



Crooked River Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan

WINTER 09/10

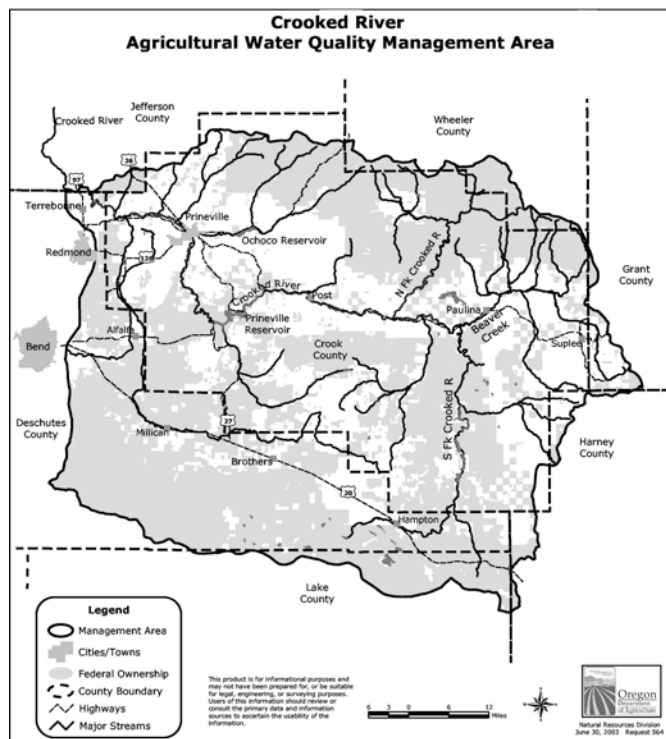
Landowners Need More Information on Water Quality Requirements

The Crooked River Local Advisory Committee (LAC) met January 12, 2010, to review the Area Plan. They told the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) that streamside conditions were improving. "We're moving ahead. A heck of a lot is being done. It's taken many, many years to recover from channelization. Now we're seeing willows," said one LAC member.

However, the LAC felt that landowners needed more information about the Area Plan and Rules. They recommended that the Crook County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) submit more articles to the newspaper on conservation activities and water quality requirements. They also suggested that the SWCD include existing agricultural water quality brochures when distributing the Crook County Rural Living Handbook.

The LAC recommended that ODA and the SWCD work together to provide a direct mailing to landowners along streams to inform them of water quality requirements for streams and appropriate land management activities.

The LAC were pleased with SWCD and Crooked River Watershed Council staffs' conservation work. They acknowledged that many landowners don't participate in grant programs because they can't afford their share of a grant-supported project. The LAC praised the Small Grant Program and wished that the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board provided more funds to that program.



The management area consists of the Crooked River Basin upstream of Crooked River Ranch.

LAC Members

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Lawrence Weberg, Chair | Barbi Riggs |
| Greg Bedortha, Vice-Chair | Russell Rhoden |
| Mysten Bohle | Bill Sigman |
| Doug Breese | |
| James (JB) Cox | Alternates: |
| Tim Huntley | Jim Eisner |
| John Morgan | Matt Smith |



Crook County SWCD Accomplishments

2007-2009 Biennium in Review Suzi Miller Hermens

The Crook County SWCD experienced a growth spurt in the 2007-2009 biennium! We wrote and implemented 16 grants through OWEB's Small Grant Program that will improve water quality and quantity in the Crooked River Watershed.

Through outreach, education, public presentations and workshops, we have expanded private landowner involvement in improving natural resources on their lands.

This year we saw a four-fold increase in landowner participation throughout the county. The projects include improvements to irrigation efficiency, riparian and streambank restoration to improve water quality and quantity and fish habitat, and upland projects that focus on eliminating invasive and noxious species and increasing water infiltration and availability.

We also began administering two large grants through OWEB. The first is the \$50,000 Mill Creek Restoration Project. It will focus on restoring half a mile of Mill Creek to a proper functioning condition by removing berms, allowing the stream to meander. Project activities include: controlling livestock grazing, building cross veins, and planting along streambanks. Restoration of this area will fill in the gap needed to annex 11 miles of restored stream on private land and will link these areas to previously restored upstream segments in the Ochoco National Forest.

The second project is a \$300,000 grant for a whole watershed project on Lawson Creek. Lawson Creek is a tributary of Ochoco Creek. It is important spawning and rearing habitat for redband trout and the watershed is critical deer and elk winter range. This is an exciting project and will focus on numerous stream repairs and riparian enhancements as well as upland juniper removal and weed control.



Aspen stand recovery will include juniper removal as well as exclusion fencing to prevent livestock and wildlife browsing.



Fresh water is delivered to trough from a solar watering station in arid sage grouse habitat. Juniper removal increased water availability to a now-thriving bunchgrass community.

2010-2012 should be exciting and busy years for us. Not only will we be implementing current projects, but also we have some exciting new project ideas for future grants. And, as usual, we continue to provide water quality technical assistance to our partners and the community.

Crook County SWCD Accomplishments



Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

Nicole Judge

It's not always easy for farmers and ranchers to implement conservation practices on their land due to time and financial constraints.

The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (or CREP in the acronym world) is a conservation easement program for land next to streams.

CREP is a cost-share and incentive-based program to reward agricultural producers for taking conservation into their own hands. It provides cost-share for conservation practices, as well as providing incentive payments along the way.



CREP riparian buffer.

The Crook County SWCD provides technical help for the program and the Farm Service Agency administers the contracts.

If you want to improve a riparian area on your land and leave it out of agricultural production for 10–15 years, this could be the program for you! Even if this program doesn't fit your needs, please don't hesitate to [call the SWCD at 541-447-3548](tel:541-447-3548) for technical help for your stream and riparian area!

<i>Crook County CREP 2007-2009</i>	
Stream Miles	21
Acreage	314
# Trees Planted	30,290
# Shrubs Planted	41,247
Total Stems Planted	71,537
Acres of Grass Seeding	80
Feet of Riparian Fencing	50,634
Acres of Juniper Removal	56
# Spring Developments	2
# Off-site Watering Facilities	16
Feet of Pipeline	6,309



CREP planting in spring of 2007. Vexar tubing protects trees and shrubs from deer and beavers.

Background



The LAC advised ODA on the development of the Area Plan and Area Rules (Oregon Administrative Rules 603-095-3400). The LAC reconvenes every two years to review progress towards meeting plan goals. LAC members represent farming and ranching, private timberlands, Oregon State University Extension Service, Trout Unlimited, and the Crook County SWCD.

The LAC's mission is to "promote cost-effective agricultural management practices that maintain or enhance water quality in the Crooked River Management Area." Their goal is to "prevent and control water pollution from agricultural activities and soil erosion through education and voluntary implementation" by

- Providing landowners with information and technical and financial assistance to minimize agriculture's contribution to water quality concerns.
- Pursuing and identifying cost-effective juniper-control and range improvement projects to improve watershed health.
- Continuing to include landowners, land managers, and local communities in the revisions and implementation of the Area Plan and associated Area Rules.
- Informing the general public about how agriculture benefits the community.
- Informing members of the community of the effects of various human activities, including agriculture, on water quality within the Management Area.

Area Rules:

1. Streamside Riparian Area Management.
 - (a) Agricultural management must allow establishment, growth, and active recruitment of streamside riparian vegetation, consistent with site capability, to moderate solar heating, stabilize streambanks, and filter sediment and nutrients from overland flows.

(b) Except as provided in (a), grazing, weed control, and other common agricultural activities are allowed in riparian areas.

(c) Water gaps and hardened crossings are allowed in streams that otherwise meet conditions required under (a).

2. Waste Management.

No person shall cause pollution, place wastes where they are likely to pollute, or discharge waste sufficient to violate water quality standards (Oregon Revised Statute 468B.025).

Complaints

No complaints have been received by ODA in this management area.



Invasive junipers cut to improve upland vegetation and increase water availability to grasses and shrubs. Cut trees were left in the draw to reduce erosion.



**Oregon Department
of Agriculture**

Water Quality Program
635 Capitol St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

**Regional Water
Quality Specialist:**

Ellen Hammond
475 NE Bellevue Dr. #110
Bend, OR 97701

Ph: 541-617-0017

Fax: 541-388-8283

ehammond@oda.state.or.us

“Got Questions? Get Answers. Get SmART!”

The Crook County SWCD joined over 20 agencies and non-profit entities in forming Central Oregon SmART (Small Acreage Resource Team).

The goal of SmART is “Collaborative Education and Outreach to Small Acreage Land Stewards in Central Oregon.”

The SmART booth debuted in 2009 at the 4-H Idea Fair and the Jefferson County Farm Fair to great enthusiasm. This effort will greatly increase the effectiveness of outreach activities to small acreage landowners and even owners of larger acreages who are unfamiliar with beneficial land management practices.

We will staff booths at “non-traditional” locations, such as the Central Oregon Home and Garden Show, business parking lot events, farmer’s markets and agricultural supply stores to better connect with the target audience.

6,000 SmART brochures were printed with funds from ODA, Central Oregon Irrigation District, Oregon State University Extension, and Farm Services Agency. The brochures provide contact information for the many partners.



We're on the Web!

http://egov.oregon.gov/ODA/NRD/water_quality_front.shtml

Crook County SWCD

498 SE Lynn Blvd.
Prineville, OR 97754