Welcome to the 2021–2022 annual report of the Upper Willamette Soil & Water Conservation District. And what an exciting year it has been!

Upper Willamette Environmental Education Team
The District provides support to the Upper Willamette Environmental Education Team, coordinated through the Middle Fork Willamette Watershed Council, to expand and coordinate place-based education opportunities to students throughout the district, as well as supporting the district in the development of our Environmental Education grant-making program.

Farmer’s Market Grants:
The UWSWCD awarded six Farmers Market Grants to local Farmer’s Markets throughout our District. The six applicants and awarders for the Fiscal Year 2021/2022 were: the Whiteaker Community Market, the Oakridge Community Farmer’s Market, Veneto’s Downtown Farmer’s Market, South Valley Farmer’s Market, Lost Valley Farmer’s Market, Lane County Farmer’s Market. These grants helped to increase community participation in market events, include more vendors, educate the public on conservation-related topics, and to make healthy, fresh agricultural products accessible to all demographics of the county (e.g., matching funds from SNAP or other assistance programs).

The Pure Water Partners Program
Holiday Farm Fire Post-Fire Watershed Restoration
In this fiscal year, the UWSWCD continued to serve as an integral partner in the Pure Water Partners (PWP) program, primarily focused on post-fire watershed restoration. We dedicated three full-time staff to manage and implement postfire restoration actions on McKenzie watershed fire-impacted private lands, working with landowners and contractors to support watershed restoration, planting nearly 500,000 native shrubs and trees across 120 properties.

We also implemented erosion control mitigation best management practices in burned areas especially those close to waterways, completed fire fuels reduction treatments on over 50 properties, and treated invasive vegetation on over 60 properties.

Read more on our website: UWSWCD.org/2021-2022Projects

Our Year of Change
The fiscal year 2021-22 was a year of big change for the Upper Willamette SWCD. With the voter approval of our tax-base structure of funding, the district began to look forward and plan for expansion with new resources. During the year, the district looked to expand capacity from 2.5 FTE to 8 FTE. Four new conservation technicians were hired to take on the district’s current technical commitments.

With the Holiday Farm Fire Recovery effort, the district has provided three FTE to work with over 300 landowners in providing technical assistance and planning to help restore the natural ecosystem of the McKenzie Watershed. The district continues its commitment to water quality protection using one FTE focused on our partnership with the Oregon Department of Agriculture to provide technical Holiday Farm Fire forest health and water quality program.

We have also enhanced our administrative staff by hiring a programs manager and fiscal manager as well as an administrative specialist and a media/outreach specialist to inform our constituents of our progress.

With this capacity expansion, grew a need for more office space for our operations. We moved our district operations out of the USDA Service Center located at 780 Bailey Hill Road in Eugene to our new office located at 3291 West 1st Ave. in Eugene. This allows us more space including a large meeting area for Board, partners, and community workshop meetings.

On the operational side, we completed our first Local Budget Law annual budget. This required the district to recruit a group of interested dedicated citizens to serve as budget committee members for a commitment term of 3 years. These amazing folks were very involved in determining how new resources were allocated.

As we move forward, the district is dedicated to providing transparency of how we operate. The public is always welcome to join our monthly Board of Directors meetings or any of our district committee meetings.

As we expand, our goal is to enhance and uplift the level of conservation throughout our district. There are multiple conservation organizations within our district that are doing great work and have built long-lasting relationships with our constituents. Through strong partnerships, we plan to assist these organizations to continue to do great work.

Dave Downing
District Manager

The biggest news in the District’s history was the passage of Lane County Measure 20-312 in November 2020, in which you, the voters of eastern Lane County, approved a property tax levy to help publicly fund conservation efforts here within our district. The biggest change this brought to the UWSWCD was the infusion of a revenue stream with which to carry out the mission of the District and help achieve the conservation goals you have told us are your priorities for eastern Lane County. A change in funding brings many exciting and complex challenges and duties, and the biggest task for us this fiscal year was the ramping up of facilities, staff, and programs to build for future work and success.

While we are still committed to continuing our ongoing work, such as water quality monitoring, soil sample testing, and the important work with Pure Water Partners in the Holiday Farm Fire recovery efforts, we also began the process of building for the future. Many hours were spent establishing work committees and drafting new policies and procedures to ensure legal compliance with our new status. A public budgeting process was initiated, a new office space was secured, a revamped website was created, and many trainings were attended by both staff and Board. In short, this process was almost like rebuilding the UWSWCD from scratch, and let me tell you – it is a lot of work!

Perhaps most importantly, this new funding allowed us to expand our staff to not only honor our previous project commitments, but to expand our operations.

We have many new and exciting projects beginning that you will be hearing much more about in the coming years.

Again, thank you for the support you have given us, and we are honored that you have placed your faith and trust in us to be the voice of the people in conservation efforts. We will work hard to represent your interests in clean waters and healthy soils for all.

As we continue to expand, we promise to be open, ethical, and efficient stewards of your resources, both financial and environmental. And as always, we thank you for taking an interest in us. You are always welcome at our meetings, and please contact us with your conservation thoughts and concerns.

From the Upper Willamette Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Directors and staff, thank you again!

Al Hrynyszyn
Board Chair

Upper Willamette Soil & Water Conservation District.

November 2020
Board of Directors
Al Hrynyshyn
Chair, Zone 1 Director
Gary Jensen
Secretary/Treasury, Zone 3 Director
Ralph Perkins
Vice-Chair, Zone 5 Director
Mary Durfee Ph.D
Zone 2 Director
Abel Kloster
Zone 4 Director
Chuck Arrera
At Large 1 Director
Malcolm Wilson
At Large 2 Director
Eric Nusbaum
Associate Director

Partners
Coast Fork Watershed Council
Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB)
Friends of Buford Park
Long Tom Watershed Council
McKenzie River Trust
McKenzie Watershed Council
Middle Fork Watershed Council
Mt. Pisgah Arboretum
Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA)
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW)
Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF)
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB)
United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Upper Willamette SWCD Staff
Dave Downing
District Manager
Lily Leitermann
Conservation Programs Manager
Victoria Fischella
Conservation Technician
Daniel Dietz
Senior Restoration Specialist
Meridith McClure
Restoration Specialist
Alec Spencer
Restoration Specialist
Clarissa Berndt
Fiscal Manager
Leslie Owens
Administrative Specialist
Cricket Deloe
Media & Outreach Specialist

2021-2022 Financial Information*
Total Revenues:
$3,252,465.58
Total Expenditures:
$1,474,770.75
Beginning Balance: $564,275.58
Ending Balance: $1,777,694.83
*Unaudited

Upper Willamette Soil & Water Conservation District
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Eugene, OR 97402
541.852.6680
www.UWSWCD.org

Our Board of Directors meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 3pm. For more information, please visit our website.