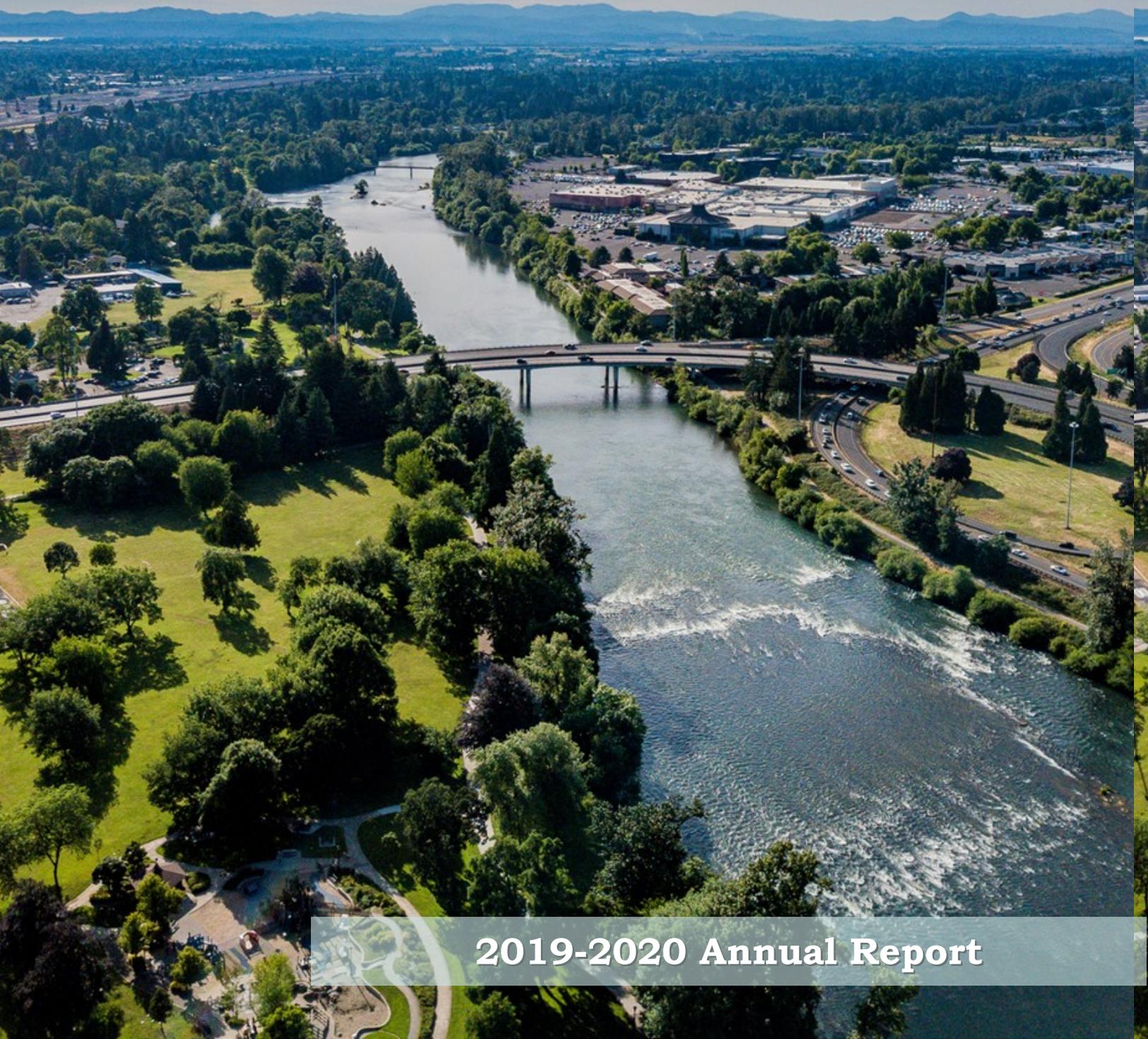


UPPER WILLAMETTE

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT



2019-2020 Annual Report

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780 BAILEY HILL RD, SUITE 5
EUGENE, OR 97402
(541) 650-3057
WWW.UWSWCD.ORG

BOARD MEETINGS

Meetings are held every second Tuesday of the month at 3 pm in the USDA conference room and are open to the public. *COVID-19 Update: Meetings will be held virtually via Zoom until it is deemed safe to resume regular meetings. Zoom code available upon request.

A Note from the Chair

Al Hrynyshyn, Board Chair



“The 2019-2020 business year for the UWSWCD was one of action and involvement in our variety of conservation-based projects, punctuated with the challenges and uncertainties brought on by COVID-19. Our mission to promote the responsible stewardship and conservation of our soil and water resources can be seen in such projects as our work in the Camp Creek SIA, continued involvement in the Pure Water Partners program, collaborative efforts with a National Water Quality Initiative grant, conservation education outreach to schools, a series of input and information-gathering meetings involving such diverse conservation viewpoints and concerns from representatives of local agriculture, forestry, and fellow conservation organizations, public polling on conservation-related issues, along with numerous

landowner site visits and evaluations and the processing of soil samples. We even rolled out a cool new district logo! But this year was not without its challenges, some new and unique, and others more routine. Covid restrictions affected office and field operations, and “Zoom” entered our vocabulary and district business. Several face-to-face planned activities were put on hold, and while we also experienced the turnover of a Board member and administrative specialist, we gained a new Zone 2 Director (Mary Durfee), and welcomed back Clarissa Berndt from maternity leave. We also sadly lost our emeritus Director, Paul Reed. While we still face the ongoing problem of not having adequate funding to meet all of the demand for our services, the UWSWCD staff and board continue to work hard with integrity and an eye toward an even more productive future. You, our constituents, can be proud of what the Upper Willamette Soil & Water Conservation District is doing to help ensure a high level of protection of your natural resources and quality of life for it’s citizens not only for today, but for this upcoming year. Thank you for your interest and support!”

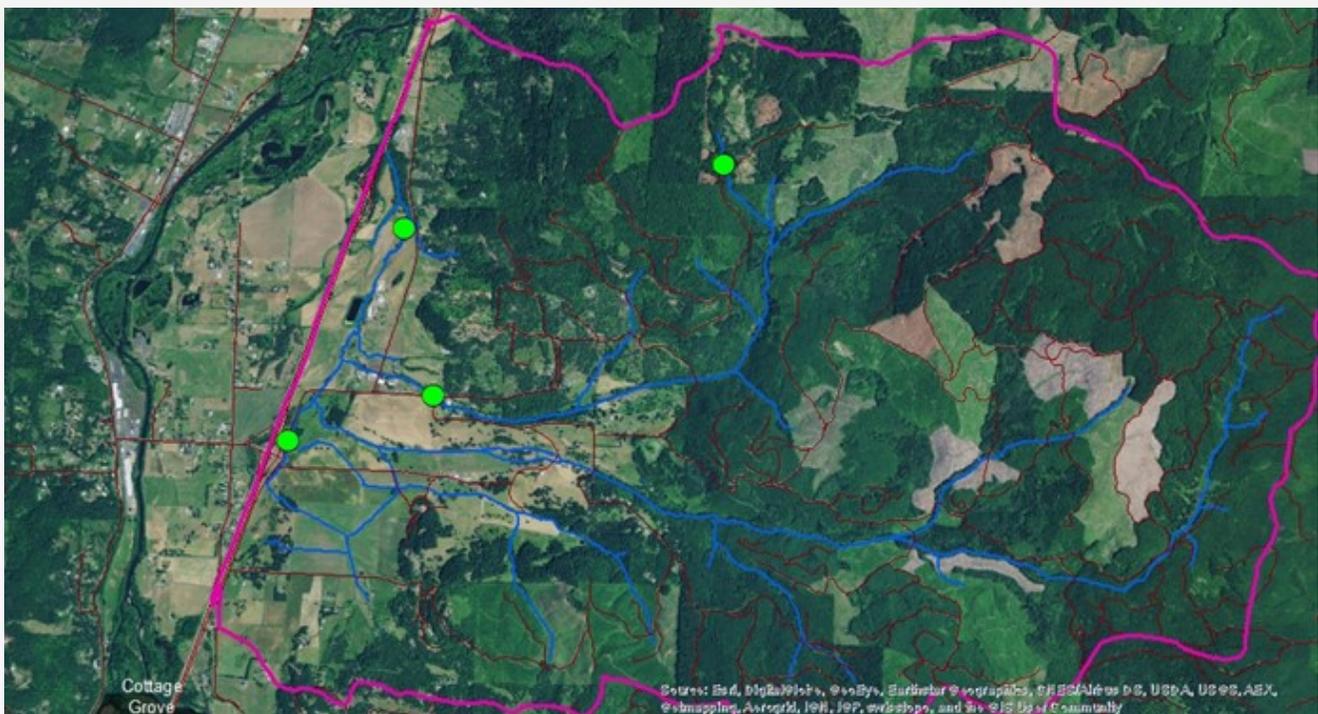
Our Mission



To encourage and promote the responsible stewardship of our natural resources through conservation, restoration and protection, to enhance the health, economic benefits and quality of life for the citizens within the District.

Gettings Creek Water Quality Monitoring

Over the past two years District staff has been conducting stream temperature monitoring on Gettings Creek, a tributary to the Coast Fork Willamette River. In May of 2019 staff began its third year of collecting stream data. The goal of this work is to provide temperature data on the stream to determine if conservation activities conducted in the riparian zone are having a positive effect on the stream. District staff deployed monitoring loggers at four sites, from the top to the bottom of the stream reach. Loggers were placed in late spring and retrieved in late fall of 2019. A mid-season check was conducted in late summer for data download and testing of stream flow. After retrieval in late fall, data was downloaded and provided to ODA and ODEQ to assure accuracy and quality of the data. Funding for this work was provided by the ODA.



National Water Quality Initiative—McKenzie River Watershed

The NWQI provides a way to accelerate voluntary, on-farm conservation investments and focused water quality monitoring. The National Water Quality Initiative is a partnership among NRCS, state water quality agencies and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to identify and address impaired water bodies through voluntary conservation. In 2019, NRCS expanded the scope of NWQI to include source water protection, including both surface and ground water public water systems. The McKenzie River watershed was selected for a Source Water Protection pilot project. In February of 2020, District Conservation Specialist, Lily Leitermann finalized this plan with approval awarded from the state and National NRCS. This plan will assist partners in adapting and expanding source water protection and identify critical source areas needing further treatment related to agricultural land uses. The assessment determined the primary influences of hydrology and human actions that impact the drinking water quality and resource concerns within the McKenzie watershed. It provided a recommendation of conservation practices and an outreach strategy to engage producers in critical areas of the watershed. If determined appropriate, the District and Lane County NRCS can apply for Implementation funding (Phase II of NWQI) to address the water quality resources concerns identified within this plan.

ODA Agricultural Water Quality Program

One of the longest standing partnerships that the District has is its relationship with the Oregon Department of Agriculture and its Agricultural Water Quality Program. The District is committed to providing technical assistance and potential funding opportunities to Agricultural producers to address water quality concerns associated with their individual ag operations. The District provided one FTE technical specialist to conduct this work and received \$58,000 from the ODA Agricultural Water Quality Grant. During FY 2019-20 District staff work consisted of:

- 500** Individual producers contacted
- 400** Acres of agricultural lands covered by 18 conservation plans that were developed to address water quality concerns
- 300** Producers provided with technical assistance
- 80** Producer site visits
- 6** Applications submitted for project funding
- 6** Landowner engagement events sponsored and coordinated
- 5** Landowner visits to assist ODA compliance division
- 1** Bi-annual meeting coordinated for the Upper Willamette/Upper Siuslaw Local Advisory Committee to review the ODA Agricultural Water Quality Plan & Rules

Thank you to our many partners, including:

USDA—FSA/NRCS, Oregon Dept of Agriculture, Oregon Dept of Forestry, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), Eugene Water & Electric Board (EWEB), Long Tom Watershed Council, Coast Fork Willamette Watershed Council, Middle Fork Willamette Watershed Council, McKenzie Watershed Council, McKenzie River Trust

Camp Creek Sub-Watershed Water Quality Monitoring Plan Created

Water Quality Improvements

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During the 2019-20 fiscal year staff worked with 6 landowners with differing levels of concern, implementing conservation practices on 120 acres of agricultural lands in the sub-watershed. From this, *two high risk assessed properties were removed from the high-risk category and downgraded to low potential negative impacts to water quality.* Another site is awaiting potential funding considerations.

In March 2020, the District Conservation staff collaborated with local water quality agencies and partners to develop the SIA Water Quality Monitoring plan for the Camp Creek sub-watershed. This plan will take place over a 10-year study-period timeframe with water quality monitoring actions to be conducted by the District and its partners. This plan identifies the need for three primary monitoring sites that will more accurately determine the relationship between agricultural related activities and riparian function, as well as compare conditions between non-ag water quality and agriculturally influenced areas. The data collected will provide a more comprehensive and accurate analysis of surface water contributions affecting the health of Camp Creek, which will provide a basis for determining activities that will reduce the water quality parameter levels and enhance vegetative conditions along the stream reach. This plan also includes a landscape monitoring design component. The riparian vegetation monitoring will help determine if restoration and enhancement of riparian vegetation conditions on private agricultural lands throughout the Camp Creek SIA area effectively reduces the *E.coli* and pesticide levels and temperature of Camp Creek over a ten-year period. Funding for this Camp Creek SIA work is provided through an OWEB multi-year grant utilizing \$25,405 during the 2019-20 fiscal year.



Pure Water Partners Program within the McKenzie Watershed

The District successfully continued its collaborative conservation work with the Pure Water Partners Program. The PWP program is a drinking water source protection strategy that rewards rural landowners who maintain high quality riparian vegetation, helping to protect drinking water quality and wildlife habitat in the McKenzie Watershed and avoid future water treatment costs. During this year, an EWEB and the Metropolitan Wastewater Management Commission provided funding for the District and its partners to continue PWP land-owner outreach, conduct riparian assessments, write management plans, and sign up landowners for long-term protection/restoration agreements. The District also participated in the PWP virtual informational meeting providing expert information to landowners about drinking water protection, sustainable landscape concepts, technical assistance resources and invasive vegetation removal. These effective outreach strategies helped recruit 12 landowners into the PWP program process during the 2019/2020 fiscal year, with a total of 89 landowners engaged in the PWP program. A popular PWP program incentive provides landowners free invasive vegetation removal conducted by the North West Youth Corps. The District supervised the Northwest youth corps crew's removal of invasive vegetation, mainly English Ivy and Himalayan Blackberry, from several riparian properties within the PWP boundary. In addition, the District completed 5 riparian assessments, 5 management plans, and assisted in the recruitment of two landowners to sign protection/restoration agreements with EWEB. In the next year the program will continue outreach to landowners with priority riparian properties, seeking to increase protection of riparian lands within the PWP boundary of the McKenzie Watershed. At this time, the PWP has placed approximately 134 acres under agreement.



Landowner Small Grant Projects

One of the more effective tools that the District staff utilizes in providing technical assistance and project funding is the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Small Grant program. This program provides funding for projects up to \$15,000. Funding is provided for individual landowner technical assistance and “on the ground” project implementation. Typical projects consist of smaller acreage riparian enhancement, small acreage upland Oak restoration, water quality concerns such as small acreage livestock manure management and livestock heavy use protection to reduce erosion in near stream areas, exclusion fencing from surface water areas and removal of invasive species with replanting of native species for habitat enhancement purposes.

Projects are usually 2 years in duration, so that projects were developed and or completed during the 2019-20 fiscal year. The structure of the small grant program allows for multiple conservation organizations to be considered applicants of a project. The District participates in two small grant areas located within the District boundaries. Thus, the District is allowed four projects per 2-year biennium.

During the 2019-20 fiscal year, staff developed 4 small grant projects addressing agricultural water quality concerns with estimated costs of \$49,000. In the same timeframe, staff completed 4 projects totaling \$45,000. These projects were located throughout the district and conducted on agricultural lands.



National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Technical Assistance Grant

During the last half of the 2018-19 FY and the first half of the 2019-20 FY the Upper Willamette SWCD was approved for an NACD technical assistance grant. This grant provided funding to the District to provide technical assistance to landowners currently participating in NRCS programs. Technical assistance was provided to 11 individual landowners totally 132 acres, consisting of conservation plan review, practice inspection with photo documentation, and assisting NRCS staff to ensure contract item completion for landowners to receive program payments. The grant covered a .35 FTE totaling \$16,846 in grant funds.

NRCS 2020 Annual Report

The Natural Resources Conservation Service has been utilizing Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) funding to implement projects within the Conservation Implementation Strategy focus areas. In 2020, there were 20 projects funded through EQIP. In Lane County there are 3 local strategies, oak woodland restoration, forest enhancement and water quality improvements in the McKenzie Watershed. There were 7 oak projects funded totaling \$591,751 in obligations for those projects. In the forest funding pool, \$33,240 was allocated to fund 4 projects. In the McKenzie watershed 4 projects totaling \$84,382 was allocated to improve water quality in the McKenzie River. In addition to local funding pools, the State has a high tunnel funding pool and an organic funding pool. The Eugene Field Office completed 4 contracts totaling \$29,673 and one organic contract for \$70,078. The total EQIP funds utilize for fiscal year 2020 was \$809,124.

The funding pools will remain the same for 2021. NRCS is working with the Upper Willamette SWCD and several other partners to expand the McKenzie funding pool to include other watersheds used for drinking water in Lane County.

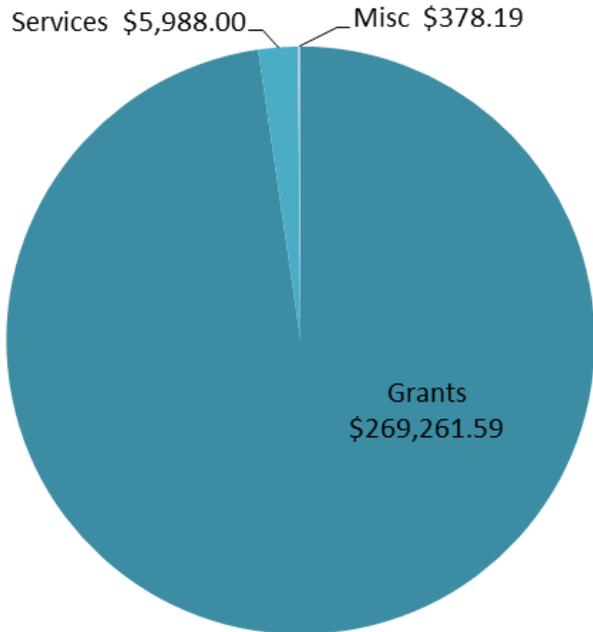
UWSWCD Public Awareness Outreach

During FY 2019-20 the District Board voted unanimously to conduct a public awareness outreach project. Funding was provided through a Developmental Focused Investment Partnership grant to conduct a series of community engagement meetings with the public to help determine on-going conservation actions being conducted throughout the District and how the District with enhanced revenue could best partner to enhance existing programs or fill in gaps that current conservation programs did not cover. Over 250 members of the public attended three planning meetings in December of 2019.

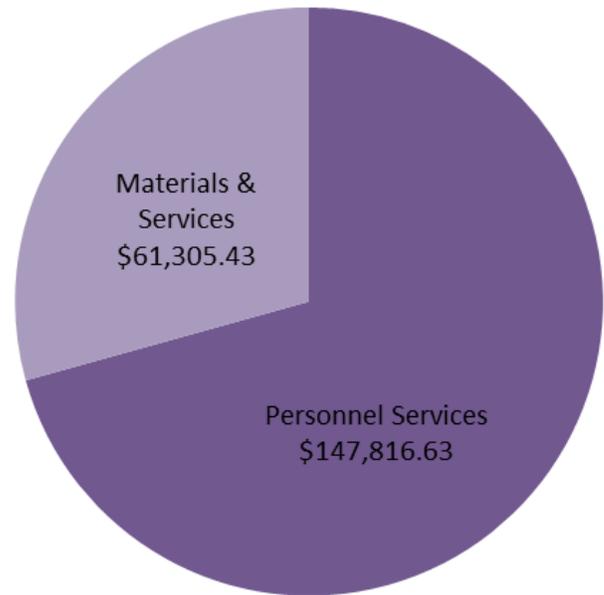
Information was gathered, reviewed, organized to help develop a strategic plan for the next 5 years. Following these meetings, the District hired a polling consultant to conduct a series of public surveys to obtain a broader perspective of the public's knowledge about the District. The results of these surveys indicated that if the public knew who the District was, they liked what we did.

With this information in hand, the District decided to hire a local marketing firm to assist in getting the District's name, mission, and goals out to the public. This consisted of re-building the District's website, distributing several informational mailings to District residents, and due to Covid-19 restrictions developed a robust social media platform. The results of these efforts indicate that now, over 60% of the public within the District understand who the District is and are in favor of the work that the District is committed to.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY



Revenues



Expenditures

REVENUES

Fiscal Year Beginning Balance	\$36,434.48
State Funding	\$176,391.56
Federal Funding	\$93,566.08
Other Sources	<u>\$6,366.19</u>
Total Revenues	<u>\$312,758.31</u>

EXPENDITURES

Personnel Services	\$147,816.63
Materials & Services	<u>\$61,305.43</u>
Total Expenditures	<u>\$209,122.06</u>

NET REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURES \$103,636.25

Balance Sheet—June 30, 2020 (Currently under CPA Review)

ASSETS

Cash & Equipment	<u>\$106,646.85</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$106,646.85</u>

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Payroll Liabilities	\$3,622.38
Other Liabilities	\$14,299.05

Equity

Net investment in Capital Asset	\$2,998.51
Retained Earnings	\$18,525.14
Net Income	<u>\$67,201.77</u>

Total Liabilities & Equity \$106,646.85

Board of Directors & Staff



Al Hrynyshyn,
Zone 1 Dir / Chairman



Mary Durfee,
Zone 2 Director



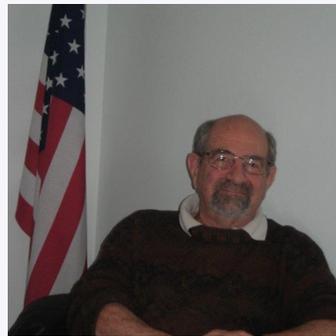
Gary Jensen,
Zone 3 Dir / Sec & Treas



Abel Kloster,
Zone 4 Director



Ralph Perkins,
Zone 5 Dir / Vice Chair



Chuck Arrera,
At Large 1 Director



Malcolm Wilson,
At Large 2 Director



Eric Nusbaum,
Associate Director



Dave Downing
District Manager
dave.downing@or.nacdnet.net



Lily Leitermann
Conservation Specialist
lily@uwsacd.org



Clarissa Berndt
Administrative Specialist
admin@uwsacd.org

The UWSWCD is an Equal Opportunity Employer, providing employment and services to the public without regard to race, color, national origin, religious preference, gender, age, or disability.