



UMPQUA

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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Newsletter – June 2024

Umpqua Soil and Water Conservation District is a non-regulatory agency here to help our community conserve natural resources through educational, financial and technical assistance. Since 1953 Umpqua Soil and Water Conservation District has been serving the residents of Northwestern Douglas County by partnering with landowners to empower them to be stewards and experts on their own land.

NEWS

Digging in: Taking Soil Samples in the Farm or Garden!

Don't miss this great opportunity to join Umpqua SWCD and OSU Extension Small Farms for our no cost soils field day workshop, "[Digging In: Taking Soil Samples in the Farm or Garden!](#)" in Elkton at the Elkton Community Education Center.

We've got two hours planned for you, with everything you need to know about why you need to take soil samples, how to take soil samples, where to send your soil samples, how to read soil test results, how knowing your soil's needs will improve your land and protect agriculture water quality/water quality, and a lot more!

This no cost field day workshop takes place on Tuesday, August 20th from 3:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. While this opportunity is free, registration is required, and can be done by going to:

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/douglas/events/digging-taking-soil-samples-farm-or-garden> for online registration, or by contacting Logan Bennett at (541) 236-3015 or by email logan.bennett@oregonstate.edu. Please register by August 13th.

We're looking forward to visiting with you in Elkton at the Elkton Community Education Center on August 20th!



Digging in: taking soil samples in the farm or garden! How to take and interpret soil samples

Do you have yellowing vegetable leaves? Is your pasture tonnage down? Are your grapes having trouble reaching brix? Whether it's your home garden or Commercial farm, it could be a soil nutrition issue. Luckily determining soil nutrition isn't as daunting a task as it may sound!

This workshop will teach you how to be an agricultural investigator, taking soil samples, interpreting the results, and scouting for in-field issues. During this class we will sample both perennial and annual cropping systems, showing you how to do both. We will also cover where, when, and how to take these samples, and where to send them.

When:	August 20, 2024 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Where:	Elkton Community Education Center 15850 OR-38 W Elkton, OR 97436
Registration:	Registration required Ends August 13, 2024
Cost:	FREE!
More information:	Logan Bennett (541) 236-3015 https://beav.as/1Ht



OSU Extension Service prohibits discrimination in all its programs, services, activities, and materials. This publication will be made available in an accessible alternative format upon request. Accommodation requests related to a disability should be made by August 13th, 2024. Please contact Logan Bennett at (541) 236-3015, logan.bennett@oregonstate.edu

"To be a successful farmer one must first know the nature of the soil."

~Xenophon, 400 B.C



Leed's Island and Providence Creek Project Update

Umpqua SWCD has been fortunate to be able to bring not one but two high-profile and exciting projects to the table in the last year! Both projects have been under consideration for a while, but the timing just hasn't quite been right up until now. These projects will offer great benefits to the residents of our area as well as provide an outstanding fish and wildlife habitat.



Providence Creek Tidegates, Summer 2011



Tidegate affected farmland, Winter 2024



Leed's Island, Winter 2024



Leed's Island, Spring 2024

Providence Creek Tidegates:

These tidegates, located at the end of Providence Creek right before it empties into the mainstem of the Umpqua River, have been in place for many years. It has been recognized that they are failing to allow adequate water downstream during high rain events, while at the same time leaking water upstream during high tide events. Additionally, no fish passage is provided, blocking off a large amount of fish habitat above the tidegates. This is the result of the gates being initially undersized, followed by several attempts at re-sleaving the leaking culverts and patching the levee they are attached to. The average lifespan of this particular style of tidegate is about 50 years and we are well outside of that. The best, and realistically only, option is to completely remove and replace these tidegates with modern tidegates. The tidegates are managed by the Port of Umpqua, and in January 2024 the Port of Umpqua and Umpqua SWCD both approved a Memorandum of Understanding to achieve this goal. We've been working closely ever since then to fundraise for the design and surveying portion of the project. Once this is accomplished, we can go to a variety of grantors to raise project funds. This project will be completed using 100% grant funding. The tidegates will allow for more flow downstream, and at times will stay open longer, providing increased fish passage. As a result, we expect less flooding in the properties along Ranch Road and Providence Creek.

Leed's Island Park:

Adjacent to the Providence Creek Tidegates is Leed's Island, a 220-acre former tidal wetland. Currently it is being lightly grazed, and the landowner has expressed interest in selling this property for many years. While undergoing discussions with the landowner regarding the tidegates, we came up with an idea: If he was willing to sell, at fair market value, could we make this property into a new city park? After some additional discussions with City of Reedsport staff, we determined that this could work out perfectly for everyone. We presented our idea to the City of Reedsport Parks & Beautification Committee in March, followed by a presentation to the entire Reedsport City Council in April. Both groups were highly supportive.

This is an amazing opportunity for our community. Once this property is a city park, options abound; hiking trails, bird watching blinds, equestrian trails, and fishing sites are just a few of the many possibilities. As the planning process continues, we want to involve the public in every aspect. There are some challenges, one being that the road access to the property is currently managed by landowners on the unpaved portion of Ranch Road and this will have to be addressed at some point. We are hopeful that in a couple of years we will have a new "jewel" of Reedsport!

Funding for the project will come from several grant sources. Primarily we are looking at the Oregon Parks & Recreation Local Government Grant Program. This program provides up to 80% of the funding for acquisition and development of parks throughout Oregon. The remainder can come from a number of state and federal sources. As with the Providence Creek Tidegates, our goal is to raise 100% of the funds required. Additionally, we want to do as much of the work in-house as possible, to reduce any potential workload increase for our partners. It's also important to note that both of these projects are being undertaken locally, and there will be no outside influence in the design or construction. We are very proud of the team we have built and are confident we can successfully carry out both projects!

SERVICES

Interested in replacing your tide gates that may be undersized or not working as well as you would like?

Umpqua SWCD can assist you with your tide gate replacement project(s)!



Join us and our partners for a post tide gate installation tour in the near future!

Weed Wrench Loan Program

Weed Wrenches are woody plant pullers and available for loan through Umpqua Soil & Water Conservation District. These plant pullers are most effectively used when the soil is soft in the spring and are suited for leveraging scotch broom, small trees, and even blackberry roots from the soil. Requires a \$25 refundable deposit for a 2-week time period. Contact us today to rent one of these helpful tools.

Soil Testing: Are You Prepared for Summer Planting? Do you know your soils pH?

Summer is here! Contact the Umpqua Soil & Water Conservation District Office today to schedule your soil test for summer fertilizer and nutrient needs. Summer lime applications help to balance soil pH, allows essential nutrients to feed the grass, manages moss and weed problems, fortifies plants with calcium, and improves the performance of fertilizer.

Lime should never be applied to pastures or lawns that are stressed, wilted or dormant, so please keep that in mind. Soil tests are currently free to District residents and provide application rates for lime, nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium, and boron.

MEETINGS OF INTEREST

Umpqua Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Director's Meetings

July 9th (please not date change), August 8th, September 12th

Our meetings are generally held the 2nd Thursday of each month and held virtually.

Please email rhonda@umpquasoilandwater.com to obtain meeting information and instructions for attending virtually.

SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Small Grants are available to District residents and producers for a variety of water quality/Ag WQ and habitat improvement projects through our Umpqua 7 Small Grant Team! Now is the time to start thinking about projects to implement in the Fall of 2024 and Spring of 2025. You know your property better than anyone else. Look around and let us know what you need assistance with.

Contact the Umpqua Soil & Water Conservation District Office in order to begin the application process. Grants are available in amounts up to \$15,000. Our next small grant submission window is the first two weeks of September.

Project Examples:

Livestock Exclusion Fencing, Off-Stream Watering Systems, Heavy Use Livestock Areas such as Hardened Livestock Feeding Areas, Improved Livestock Crossings, Manure Storage Facilities, and More!

NEWSLETTER DELIVERY

Would you like to receive this newsletter by email? Send us an email with "newsletter" in the subject line to rhonda@umpquasoilandwater.com to let us know! If you are not yet receiving this newsletter and would like to, but don't use email, call (541) 662-1341 and we'll add you to our mailing list.



FARM CONSERVATION PLANNING

Farm Conservation Plans are documents developed jointly by Umpqua Soil & Water Conservation District and land managers. Farm Conservation Plans include actions that land managers can take to achieve their land use goals while protecting water and other natural resources. The planning process takes into consideration the size of the farm, type of soils, slope of the land, proximity to streams or water bodies, type of livestock or crops, and resources such as machinery, buildings and available finances.

Umpqua SWCD's Conservation Planner looks at changes that can be made to improve farm productivity and reduce impacts on natural resources. Some examples include stream-side fencing, gutters and downspouts, composting manure, pasture management and renovation, weed management, creating sacrifice areas, cross fencing and pasture rotation of livestock. Our Farm Conservation Planner can offer technical assistance on questions such as what grasses to plant, how to build a fence and when to mow.

Once the land manager has decided which changes they'd like to make on their property, they work with our Conservation Planner to set a tentative implementation schedule. Revisions of the schedule and the plan can be made as the goals and needs of the land manager change.

Farm Conservation Plans can help land managers, who have livestock, to meet the requirements of the Oregon Department of Agriculture Umpqua Basin Agricultural Water Quality Area Plan. This document can be found by going to:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oda/shared/Documents/Publications/NaturalResources/UmpquaAWQMAreaPlan.pdf>

All aspects of Farm Conservation Planning services provided by Umpqua SWCD are free of charge and without obligation. Umpqua SWCD is a non-regulatory, non-enforcement agency.

DIRECTOR RECRUITMENT

Director Responsibilities:

The Board of Directors set the direction of the District through the development and/or oversight of the strategic plan, biennial work plan, and District policies, with input from the District Manager and Staff. The Board and Staff enjoy a great working relationship that ensures natural resource stewardship programs and projects are available to all Douglas County citizens within the Umpqua Soil & Water Conservation District boundaries.

An individual Board member may only exercise their authority and responsibility of his or her position when the Board is in legal session and only as part of a specific Board action (e.g. resolution, motion, policy, etc.) and must be recorded in the public meetings minutes. Individual Board members may be given limited authority to act on behalf of the Board only when authorized by a specific Board action.

The responsibilities of the Board of Directors include but are not limited to the following tasks:

Approval and tracking of budgets, require and understand sufficient financial reports, oversight, employee performance reviews, approval and monitoring of annual work plan, strategic plan development and approval, represent Interests of Constituents, come to meetings informed and prepared, stay abreast of local conservation issues, promote the District's work to local landowners, local and state agencies, legislators, and other organizations.

In addition to the responsibilities listed above, the Directors, as a Board, have legal powers under ORS 568.550. To find out more go to: https://oregon.public.law/statutes/ors_568.550

The District is currently recruiting for the Zone 3 position to be appointed to the Umpqua SWCD Board of Directors.

Zone Director qualifications:

Must be a registered voter within the Umpqua SWCD boundary in Douglas County.

Reside within the zone being represented within the District.

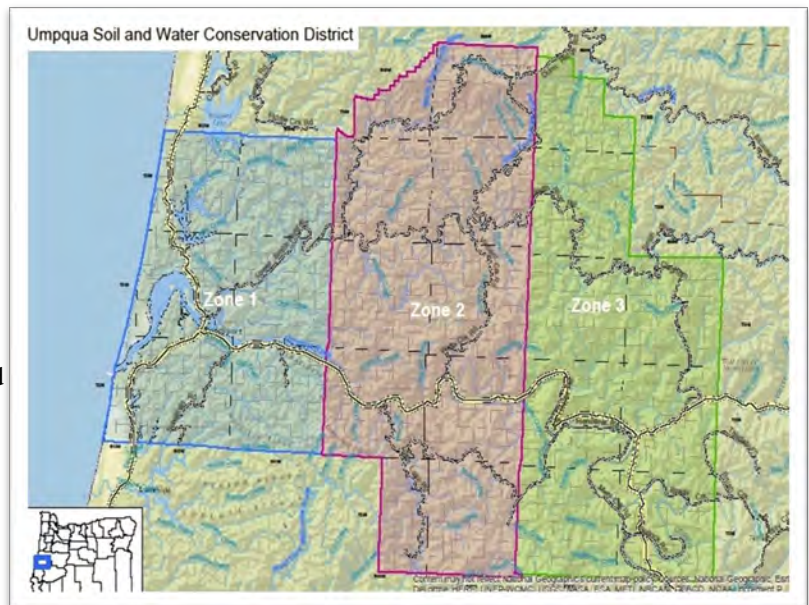
Own or manage 10-acres of land within the zone represented, or

Serve at least one year as a Director or Associate Director and have a District-approved conservation plan.

An interactive map of the District and zones can be found at:

<https://geo.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/lookup/index.html?appid=31b2f5ae9d494ecfbf7ff2608061a63f>

Please contact Umpqua SWCD if you are interested in becoming a Zone 3 Director!



NOTICE OF ELECTION FOR DISTRICT DIRECTORS OF THE UMPQUA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Notice is hereby given that on November 5, 2024, an election will be held to elect board director(s) to the following positions for the Umpqua Soil and Water Conservation District:

Positions:

Zone 1: 4 years

Zone 2: 4 years

Zone 3: 2 years

At-Large 1: 2 years

At-Large 2: 4 years



Zone boundaries, eligibility requirements, and copies of the required election forms may be obtained by emailing rhonda@umpquasoilandwater.com or by calling (541) 662-1341.

Election forms and information may also be found at the Oregon Department of Agriculture SWCD election page at <https://www.oregon.gov/oda/programs/NaturalResources/SWCD/Pages/Elections.aspx>

Each candidate must file a "Declaration of Candidacy" and a "Petition for Nomination Signature Sheet" with the Oregon Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Division. The filing deadline is 5:00 p.m. on August 27, 2024.

The candidate Packet can be found here: <https://www.umpquasoilandwater.com/elections> and at ODA's website.

Director zone boundaries can be found by looking on the Umpqua SWCD Zone Map found on page 4 of this newsletter or by going to ODA's interactive Director Zone Map located at:

<https://geo.maps.arcgis.com/apps/instant/lookup/index.html?appid=31b2f5ae9d494ecfbf7ff2608061a63f>

Requirements for eligibility:

The eligibility requirements for district directors were significantly changed in SB 775, which was passed in 2023. Please note that as of January 1, 2024, all zone directors must reside in the zone in which they represent. For director eligibility, residency refers to the place in which the candidate is registered to vote.

Candidates for At-Large positions must reside within the boundaries of the SWCD and be a registered voter in that district.

The other positions on the SWCD boards are Zone positions. Zone directors must be registered voters and reside within the zone they represent. In counties with fewer than 250,000 residents, eligibility requirements also include:

Own or manage 10 or more acres of land in the zones they represent in the district and be involved in the active management of the land; or

Indicate an interest in natural resource conservation as demonstrated by serving at least one year as a director or associated director of a district and having a conservation plan that is approved by the district.

MISSION STATEMENT

"The mission of the locally led Umpqua Soil and Water Conservation District is to provide assistance to any individual, group, or agency in applying natural resource conservation practices for the wise use of their natural resources."

ANNUAL MEETING

Look for information about our annual meeting this fall.

At our annual meeting we'll present our annual report and audit report for the year ending June 30, 2024.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Umpqua Soil & Water Conservation District:

Email: rhonda@umpquasoilandwater.com, Telephone: (541) 662-1341, website: <https://www.umpquasoilandwater.com/>

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