- Bonneville Power Administration
- Friends of Miller Woods
- Native Plant Society
- Yamhill County Public Works
- Agricultural industry groups
- Oregon Department Environmental Quality
- Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- The Nature Conservancy
- Columbia Land Trust
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Trout Mountain Forestry
- Neighboring Conservation Districts
- Local Businesses and Municipalities

**Summary**

The annual work plan provides a general overview of the district’s scope of work for 2022-2023. More information about specific projects, outreach events, technical assistance and partnerships may be obtained by contacting the district directly or by visiting the district’s website at: [www.yamhillswcd.org](http://www.yamhillswcd.org)

Reviewed and approved by the District Board on June 8, 2022.



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Larry Ojua, District Executive Director

June 8, 2022

Date



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Barbara Boyer, District Chair

June 8, 2022

Date