



United States Department of Agriculture



Local Work Group Meeting

Katie Woodruff | 1/20/2020

Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Agenda



Topic	Speaker
Welcome and Settle in to Zoom	Cory & Kylie
Current USDA-NRCS CIS's Programs in Coos and Curry Counties	Katlyn Woodruff
Current USDA-NRCS Initiative Programs in Coos and Curry Counties	Cheyenne Rico
Quick Stand-Up Break	
Current USDA-FSA Programs in Coos and Curry Counties	Bret Harris
Current USDA-FSA CREP Programs in Coos and Curry Counties	Barb Grant
What's next for CIS's in Coos and Curry Counties	Katlyn Woodruff
Current status of Tide Gates and NRCS's Role in Tide Gate Work	
Last Thoughts - Feedback	Katlyn Woodruff





United States Department of Agriculture

Our Mission:

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) collaborates with farmers, ranchers, communities and other individuals and groups to protect natural resources on private lands. Working side by side with our partners and customers, we identify natural resource concerns such as water quality and quantity issues, soil erosion, air quality, wetlands and wildlife habitat, and develop solutions to restore and protect these resources.



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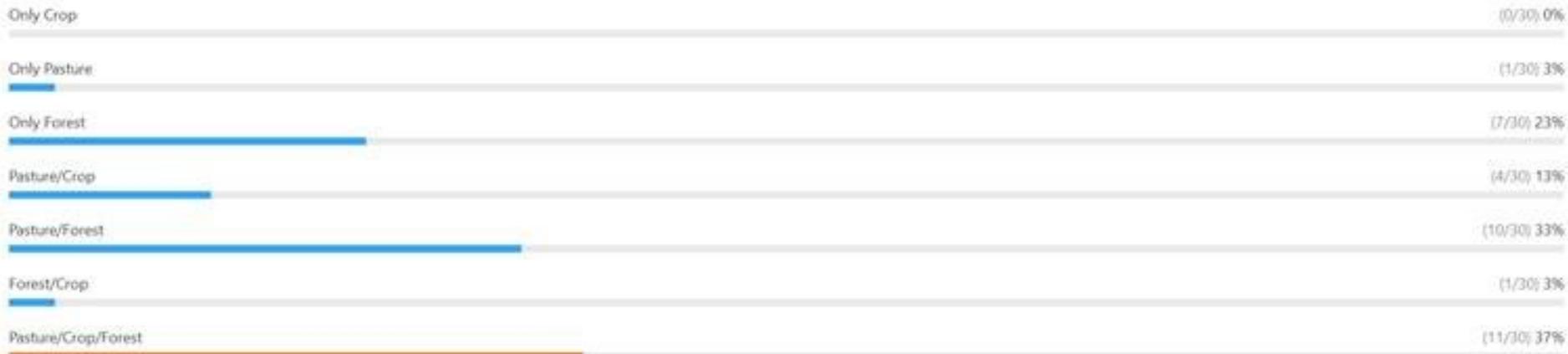


Polls

Sharing Poll Results

Attendees are now viewing the poll results

1. What land use to you primarily work in? (Multiple choice)



Stop Share Results

Re-launch Polling

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Oregon NRCS



The GOAL is to enhance our capacity:

To invest strategically to solve natural resource problems and be more effective, efficient, and accountable for staffing, funding and partnerships.



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STRATEGIC APPROACH TO CONSERVATION



Partner-Centric: Collaboration and coordination through partnerships with local, state and federal governments, SWCDs, tribes, NGOs, and other groups.

Cost Effective: Leverages funding sources from partners to make the most effective use of limited federal conservation dollars.

Focused & Targeted: Investments target specific areas to achieve clearly-defined natural resource goals.

Results Oriented: Emphasis on planning with the end in mind. Long Range Plans and local CIS designed with measurable goals.

A Management Tool: Allows staff to better prioritize, track, plan, and monitor conservation projects on-the-ground. Empowers staff to deliver more effective project planning and increases our efficiency in implementation.



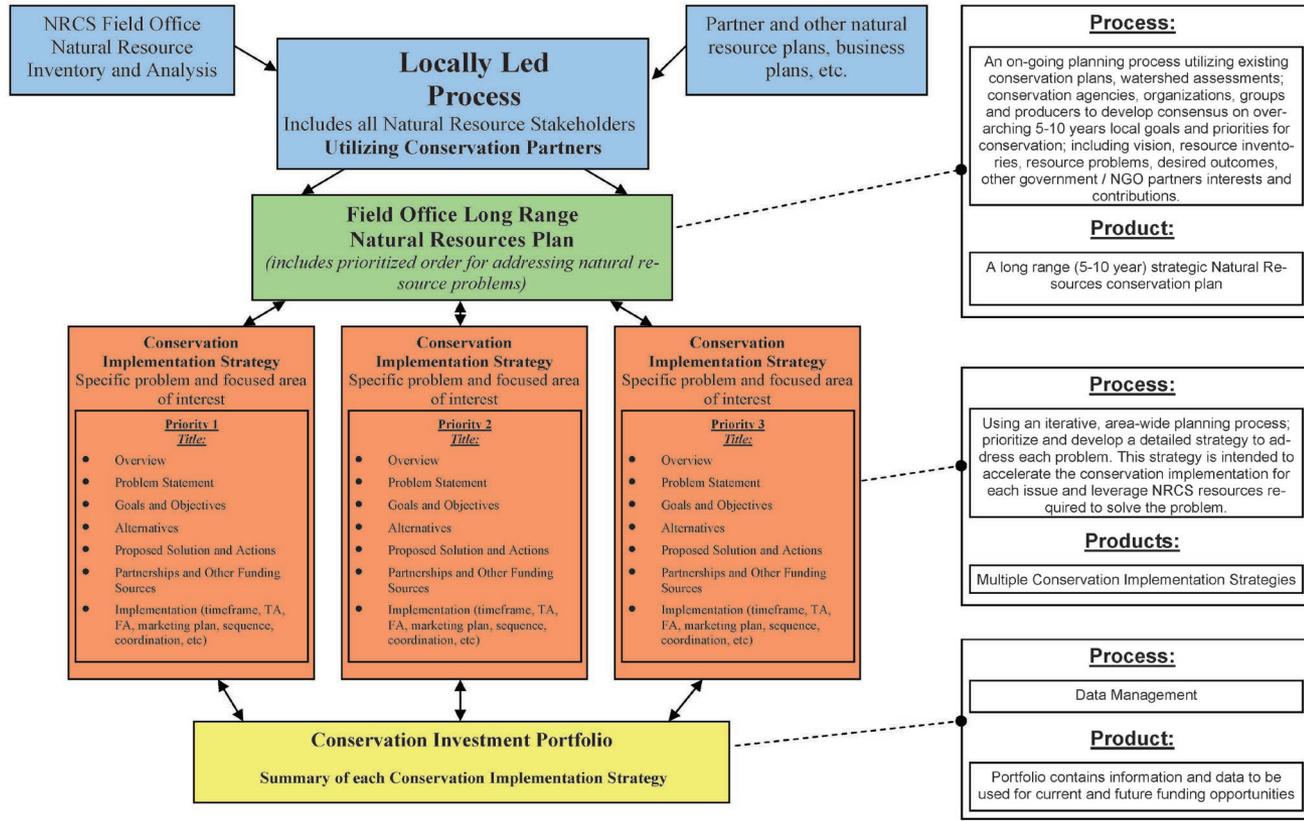
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Oregon's Strategic Approach to Conservation

Oregon NRCS

Goal: to invest strategically to solve natural resource problems and be more effective, efficient, and accountable for staffing, funding and partnerships



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Programs



- **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)**
 - Provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to address natural resource concerns and deliver environmental benefits such as improved water and air quality, conserved ground and surface water, reduced soil erosion, or improved wildlife habitat.
- **Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)**
 - Helps agricultural producers maintain and improve their existing conservation systems and adopt additional conservation activities to address priority resources concerns.
- **Technical Assistance**
 - NRCS delivers technical assistance through its voluntary Conservation Technical Assistance Program (CTA). Although CTA does not include financial or cost-share assistance, landowners may develop plans that can, in turn, serve as a springboard for future participation in conservation program.
- **Other Programs**
 - Easements, Agricultural Conservation Easement
 - Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)
 - Conservation Innovation Grants





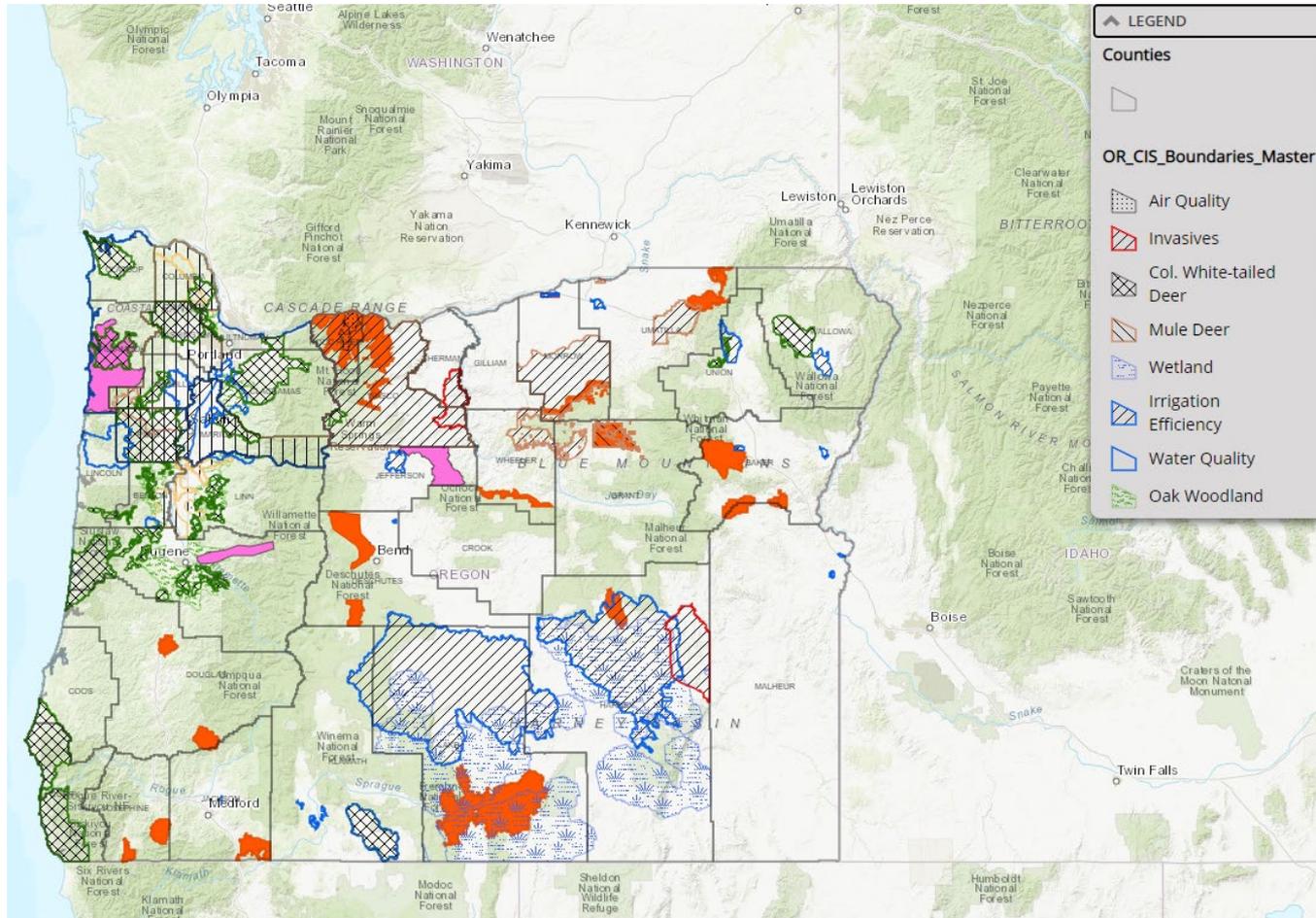
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Conservation Implementation Strategies (CIS)

- ‘Conservation Implementation Strategies’ are derived from the Long Range Plans and lay out the technical and financial needs for a specific resource concern for up to five years. More specifically, they describe the primary resource goals, proposed solutions and actions, necessary funds and technical assistance, and monitoring and evaluating methods as well as implementation timeline and partner roles.
- **There are two current CIS for the Coquille office.**
 - Sudden oak death
 - Sek Wet Se-Sixes Forest Health Collaborative



Current CIS



Sudden Oak Death

Sek Wet Se-Sixes

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Sudden Oak Death Forest Restoration Conservation Implantation Strategy

Goal is to improve the long-term capacity of forestlands to sustain ecosystem functions including watershed health, soil health, wildlife habitat by mitigating the impact and slowing the spread of sudden oak death.

- **NRCS has partnered with the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) to plan implement these projects.**
 - ODF completes the inventory and evaluation, helps design specifications, and reviews completed work.
- **Priority for applications is given to applicants with the EU1 strain outside the GIA. Lower priority is given to clients inside the GIA.**



Sudden Oak Death Forest Restoration Conservation Implantation Strategy

Practices offered line up with the approach ODF has been implementing.

- **Forest Stand Improvement**
 - Chemically treat trees (hack and squirt) and then later cut tanoak and other secondary host plants
- **Woody Residue Treatment**
 - Cut/limb slash, pile and burn
- **Brush Management**
 - Chemically treat seedlings/regrowth
- **Tree/shrub Site Preparation**
- **Tree and Shrub Establishment**
- **Herbaceous Weed Control**
- **Critical Area Planting or Cover Crop**
 - To prevent soil erosion and invasive plant species



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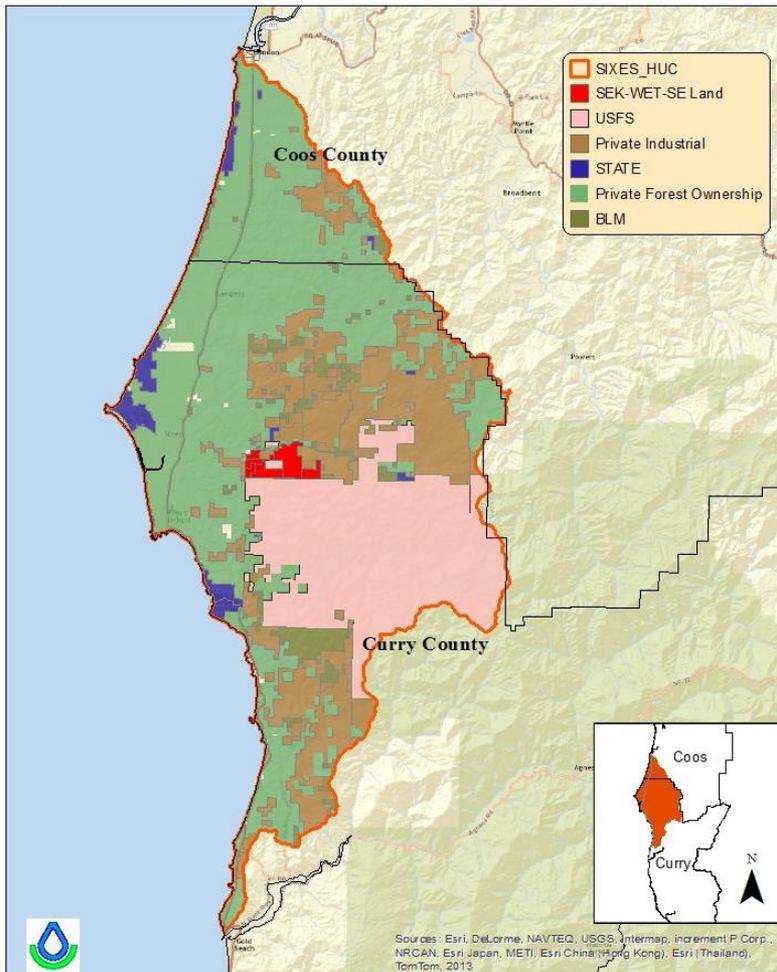


Sek Wet Se-Sixes



SEK-WET-SE SIXES Forest Health Collaborative

Agency: NRCS Field Office: COQUILLE SERVICE CENTER State and County: OR, COOS Date: Fiscal Year 2018



Resource Concerns

- Plant structure and composition
- Plant productivity and health
- Plant pest pressure

- Main practices involve forest stand improvement and woody residue treatment. Along with supporting practices



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Sek Wet Se-Sixes



This strategy will improve forest health of the Coquille Tribes Sek-wet-se Tribal Forest and private nonindustrial forest lands of the Sixes Sub-basin in Coos and Curry Counties.

Objectives

- Improve forest health through tree planting and correcting under-stocking.
- Reduce single species suppression and increase native plant and tree diversity
- Promote development of late successional forest habitat.
- Provide wildlife habitat through healthy stands and invasive species control.
- Reduce soil erosion through forest cover, stocking rates and structure.
- Reduce threat of forest fire through correct stocking levels, invasive species control and biomass removal.
- Build forest resiliency and minimize the impact of pathogens.
- Degraded Plant Condition-Inadequate Structure and Composition





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Poll Question

If you are a landowner/operator, are you interested in applying to the Sudden Oak Death program or if not a landowner/operator are you aware of people with interest?



If you are a landowner/operator, are you interested in applying to the Sek Wet Se-Sixes Forest Health collaborative, or if not a landowner/operator are you aware of people with interest?

Are you interested in NRCS creating a new CIS?

Majority answered that they would like NRCS to create a new CIS



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National Initiatives

Cheyenne Rico | 1/20/2021

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12 Learning Presentation

USDA

National Initiatives Poll #1 in Progress 1:21

Attendees are now viewing questions 25 of 48 (52%) voted

1. If you are a producer and not currently certified organic, have you thought about transitioning?

Yes	(3) 12%
No	(22) 88%

2. If you are not a producer, do you know of any who may be interested in transitioning to organic?

Yes	(5) 20%
No	(20) 80%

3. In your opinion, what is the largest barrier to becoming an organic operation?

Meeting organic standards	(9) 36%
Certification Costs	(8) 32%
Other	(8) 32%

End Polling



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National Initiatives



Organic

- Technical and financial assistance to support conservation on organic operations. Supports organic certification standards.

Certifiers must ensure that an operation's OSP describes or lists practices that explain the operation's monitoring plan and practices to comprehensively support natural resources and biodiversity conservation, pursuant to § 205.200 of the regulations.

Resource Concerns

- Plant Productivity and Health
- Plant Pest Pressure
- Inefficient Irrigation Use
- Inadequate Livestock Water
- Habitat for Wildlife
- Erosion

Topics	NRCS Assistance May Be Available ³	Examples of Activities ⁴
Examples Relevant to All Types of Organic Certification		
Soil Composition	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Adding organic matter through the diversity of crops and inputs, to the soil to increase the diversity of soil organisms and to improve nutrient cycling, competitive exclusion of plant pathogens, long-term storage of soil carbon, and adaption to extreme climatic conditions and water holding capacity.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Conserving and restoring forests, shrublands, woodlands, grasslands, riparian areas ⁵ and wetland areas, which sequester carbon in soils and aid in cycling soil nutrients.
Soil Stability and Water Quality	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Creating, conserving, and restoring vegetative covers (forests, shrublands, woodlands, grasslands, riparian areas, and wetland areas) that control erosion and filter nutrient, pesticide, and pathogen pollutants. Minimizing disturbances, maximizing diversity, living roots and cover.
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Using no-till or permanent cover, conservation tillage, terracing, contour farming, micro-irrigation, windbreaks, cover crops, grass waterways and soil health practices.



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Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP)

OCCSP provides cost share assistance to producers and handlers of agricultural products who are obtaining or renewing their certification under the [National Organic Program](#) (NOP). Certified operations may receive up to 50 percent of their certification costs paid during the program year, not to exceed \$500 per certification scope.

Contact Farm Service Agency!

bret.harris@usda.gov



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Sharing Poll Results
Attendees are now viewing the poll results

1. If you are a producer, do you currently or seasonally sell crops, herbs, markets, local markets, or through a CSA program?

Yes

No

2. If you are NOT a producer, do you know anyone who does currently sell crops, herbs, or flowers at farmer's markets, local markets, or through a CSA program?

Yes

No

Buttons: Stop Share Results, Re-launch Polling

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National Initiatives



High Tunnel

- Seeks to extend the growing season and promote local sources of fresh produce.

Resource Concerns

- Plant Productivity and Health
- Organic Matter Depletion
- Erosion

Note: National Initiatives are available outside of CIS areas.



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Example Practices



Organic *Crop*

- Conservation Cover (327)
- Irrigation System, Microirrigation (441)
- Residue and Tillage Management, No-Till (329)
- High Tunnel System (325)
- Structures for Wildlife (649)

Livestock

- Watering Facility (614)
- Pasture and Hay Planting (512)
- Nutrient Management (590)
- Fence (382)
- Prescribed Grazing (528)

High Tunnel

- High Tunnel System (325)
- Irrigation System, Microirrigation (441)
- Cover Crop (340)



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CREP and FSA



Sharing Poll Results

Attendees are now viewing the poll results.

1. In just one year (FY 2019), how much money did the Oregon CREP program contribute to our state's conservation and agriculture industries?
Hint: The Conservation Reserve Program, the parent of the Oregon CREP, is the largest private lands conservation pe

Response Option	Count	Percentage
\$500K - \$1 Million	(0)	0%
\$1 - 3 Million	(7)	23%
\$3 - 6 Million	(8)	26%
More than \$ 6 Million	(18)	52%

Buttons: Stop Share Results, Re-launch Polling



FSA Bret Harris



Ongoing FSA work:

CFAP, CFAP-2, and seafood trade relief payments are being processed. The deadline for these has passed.

2020 drought (FLP, Forage and Livestock Program) payments will be processed as soon as CFAP and trade relief payments are cleared out.

- The deadline for the 2020 FLP drought sign-up is February 2, 2021.
- Question “How long to wait for 2020 drought payment before producer should call to check?”
 - 2020 FLP payments should be cleared by late 2021, prioritized after the CFAP and trade relief processing, but should be pretty rapid once backlog is done.

Overall, FSA is working to catch up to workload. He now has a temp. program tech in the Coquille who is helpful but temporarily funded.

Has processed about \$2 million CFAP 1 and 2, seafood trade relief payments so far.



FSA Bret Harris



New FSA work:

- CFAP-3 is coming, but this program has not been announced. No program rules yet to share.
- CFAP-2 has a newly announced “top up” payment for certain previous applicants.
- CFAP-2 has also newly expanded to include turfgrass, contract poultry and swine.
- Bret is watching the drought monitor. Coos and Curry Counties are still in D-3 “Extreme drought”. If D-3 overlaps with official grazing season another round of drought FLP relief payments will be authorized. More info to come.



A landscape photograph of rolling green hills with scattered evergreen trees under a grey sky. The hills are covered in lush green grass, and several clusters of dark green evergreen trees are scattered across the slopes. The sky is a uniform, overcast grey. The overall scene is a natural, rural landscape.

Oregon CREP

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program



Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

CRP

Farm Service Agency's flagship conservation program, authorized through the Farm Bill nation-wide.

Lots of CRP on fallow wheat fields to benefit game birds

The largest private lands conservation program in the nation

The Oregon CREP

A state-specific *enhancement* to CRP

Oregon CREP restores buffers on stream corridors adjacent to pastures, hayfields, and crop fields to benefit fish and water quality



What is CREP?

A *voluntary* riparian* restoration cost-share and land rental program

Requires a 10- to 15-year contract with FSA to exclude grazing and harvest in the riparian buffer, maintain the new trees

FSA pays cost-shares and incentives to the cooperator to restore riparian buffer

FSA also pays the cooperator a yearly rental

CREP can help comply with Oregon Agricultural Water Quality protection and other rules

CREP pays for:

Normally accepted conservation farming practices on agricultural land (fence, native riparian trees/shrubs, off-stream water)

Practices agreed to by landowner (customized for specific wildlife, concerns, pollinators, viewshed, etc.) in an approved plan

*Streambank, riverbank

What *isn't* CREP?

CREP contracts are not permanent

No deed encumbrance on the farm

CREP is not an “easement” but a 10- to 15-year rental agreement

Early cancellation of a contract?

- Participants may request early cancellation with repayment, interest, damages
- The purchaser of a ranch may assume the remainder of the seller’s contract obligation
- In case of involuntary loss (death, foreclosure, disaster) no-fault cancellation may be approved

CREP does not require public access

- Status reviews by staff are required, by appointment
- Privacy requirements and eligibility for Farm Bill programs apply

CREP Partners

US Department of Agriculture

- FSA administers the agreements and individual contracts, and pays landowners
- NRCS does technical assistance and planning, field work, and monitoring (with assistance from OWEB-funded technicians), and submits status reviews to FSA

State agencies

- Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) funds CREP Technicians and provides 25% landowner cost share in addition to FSA's 50%
- Oregon Department of Forestry reviews planting plans and troubleshoots tree problems
- ODFW, OWR

Local SWCDs

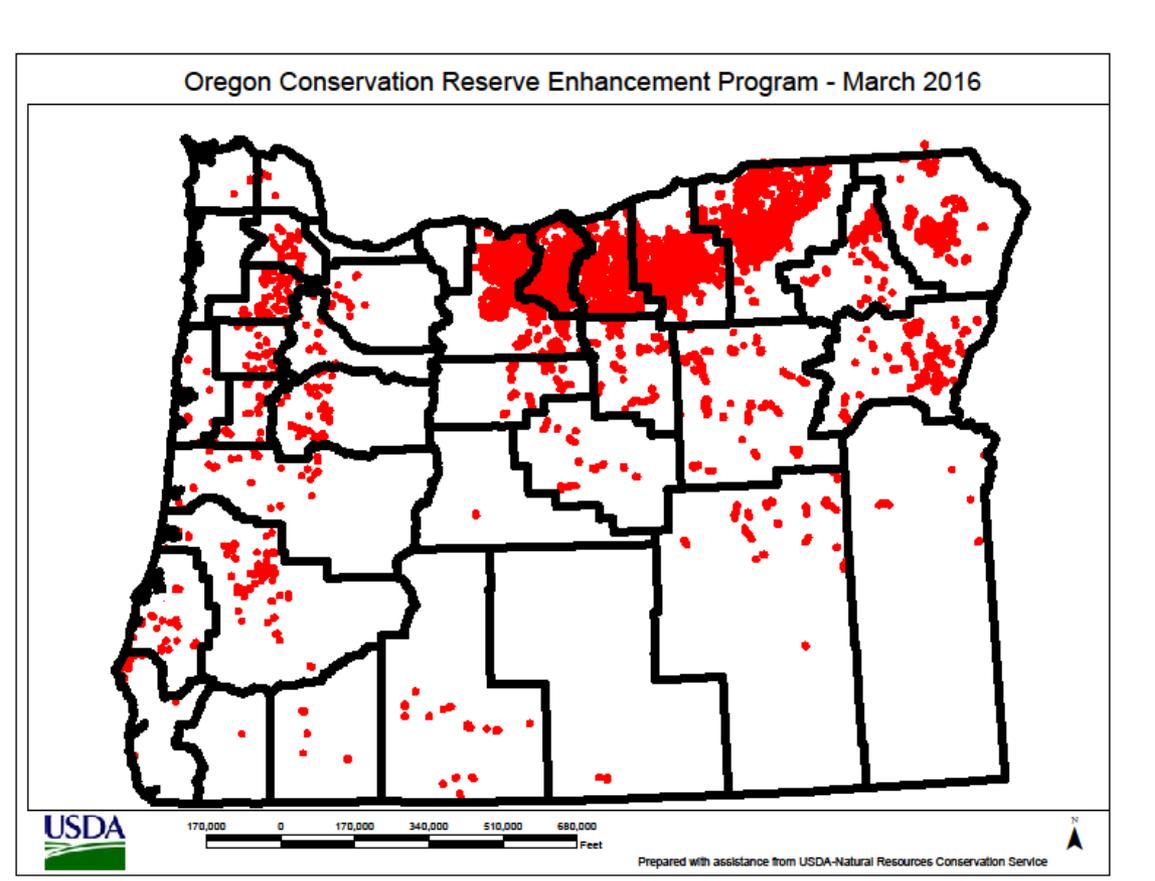
- Contribute **staff to supplement NRCS** (with OWEB funding)

Individual Landowner-Cooperators

- Each cooperating landowner installs and maintains their own project, and excludes grazing and harvest
- 10- to 15-year FSA contract

Barbara Grant, Curry SWCD, 541-373-7161

Participation in the Oregon CREP



CREP: Moving conservation up the “to do” list: *What can I afford to get done this year?*

*Payment Type	Amount	
Cost Shares	75% cost-share as each practice is installed, up to scheduled budget amount	Covers <u>most</u> of the cost of installing fence, trees, etc. up to the capped amount
Incentive payments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> \$100 per acre sign up incentive 40% to complete all practices Special Incentive for “cumulative impact” areas—<i>neighbors add up!</i> 	2020: 75% Cost Share +40% Incentive =115% actual expense. Rule for 2021??
Annual “rental” payments from FSA	\$114 per acre on perennial streams \$102 per acre on intermittent \$171 per acre with irrigation rights	* All payments are reported to IRS

Landowner
input—
why NOT
CREP?

Choosing NOT to enroll (or re-enroll) in CREP

Maintenance obligation (labor, heavy gorse, knotweed)

Outlook of property control (health, family/heir conflict)

Land use change is planned by purchaser (gravel pit and road)

"I just don't like government programs"

Program minimum width (narrow, constrained valley)

Unstable river is undermining riparian trees (South Fork Coquille)

Need to access another program instead (NRCS EQIP Sudden Oak Death assistance)

Landowner input— why CREP?

Win-win: Stuff we wanted to do anyway!

A fenced stream corridor to divide larger grazing units

Eliminated problem round-up through steep channel

Excluded calves from muddy low spots

A privacy buffer between pastures and river

Windbreak

Pollinator habitat to support native bees

Aesthetically pleasing solution to management problems

Rehab unwanted Himalayan blackberry

Following up great knotweed eradication, it's time to restore

Provided match for a big Watershed Council fish habitat project

Enhanced family property to reflect stewardship values



CREP Questions?

Barbara Grant
541-373-7161





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Proposed CIS and Long Term Planning

Katie Woodruff | 1/20/2020

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Sharing Poll Results

Attendees are now viewing the poll results

1. What resource concerns are folks most interested in next?

Soil	(4) 15%
Water Quality	(13) 50%
Water Quantity	(1) 4%
Air	(0) 0%
Plants - Pasture	(2) 8%
Plants - Forestry	(5) 19%
Animals - Aquatic	(1) 4%
Animals - Terrestrial	(0) 0%

Stop Share Results Re-launch Polling

Security Participants (50) Polls Chat Share Screen Record Reactions



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Proposed CIS



From last years local work group there has been interest in creating a CIS for water quality for Coos watersheds.

- These subbasins include the Haynes Inlet, Isthmus Slough Subbasin, Beaver Slough Subbasin, Lower Coquille Subbasin, Bear Creek Subbasin, and Catching Slough
- Working with the Coos SWCD, Coos Water Association, and Coquille Water Association
- Project Goal: To improve water quality and fish habitat by restoring riparian vegetation and improving pasture condition on agricultural lands within six Coos-Coquille coastal watershed sub-basins.
- Problem Statement: Lack of riparian vegetation and poor pasture condition on grazed coastal floodplains has led to elevated stream temperatures and increased sediment in essential fish habitat within the Coos and Coquille watersheds.



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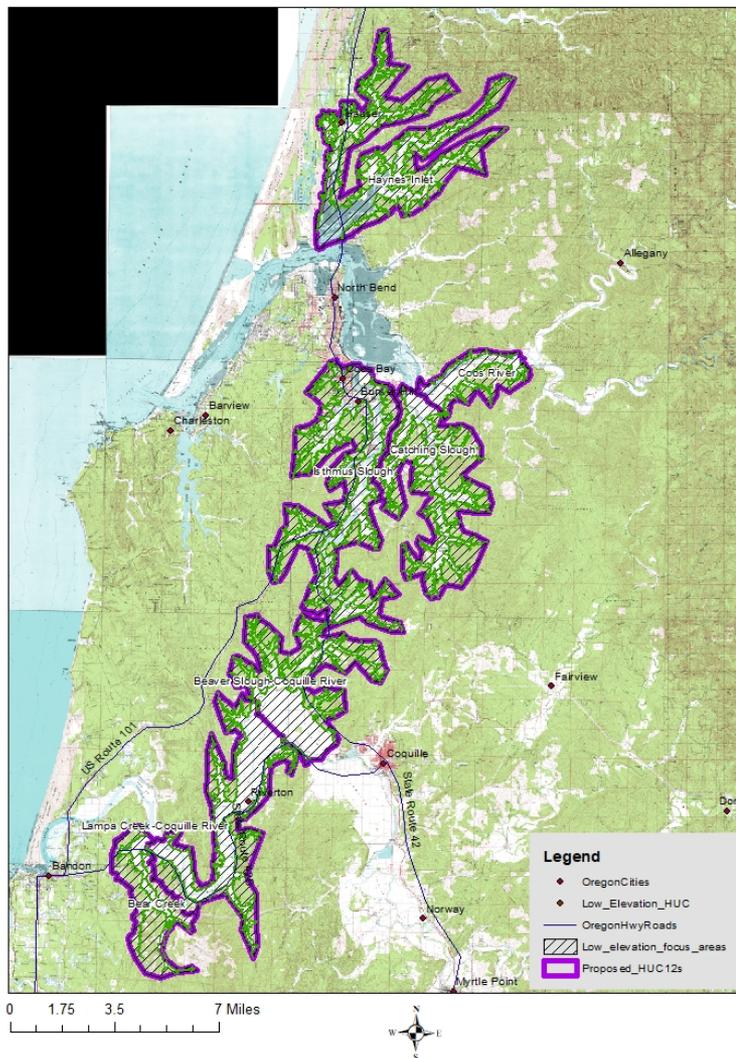


Proposed CIS



Proposed Water Quality CIS

Date: 1/15/2021



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Proposed CIS



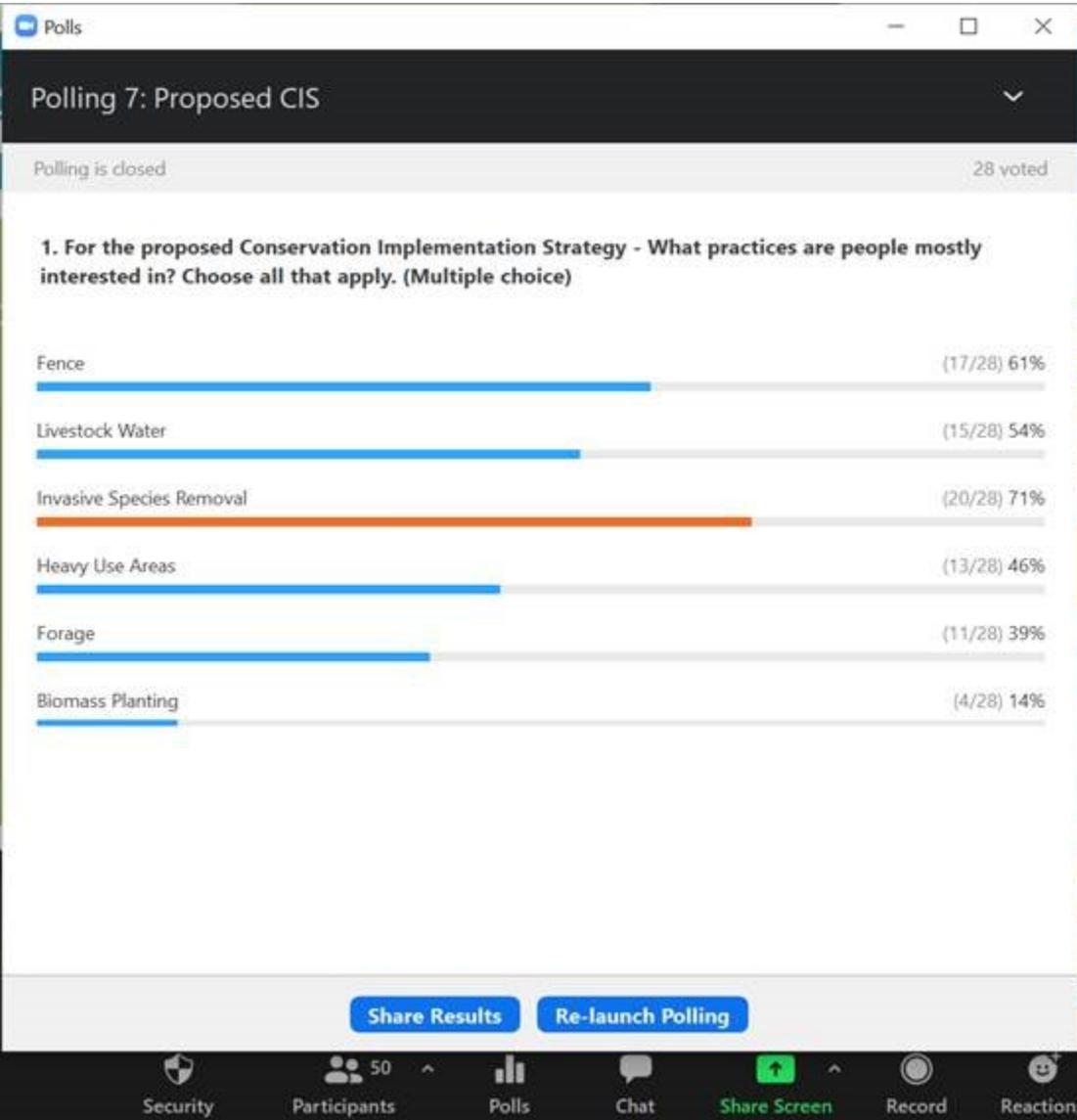
Resource Concerns

- Lack of riparian vegetation results in the following water quality degradation parameters:
 - Elevated water temperature
 - Sediment transported to surface water

Resource concerns in the priority area will benefit with the following NRCS conservation practices:

- Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (496)
- Riparian Forest Buffer (391)
- Riparian Herbaceous Cover (390)
- Brush Management (314)
- Fence (382)
- Heavy Use Area Protection (561)
- Watering Facility (614)
- Livestock Pipeline (516)
- Pumping Plant (533)
- Forage and Biomass Planting (512)
- Prescribed Grazing (528)
- Structure for Water Control (587)





Long Term Planning



The local work group process is year round but once a year the LWG convenes to review CIS and talk about future direction.

- What is the problem/resource concern
- Where is it located at
- Who needs to be involved
- When does it need to take place
- How will the problem be solved



Long Term Planning



**NRCS breaks land use into Crop, Pasture, Range and Forestry.
Local land uses in the two counties are forestry, crop and pasture.
Common resource concerns in the area:**

- **Water**
 - Elevated water temperature
- **Soil**
 - Erosion
- **Animals**
 - Aquatic fish habitat
 - Wildlife habitat
 - Livestock water
 - Feed and forage imbalance
- **Plants**
 - Plant productivity and health
 - Plant structure and composition
 - Plant pest pressure
 - Wildfire hazard





Tide Gates



What is the problem

- **Animal: Habitat Fragmentation, Fish Passage Barriers**
 - Loss of Stream Complexity (Large Wood), Loss of Wetland, Estuary, and Riparian Habitat
- **Water Quality and Quantity:**
 - Sediment, Temperature, and Nutrient Levels
- **Economic:**
 - Loss of Fishing Industry
- **Degraded Plant Condition:**
 - Inadequate structure and composition





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Sharing Poll Results

Attendees are now viewing the poll results.

1. What is the main resource concern with tide gates in the area?

Inadequate Habitat for Fish and Wildlife	(22) 73%
Degraded Plant Condition	(8) 27%

Stop Share Results Re-launch Polling



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Tide Gates



- Tide gate replacement is new to NRCS Oregon and the scope of potential projects is too large for any one agency or organization. Therefore, NRCS Oregon wishes to explore partnerships to share in the planning, engineering, permitting, contracting, and financial assistance for tide gate replacement.
- The primary resource concern that allows NRCS involvement in replacing tide gates is Fish and Wildlife Habitat Degradation-Fish Passage. NRCS may be able to help landowners install fish-friendlier tide gates and establish good riparian vegetation and habitat structure to support rearing of anadromous fish, including Oregon coast coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), which is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. Note that tide gate replacement may cause short-term negative effects (turbidity in the water, removal of riparian vegetation, etc.) that may impact threatened fish species.



Issues with Tide Gates



- **Engineering**
- **Complex systems with many parties, landowners, producers, non-agricultural lands, drainage districts, local governments**
 - Must look at the whole system and the big picture
- **NEPA/Permitting**
- **Projects must not include drainage improvement that could compromise a producer's eligibility for USDA programs**
 - An evaluation would be needed to be done to determine if the system would increase the drainage past the previous best drained condition. If it increases the drainage that was in place before 1985 (Food Security Act) NRCS cannot be involved, and the producer may be ineligible for all other USDA programs. A certified wetland determination by NRCS would be required.



NRCS Process for Tide Gates

- **Focused/prioritized area**
 - Implementation that can occur within 3-5 years for all the tidegates in the priority area. 1 tidegate CIS will not work.
- **Design process fairly complete before applying to NRCS funding opportunities**
 - This is because due to the complexity, we can only help on the implementation
- **Tidegates 4 feet in diameter or less**
 - Because of funding, complexity, and location
- **Ready, willing eligible landowners**
- **Cohesive partnership**
 - Multiple funding opportunities, but a concise strategy needs to be in place. This takes time to develop because of the reasons above





Windows window titled "Polls" with a green header "Sharing Poll Results".

Attendees are now viewing the poll results

1. Are you aware of opportunities or partnerships where NRCS could get involved to help plan out the implementation of smaller tide gates?

Yes	(16) 55%
No	(13) 45%

Buttons: Stop Share Results, Re-launch Polling



Summary of Meeting



- **There is an agreement that a new CIS should be created.**
 - Water Quality is the most identified resource concern for the area.
 - The polls indicate invasive species removal is the highest concern, then fences, livestock water and heavy use areas.
 - The District Conservationist Katie Woodruff will update the current CIS to reflect these resource concerns.
- **Better communication of when and why wetland determinations**
 - If any project may affect wetlands an evaluation would be needed to determine if the system would increase drainage past the previous best drained condition. If it increases the drainage that was in place before 1985, NRCS cannot provide financial assistance and the producer may be ineligible for all other USDA programs. A certified wetland determination by NRCS would be required.
- **Tide gates**
 - Polls indicate that inadequate habitat for fish and wildlife is the main resource concern. Polls may be influenced by the participants in attendance.
 - Many of the other partners have been working on tide gates or are in the early stages of planning/discussion. NRCS might be a good fit to support these efforts with agricultural land assistance. Comments were made that tide gates are too big of projects for one entity and that we should work together.
 - A RCPP proposal might be the best solution for NRCS to help with tide gates.
 - The Coquille office will continue to support partners in tide gate efforts in the capacity that they can.



Other needs



Are there other needs in the two counties that NRCS should be aware of?

You may reach me at:

Katie Woodruff

District Conservationist

Coos and Curry Counties

USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service

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Coquille, OR 97423

Phone 541-396-2841

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