Sherman County SWCD & Watershed Council

The Rolling Thunder

Farm Service Agency

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) General Sign-Up 45
May 20 through June 14, 2013

USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) will hold a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) general sign-up from May 20 - June 14, 2013.

Submitting CRP Offers

Land that is not currently enrolled in CRP may be offered for enrollment during CRP sign-up 45. In addition, CRP participants with contracts expiring on Sept. 30, 2013, may submit offers.

To submit CRP offers please call or visit the FSA office. FSA will accept offers only during the sign-up period.

Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) and Direct and Counter-Cyclical (DCP) Programs

The ACRE and DCP programs have been extended for one year through 2013.

ACRE sign-up period began on February 19, 2013 and ends on June 3, 2013.


Farms that have enrolled in the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) for 2013 may elect to switch to ACRE, but must do so on or before June 3, 2013.

All producers may choose to enroll in either DCP or ACRE for the 2013 crop year. This means that producers who enrolled in ACRE for 2012 may elect to enroll in DCP in 2013, or vice versa.

Producers who elect and enroll a farm in ACRE agree to: (1) forgo counter-cyclical payments, (2) a 20-percent reduction in their direct payments, and (3) a 30-percent reduction in the marketing assistance loan (MAL) rates for all commodities produced on the farm.

When you call to make an appointment please be sure to inform the office of any farm changes.

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**Soil & Water Conservation District**

- We would just like remind everyone of our small grant program and its upcoming deadline. Our funding for the current 2011-2013 biennium will expire June 30th 2013 or until the funds run out, whichever comes first. If interested in starting a project please do not hesitate to contact Kayla von Borstel by either stopping in the office or calling 541-565-3216 x 109.

- We also still have openings for the full time position of SWCD Conservation Technician as well as a temporary position of Weed Technician. If interested or for more information please visit our website (www.shermancountyswcd.com) or call our office at 541-565-3216 x 3.

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**Natural Resource Conservation Service**

- NRCS will be conducting CRP Status Reviews starting the month of April. Our office will be in contact with those producers to make appointments for field days.

- If you have a CRP contract that expires 9/30/2013 and you plan to rebid these fields, contact Kristie to verify the species before going to FSA for a ranking. Kristie's number is (541)565-3551 ext. 102.

- EQIP dollars that were received for weeds along the river corridors and reshaping of existing terrace have been spent and there is a request in for additional dollars for Sherman County. However, it is not known at this time if there will be additional funds.

- Signup for the Conservation Stewardship Program is ongoing so if you haven't signed up, contact Kristie.

- REMINDER: ‘Tis the Season for getting rid of weeds in your field. Just a reminder that if you plan to use your clean till option on Highly Erodible Land, please contact Kristie to report those acres.

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### 2013 USDA FSA Dates to Remember - Friendly Reminder

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<td>June 3rd</td>
<td>ACRE Sign Up Deadline</td>
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<td>June 14th</td>
<td>CRP General Sign Up 45 Deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 15th</td>
<td>Acreage Reporting Deadline spring seeded crops &amp; CRP</td>
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<td>July 15th</td>
<td>Production Records for 2012 ACRE farms. You may use crop insurance form 5030. Ask your insurance agent to forward to the FSA office.</td>
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<td>August 2nd</td>
<td>DCP Sign Up</td>
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**Farm Service Agency Continued**
Oregon Department of Agriculture

This is an excerpt from Katy Coba, director of ODA, in the Agriculture Quarterly Spring 2013 issue.

“Last summer, I delivered a call to action for Oregon’s farmers, ranchers, and other landowners to pay attention to water quality issues. ODA’s Agricultural Water Quality Management Program was beginning to consider potential changes in how it operates. We wanted to know if an alternative to the predominantly complaint-based program could be developed that would provide a more strategic and effective effort. We asked landowners for input. We involved the State Board of Agriculture for guidance. We enlisted the help of traditional partners like the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD), the Soil and Water Conservation Commission (SWCC), and individual Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD’s). This Spring, I can tell you that changes are in the works. They can be summed up in two words—‘strategic implementation.’

Those words should be encouraging, not intimidating. The old process of responding to water quality complaints may have been effective during its time, but the issues have evolved and so must the program. Our Agricultural Water Quality Management Program has an opportunity to improve its effectiveness by being strategic. A resolution recently passed by the board of Agriculture supports a ‘full suite of tools necessary to pursue the state’s water quality goals that includes continuing complaint-based inspections, undertaking agency-initiated site inspections, and focusing strategic implementation in small geographic areas.’

In the days ahead, ODA will establish and pilot a strategic implementation process that prioritizes and focuses resources to achieve compliance with locally-established water quality rules. Two specific geographic areas with a history of water quality problems have been selected as ‘test runs.’ East of the Cascades, Mill Creek in Wasco County has been chosen. On the west side, Clackamas County’s North Fork Deep Creek will also be a test run. In both locations, ODA’s compliance authority will supplement the work of the SWCD’s who will provide landowner outreach and technical assistance.

One of the areas of ODA’s program in need of improvement is monitoring. We believe that all the efforts over the years to achieve water quality goals have resulted in better conditions. However, documentation of those changes is lacking. Under the new strategic implementation process, a pre-assessment of the watershed will take place followed by vigorous outreach to landowners in an attempt to address the highest priority concerns. Post-assessments will also be conducted to document changes in streamside conditions with the hope that pollution from agricultural activities is prevented and controlled. Landowners will be provided with necessary tools to improve shade, stabilize stream banks, and control erosion to achieve compliance. Whether providing technical assistance or financial incentive, our aim is to strategically make a difference and then be able to show it. We expect success from these two test runs. In time, additional strategic implementation areas will be identified.

These efforts are not to suggest that the Agricultural Water Quality Management Program needed drastic change. It is more a case of the program maturing and the need to provide meaningful and measurable outcomes. We believe strategic implementation will get us there, the Board of Agriculture believes it, and so do the partnering soil and water conservation groups who have agreed to step up and play a larger role.

There is one aspect to our program that will not change. ODA still promotes voluntary cooperation among landowners to address water quality and landscape issues. ODA will pursue regulatory action when necessary, but we recognize that a lot of good things have happened voluntarily, especially when partners like our SWCDs and other natural resource entities are willing and able to help landowners.

By focusing our resources and efforts strategically, we can better show program effectiveness. The foundation of our program is collaboration, sort of a clean water partnership within agriculture. Every farmer, rancher, and agriculture landowner is part of a team that I expect will be victorious in demonstrating water quality improvement.”
Quote of the Quarter

And on the 8th day, God looked down on his planned paradise and said, “I need a caretaker.” So God made a farmer.

God said, “I need somebody willing to get up before dawn, milk cows, work all day in the fields, milk cows again, eat supper and then go to town and stay past midnight at a meeting of the school board.” So God made a farmer.

“I need somebody with arms strong enough to rustle a calf and yet gentle enough to deliver his own grandchild. Somebody to call hogs, tame cantankerous machinery, come home hungry, have to wait lunch until his wife’s done feeding visiting ladies and tell the ladies to be sure and come back real soon — and mean it.” So God made a farmer.

God said, “I need somebody willing to sit up all night with a newborn colt. And watch it die. Then dry his eyes and say, ‘Maybe next year.’ I need somebody who can shape an ax handle from a persimmon sprout, shoe a horse with a hunk of car tire, who can make harness out of haywire, feed sacks and shoe scraps. And who, planting time and harvest season, will finish his forty-hour week by Tuesday noon, then, paining from ‘tractor back,’ put in another seventy-two hours.” So God made a farmer.

God had to have somebody willing to ride the ruts at double speed to get the hay in ahead of the rain clouds and yet stop in mid-field and race to help when he sees the first smoke from a neighbor’s place. So God made a farmer.

God said, “I need somebody strong enough to clear trees and heave bails, yet gentle enough to tame lambs and wean pigs and tend the pink-combed pullets, who will stop his mower for an hour to splint the broken leg of a meadow lark. It had to be somebody who’d plow deep and straight and not cut corners. Somebody to seed, weed, feed, breed and rake and disc and plow and plant and tie the fleece and strain the milk and replenish the self-feeder and finish a hard week’s work with a five-mile drive to church. Somebody who’d bale a family together with the soft strong bonds of sharing, who would laugh and then sigh, and then reply, with smiling eyes, when his son says he wants to spend his life ‘doing what dad does.’” So God made a farmer.

-Paul Harvey; 1978 @ Future Farmers of America Convention

Experiment Weather Station

February

- Precipitation for February 2013 is 0.02” which is 1.09” below normal
- 2012/2013 crop year total is 5.61” which is 1.80” below normal
- The highest temperature was 54° on the 28th
- The lowest air Temperature was 22° on the 19th
- Long time air temperature averages indicate we can expect 57° and 10°
- The average air temperature for the month was 38.1°
- February long term average air temperature is 35.5°
- 4” soil temperature ranged from 45° to 35°
- The average windspeed of 3.8 PMH is 0.1 above normal
- Wind is recorded 1 foot above evaporation tank
Experiment Weather Station Continued...

**March**

- Precipitation for March is 0.83” which is 0.15” below normal
- Total precipitation for 12/13 crop year is 6.44” which is 2.08” below normal
- The highest air temperature was 69° on the 31st
- The lowest air temperature was 18° on the 4th
- Long time air temperature averages indicate we can expect 66° and 20°
- The average air temperature for the month was 42.5°
- The long term average air temperature for March is 41.5°
- 4” soil temperature ranged from 58° to 38°
- The average windspeed of 3.8 PMH is 0.5 below normal
- Total snowfall was a trace

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~ Calendar Of Events ~

1. May 14th, 2013—District budget meeting to be held @ the SWCD office—8:00am—Date subject to change
2. May 14th, 2013—Board meeting to be held @ the SWCD office—8:30am—Date subject to change
3. May 27th, 2013—Memorial Day—Office Closed
4. June 11th, 2013—Board meeting to be held @ the SWCD office—Date subject to change
5. July 4th, 2013—Fourth of July—Office Closed
7. September 10th, 2013—Board meeting to be held @ the SWCD office—Date subject to change

~ Board & Staff ~

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Mary Beth Smith, Basin Resource Conservationist

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