



“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.

OSWB Awards Funding for Dalmatian Toadflax Weed Grant



this area that are heavily infested with Dalmatian Toadflax. The project area in Condon Canyon is approximately four miles square and includes several smaller canyons which are designated as steelhead tributaries.

or by missed plants. In addition, photo points will be used to monitor the success of the project.

The objectives are to reduce the infestation of Dalmatian Toadflax in the watershed, improve water quality, restore wildlife habitat, prevent re-infestation, and increase awareness of the noxious weed problems in Gilliam County with information, outreach and control strategies.

The Gilliam County Weed Department received grant funding from the Oregon State Weed Board to help control the Dalmatian Toadflax infestations in Condon Canyon.



For further information on this project or weed problems in your area of Gilliam County, please contact the Gilliam County Weed Department at 384-4222.

This weed control project took place on November 8, 2007 and involved six landowners. This project was located in the Condon Canyon area of Gilliam County in the Lower John Day Basin. There are approximately 200 acres in various sites throughout

The aerial treatment was done by Columbia Basin Helicopter Company out of Baker, Oregon. The treated sites will be monitored to prevent re-infestation through the weed seed bank



Fall 2007

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2007 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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- Zone 2 ~ Rich Harper
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GILLIAM-EAST JOHN DAY WATERSHED COUNCIL

P.O. Box 106 ~ Condon, OR
Phone: 541-384-2281, Ext. 111

Sue Greer, Chair, Ferry Canyon
Don Farrar, Hay Creek/Scott Cyn
Alma Campbell, Lonerock Creek
Gary Wilde, Vice-Chair, Rock Creek
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Teri McElroy, Secretary/Coordinator

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Gilliam County SWCD Annual Meeting	2	Badgers in Eastern Oregon	4
Rock Creek/Lonerock Creek Watershed Assessment Grant	3	A Profile on Musk Thistle	5

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

The 2007 Gilliam County SWCD Annual Meeting!

You are cordially invited to attend
the
Gilliam Soil & Water Conservation District

ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

Thursday, December 6, 2007
Condon Elks Lodge

The evening will begin with a Social Hour at 5:30 pm

The Board Meeting at 6:00 pm.

The no-host Rib Eye Steak dinner, salad, and dessert begins at 6:30 pm

(Dinner cost per person is \$17.00 which includes gratuity)

The Annual Meeting will follow the dinner at 7:00pm.

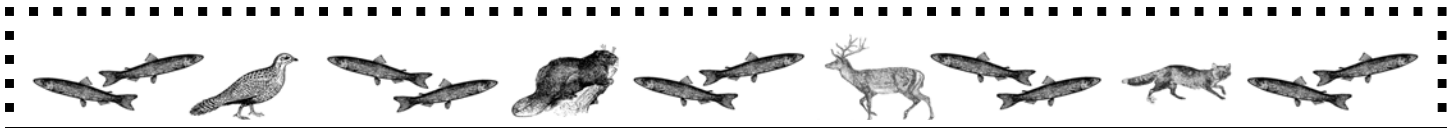
Guest Speaker :

George Taylor, Oregon's State Climatologist

Topic: Weather and Climate in the Pacific Northwest

*"Join us for an enjoyable evening with door prizes, special speakers, delicious foods,
friends and neighbors!"*

Please RSVP to Walter Powell, Gilliam SWCD - 541-384-2672, ext. 109



OWEB Awards Funding for Rock Creek/Lonerock Creek Watershed Assessment

The Gilliam County Soil and Water Conservation District has been awarded a grant to conduct a watershed assessment for the Rock Creek/Lonerock Creek Watersheds by the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB). It is scheduled to begin later this fall and run through June of 2009.

After the grant was awarded, a request for proposals was sent to several watershed assessment consultants. Upon reviewing the proposals received, a decision was made by the Gilliam-East John Day Watershed Council to accept the proposal from ABR, Inc. out of Forest Grove. ABR, Inc. recently completed the Butte Creek Watershed Assessment for Wheeler County SWCD. They are looking forward to becoming involved with the community while conducting this watershed assessment.

Along with OWEB funding there will be many hours of donated services from the Gilliam Soil & Water Conservation District, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Oregon Water Resources Department, Oregon State University Extension Service, Condon High School Vo-Ag Students, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Bureau of Land Manage-

ment, Oregon DEQ, and the Gilliam-East John Day Watershed Council.

This grant funding awarded by OWEB comes from Oregon Lottery revenues and other sources including salmon license plate revenues, federal salmon funds, and funds that come from the purchase of "salmon-friendly" power.

In 1998, Oregon voters approved a ballot measure that set aside 15 percent of all lottery revenues for restoring Oregon's salmon, watersheds, and state parks. Under the program, half of these funds, 7.5%, are used to enhance watersheds and salmon habitat in Oregon. Since 1999, over \$148 million in Lottery profits has gone to help restore

Oregon's watersheds and salmon habitat.

Since 1997 in Gilliam County, OWEB has awarded grant funds for projects such as the Hay Creek/Scott Canyon Watershed Assessment, the Thirtymile Creek Watershed Assessment, Watershed Council Support, the Rock Creek Diversion Improvement Project, the Direct Seed Incentive Grants, Gilliam SWCD Small Grant Program projects, and now, the Rock Creek/Lonerock Creek Watershed Assessment project.

For more information about the Rock Creek/Lonerock Creek Watershed Assessment or OWEB grants, contact Walter Powell, District Manager / Watershed Technical Specialist for the Gilliam SWCD at 384-2672, ext 109, or Teri McElroy, watershed coordinator for Gilliam-East John Day Watershed Council at 384-2281, ext 111.

Public information meetings with ABR, Inc., the Gilliam County SWCD, and the Gilliam-East John Day Watershed Council will be held later this fall for anyone interested in the Rock Creek / Lonerock Creek Watershed Assessment Project. We will announce the date for these meetings in the Times Journal.



Wildlife Feature: *Badgers in Eastern Oregon*



The American badgers have a flat body with short legs and a triangular face with a long, pointed, tipped-up nose and, as a result, have a fantastic sense of smell. Including their tails, they are around 3 feet long, and usually weigh 20-25 pounds but can even get as heavy as 44 pounds. They have long brown or black fur with white stripes on their cheeks and one stripe running from their nose to the back of their head. They have small ears on the side of their head and long, sharp front claws.

The American Badger mates between July and August, but the embryos don't really start to grow until December or February. The female gives birth in March. She will have between one to five babies. The babies will be weaned by June.

Badgers can give birth anytime between November and August, but the majority of cubs are born in February. 1-3 cubs are born and they then spend about 8-10 weeks underground and emerge around May. It is important for badgers to be born early in the year, so that they have plenty of time to eat, grow, and put on fat for



the enduring winter months. After about 10-12 weeks, young badgers disperse and lead lives without their parents. Many badgers die in the first two years of life because of starvation or from being eaten by predators, which is probably due to their weakness and small size.

On average badgers in the wild live between 8-10 years. In captivity badgers can live up to 26 years. It is possible to be able to determine how old a badger is by looking at how worn their teeth are. This is due to earthworms being a part of their diet. The earth causes the white enamel of their teeth to wear down at an early age.

Badgers like to live in open areas like plains and prairies, farmland and the edges of woods. Dens and burrows are a very important part of the badger's life. A badger usually has lots of different dens and burrows. It uses them for sleeping, hunting, storing food and giving birth. A badger may change dens every day, except when it has babies. Badger dens have one entrance with a pile of dirt next to it. When a badger is threatened, it will often back into a burrow and bare its teeth and claws. It may then plug up the burrow's entrance. With the badger's amazing sense of smell and appetite for bees, it is no surprise that badgers like honey. Also on the vegetarian side of the badger's diet are many grains, such as wheat, oats, and barley. Badgers also like to feast on fruit and nuts when they are available.

Badgers are omnivorous animals, but animal sources form the majority of their diet. Badgers tend to feast on small mammals such as mice, gophers, chipmunks, and prairie dogs, along with other burrowing animals and earthworms. Badgers will also eat

some reptiles like snakes and lizards, plus insects like wasps and bees. They also will eat dead carcasses of almost any animal as well as fish and birds. Some badgers are also known to eat antelope and rabbit. They dig their prey out of the ground with their strong, sharp claws. The badger will sometimes dig into the burrow of an animal and wait for it to return. Coyotes often will stand by while a badger is burrowing and catch animals that come out of a tunnel trying to escape the badger. It will sometimes bury extra food to eat later.



Badgers are mostly nocturnal, but may exhibit daytime activity if there is not much disturbance from humans and if food supplies are low. Females commonly search for food during the day when they need to feed their young. Badgers that live in areas with cold winters have varied activity patterns and are much less active in the winter. Those that live in warmer climates do not tend to have this seasonal variation in activity patterns.

The badger is well-protected from predators. Its muscular neck and thick, loose fur protect it when it is captured by a predator. This gives the badger time to turn on the predator and bite and claw it. When a badger is attacked, it also uses vocalizations. It hisses, growls, squeals and snarls. It also releases an unpleasant musk that may drive a predator away.

A Profile on *Musk Thistle* in Gilliam County



Identification:

Biennial; blooms in early June. Grows 3 to 6 ft tall. Flower heads large, purple, solitary and usually nodding.



Impacts:

An aggressive plant that spreads rapidly to form nearly impenetrable stands, often displacing desirable forage. Found in pasture, range and timberlands, it spreads by seeds, taking advantage of human disturbance. Klamath County is the most heavily infested musk thistle county in Oregon.

Biological Controls:

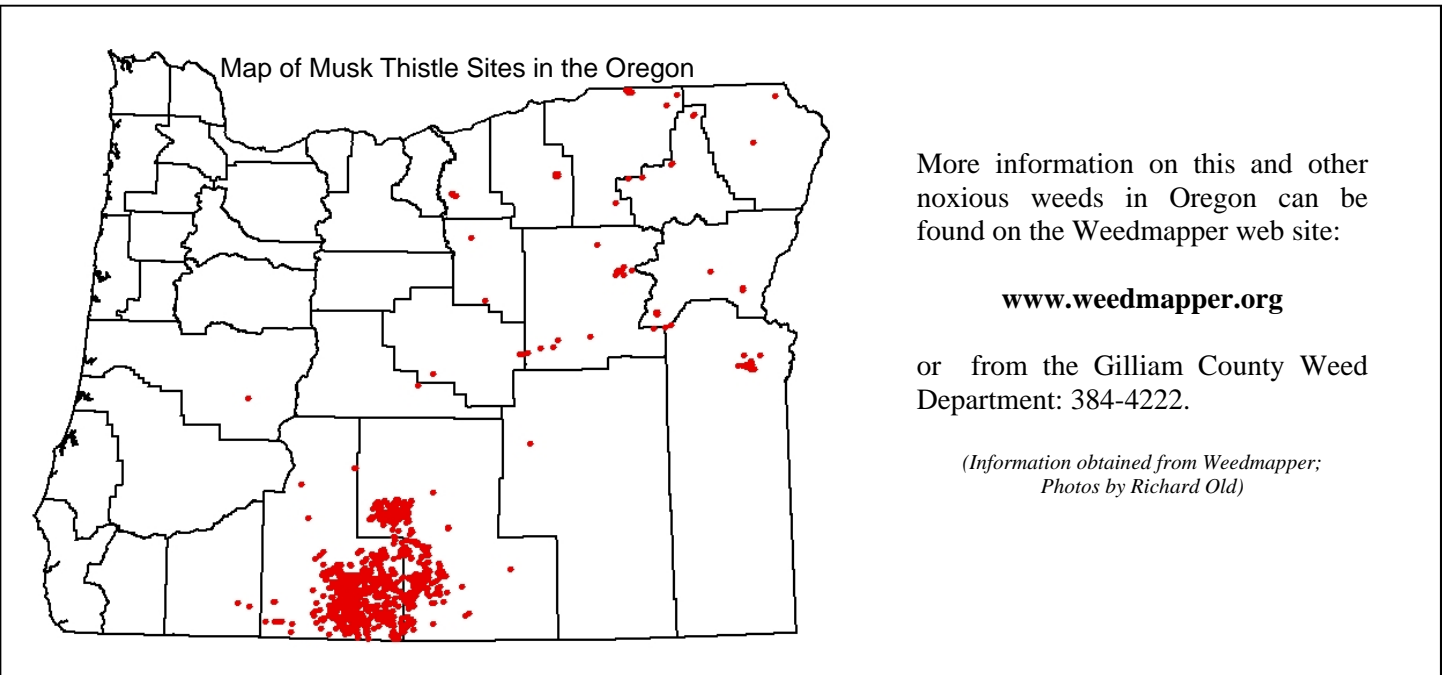
Six biocontrol agents have been approved for release. Three of these, a crown weevil, a seed head weevil and a flower fly, have been established in Oregon.

Mechanical control:

Musk thistle will not tolerate tillage and can be removed easily by severing its root below ground with a shovel or hoe. Mowing can effectively reduce seed output if plants are cut when the terminal head is in the late-flowering stage. Gather and burn mowed debris to destroy any seed that has developed.

Chemical control.

Several herbicides are registered in pasture, rangeland and noncrop areas to control musk thistle. Tordon 22K, Curtail, Banvel/Vanquish/Clarity (dicamba), 2,4-D, or Banvel/Vanquish/Clarity plus 2,4-D are commonly used. These herbicides should be applied in spring or fall to musk thistle rosettes.



Fall 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:

**Annual Meeting
December 6, 2007 at 5:30 pm
At the Condon Elks Lodge**

The Gilliam County Soil & Water Conservation
District has the authority to go into Executive
Session 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.



Gilliam Soil & Water Conservation District
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