



“WE ALL LIVE IN A WATERSHED”

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE GILLIAM SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
AND THE GILLIAM-EAST JOHN DAY WATERSHED COUNCIL

Addressing watershed management issues and providing a framework for volunteer coordination, education, and cooperation in planning, and implementing watershed improvement activities.

NRCS Sets New EQIP Dates

Local farmers and ranchers interested in financial and technical assistance for conservation measures on their working lands have until October 31 to apply for Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funding for federal fiscal year 2008.

However, there will now be two ranking cut off dates, October 1 and October 31.

All applications received prior to October 1 will be ranked with high priority applications being funded. Applications received before October 1 that do not get funded will then compete with all applications received prior to the second deadline.

“EQIP is a voluntary conservation program to help farmers and ranchers improve and enhance the condition of water, soil and other natural resources on private working lands,” says Josh Coiner, District Conservationist. “The program is designed to help

producers protect the resources that support their operations and contribute to environmental quality for the overall community.”

Common structural practices may include cross fencing, livestock water developments and irrigation pipelines. Producers with a Conservation Security Program contract must be making a significant improvement to their system to be eligible for EQIP incentives.

In Gilliam County there will be three funding pools for applications that address local resource concerns developed by the Gilliam County Local Work Group.

The funding pools for Gilliam County are dry cropland, grazed range/forest, and irrigated cropland.

The priority resource concerns in Gilliam County are Soil Quality, Soil erosion, reduction of invasive species, livestock water development and inefficient water use on irrigated land.

In Wheeler County, the local work group has established two funding pools consisting of Irrigated land and grazed range/forest with an emphasis on applications that address inefficient water use on irrigated land and invasive brush, tree and grass species on range and forest land.

NRCS would encourage any and all landowners to stop by the office to see what is available. If you have been affected by wildfire this last year, EQIP presents a great opportunity to receive incentives for rehabilitation of burned land.

For more information, visit NRCS at the USDA Ag Service Center at 333 S. Main St. in Condon or call Josh Coiner, District Conservationist at 384-2671 ext. 114 or Damon Brosnan at ext. 107. The Gilliam and Wheeler Soil and Water Conservation Districts can also provide assistance regarding EQIP and other possible funding sources for conservation projects.

Summer 2007

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GILLIAM SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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For information on this newsletter or any of the information within please contact the Gilliam-East John Day Watershed Council Coordinator, Teri McElroy at 541-384-2281, ext. 111, or email: teresa.mcelroy@oregonstate.edu.

Views From The Board ~ from Walter Powell

This will apparently be my last director column for a while. On the 11th of this month I resigned from the board in order to move into the office as the new watershed tech/office manager. It is a little difficult to call yourself a manager when there is only one other employee and one part time contract employee. And I am just getting on the ground on the tech side, so I really don't call myself a watershed tech yet either. Hopefully, I will grow into the position.

As we work through various program opportunities with you, two or three points should be made:

1. We don't know everything.

2. We will tell you what we know and don't know.

3. If we don't have an answer for you, we will get it.

As you can tell from other articles in this newsletter, fall is the time to start planning your 2008 conservation efforts.

1. Teri and I are starting to line up new small grant proposals.

2. Josh is starting to sign up 2008 EQIP grant requests.

3. Teri and I have an October 22, 2007 deadline for the first go on large grant requests.

4. All of us are working on future CREP opportunities...

We have had a number of employee adjustments to make in the last three months and will have another transition to make in the next month or so as Bill Ewing will be leaving.

Our staff as of now consists of:

CREP Planner - Bill Ewing
 Financial Officer - Cheryl Arnst
 Watershed Coordinator -
 Teri McElroy
 Watershed Tech/Manager -
 Walter Powell

We all look forward to working with you on 2008 conservation programs. All of us appreciate the opportunity the board has given us to serve you, the producer.

Gilliam County SWCD Welcome Wally and Cheryl

The Gilliam County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) welcomes Wally Powell as the new District Manager/Watershed Technical Specialist, and Cheryl Arnst as the new Gilliam SWCD Financial Officer. Both Wally and Cheryl live in the Condon area.

Cheryl Arnst has been a member of the local community for many years. She also works as the

financial secretary for the South Gilliam County Cemetery District. Her skills in financial matters will serve the Gilliam SWCD very well. We are very pleased to have her join us.

Wally has been serving on the SWCD Board for the past several years and, until recently, served as the board chairman. As a local farmer, he understands the problems facing all farmers and

ranchers in this county today. He understands their concerns regarding crops, weather, soil erosion, conservation, rangeland, etc. He has the knowledge and experience needed to help local farmers, ranchers, and landowners with the many natural resource issues they are concerned with in this county.

Stop by and visit with Wally, or give him a call at 541-384-2672.



OWEB Small Grant Funds Now Available for Low-Cost Watershed Projects

The Lower John Day Small Grant Team, a partnership of the Gilliam-East John Day Watershed Council, the Gilliam County Soil and Water Conservation District, and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, are now accepting applications for watershed restoration projects that cost less than \$10,000. The Lower John Day Small Grant Team has \$66,670 to award to low cost watershed projects through June 2009.

If you are interested in helping this restoration effort to restore our state watersheds, please

contact the Gilliam County SWCD Office at 384-2672 and ask to speak with someone about applying for a small grant.

Funding for these awards is made available from the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) through Ballot Measure 66 approved by voters in 1998. Measure 66 specified that 15 percent of lottery proceeds be used for watershed enhancement and maintenance of state parks.

OWEB uses this funding to support voluntary efforts to restore

factors in watersheds that limit water quality, water quantity and the recovery of listed fish.

Projects eligible for funding are:

- ~ Instream Process and Function
- ~ Fish Passage
- ~ Wetland Process and Function
- ~ Riparian Process and Function
- ~ Road Impact Reduction
- ~ Upland Process and Function
- ~ Water Quantity and Irrigation Efficiency.

Project proposals must originate in Gilliam County.

CREP Planning Announcement

We are currently accepting applications for the position of Riparian Buffer Planner.

This individual will work with Landowners as they go through the process of rehabilitating the Riparian Zones on their property.

Please see the ad in the Times Journal or call the Gilliam County SWCD office at 541-384-2672 for further details.





Wildlife Feature: *Bobcats in Eastern Oregon*

Much of Oregon is prime bobcat country. These small, powerful predators have lived here for thousands of years, preying on small mammals and birds and play an important role in the ecosystem.

You may live in bobcat country. Bobcats are not dangerous to humans, but may cause problems by preying on domestic fowl, domestic rabbits and cats, and occasionally domestic goats.

Bobcats are generally solitary animals, except when a female is accompanied by kittens. They move quietly through heavier brushy areas, usually at night, in search of small mammals and birds. Bobcats generally avoid people, but sometimes become curious about humans, pets, and activities. They may simply sit and observe from a vantage point, much as a common house cat does.

Bobcats are tawny in color (grayer in winter), with indistinct black spotting. They got their name from the stubby or "bobbed" tail.

An adult bobcat is about 25-30 inches long with a 5-inch tail. They weigh between 15-35 pounds. Males are generally larger than females. The bobcat has a short tail with three indistinct black rings, and the tip of the tail is black above and pale white below. The upper legs have dark or black horizontal bars. Their face has thin, often

broken black lines radiating onto a broad cheek ruff. Ear tufts are short and inconspicuous.

Bobcats can be distinguished from cougars mainly by the tail. Cougars have a much longer tail which measures one-third of their total length. Cougars are also much larger, averaging six to seven feet from nose to end of tail.

The fore and hind prints are about the same size, 2" long, slightly longer than wide, with four toes, and no claw marks. If it is clearly outlined, the heel pad can be distinguished from canine prints. A bobcat's is lobed at the rear and concave at the front, giving the print scalloped front and rear edges. Canine prints are only lobed at the rear. A bobcat's trail is very narrow, the hind prints close to or

overlapping the fore prints. In an unhurried walk, tracks are generally about 9" apart, in a run, about 13" apart. Adult males almost always travel alone. If tracks indicate two or more bobcats traveling together, it's probably a female with kittens.

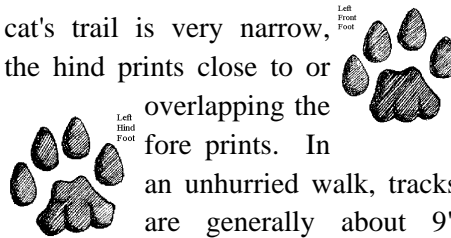
The bobcat has a variety of calls much like those of the domestic cat, although its scream is piercing, and when threatened, it utters a short, sudden, and resonant "cough-bark." It yowls loudest and most often during breeding season.

Bobcats wander 25-50 miles, but are usually within a 2-mile radius. Size of the home range depends on the terrain and how much food is available.

Bobcats are most active from dusk to dawn, although they sometimes also travel and hunt in daylight. Bobcats prefer to eat small mammals and birds; however, they may occasionally eat carrion if it is not spoiled. When hunting, a bobcat sometimes rests on a boulder or a low tree branch, waiting to pounce on small game that passes. After the kill, a bobcat may feed, then cover up the remains with leaves and sticks, and return to feed again during the following few days.

There are no known reports of attacks by bobcats on people, but it is best, as with all wildlife, to avoid threatening or cornering them.

Do not approach or corner a bobcat: Give them a way to escape. Protect small livestock and pets. Enjoy this rare sight.



(information from Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife website)

A Profile on *Rush Skeletonweed* in Gilliam County



Identification: Perennial; blooms July to September. Grows 1 to 4 ft tall. Yellow flower 3/4 inch in diameter with 7 to 15 petals. Coarse downbent hairs on the lower 4 to 6 inches of stem; almost no leaves. Spreads primarily by seed, but roots scattered by cultivation can aid in spread.



Impacts: Rush skeletonweed is an aggressive plant in both rangeland and cropland, particularly in light textured soil and has been the target of large control projects for decades. Cereal grain and potato production areas are at risk from skeletonweed invasion. Impacts include reduced yield due to competition and harvest difficulties with combine harvesters from latex sap that is exuded from the plant. Extensive efforts have been made to eradicate or contain outbreaks, but new sites are being found each year in Eastern Oregon.

Biological Controls: Four biocontrol agents are approved for release. Three of these, a gall midge, a gall mite and a rust fungus, have been established in Oregon, but have only been effective in reducing seed production.



Map of Rush Skeleton Infestations in Gilliam County

More information on this and other noxious weeds in Oregon can be found on the Weedmapper web site:

www.weedmapper.org

or from the Gilliam County Weed Department: 384-4222.

(Information obtained from Weedmapper; Photos by Richard Old)



Summer 2007

Gilliam County
Soil and Water Conservation District

MONTHLY BOARD MEETING

PUBLIC NOTICE
ORS 192.620-192.710

*Held the Second Tuesday of the Month
Times are indicated below:*

November-February 11:00 AM

March-October 7:00 AM

NEXT SWCD BOARD MEETING:

**Tuesday, October 9, 2007
7:00 am**

Upstairs-Dunn Bros. Building
333 South Main Street
Condon, Oregon

The Gilliam County Soil & Water Conservation
District has the authority to go into Executive Ses-
sion under ORS192.610(2)

Our Vision . . .


The Gilliam Soil and Water Conservation District's vision statement is to maximize and recognize the production of crops and livestock with the utilization of natural resources, while remaining environmentally and economically sustainable.

Also, to ensure maximum benefit from existing practices such as the Conservation Reserve Program, controlled burn plans and weed invasion, in cooperation with the Bureau of Land Management, the Rural Fire Department, the State Forestry and the Soil Water and Conservation District.

Our Mission . . .

The Gilliam Soil and Water Conservation District's mission is to provide support for economic sustainability for the rural community and to educate and assist the community for conservation while preventing soil and water erosion for the future.

As a small community we are able to work with one another and help each other with the assistance from our district directors, the Oregon Department of Agriculture, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts, and the Watershed Council.



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