



Tillamook County

SWCD NEWSLETTER

Tillamook County Soil and Water Conservation District Newsletter

August 2019

2019 Scholarships Awarded

Tillamook County SWCD is pleased to announce that **Claire Bradley** and **Joshua Seals** are the 2019 recipients of our two \$1,000 scholarship awards.

Claire Bradley graduated from Tillamook High School and started at Oregon State University in 2018. Claire is majoring in BioHealth Sciences (Pre-Pharmacy), and minoring in Chemistry. Claire is planning a career focusing on the veterinary medicine aspect of compounding pharmacy.



Claire Bradley



Chairman Rudy Fenk



Joshua Seals

Joshua Seals is a 2019 graduate of Nestucca High School with plans to attend Oregon State University at Eastern Oregon University in LaGrande. Joshua will be majoring in Agriculture Sciences. He plans to return to his family farm and continue as a dairyman.

Tillamook County SWCD is committed to supporting local students who care about our natural resources and wish to promote conservation, impacting future natural resource decisions. Our goal is to assist college students majoring in the field of agriculture, natural resource science, or a related discipline. Each year the district is pleased to offer two \$1,000 scholarships.

More information and application materials can be found on our website <http://tillamookcountyswcd.org/index.php/scholarships/>

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2018 Cooperator of the Year

Tillamook County SWCD is proud to announce the selection of Karen Kuntz as the 2018 recipient of the Cooperator of the Year Award. This honor is in recognition of her outstanding commitment to conservation in Tillamook County.



Pictured from Left to Right: Leo Kuntz, Karen Kuntz, and Rudy Fenk

Karen raises high-quality, grass-fed beef on her 304-acre ranch near Nehalem. Foley Peak Angus ranch has become a model for conservation and sustainable land stewardship.

Karen strategically grazes her cattle using a grazing management plan, which helps her keep the soil, water and grasses healthy. She has nutrient management plan to help her re-use livestock waste as field fertilizer while protecting water quality.

She worked with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Tillamook County Soil and Water Conservation District to develop these plans.

Karen also partners with the ODFW to address habitat needs for salmon, elk, deer, beavers and other native species on her land.

Karen has planted native trees and shrubs along Tomlinson creek to protect water quality, reduce soil erosion, and improve salmon habitat. These plants also provide cover for wildlife.

To further protect stream health, Karen installed in-field water troughs so her cattle can have drinking water without accessing the creek. She installed vegetative buffer strips along the water courses, including draining ditches, to help with storm water run-off control. 🌿

Board of Directors

Zone 1
Walter Porter
Term Ends 2022
Zone 2

Daren Filosi
Term Ends 2022

Zone 3
Clarence (Bub) Boquist
Term Ends 2020

Zone 4
Bryan Measor
Term Ends 2020

Zone 5
Bill Hagerty
Term Ends 2020

At Large 1
Larry Zweifel
Term Ends 2020

At Large 2
Rudy Fenk
Term Ends 2022

Associate Director
Gus Meyer



Find us on the web at:
tillamookcountyswcd.org

Tillamook County SWCD
4000 Blimp Blvd. Suite 200
Tillamook, OR 97141

(503) 842-2848

Purple Loosestrife: A Lone Wolf Tamed At Last

Purple Loosestrife is an invasive wetland and riparian species that plagues many western Oregon streams, rivers and lakes. A prolific seed producer, a single adult can produce up to 3 million seeds each year. At that rate, it's no wonder that Purple loosestrife is so successful at crowding out native species that are crucial for maintaining fish & wildlife habitat and water quality.



Purple loosestrife near Neahkahnie Beach.

Luckily, Tillamook County has been mostly spared from this invader with just one active site in the county. First reported to the SWCD in Spring 2018, we quickly launched a project to bring the infestation under control. Due to the valuable wetland plant community at the site, and a proven biocontrol agent being available, we elected not to use herbicide for the project. Instead, we collaborated with Oregon State Parks, The Wetlands Conservancy, Oregon Youth Conservation Corps and Oregon Dept. of Agriculture to implement manual removal, augmented by the release of a host-specific, root boring weevil (*Hylobius transversovittatus*).



2019 Oregon Youth Conservation Corps

We removed over 1200 pounds of flowering stalks in 2018 and immediately released over 400 weevils. Those 400 weevils have the potential to multiply into over 4 million weevils in just 2 years. SWCD staff visited the site in Spring 2019 with Oregon Dept. of Agriculture and confirmed that the original release had reproduced. Just a few months later, we repeated our flower-head removal and disposed of over 400 pounds of biomass and released another 250 weevils.



Hylobius weevil on purple loosestrife.

Over time, our combined efforts should lead to a dramatic reduction in loosestrife at the site that will facilitate an increase in native plant cover and the natural benefits that accompany native, intact wetland systems. For more information, please visit our website.

<http://tillamookcountyswcd.org/> 

Fourth Grade Foresters 2019

In 1885 a national group of educators urged observation of Arbor Day in the nation's schools on the official Arbor Day of their own State. Somehow the School Arbor Day tradition began to fade away and now only relatively few kids get a tree to take home and plant on their State's Arbor Day.

Tillamook County SWCD decided it was time to reverse the decline. Just in time for Arbor Day fourth graders at participating Tillamook County schools received an individually packaged 12" – 18" shore pine tree of their own to take home and plant. Every tree was packaged by adults with disabilities, helping workers earn a paycheck.

Tillamook County SWCD has been sponsoring this project for over 15 years. Trees take carbon dioxide (CO₂) out of the atmosphere to help reduce warming and help clean the air we breathe. Planting trees is a simple, inexpensive and easy way to address the problem.



Garibaldi Grade School Student with her tree!



Shore Pine has proven to be a valuable riparian species. Its high tolerance to heavy, wet soils makes it a good species for river banks. More important, it has exhibited an ability to compete with reed canary grass and other river bank invaders, particularly when planted on a close spacing.

Fourth Grade Foresters USA was kicked off in 2006. Since 2007, thanks to 2,785 project sponsors like Tillamook County SWCD, more than **677,280 trees have been distributed to fourth graders in 7,100 schools across the country.** In Oregon 15,715 fourth grade students have received trees since the program started.

There are more than 3.5 million fourth graders in the United States. Together they can begin to plant a forest of their own...a forest that will benefit everyone for generations to come. 🌲



Oregon has celebrated Arbor Day since 1872. Oregon declared Arbor Week as the first full week in April each year.

The idea for Arbor Day originally came from Nebraska. A visit to Nebraska today wouldn't disclose that the state was once a treeless plain. Yet it was the lack of trees there that led to the founding of Arbor Day in the 1800s.

Invasive Weeds Program Pursues Biological Control Solutions for County-Listed Weeds

Tillamook County SWCD uses numerous tactics to manage invasive weeds like Canada Thistle and Purple Loosestrife and we continually seek out new strategies that will increase our impact and effectiveness in the county.

Canada Thistle has long been a scourge to farmers and land managers in Tillamook County, appearing on our county weeds list nearly 100 years ago (1927). Due to its perennial nature, Canada Thistle has proven tougher to manage than other annual/biennial species like Bull Thistle. It can rapidly displace prime pasturelands and severely decrease forage production over time.




Canada Thistle infected with rust

Our organic farmers are typically the hardest hit due to their limited options for controlling noxious weeds. Conventional farmers are not immune, either, as treatment can be very costly and control may take many years to achieve. To that end, TCSWCD has been working with Oregon Dept. of Agriculture to find solutions for managing thistle infestations for conventional and organic farmers alike.

Puccinia punctiformis is a host-specific rust that infects and destroys Canada Thistle and was the very first plant pathogen ever suggested as a biocontrol (1893). Already established in many parts of North America, Oregon Dept. of Agriculture is now making this control agent available to farmers and ranchers in Oregon. Unlike many bio-control agents, thistle rust can kill its host. Field trials have shown reduction of thistle from 45-100%, depending on site conditions.

Tillamook County has near perfect climate and moisture regimes for successful introduction of the thistle rust and TCSWCD is optimistic about the potential for success. Preliminary releases are scheduled for Fall 2019 with plans to expand in 2020.

If you would like more information on thistle rust or would like to inquire about inoculation in your pasture, please refer to our website at <http://tillamookcountyswcd.org/> or call our office at (503) 842-2848 ext.103. You will also find Best Management Practices for over 20 species of invasive weeds in a convenient, downloadable PDF format. 

Tillamook County Soil and Water Conservation District Water Quality MEAD Loan Program



Producers - If you are in need of **funding for** a water quality project, you may qualify for a loan through the Tillamook County Soil and Water Conservation District (MEAD) - Revolving Loan Program:

Minimum loan amount of \$2,000. Maximum loan up to \$75,000.00

Loans are offered at 5% interest.

Loans are generally up to 10 years-Board may approve longer terms

There is a non-refundable application fee of \$50.00

There is a non-refundable credit check fee of \$30.00 for every person that owns 20% or more of the business.

Eligible practices may include but **are not limited to:**

Animal Waste Storage Facilities

Manure Application Equipment

Gutters and Runoff Controls

Usually any practice that improves water quality

Projects must be approved by the Tillamook County SWCD Board of Directors

For additional information on the program, please contact:

Ray Monroe, Tillamook County SWCD

4000 Blimp Blvd. Suite 200

Tillamook, OR 97141

tcsxcd@gmail.com

(503) 801-4744



Covered Manure Storage Facility

New Employee Spotlight – Meet Michael Blankenship

Tillamook County SWCD is pleased to announce that Michael Blankenship has been hired as our new full time Water Quality & Weed Program Assistant Coordinator. Michael started out as a seasonal employee in June of 2018, and quickly worked his way up to permanent full-time employment by November.

Michael says “I had the wonderful opportunity to serve Tillamook County by growing up more or less on my grandparent’s dairy, working alongside my family to milk the cows, and take care of the daily business that occurred on the farm. That gave me the wisdom of hard work, the love of agriculture, and the passion to pursue an agriculture related education. I graduated from Oregon State University in 2018 with a major in Animal Science and minor in Agriculture Science. Every part of my existence knew that I would some how remain rooted and tied with the land.”



Michael Blankenship

“I performed various jobs including herd management, landscaping, combined annual rye grass seed and dairy service technician for the past five years, before starting to work full time with Tillamook County Soil and Water Conservation District. The great staff and variety of land owners that I have worked with, offering assistance is delightful.”

Please join us in offering a warm welcome to Michael! 🏡

SAVE THE DATE

Join Us as We Celebrate 79 Years

of Continuous Service
to the People of Tillamook County

The Board of Directors & Staff of the Tillamook County Soil & Water Conservation District Invite you to Join them at their Annual Meeting, Dinner & Silent Auction

**Saturday,
September 21, 2019**

3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

**Please RSVP to: Soil & Water Office
at (503) 842-2848 ext. 110**

***Good food, good fun, award presentations,
& great auction items to bid on!***

Visit us at the
Tillamook County Fair
August 7-10, 2019.

Find us at our booth in
the NE corner of the
main Exhibit Hall.

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our services.

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2019 District Activities



Another busy year at the Tillamook County SWCD.

- Participate in the Children’s Clean Water Festival & 4th Grade Foresters.
- Create and update Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans as required.
- Continue Inventory of invasive weeds in Dougherty Slough.
- Continue to attack invasive Knotweed infestations in Nestucca and Tillamook Basins & Dougherty Slough
- Install livestock exclusion fences & off-stream water along riparian areas.
- Respond to noxious weed complaints in a confidential manner.
- Prepare and staff a display for County Fair booth.
- Plant trees and shrubs along the riparian areas fenced above.
- Provide conservation technical assistance as requested.

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STAMP
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