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Oregon Chapter Annual Meeting

The Annual Oregon Chapter Meeting and Summer Tour was held Sept 21 in Corvallis. Fourteen of our 78 members attended the event which began at the NRCS Plant Materials Center. SWCS members were joined by staff



Teresa Matteson and Bob Wilt talk about the Soil Quality Project. Photo Steve Fedje

from the Oregon Department of Agriculture Water Quality Team to hear about a Soil Quality Project that is being conducted by Benton Soil and Water Conservation District. During spring 2010, OSU students from the Natural

Resources Conservation Club helped collect soil samples and field data. Next tour members visited Sunset Valley Organics to hear about the world of soil quality according to owner Bob Wilt.

The group then moved on to Tyee Wine Cellars to hear owner Dave Buchanan discuss some of the cultural practices employed on their farm that help improve water quality. Some of the practices discussed



Speaker in vineyard broadcasting predatory bird calls as part of Integrated Pest Management System. Photo Steve Fedje

include: restoration of historic wetlands and floodplains to natural vegetation to filter water, use of solar power to reduce farm energy costs, and the use of beneficial insects to control pests on crops rather than relying on chemical means.

The day included lunch for participants from Old World Deli in Corvallis. Following the tour, we held our annual business meeting which included nominations for new members to the Board of Directors, summary of 2010 activities and trainings, and discussion of upcoming 2011 opportunities. The complete minutes from the meeting are available on request.

Establishing Winter Cover Crops

Submitted by Dana Higgins, written by Nick Andrews, OSU Small Farms Program;



Kristin Pool interseeds cover crops into Jim Bronec's Butternut squash in early August 2010. Photo provided by Nick Andrews

In theory cover crops can protect soil from erosion, improve soil tilth, supply nitrogen (N), reduce weeds, provide nectar and pollen for beneficial insects, increase the winter survival of mycorrhizae, help to manage soil-borne diseases, and provide other benefits. In practice, it's often difficult to establish cover crops in commercial rotations to produce enough ground cover and biomass to realize these

potential benefits. The OSU Organic Fertilizer and Cover Crop Calculator (see resources) enables you to estimate the cost and N contribution of cover crops on your farm. This article is based on experience in vegetable rotations but can inform other cropping systems.

Links to full article and calculator:

<http://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/newsletter>
<http://smallfarms.oregonstate.edu/calculator>

Notes from Headquarters

SWCS Executive Director Jim Gulliford attended the Farm foundation Forum on Sept 14th to discuss budget implications for the next Farm Bill. Presenters included Craig Jagger, chief economist of the House Agriculture Committee; Patrick Westhoff of the Food and Agriculture Policy Research Institute; Chuck Conner of the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives; and Ferd Hoefner of the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition.

Other News

ODA - Block grants directed to enhance Oregon specialty crops: ODA awards \$1.75 million in federal funds to 24 projects

Oregon's specialty crop industry is hoping to increase its success in the marketplace with the help of \$1.75 million in federal funds authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill. The money will fund 24 projects selected by the Oregon Department of Agriculture and an industry advisory board. The projects are designed to help a major portion of the state's agricultural producers.

Funding has been allocated for projects dealing with such issues as food safety, marketing, promotion, carbon reduction, school gardens, and certification.

Full article at <http://www.oregon.gov/ODA/>

Meet Your Board of Directors!

Joe Williams – President Elect



Joe Williams is the Manager of the USDA-NRCS Corvallis Plant Materials Center. He was a District Conservationist for 4 years in California and has served as an Agronomist and Soil Conservationist in his 14 years with NRCS. Joe is a Certified Professional Agro-

nomist (CPAg) and a Certified Crop Adviser. He looks forward to serving the Society as President this upcoming year!

Upcoming Events

Oct 23, 2010 Natural Resources School Newport, OR

This one day school will offer 40 different subjects/topics such as: Forestry Management, Agriculture/Small Farms, Special Forest Products/Christmas Trees, Sawing/Drying Wood, Wildlife, Landscape/Gardens, Pests and Invasive Species, Fisheries and Fishery Products, and General community Topics. Cost is \$50.

Oregon Coast Community College, 400 SE College Way, Newport, OR. For more info contact Sam Angima at 541-574-6537 or sam.angima@oregonstate.edu

Dec 7-9, 2010 Western Native Plant Conference, Portland, OR

Three day conference on all aspects of native plant restoration, propagation, and reintroduction. Western Forestry and Conservation Association www.westernforestry.org. Contact 888-722-9416 email michele@westernforestry.org

Feb 26, 2011 OSU Small Farms Conference, Corvallis, OR

Feb 2011 Film and Lecture Series with Friends of Struab Environmental Learning Center and Salem Progressive Film Festival Salem, OR

Screening "DIRT! The Movie" with lecture by Dr Dave Montgomery, author of [Dirt, The Erosion of Civilizations.](#) Dates TBA.

Resurrect OSU Student Chapter

Your input is solicited by the Student Chapter Steering Committee for help in reinstating the OSU chapter of the SWCS. Teresa Matteson heads up the Committee and she can be reached at: tmatteson@bentonswcd.org or call 541-753-7208

What SWCS is Doing for You

What does the organization produce that I should want to support it?

Advocacy for our work. SWCS is all about soil and water conservation, obviously. There are many organizations that you could support that work on natural resource issues. To belong to them all would require time and financial commitments few of us could afford. SWCS is made up of folks who advocate the need for the work we do. Whether you are local, state or federal agency with soil and water conservation work, or private individual or firm that assists clients in meeting jurisdictional requirements it pays to have people lobbying on your behalf for policy or advancing the science of soil and water conservation.

Personal and professional growth. If you are just starting out on a conservation career it helps to have a vehicle that you can use to gradually improve leadership, scientific and group member skills. Chapter positions give everyone an opportunity to gain leadership skills. **The Journal** has articles that relate specifically to our work and show we can make a difference. The work shown in some article could inspire you to do your own project and get it published.

Certainly there are levels of support. You don't have to be the president to support an organization. Any contribution is support. In the case of the SWCS if you pay your dues you are at a fairly high level of support.

Your Oregon Chapter has several projects planned for 2011 including:

- Technical Training Sessions such as Soil School, RUSLE II and more.
- Sponsorship and support for the National Soil Judging Contest in Central Oregon.
- Initiation of the Student Chapter to lead the next generation into conservation careers.
- PNW Regional Workshop on the new EPA rules for pesticides and fumigants.
- Launch of a new chapter website and newsletter to keep you informed and up-to-date.

We would love to hear from you! If you have more ideas about what you would like to see your chapter working on contact one of the Directors listed below. We are here to help you!

Useful Contacts

Russ Hatz (President, East Zone 2)

Tel: 503-273-2428

russ.hatz@por.usda.gov

Joe Williams (Vice President, SW Zone 3)

Tel: 541-757-4812

joe.williams@or.usda.gov

Luca DeStefanis (Secretary, NW Zone 4)

Tel: 503-655-3144

manticula@gmail.com

Steve Fedje (Representative)

Tel: 503-326-3941x102

steve.fedje@or.usda.gov

Dana Higgins (Treasurer, East Central Zone 1)

Tel: 541-298-8559 ext 113

dana.higgins@or.usda.gov

Teresa Matteson (Representative, NW Zone 4)

Tel: 541-753-7208

TMatteson@bentonswcd.org

Denise Troxell (Membership Chair)

Tel: 503-414-3232

denise.troxell@or.usda.gov

