



OACD NEWS

December 2024



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OACD Advocacy Committee

***** New Meeting Time *****

2nd Monday of the Month at 2pm-3:30pm

Next meeting is Monday, December 9. Come check out the OACD Advocacy Committee as we prepare for the 2025 Legislative Session.

Contact Andrea Kreiner at andrea.kreiner@oacd.org or Stan Dean at Stan.dean@jswcd.org for the zoom link.

Save the Date: Advocacy Training
on Monday, January 13 from noon – 2pm.
Zoom link is [HERE](#)



Hello Conservation Partners,

We are closing in on the beginning of the 2025 long legislative session: January 21 through June 29th. To help you prepare for learning how to find and review bills, look at legislative committee schedules, attend hearings live or online, submit testimony, and track your legislator's communications, plan to attend the [OACD Advocacy Committee Training Session January 13th](#) from noon-2pm. You can also sign up to attend our Advocacy Committee meetings. In December the committee will meet on December 9th from 3:00-4:30. Contact committee chair Stan Dean to sign up for the online link.

In January the committee will be reviewing bills submitted for the session and OACD will review and chart certain priority bills for your attention. We will be asking for your help to provide feedback and to submit testimony. One section of the advocacy training will share how to set up your district to be able to respond in a timely fashion on important issues. On the OACD website you will see OACD's "position statements." These are guidelines as to how the committee will approach natural resource issues. We anticipate updating some sections following the session.

As shared at the annual conference, the OACD board has adopted a strategic plan to guide operations over the next several years. One of the goals of the plan is to promote communication between the board and your districts. The 45 districts have been divided generally by region with board members assigned to develop communication with those districts to which they are assigned. For example, I will visit with districts in Central Oregon that adjoin Clackamas County. Once assignments are completed, we will begin the process in January of reaching out to our district partners.

Wishing you all a wonderful Holiday Season!

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jan", is positioned above the typed name.

Jan Lee, OACD President
janleewater@gmail.com 503-545-9420 cell



COMING EVENTS

Agency Meetings (all events are hybrid; see details at link to websites)

[Oregon Water Resources Commission](#) - December 12-13, Salem

[Oregon Board of Agriculture](#) – December 17-19, Newport

[Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission](#) – December 13, Salem

[Oregon Land Conservation and Development Commission](#) – Dec 4-6, Salem

[OWEB DEI/EJ Committee](#) December 3

[OWEB Grants Committee](#) December 5

[OWEB Water & Climate Committee](#) December 11

OACD Board Meeting

District participation and comments are encouraged.

December 17, 9am-11am. Zoom link [HERE](#).



[Registration](#) is now open! Don't let the opportunity fly by. Act now to get an early bird discounted rate.

All the details on registration can be found on the [Annual Meeting webpage](#).

If you are interested in some scholarship money to attend, contact Andrea at andrea.kreiner@OACD.org!

Save the Date for the. Oregon Soil Health Summit!

OrCAN invites you to take part in Oregon's first-ever Soil Health Summit: a gathering of Oregon's agricultural community to promote soil health for climate resilience.

Wednesday January 22nd, 2025

OSU LaSells Stewart Center, Corvallis, OR

Check the [Soil Health Summit website](#) for updates

2024 Oregon Interagency Noxious Weed Symposium.

December 10 thru 12, 2024 at the LaSells Stewart Center, in Corvallis, Oregon.

The Oregon Interagency Noxious Weed Symposium (OINWS) is a biennial event hosted by the Oregon Department of Agriculture Noxious Weed Control Program to provide educational and networking opportunities for natural resource professionals working on invasive plant management in the Northwest.

Symposium sessions will include:

- Oregon State Weed Board Meeting
- Updates from other natural resource partners, federal agencies, and ODA Regional staff
- Updates on: chemical and pesticide application
- Research and techniques to help in future project planning
- What's new in: technology, climate change, and funding opportunities
- Awards reception to recognize outstanding individuals in the field

Early Registration Fee: \$275.00, plus Eventbrite fee

Late Registration Fee after November 16: \$325.00 + Eventbrite \$23.65 Fee

[Registration link](#)

FUNDING RESOURCES



OWRD Feasibility Study Grants

OWRD invites applications for studies to evaluate the feasibility of developing water conservation, reuse, and storage projects through the [Feasibility Study Grant](#) funding opportunity. Grants require a 50% cost-share match, which may include in-kind contributions.

What is a Feasibility Study? A feasibility study is an assessment of the practicality of a proposed project and can be used to determine if and how a conservation, reuse, or storage project should proceed to implementation. The feasibility study focuses on helping to answer the essential question of, “should we proceed with the proposed project idea?” All activities of the study are directed toward helping answer this question.

Eligible studies: Studies may include analysis or evaluation of hydrological refill capacity, water needs, geology, or hydrology, engineering and water exchange, financial feasibility, fiscal analysis, instream ecological flows, alternative means of supplying water, including costs and benefits, environmental impacts or public benefits, hydrological analyses, or water quality impacts.

Grant funding available: We expect to have between \$400K and \$1.4M available, depending on the outcome of the 2025 Legislative Session and OWRD’s 2025-2027 budget.

How to apply: [Application materials are available online.](#)

Application deadline: **March 12, 2025 at 5 p.m.**

Pre-Application Conference: OWRD encourages all applicants to request a Pre-Application Conference before applying. Staff will review your draft application and provide feedback. You must submit your draft application two weeks before the pre-application conference. To learn more, [see the pre-application conference form.](#)

Irrigation Modernization Funding

OWRD invites entities to submit applications for **Irrigation Modernization projects** that improve water use efficiency of irrigation systems on currently irrigated agricultural lands. This funding opportunity invests in projects that meet water supply needs and result in public economic, environmental, and social/cultural public benefits.

Eligible Projects: Eligible activities include, but are not limited to: piping irrigation canals, ditches or laterals; lining irrigation canals, ditches or laterals; installing sprinkler or microirrigation systems; upgrading existing infrastructure, such as flumes or pipes; installing or upgrading pump stations, including variable speed pumps; installing measuring devices or soil moisture monitoring; installing Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) systems; purchasing irrigation scheduling software; and upgrading turnouts.

How to Apply: [Application materials are available online](#). See the application materials listed under “Irrigation Modernization Funding” on the Water Project Grants and Loans webpage. [View Frequently Asked Questions](#).

Application Deadline: 5 p.m. on Wednesday, January 15, 2025

Pre-Application Conference: OWRD encourages all applicants to request a pre-application conference before applying. Staff will review your draft application and provide feedback. You must submit your draft application two weeks before the pre-application conference. To learn more, [see the pre-application conference form](#).

NOAA fish passage funding opportunities

Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal

Up to \$75 million in funding is available through the Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal funding opportunity. This funding will support the locally led removal of dams and other in-stream barriers. NOAA will accept proposals between \$750,000 and \$8 million for the entire award, with typical funding anticipated to range from \$3 million to \$5 million. Applications are due by February 10, 2025.

Restoring Priority Tribal Fish Passage through Barrier Removal

Concurrently, up to \$20 million in funding is available for fish passage and tribal capacity building through the Restoring Tribal Priority Fish Passage through Barrier Removal funding opportunity. This funding will support U.S. federally recognized tribes, Alaska Native Corporations, and tribal organizations in implementing on-the-ground fish passage work and in building tribal organizational capacity. NOAA will accept proposals between \$300,000 and \$6 million for the entire award, with typical funding anticipated to range from \$500,000 to \$4 million. Applications are due by February 27, 2025.

Clean Water State Revolving Fund

The Oregon CWSRF program can finance planning, design and construction of water quality and infrastructure projects. The program recently increased limits of principal forgiveness up to \$2,000,000 for design and construction loans for eligible borrowers and projects to meet requirements and priorities under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Project and borrower eligibilities

- To learn if your community and project is eligible for future funding, submit a [Loan Information Request Form](#) anytime.

Applications are accepted year-round, but projects will be reviewed, scored, and ranked after submission deadlines:

- **Friday, December 12, 2024**
- **Friday, April 12, 2025**

For more information, please contact CWSRFinfo@deq.oregon.gov

Farmer & Rancher Disaster Resilience Grant Program

The Oregon Community Food Systems Network (OCFSN) has just launched Round Two of the [Farmer & Rancher Disaster Resilience Grant Program](#), to support Oregon's small farms to be more resilient to climate disasters. In 2024, Round One of this Grant Program awarded \$1.6 million to 114 small farms and ranches across Oregon. In Round Two, \$900,000 is available for grants to farmer and rancher applicants who were not awarded in Round One or who have not previously applied.

- Applicants must operate a small farm or ranch business in Oregon
- Funding from these grants is for on-farm disaster resilience projects and plans
- Grant applications will be accepted beginning on November 15, 2024
- The **application period closes on January 17, 2025**

Project Categories Include:

- Soil Health Management
- Crop Management
- Ecosystem Management
- Equipment Purchase, Rental or refurbishment
- Irrigation and Water Efficiency
- Shading and Cooling
- On-Farm Planning, Monitoring, and Research

This list is not exhaustive and applicants may propose other activities to increase their resilience to climate related disasters.

Find out more & apply here: <https://ocfsn.org/disaster-resilience-grant>

NEWS and OPPORTUNITIES



Meet NRCS Oregon's Leadership Team

Click [HERE](#) for a great intro to all the new, and not-so-new members of the NRCS Leadership Team here in Oregon!

Outreach Brochure Template Available

NACD has developed an outreach brochure template for use by SWCDs. You can customize the brochure for your specific district. Access the template and instructions at:

[Outreach Brochure Template for Districts - Google Drive](#)

USDA Seeks Public Input on Climate-Smart Conservation Practice Standards

USDA is seeking public input by December 23, 2024, on how to improve conservation practice standards to maximize climate change mitigation and adaptation benefits, as supported by peer-reviewed scientific literature. Conservation practices providing climate benefits are delivered through existing USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) conservation programs popular with producers, like the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), and Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) as well as NRCS technical assistance. The Inflation Reduction Act, part of President Biden's Investing in America agenda, and Farm Bill provide funding for these programs. Click [HERE](#) for more info.

Submit Water Investment Needs Survey by December 15

The [Water Caucus](#) is asking Oregonians to submit their current and future water investment needs via a statewide survey to help inform budget requests and strategic planning. In the time since the [Statewide Integrated Water Resources Strategy](#) was initially adopted in 2012, the state has been incrementally increasing its attention to critical water priorities, but the Legislature does not have a comprehensive inventory of water investments needs. In an effort to fill that gap, the Water Caucus invites water managers, users, stewards, advocates and members of the public to submit water investment needs by December 15 via a statewide survey: <https://bit.ly/2024waterinvestmentsurvey>. By doing so, Oregonians can help the Water Caucus understand investment-ready water projects. In addition to physical projects, water investment needs can include data, planning, and other needs that benefit the environment, communities, and economy. The survey is for informational and planning purposes only and does not guarantee funding or replace other legislative processes.

Oregon Department of Forestry Launches Prescribed Fire Liability Program

This pilot program is intended to increase use of prescribed fire and cultural burning and support fire practitioners by providing liability coverage for enrolled burns. Introducing periodic fire to fire-adapted landscapes and reducing forest fuels has been shown to lessen the potential for high-intensity wildfires and the large volume of smoke they produce. Governor Kotek signed House Bill 4016 in 2024 establishing the pilot Prescribed Fire Liability Program. It authorizes claims covering certain losses arising from escaped prescribed fires and cultural burns. Participation in the program is voluntary.

Learn more about the program and apply at [ODF's Prescribed Fire Liability Program web page](#).

Sagebrush Conservation Gateway Delivers Latest Sagebrush Science from Across the Sagebrush Biome

USDA's Working Lands for Wildlife initiative recently unveiled the latest sagebrush science through a special issue of the 2024 Journal of Rangeland Ecology & Management. A group of experts from across the sagebrush biome, came together to publish the Sagebrush Conservation Design (SCD), which identifies the last, best, ecologically intact sagebrush areas to safeguard and also analyzes the largest threats that are degrading the biome today. Learn more about how the SCD is providing a roadmap for diverse stakeholders to proactively conserve the sagebrush biome in the American West at <https://sagebrushconservation.org/>.

Gridded Soil Survey Geographic Database (gSSURGO) Updated

Natural Resources Conservation Service manages the SSURGO that contains information about soil collected by the National Cooperative Soil Survey over the course of a century. Gridded SSURGO (gSSURGO) is similar to the standard SSURGO Database product but includes a raster map layer for the soils spatial data and is delivered in the format of an Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI®) file geodatabase. As of October 24, 2024, all gSSURGO databases have been updated with the most current SSURGO information. The databases can be downloaded for all [states and island territories](#) of the United States. A custom set of ArcTools designed to aggregate gSSURGO soils information and produce thematic maps is also available. You can read about and download the tools in the SSURGO/gSSURGO ArcTools section of the [gSSURGO web page](#). While there are many tools in this toolbox, most customers are interested in using the "Create Soil Map" tool. This tool is designed to produce the same thematic maps of aggregated soil data as Web Soil Survey and Soil Data Viewer. Currently, these custom ArcTools only work in ArcMap, but in the next few months, an updated version for ArcGIS Pro will be available. A prototype version for ArcGIS Pro with limited functionality can be found at the github website (<https://github.com/ncss-tech/SDDT-ArcGIS-Pro/tree/main>). Please contact the [Soils Hotline](#) for assistance with accessing and working with gSSURGO.

Call for Abstracts
CONNECT 2025 | April 8-10
Florence Event Center - Florence, Oregon

CONNECT 2025 is not just another conference but a gathering for visionaries in soil and water conservation. This event brings together local, state, and federal decision-makers, professionals from Conservation Districts, and supportive organizations dedicated to preserving our natural resources.

submit your abstract by January 10, 2025

CONNECT 2025 offers a comprehensive program that addresses both technical and administrative aspects of soil and water conservation, tailored for:

- Rural and urban conservation implementation
- Managerial and administrative functions
 - Policy development and discussion
 - Education and outreach activities

Click [HERE](#) to submit an abstract

DISTRICTS IN THE NEWS

CHECK OUT THE LATEST NEWS STORIES FEATURING OUR SWCDS---

[*Sullivan Gulch Restoration Project at Cape Blanco*](#), KCBY 11

[*USDA gives \\$167 for Northwest conservation projects*](#), Capitol Press

[*https://www.wallowa.com/news/warnock-heads-effort-for-federal-designation/article_85cdb212-089c-5f0f-8a5f-bbd53b91c7b0.html*](https://www.wallowa.com/news/warnock-heads-effort-for-federal-designation/article_85cdb212-089c-5f0f-8a5f-bbd53b91c7b0.html)

Do you have a story to share, please send it to andrea.kreiner@OACD.org!



**Oregon Association of
Conservation Districts**

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