



FISCAL YEAR 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

OREGON'S NATURAL RESOURCES
CONSERVATION SERVICE





FY23 INVESTMENTS IN CONSERVATION

Remarks from Acting State Conservationist, Jay Gibbs

Fiscal year 2023 was a year of notable change in Oregon. It marked the start of Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funding and implementation, the retirement of our long-standing State Conservationist Ron Alvarado in September, and an increasing demand for conservation across the landscape. I'm proud of how our team persevered through the changes and demands, steadfast in our Strategic Approach to Conservation. When reflecting on the last FY, here are some successes that come to mind (in no particular order): We spent all of Oregon's allocated IRA funds. We funded over 75 positions through partnerships to expand our capacity and support customers. We hired our first urban conservationist and filled four organic and small farm specialist positions across the state, one to cover each basin. In June, we helped sponsor Oregon's first ever Juneteenth Rodeo targeting black ranchers and farmers. The list goes on and on, and I'm excited to see how Oregon continues to move the needle in the next FY.

Oregon's Strategic Approach to Conservation

NRCS Oregon had a total of **71** Conservation Implementation Strategies (CISs)

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

578 landowner contracts

\$32M obligated

Across 216,983 acres

EQIP Initiatives

High Tunnel

\$712K obligated • 77 contracts

Conservation Incentive Contracts

\$1.5M obligated • 12 contracts

Air Quality

\$861K obligated • 5 contracts

National Water Quality

\$349K obligated • 9 contracts

Organic

\$592K obligated • 15 contracts

Sage Grouse

\$2.3M obligated • 23 contracts

Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration

(Partnership with U.S. Forest Service)

4 projects • \$3.5M obligated • 27 contracts

Cover photos (top to bottom, left to right):

- (1) NRCS' Chief Cosby visits Portland's People's Garden at Our Village Gardens. (2) Spring blooms at Triangle Farms, located in the Willamette Valley. (3) Soil Conservationist Theresa Brehm collects soil samples for a rainfall simulator demo. (4) Intern training at the Corvallis Plant Materials Center in July 2023. (5) Fall scenery at the John Day River in Eastern Oregon, captured by DelRae Ferguson. (6) Prescribed fire training for field staff, captured by Andrew Owen.

FY23 INVESTMENTS IN CONSERVATION



Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

(Includes CSP Classic, Renewals & IRA)

167 contracts

\$25M obligated

Across 586,638 acres

Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

20 active projects

\$5.4M obligated

70 landowner contracts

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

\$1.1M allocated for Agricultural Land Easements (ALE)

\$3M allocated for Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE)

\$400K allocated in stewardship funds for current easements

4 ACEP-ALE applications received to protect 3,718 acres

PL-566 Watershed Projects

(Infrastructure)

\$26M in PL-566 funding requests

\$24M allocated for planning, design & construction

28 sponsoring local organizations

30 active watershed planning efforts:

- 26 agricultural water management plans
- 3 dam rehabilitation plans
- 1 watershed protection plan

Partnership Agreements

91 active agreements

\$195M invested

\$43M in partner commitments

75 partner positions funded

TOP 10 EQIP CONSERVATION PRACTICES

- 1 Brush Management
- 2 Forest Stand Improvement
- 3 Woody Residue Treatment
- 4 Watering Facility
- 5 Livestock Pipeline
- 6 Irrigation Pipeline
- 7 Irrigation Water Conveyance
- 8 High Tunnel System
- 9 Fence
- 10 Herbaceous Weed Treatment



SUCCESS AROUND THE STATE



Forest Restoration and Resiliency in Eastern Oregon

NRCS Oregon and the Oregon Department of Forestry led partnership efforts for this East Oregon forest restoration project covering Umatilla, Wallowa, Baker, Union counties. The project, funded through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, involves collaboration from 11 partners to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire and improve water quality and stream habitat in the Northern Blues area. Watch the success story video here: bit.ly/ForestRestorationResiliency



Conserving Water and Energy in the Deschutes Basin

Drought is top of mind for producers located in Central Oregon. The Three Sisters Irrigation District On-Farm and Renewable Energy project, funded through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program, brings together over 50 partners including NRCS Oregon, Three Sisters Irrigation District, Deschutes Soil and Water Conservation District, Deschutes River Conservancy and private landowners to conserve water and reduce energy demands. The project serves as a shining example helping pave the way for other irrigation districts in the West battling drought and climate change impacts. Watch the success story video here: bit.ly/DeschutesOnFarm



Restoring Forests Through the Elk Creek Watershed Restoration Partnership Project

NRCS Oregon, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Tiller Ranger District, the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, Oregon Department of Forestry and other project partners established the Elk Creek Watershed Restoration Partnership Project, funded through the USDA's Joint Chiefs' program. Cross-ownership boundary collaboration allowed for restoration work across approximately 55,000 acres to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire, increase forest resiliency and restore the watershed and forest ecosystems. Watch the success story video here: bit.ly/ElkCreekProject