

# THE ROLLING THUNDER



January 2022

SHERMAN COUNTY SWCD & WATERSHED COUNCIL

## Soil & Water Conservation District

### Upcoming Meetings

The next SWCD meeting is February 8th at 8:30 am in the OSU Extension Conference Room.



### The SWCD annual meeting will be held March 8th at 6 pm at in Rufus

To RSVP contact Amanda Whitman at 541-705-5070 or  
Amanda.whitman@or.nacdnet.net  
More information will be advertised soon.

### County Cost Share

The SWCD has county cost share grants still available! County cost share funds conservation projects in crop, range, and/or riparian areas. Eligible projects include **cross and border fencing, haul roads, spring development, solar water development, weed treatment, range seeding, riparian restoration, and more.** Projects up to \$10,000 have a 75% cost share rate and projects \$10,001-\$15,000 have a 50% cost share rate. Projects must be completed within 1 year. Call the SWCD at 541-705-5070 to learn more or apply. There is no deadline to apply. Applications are reviewed every month at SWCD board meetings.

## Sherman County Area Watershed Council

### Upcoming Meetings

The next Council meeting is March 8th at 8 am at the OSU Extension Conference Room.



## We've Moved Offices!

The Sherman County SWCD and the Sherman Area Watershed Council are now housed in the OSU Extension Office in Moro at 66365 Lone Rock Rd. Moro, OR 97039.

Come by and say hi during business hours, Monday through Friday 8am to 4:30pm.

*We are still teleworking on occasion, so we may not be in every day.*

### How to reach us:

Amanda Whitman  
SWCD District Manager  
Cell: 541-705-5070  
Amanda.whitman@or.nacdnet.net

Hannah Fatland  
Sherman Area Watershed Council Coordinator  
Cell: 541-705-5161  
Hannah.fatland@or.nacdnet.net

# Conservation Spotlight: SMALL GRANTS



Applying for a small grant is a great opportunity to have small scale conservation projects implemented on your property. Our new biennium began August 30th and we are able to fund conservation projects through the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) Small Grant Program. Projects available for funding include **spring and water developments, guzzlers, brush and juniper management** among others. Small grants have a cost share rate of 75% with projects up to \$10,000, and 50% cost share \$10,001-\$15,000. Small grants can not exceed \$15,000. Applications are reviewed monthly at SWCD board meetings by the Small Grant team. Once an application is approved and a grant agreement has been signed, the recipient has two years to complete the project. Call the SWCD 541-705-5070 or 541-705-5161 to learn more or apply. If there is a project you would be interested in implementing that is not listed please, feel free to contact us.



Spring development developed through Small Grant Program



Solar well developed through Small Grant Program

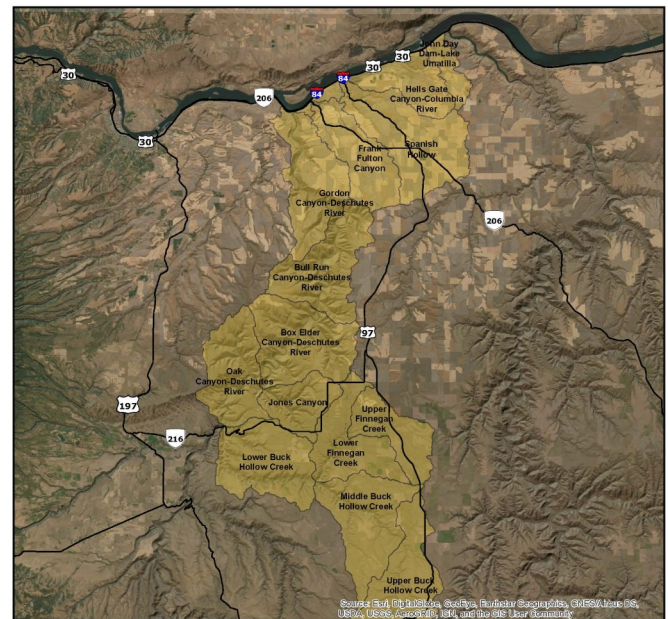
## Eastern Lower Deschutes Strategic Implementation Area (SIA)

The Eastern Lower Deschutes watershed has been selected by the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) as one of their Strategic Implementation Areas. This is a program in which ODA evaluates agricultural activities across the state to identify opportunities to improve water quality.

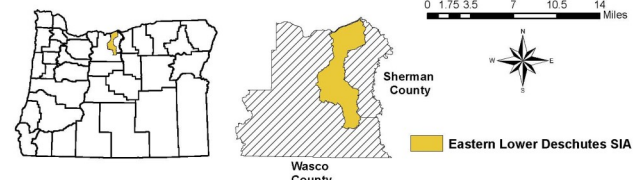
After the evaluation, those owning agricultural lands within the selected watershed are usually invited to an open house where ODA would have met landowners in person and discussed the SIA initiative, shared results, and provided information and resources, but were unable to due to COVID-19 restrictions for indoor public gatherings.

ODA recently recorded a virtual open house to provide information about the SIA and what it means for you and your property. The ODA hopes to be able to host and in person open house in the near future. Until then you can watch the Virtual Open House at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dRdZrBEN4E>

For assistance, please call the ODA at (503) 931-1754 and ask to speak to a Theresa DeBardelaben. You may also e-mail questions or concerns to [tdebardelaben@oda.state.or.us](mailto:tdebardelaben@oda.state.or.us) or the Sherman Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) at (541)-705-5070 or [www.shermancountyswcd.com/](http://www.shermancountyswcd.com/)



For more background information on ODA SIA please visit pages 4 and 7 of this newsletter.



Eastern Lower Deschutes Strategic Implementation Area





## **NEW Contact Information for FSA:**

To contact FSA or NRCS staff, please call the Wasco/Hood River USDA Service Center at 541-298-8559 and use the extensions listed below. You will be able to contact each of us directly and/or leave a message if we do not answer. Our phone extensions will ring directly to our computers if we are not physically in The Dalles office.

**FSA 130 – Kara Lanthorn**

**FSA 131 – Kayci Sharp**

**FSA 132 – Kayla Coulter**

**NRCS 133 – Misty Strayhorn**

**NRCS 134 – Lauren Healey**

## **FSA upcoming deadlines:**

**Emergency Assistance for Livestock (ELAP):** Due to Sherman County continuing to experience Exceptional Drought (D4) conditions, water hauling is still eligible for benefits. If you have incurred increased transportation costs for hay, please notify the FSA office for more information or to report your losses. Deadline to sign up for 2021 payments is January 31, 2021.

**Livestock Forage Program:** May 4, 2021 Sherman County Hit D3 Extreme Drought Status and livestock producers are now eligible to apply for LFP. Deadline to submit a completed application is January 31, 2022

**2022 Crop Year – Election and Enrollment Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC-CO or ARC-IC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC):** Sign up has begun. Please check in with the office and let us know which program you would like to sign up for 2022 crop year. All election and enrollment signatures must be obtained on contracts by March 15, 2022.

**USDA Expands Partnerships for Conservation Through Its Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is leveraging its authorities under the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) to bring in new types of partners and ultimately expand opportunities in voluntary conservation for the Nation's agricultural producers and private landowners. In direct response to feedback from state agencies, Tribes, non-profits and other groups, USDA has updated CREP's rule regarding matching fund requirements, and invested in additional staff to work directly with partners for streamlined, partner-driven conservation efforts.

CREP is part of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and enables USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), through Farm Service Agency (FSA), and partners to co-invest in partner-led projects. CREP also plays an important role in USDA's broader climate change strategy, bringing together producers, landowners and partners for climate-smart land management.

### **Matching Funds**

A Dec. 6, 2019, rule required that 50% of matching funds from partners be in the form of direct payments, which made it more difficult for diverse types of groups to participate as partners in CREP. With this rule change, partners can now provide their negotiated level of matching funds in the form of cash, in-kind contributions, or technical assistance. This change allows for greater flexibility and opportunity for additional partners to participate in the program.

This change was enacted through a Dec. 13, 2021 rule in the Federal Register.

The rule also updated policy to now provide a full annual rental rate to producers who are impacted by state, Tribal or local laws, ordinances and regulations that require a resource conserving or environmental protection measure. The previous rule reduced the rental payment made to producers who were covered by such laws.

### **Additional Capacity to Support Partners and Producers**

In order to implement these changes, FSA has hired three new CREP staff members, using a regional approach to work closely with potential and existing partners and expand program availability. The team members include:

Evelyn Whitesides, focusing on Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia and Caribbean Region (Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands).

*Continued on page 4* →

# Farm Service Agency Continued

Kim Martin, focusing on Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas and Wisconsin. Patrick Lewis, focusing on Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Pacific Basin, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

These investments in CREP staffing build on other recent outreach and education efforts by FSA, including a \$4.7 million investment announced this year to establish partnerships with organizations to provide outreach and technical assistance to historically underserved farmers and ranchers on a variety of CCC and FSA programs, including conservation programs.

Currently, all CREP partners are States; however, FSA is strongly encouraging Tribes and non-governmental organizations to consider partnerships. This program is a great vehicle for their conservation-focused efforts.

## About CREP

Currently, CREP has 34 projects in 26 states. In total, more than 860,000 acres are enrolled in CREP.

Eligible partners include States, Tribal groups, and non-governmental organizations. Potential partners interested in CREP should contact their FSA State Office or one of the new CREP team members listed above.

## More Information

Earlier this year, FSA rolled out a number of improvements to CRP, which included a larger emphasis on climate-smart agriculture through a new Climate-Smart Practice Incentive for CRP general and continuous signups. Learn more in our “What’s New with CRP” fact sheet. These updates to CREP build on FSA’s larger effort to improve all components of CRP.

To learn about CREP and other CRP opportunities, producers and landowners should contact their local USDA Service Center.

## Oregon Department of Agriculture - Strategic Implementation Area

### Oregon’s Agricultural Water Quality Management Program

#### What is a Strategic Implementation Area?

A Strategic Implementation Area, or “SIA,” is a geographic area of focus selected by the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), in coordination with local partners, with the intent of providing targeted outreach and assistance for landowners to implement projects that improve water quality in the local watershed, while helping landowners adhere to state regulations.

#### SIA Selection

Every few years, new SIAs are identified by ODA following discussions with partners, including SWCDs and watershed councils, and a background review of local information and existing water quality data. Areas that would benefit most from the targeted outreach, education, financial and technical assistance provided by local partners and agencies are selected.

#### Partnerships

Partner agencies and organizations provide tremendous support to SWCDs in the form of technical assistance and financial resources. These partners and agencies include ODA, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), USDA Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), watershed councils, and other local entities, all committed to improving water quality for present and future generations.

#### Results

Developing and implementing your own plan can help reduce pollution of streams, lakes, and ponds; improve surface and groundwater quality; stimulate growth of native vegetation along streams; and help stabilize streambanks. Additionally, your plan may help you improve the production potential of your property; decrease unwanted invasive plants; improve livestock health and vigor; improve pasture quality; decrease muddy areas; and decrease labor time and costs, along with other benefits.

*Continued on page 7*



## NRCS—CSP General Sign UP

### IMPORTANT Policy CHANGE:

The existing Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) policy had previously imposed a 2-year ineligibility upon prior participants for their ability to enroll lands in CSP, also known as the “2-year cooling off period.” The Chief has waived the “2-year cooling off period,” and any interested participants should contact NRCS to apply for CSP General 2022 Signup. The current CSP General 2022 application deadline is 3/18/2022.

### Sherman County Local Working Group Meeting

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) will be hosting their annual “Local Working Group Meeting” on February 8<sup>th</sup>, after the Sherman County Soil and Water Conservation District Board Meeting. The meeting will begin approximately at 11 am and will be located at the OSU Extension office in Moro, Oregon. Please email Misty Strayhorn @ [misty.strayhorn@usda.gov](mailto:misty.strayhorn@usda.gov) if you have topics or concerns you would like to add to the agenda.

### NEW Contact Information for FSA & NRCS:

To contact FSA or NRCS staff, please call the Wasco/Hood River USDA Service Center at 541-298-8559 and use the extensions listed below. You will be able to contact each of us directly and/or leave a message if we do not answer. Our phone extensions will ring directly to our computers if we are not physically in The Dalles office.

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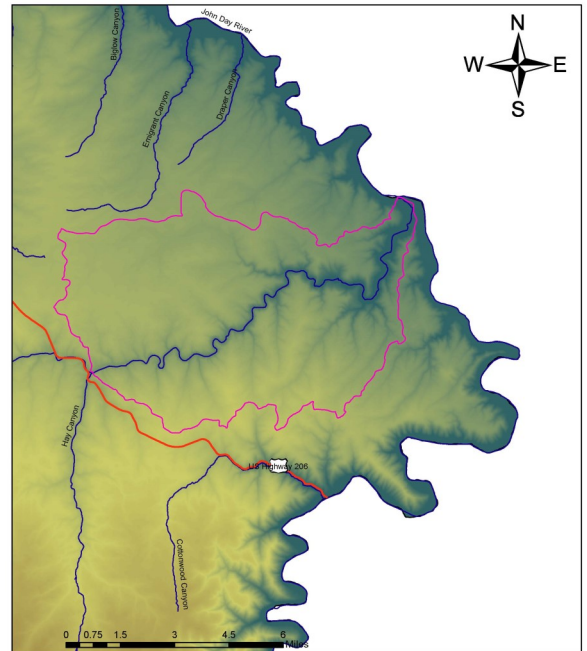
## Lower Grass Valley Canyon Upland Restoration

### Restoration Opportunity

The SWCD received an extension from OWEB for the 218-6003 Lower Grass Valley Canyon Upland Restoration Grant. This allows up more time to implement more projects within the watershed. The options for projects that can be implemented with this grant are **grass waterways, WASCBs, terrace reshapes, wildlife watering facilities or guzzlers, spring and water developments, and upland range seeding**

If you have property within the Lower Grass Valley Canyon Watershed

and are interested in implementing restoration projects, please contact the SWCD at 541-705-5070.



Lower Grass Valley  
Canyon Upland Restoration

# Moro Weather

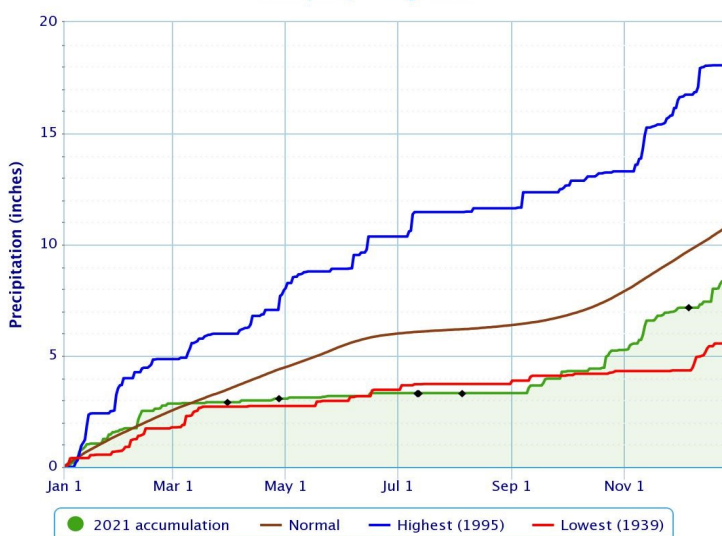
## Air Temperature

| Month     | Max High | Average High | Min Low | Average Low |
|-----------|----------|--------------|---------|-------------|
| August    | 103°F    | 84°F         | 35°F    | 53.2°F      |
| September | 94°F     | 74.9°F       | 35°F    | 45.9°F      |
| October   | 71°F     | 61.2°F       | 26°F    | 36.3°F      |
| November  | 67°F     | 53.1°F       | 23°F    | 32.6°F      |
| December  | 62°F     | 43.6°F       | 10°F    | 27.4°F      |

## Precipitation

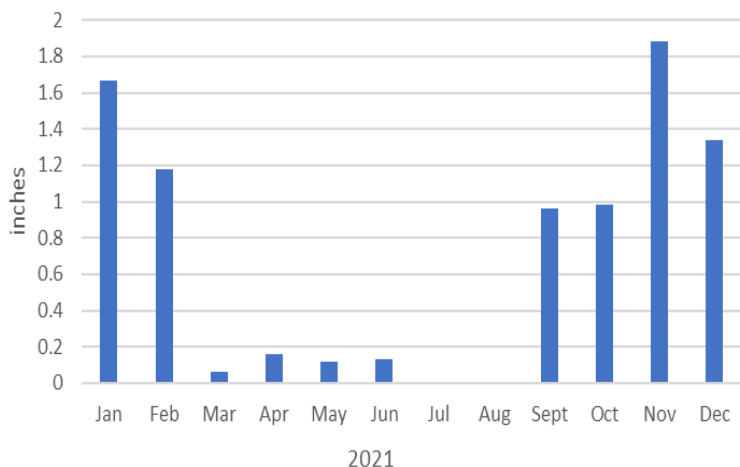
### Accumulated Precipitation – MORO, OR

Click and drag to zoom to a shorter time interval; green/black diamonds represent subsequent/missing values

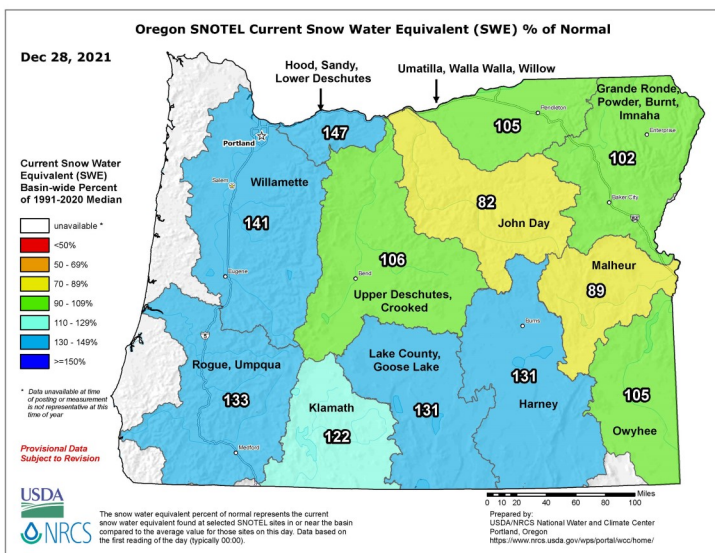


Powered by ACIS

### Total Monthly Precipitation



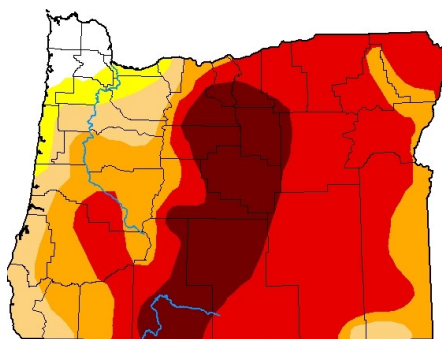
## Snow Pack



## Drought Monitor

### U.S. Drought Monitor Oregon

December 21, 2021  
(Released Thursday, Dec. 23, 2021)  
Valid 7 a.m. EST



|                                      | Drought Conditions (Percent Area) |        |        |       |       |       |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
|                                      | None                              | D0-D4  | D1-D4  | D2-D4 | D3-D4 | D4    |
| Current                              | 2.96                              | 97.04  | 93.63  | 83.75 | 63.14 | 18.61 |
| Last Week<br>12-14-2021              | 1.39                              | 98.61  | 96.78  | 90.05 | 66.97 | 20.35 |
| 3 Months Ago<br>09-24-2021           | 0.00                              | 100.00 | 100.00 | 96.47 | 72.10 | 26.59 |
| Start of Calendar Year<br>12-29-2020 | 8.57                              | 91.43  | 83.53  | 68.71 | 27.74 | 0.00  |
| Start of Water Year<br>09-28-2021    | 0.00                              | 100.00 | 100.00 | 96.47 | 72.10 | 26.59 |
| One Year Ago<br>12-22-2020           | 8.57                              | 91.43  | 83.53  | 68.71 | 29.42 | 0.00  |

Intensity:  
None (white), D0 Abnormally Dry (yellow), D1 Moderate Drought (orange), D2 Severe Drought (red), D3 Extreme Drought (dark red), D4 Exceptional Drought (black)

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author:  
Brad Pugh  
CPC/NOAA



# ODA SIA Continued

The Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) is working with local partners to evaluate and address water quality concerns associated with agricultural and farm activities in the Eastern Lower Deschutes Strategic Implementation Area in Sherman and Wasco Counties. Inside the *Strategic Implementation Area (SIA)*, ODA will evaluate agriculture's impact on water quality, provide outreach and connect landowners with technical assistance, ensure compliance with Oregon's water quality regulations, and account for the effectiveness of these collective efforts to prevent and control water pollution.

**Purpose:** The Strategic Implementation Area (SIA) initiative Includes four key components:

1. Demonstrating compliance with Oregon's agricultural water quality regulations.
2. Voluntary, incentive-based conservation.
3. Monitoring to track water quality and land conditions.
4. Locally-led collaborative partnerships.

**Evaluation Process:** ODA remotely identifies opportunities for water quality improvement within agricultural lands by reviewing aerial imagery, maps, stream and drainage locations, property boundaries, soils, and well logs. The presence of an agricultural activity (such as livestock or cropping), slope, proximity to the waterbody, size of the waterbody, and stream type (seasonal or year-round) are considered when identifying potential water quality impacts. ODA also completes a field evaluation from public viewpoints to verify results from the remote evaluation and document any additional observations.

**Why this watershed?** ODA's SIA selection process includes the location of agricultural lands and streams, Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) list of impaired waterbodies and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) local fish habitat priorities. These data sources help prioritize areas for SIA work.

If you have any questions or concerns about the ODA SIA process, please call the ODA at (503) 931-1754 and ask to speak to a Theresa DeBardelaben. You may also e-mail questions or concerns to [tdebardelaben@oda.state.or.us](mailto:tdebardelaben@oda.state.or.us).

## Local Advertisements

### BUSINESS OWNERS!!!!

Are you interested in showcasing your business cards in our newsletter?

Advertisements are \$20 per issue or \$75 for the year! Issues are dispersed quarterly. For those of you who previously advertised, if you haven't renewed don't get left out! Call our office today!



**MCP Mid Columbia Producers, Inc.**  
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Mid Columbia Producers, Inc. operates three offices to better serve our customers. Our main office is located in Moro, Oregon.

Moro Office | 2003 First Street | Moro, OR 97039 | 800-325-9327  
 Bend Office | 913 1st Street | Bend, OR 97701 | 888-616-0690  
 Hermiston Office | 345 N 1st Pl | Hermiston, OR 97838 | 541-289-5015

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Mike DeGrange  
cell: (541) 993-1963

office: (541) 442-5712 • fax: (541) 442-8588  
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 Moro, OR 97039  
[www.beobank.com](http://www.beobank.com)

# ~ CONSERVATION CALENDAR ~

January 19: Farm First Aid Training, 1-3 pm at CGCC in The Dalles

January 18: Martin Luther King Jr. Day (Offices Closed)

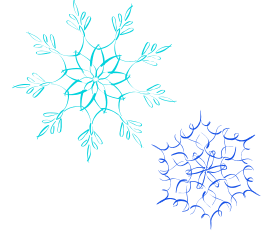
February 8: SWCD Regular Board Meeting, 8:30am

February 8: Sherman Co. Local Working Group meeting, 11am, OSU Extension Office Conference Room, Moro, OR

March 8: Sherman Area Watershed Council Meeting, 8:00am, OSU Extension Office Conference Room, Moro, OR

March 8: SWCD Regular Board Meeting, 8:30am

March 8: SWCD Annual Meeting, 6:00pm, Rufus, OR



## ~ BOARD & STAFF ~

### SWCD Staff

Amanda Whitman, District Manager  
Hannah Fatland, Watershed Coordinator  
Vacant, Watershed Technician

### NRCS Staff

Misty Strayhorn, District Conservationist  
Lauren Healey, Soil Conservationist

### Sherman County SWCD Board of Directors

Jesse Stutzman, Chair  
Josh Hilderbrand, Vice Chair  
Clint Moore, Treasurer  
Trevor Fields, Secretary  
Nick Von Borstel, Member

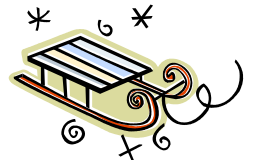
*"If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant"*

Anne Bradstreet—Poet



We're on the Web! Don't forget to check us out for current news!  
[www.shermancountyswcd.com](http://www.shermancountyswcd.com) and [www.shermancountywc.com](http://www.shermancountywc.com)

We're also on Facebook!



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