



## Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District

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**Learning and Sharing**  
**December 2024**

Let me know if you want to be ADDED or TAKEN OFF this email list! Ellen Hammond, [ellen.hammond@jeffswcd.org](mailto:ellen.hammond@jeffswcd.org).

**January 28, Tuesday; noon**

### Jefferson SWCD Board Meeting Madras Airport

Learn about what the SWCD is doing for you. Contact [Kate Haarberg](#) for an agenda and to RSVP for lunch! Agendas and approved minutes are posted on our [website](#) when available.

**January 29, 2025**

### Statewide Virtual Fencing Symposium in Ontario

I still haven't received details; it is supposed to be hybrid so you can participate remotely. Contact Central Oregon OSU Livestock Extension Agent [Scott Duggan](#) to find out more!



**February 6, 2025; 11am-noon**

### Jefferson SWCD Annual Meeting Farm Fair, Madras

Learn what the SWCD has been doing for you! Stop by our booth throughout Farm Fair to chat with us :-).

**February 12, 2025; 9-11:30am**

### NRCS Local Work Group Madras City Hall

This is an opportunity for you to learn about local NRCS programs and provide your thoughts on priorities.

**Early March, 2025**

### Soil Health Workshop Somewhere in Madras

In June 2024, we had a field day presented by Ray Archuleta and Alejandro Castillo on soil health in croplands and rangelands. NRCS, COAREC, OSU Extension, and your SWCD are planning an ongoing conversation with you about soil health, via workshops of 2-3 hours and field days at convenient times for local farmers and ranchers. We currently envision the March workshop to consist of Soil Health Basics and then a discussion about soil testing and how to track changes through time, followed by a tour this summer. Stay tuned for details!



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March 2025

## Weed Field Days Agency Plains and Culver

The SWCD and partners will host two field days with farmers to discuss topics such as identifying and controlling the major weeds of concern, data from pesticide testing of drains to the Deschutes River, recommended best management practices, and irrigation water management. Bring your experiences and questions, and we will provide answers. We will provide more details as we get them figured out!

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### Amber Herman, the SWCD's new Conservation Planner

We introduced you to Amber in the October newsletter. Amber is working with the SWCD and the NRCS as a Natural Resources specialist and Conservation Planner. She will be working with private landowners in Jefferson County to plan, implement and monitor conservation projects. She works as a part of a larger team that will be able to provide technical assistance on projects such as soil conservation, habitat restoration, irrigation, etc. In addition, she will be able to help connect landowners with funding opportunities to support various types of conservation work.



### Regenerative Farming/Ranching

What does this mean? Many farmers see 'regenerative ag' as just a trend with a fancy name. It has different definitions but is essentially farming in harmony with nature. Farmers have been doing this for millennia, however, there are always new ways to think about your farming practices. If you are interested in learning more, here are a few websites that you can check out: [Kiss the Ground | For Regeneration!](#) And [Regenerative Ranching — Sustainable Northwest](#). Local farmers, such as Casad Family Farms, are actively involved with regenerative farming organizations, and at least one Jefferson County rancher is participating in Sustainable Northwest's Regenerative Ranching program.

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### Featured Weed: Myrtle Spurge

Could that interesting plant growing in your garden be a noxious weed in disguise?

Noted for its 'season-long interest', Myrtle Spurge is an evergreen, succulent perennial with sprawling stems of fleshy, blue-green leaves in closed spirals. In spring it produces 'eye-catching' clusters of star-shaped yellow-green flowers. In England, it has been granted the Royal Horticulture Society's Award of Garden Merit, however, IT IS CONSIDERED A NOXIOUS WEED IN OREGON AND SHOULD NOT BE PLANTED!

It is native to the Mediterranean, so it likes sun and sandy soils, such as we have in Jefferson County. Once it finds its way in the wild, it outcompetes native plant communities. Most of the Jefferson County wild plants have been found in Crooked River Ranch.

Myrtle spurge is very invasive and managing its spread is challenging. It spreads via seeds or bits of root. Dig out the plants before they set seed and make sure you remove all roots. Wear gloves because the milky sap is toxic! For larger infestations, myrtle spurge can be effectively controlled with products containing 2, 4-D and dicamba in late fall. For more information on identification and control of Myrtle Spurge, see [Weed Control Handbook-Myrtle Spurge](#) or contact Jefferson County Weed Abatement and Control at 541-475-4459.

