

# *Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District*

## **Annual Report of Accomplishments**

**July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025**



*Connecting new pivot to buried mainline*

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## Partners

Thank you to our partners and funding organizations for continued support. There are too many to list due to the widespread interest and involvement in all of our activities. However, you will see many of their names sprinkled throughout our report.

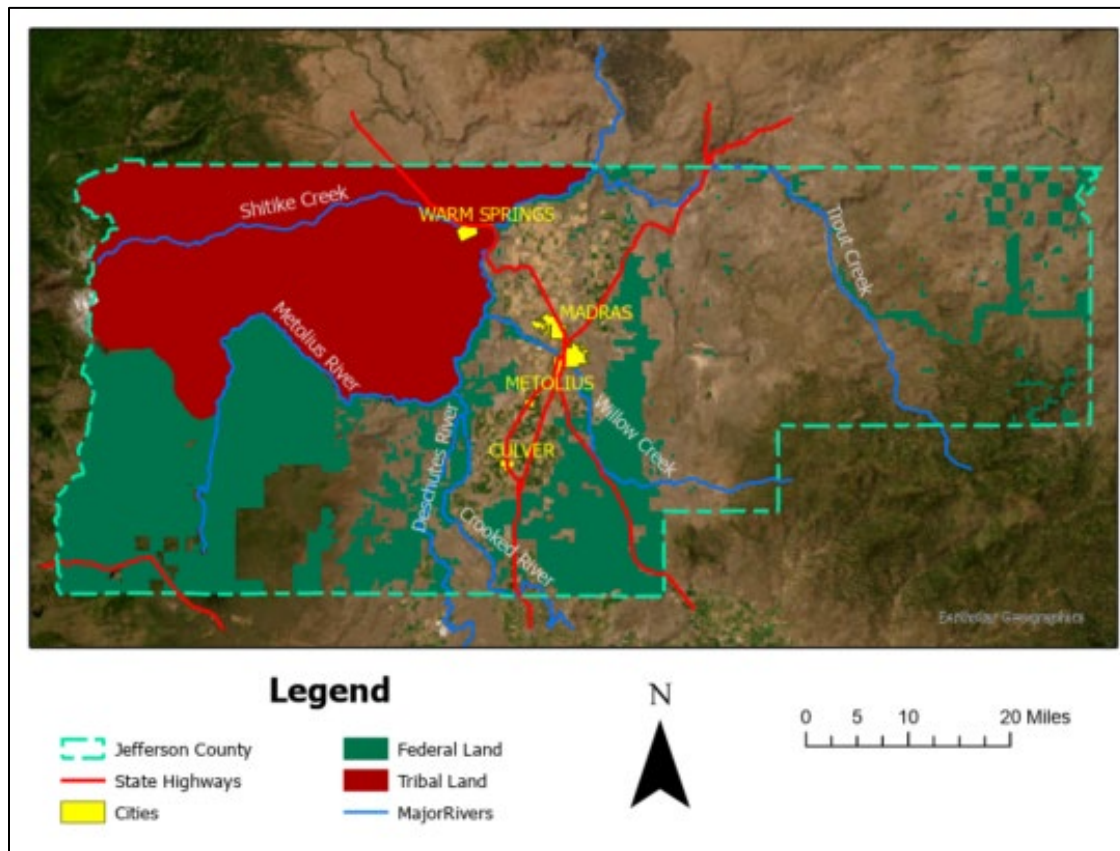


*MDWC, JSWCD, and NRCS partners on a tour of Hay Creek Ranch - Dec 2024*

## **ACRONYMS**

BDA	Beaver Dam Analog
CIS	Conservation Implementation Strategy
JCSWCD	Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District
MDWC	Middle Deschutes Watershed Council
NRCS	National Resource Conservation Service
NUID	North Unit Irrigation District
ODA	Oregon Department of Agriculture
ODFW	Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
OSU	Oregon State University
OWEB	Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
PSP	Pesticide Stewardship Partnership
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

## I. Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District (JCSWCD)



The 1930s brought an ecological disaster known as the “Dust Bowl”. The US Congress immediately declared soil and water conservation a national policy and priority, and the idea for SWCDs was born. Today there are almost 3000 SWCDs, one in almost every county. Each SWCD is designed to serve the conservation needs of that county and help its citizens conserve land, water, forests, wildlife, and other natural resources.

The JCSWCD operates within the boundaries of Jefferson County in Central Oregon and has been helping landowners conserve natural resources since 1974. It consists of 5 staff members, 7 Board Directors, and 4 Technical Advisors. Its mission is to “pursue natural resource stewardship through collaboration, assessment, and project implementation.” We:

- Provide technical assistance to landowners to implement conservation measures to protect natural resources while meeting their objectives.
- Advise on erosion control, irrigation, manure management, invasive species, wildlife habitat, stream functioning, and other natural resource issues.
- Conduct research and assessments to identify problems and solutions.
- Work with local agencies and groups to address watershed-wide natural resource concerns and opportunities.
- Inform residents through public speaking, workshops, printed material, and public media.
- Bring federal, state, and private dollars to Jefferson County to assist landowners with implementation costs.

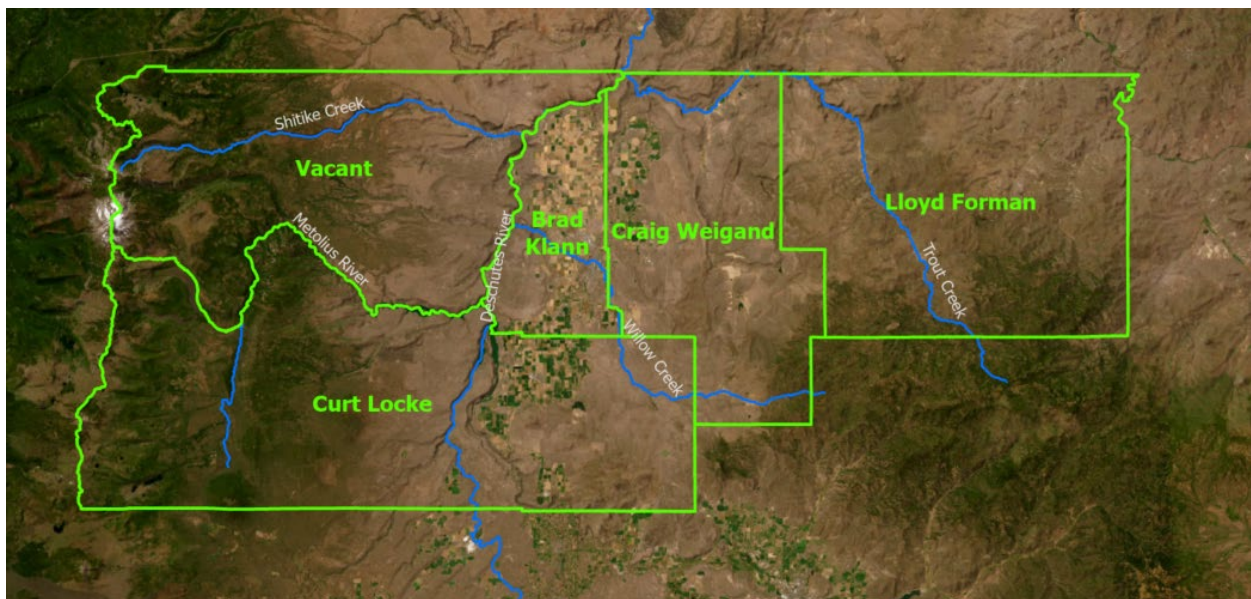
## A. District Staff

- Kate Haarberg *District Manager (hired 2024)*  
Kate grew up the daughter of a John Deere dealer in a rural town of 500 people in Idaho, which instilled in her a deep compassion and curiosity about how weather impacts crops, livestock, and communities. She has a B.A. in Human Resources from the University of Idaho and worked for various non-profits.
- Adam Haarberg *Trout Creek Project Manager (hired 1998)*  
Adam earned a B.S. in Rangeland Resources from Oregon State University (OSU) in 1996. Adam manages the contract with Bonneville Power Administration to implement habitat improvement projects in the Trout Creek Watershed to benefit federally listed “threatened” Mid-Columbia summer steelhead population that uses Trout Creek and its tributaries.
- Ellen Hammond *Conservation Specialist (hired 2022)*  
Ellen joined the JCSWCD after 25 years in Oregon's Department of Agriculture (ODA) Water Quality Program as a Regional Water Quality Specialist and the statewide Monitoring Lead. She has an M.S. from OSU and previously worked for the Malheur County SWCD. She has first-hand experience with irrigation and is excited to be working directly with farmers.
- Ryan Brunner *Weed Program Manager (hired 2024-left 2025)*  
Ryan grew up in Jefferson County in the agricultural community and received B.S in Agriculture Science from OSU, with a minor in Business and Animal Science. He was a crop advisor in Central Oregon since 2017. His main focus is to control noxious weeds, but he also has a passion for soil, water, and crop health.
- Amber Herman *Conservation Planner (hired 2024)*  
Amber has a B.S. in Natural Resources with a focus on Fish and Wildlife Conservation. She works closely with NRCS staff. She helps private landowners plan, implement, and monitor conservation projects. She works as part of a larger team that provides technical assistance on projects such as soil conservation, habitat restoration, irrigation, etc. In addition, she helps connect landowners with funding opportunities to support various types of conservation work.
- Ally Steinmetz *Middle Deschutes Watershed Council (MDWC) Coordinator (hired 2021)*  
Ally earned a M.S. in Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation from Virginia Tech and a B.A. in Liberal Studies with a Spanish minor from OSU-Cascades in 2011. Ally manages the Watershed Council and OWEB Small Grant Program for Region 17. Her focus is on rangelands and riparian restoration, while also supporting monitoring efforts and a youth education program.

## B. Board of Directors

The JCSWCD is governed by a seven-member Board of Directors elected in the General Elections. Five are elected from each of the zones and two are at-large positions. Directors serve four-year terms.

Lloyd Forman	<i>Chair, Zone 4</i>
Rob Galyen	<i>Co-Chair, At Large 2</i>
Curt Locke	<i>Treasurer, Zone 5</i>
Brad Klann	<i>Secretary, Zone 2</i>
Gary Richards	<i>Director, At Large 1</i>
Craig Weigand	<i>Director, Zone 3</i>
Vacant	<i>Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs Representative, Zone 1</i>



### Technical Advisors

Nina Caldwell	<i>Oregon Department of Agriculture, Water Quality Specialist</i>
Lars Santana	<i>Natural Resource Conservation Service, District Conservationist</i>
Collin Cowsill	<i>North Unit Irrigation District, Water Operations Specialist</i>
Smita Mehta	<i>Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, Water Quality Program</i>

## II. 2024-2025 Annual Plan of Work and Accomplishments

Goals/Objectives/Strategies/Projects		Accomplishments
<b>Goal A: Improve irrigation efficiency and reduce irrigation runoff</b>		
a.	Partner and collaborate with stakeholders, agencies and organizations including NUID, NRCS, OWEB, FSA, Wy'East RC&D, DRC, etc. to coordinate and facilitate natural resource agreements, work group participation and round table discussions.	Facilitated Pesticide Stewardship Partnership, Campbell Creek SIA. Hired staff to focus on NRCS work.
b.	Facilitate the Jefferson County Agricultural Resiliency Group; participate in Group conversations and Workgroups	6 Workgroup meetings Dec 2024 - Feb 2025
c.	Provide technical assistance to landowners including site visits, grant writing, implementing conservation practices, compliance visits with ODA, and project management/inspection/verification.	Wrote successful grant proposals for Lateral 43 and Henderson Flat OAHP. Also 3 small grants for irrigation upgrades. No compliance investigations.
d.	Map irrigation systems	Done annually since 2024.
<b>Goal B: Improve soil health (in croplands)</b>		
a.	Assist landowners with EQIP and small grant applications that improve soil health	NRCS specialist hired in fall of 2024. She has helped NRCS with all EQIP applications.
b.	Participate in the NUID Soil Health RCPP with NUID, DRC, and OSU Extension	This RCPP didn't happen.
c.	Facilitate tours of conservation practices implemented and planned	Started to plan with COAREC but didn't take place.
d.	Assist NRCS with outreach	Not requested by NRCS. NRCS had more demand than funding and staff.
e.	Weeds: attend winter meetings, meet with up to 100 landowners to discuss weed control	Met with 100 landowners.
f.	Weeds: develop 5 brochures for different types of landowners	Not done; low priority.
g.	2 peer-to-peer on-farm field days focusing on weed control	Not done.
h.	Develop and implement methodology to assess and track soil health	Not done. Low priority for staff time.
<b>Goal C: Protect and improve water quality</b>		
a.	Continue Campbell Creek SIA water quality monitoring	Samples collected biweekly. Installed flow measurement methodology at one site; had flow monitor repaired for other site. Presented data at Farm Fair and to ODA's AgWQ Local Advisory Committee.
b.	Implement the Middle Deschutes PSP Strategic Plan; continue monitoring pesticides in Mudsprings, Campbell Creek, Rattlesnake Canyon, and Culver Drain. Implement outreach program	Continued monitoring. Wrote successful grant for 2025-27 PSP: monitoring, technical assessment, outreach. PSP presentation at Farm Fair.
c.	Implement outreach through the ODA/EPA Toxics Grant	3 landowner meetings. Developed and distributed 1 flyer for linuron.

<b>Goal D: Improve streamside conditions and habitat</b>		
a.	Connect streams to floodplains via BDAs and bioengineering	SWCD + WC conducted site visits to Hay Creek Ranch and Enchanted Rocks Preserve to assess project potential to improve streamside conditions; Monitored BDAs Campbell Creek.
b.	Improve riparian vegetation via plantings	Planted 1,006 trees on Campbell Creek Nov 2024.
c.	Hire CREP Planner	Hired in November 2024.
<b>Goal E: Improve rangeland and forest health</b>		
<b>Improve Hydrologic Function in Trout Creek Watershed</b>		
a.	Provide Technical Assistance & Input, seek funding	Completed and still ongoing
b.	Watershed Coordination and Assistance with ODFW-Trout Creek Project	Completed and still ongoing
c.	Habitat Maintenance - Maintain Instream and Floodplain Structures	No maintenance required during this timeframe
d.	Develop and implement noxious weed program: write grants, develop outreach tools, provide information to landowners and pesticide applicators, and control noxious weeds	Didn't happen. Weed position returned to the County at end of Fiscal Year.
e.	Trout Creek Vegetation Improvement - Upland & Riparian	Seeded several sites, primarily firelines from RFPA controlled burns
f.	Foley Creek Passage and Habitat Improvement - Phase 2 Implementation	Project Completed in March 2025
g.	Little Trout Creek Juniper Removal OWEB Grant Implementation	Project Completed in December 2025
h.	Beaver Creek Watershed Improvement OWEB Grant Implementation	Project Completed in December 2024
i.	Calf Gulch Juniper Removal OWEB Grant Implementation	Project Completed in January 2025
j.	Produce Annual Report	Completed
k.	Weeds: attend winter meetings, meet with up to 20 landowners to discuss weed control	Met with 20 landowners.
l.	Weeds: develop brochure for different types of landowners	Not done; low priority
m.	Weeds: 1 peer-to-peer on-farm field day focusing on weed control	Ashwood meeting.
<b>Trout Creek Monitoring</b>		
a.	Assist ODFW with Steelhead Spawning Surveys and Smolt Trapping	Completed and still ongoing
b.	Annual project site visits/evaluations and photo points	Completed and still ongoing
c.	GPS survey past stream restoration project sites after high water events	Did not occur during this timeframe
d.	Hydrologic Restoration for Steelhead in Jefferson County - CIS monitoring	Ongoing Water Level & Surface Flow Monitoring in 2 subbasins (Little Trout Creek & Beaver Creek)
<b>Other</b>		
a.	Maintain BDAs in Campbell Creek	Assessed repairs needed; still need funding to implement.

b.	Plan and implement field tours and outreach/educational events	WC led tour of Opal Springs 11/2024.
c.	Implement Roberts' Small Grant	Planted riparian trees, sprayed Rejuvra aerially on cheat grass, installed two livestock troughs.
<b>Goal F: Support Middle Deschutes Watershed Council activities</b>		
a.	Provide technical assistance to on the ground projects	Adam Haarberg provided technical assistance to WC.
b.	Write and manage grants	SWCD + WC staff collaborated on grant writing, review, & mng't.
c.	Manage Small Grant Team	WC took on Manager role in 2024; JSWCD was active team member and led design and review of all irrigation projects.
d.	Assist with outdoor education programming in Jefferson County	One request; not met due to injury
e.	Act as Fiscal Administrator for Council	Completed and ongoing.
<b>Goal G: District Operations</b>		
<b>Marketing Jefferson County SWCD to increase community support for our mission</b>		
a.	Maintain District website. Display information, news, create community, and showcase benefits of Jefferson SWCD programs.	Website maintained at minimal level; however, all Board meeting minutes and agendas posted. Website became ADA compliant. Presentation and display booth at Farm Fair.
b.	Show and market the results and outcomes that Jefferson SWCD achieves thru Annual Report.	Done.
c.	Newsletters and News Releases.	Emailed monthly to over 150 landowners and 60 partners.
d.	Participate in Natural Resource Committees or Groups that align with the District mission in Jefferson County.	NRCS Local Working Group, Jefferson County Weed Advisory Board meetings.
e.	News articles	Guest editorial in Bend Bulletin about JeffCo ag and water situation.
<b>Internal Operations</b>		
a.	Implement 2023-2028 Strategic Plan	In Progress
b.	Annually update Annual Plan of Work based on Jefferson SWCD Strategic Plan.	In Progress
c.	Develop weed strategic plan	Weed strategic management plan was in draft form, but position went back to the County end of Fiscal Year
d.	Hire Conservation Planner	Hired in November 2024, with focus on NRCS. Is close to completing conservation planning certificate.
e.	Update as needed Board Policies and Procedures	Hazardous Materials Policy.

f.	Continue to manage Jefferson County SWCD financial affairs consistent with Accepted Accounting Principles and ODA Requirements	Contracted with ex-District Manager, Tanya Graham, to assist with improving our Accounting Practices.
g.	Submit detailed financial reports to Board member for monthly review	10 Board Meetings held
h.	Administer grant funding and track finances for all funding sources in QuickBooks	Continued to improve grant tracking communication
i.	Conduct annual financial audit or review and quarterly financial review by CPA	Audit completed earlier than usual with no issues

### III. PROJECT UPDATES

SWCD staff have successfully met most of their goals identified in the Annual Plan, as described below.

#### A. Drought Planning

The Deschutes Basin Watershed continues to experience drought. Average summer temperatures in the last 30 years are higher than the average for 1900-2000. And, water availability in the snowpack near Wikiup Reservoir, which is NUID’s primary source of irrigation water, has been less for the last 15 years than in the previous 30 years.

NUID delivers water to 58,800 acres, which constitute most of the irrigated acres in Jefferson County. Due to NUID’s junior water right, drought and the Deschutes Basin Habitat Conservation Plan, NUID delivered one half of their allotment in 2024. These shortages drastically affected the watershed, community, and economy of the county. Drought is also affecting irrigation and ranching in the rest of Jefferson County. The SWCD has been working with landowners and other conservation partners to implement the 2023 Jefferson County Agricultural Drought Resiliency Plan ([Drought Resiliency for Jefferson County, Oregon Agriculture](#)). The 2024 update can be found at [Managing for Drought - Jefferson County SWCD](#).

Workgroups facilitated by JCSWCD staff are addressing the following priorities, with SWCD involvement as needed:

#### Croplands

- Increase crop water use efficiency
- Diversify cash crops
- Improve soil health
- Control weeds on fallow land



#### SWCD Implementation:

- Wrote grant proposal to provide technical assistance to landowners in NUID’s Lateral 43 service area who will receive pressurized water from piping. The Central Oregon Agricultural Research and Education Center is a partner and will work with landowners on irrigation upgrades, soil moisture monitoring, and recommendations for cover cropping.
- Started participating in the Statewide Soil Health Network.

- Wrote grant proposal to the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program to develop and implement a conservation plan for 900 acres in the Henderson Flat area.

### **Ranchlands**

- Juniper control (+ reseeding + weeds control + burning + grazing, as needed for rangeland health)
- Grazing to improve forage and rangeland health
- Vegetated streamsides
- Reconnect stream to floodplains
- Control invasive annual weeds



### SWCD implementation

- Trout Creek work (see below)
- Weed Program Coordinator held weed meeting in Ashwood
- Received SIA Restoration Grant for the mouth of Campbell Creek: off-stream water, riparian plantings, and spraying of Rejuvra on invasive annual grasses.

### **Public Outreach: “Jefferson County agriculture is diverse, valuable, at risk, and worth supporting”**

The SWCD facilitated an outreach plan that resulted in the following:

- Panel presentation at COCC on JeffCo and ag’s challenges
- Editorial in the Bend Bulletin
- Articles in the Madras Pioneer



## **B. Small Grants**

Every biennium, OWEB allocates approximately \$100,000 for each SWCD statewide to implement natural resource conservation practices. Regional Small Grant Teams develop priorities based on landowner and agency input, while ensuring conservation practices and environmental benefits meet OWEB criteria. Funds are limited to \$15,000 per project per landowner per biennium. A 25% landowner match (cash or in-kind) is also required. Following the previous District Manager’s departure, MDWC’s Watershed Coordinator assumed management of the program, with the team (Region 17) helping develop conservation projects, development, submit applications, and manage grant implementation. JSWCD’s Conservation Specialist has been a very active team member, leading project design and review of all irrigation projects. In July 2024, the team’s exceptional performance in its first year made them eligible for an additional \$100,000 in unspent statewide program funds. During the 2023-2025 biennium, the Region 17 team was successful in receiving 13 small grants totaling funding of more than \$159,000. These projects are summarized below:

### **Ranchland**

- Reseeded 21 acres disturbed during juniper removal on Axehandle Ridge in the Trout Creek watershed.
- Juniper removal on 33 acres, followed by reseeding and cattle exclusion on Little Willow Creek.
- Juniper removal on 62 acres that drains to Willow Creek Reservoir.
- Juniper removal on 33 acres using chainsaws, followed by reseeding and cattle exclusion near the headwaters of Hay Creek.

- Juniper removal on 45 acres of rangeland, followed by reseeding and minimal livestock disturbance on McMeen Creek.
- Removed old fencing and junipers, and planted willows, cottonwood, and aspen using a hydraulic tree planter and protected by fencing on Foley Meadow.
- Planted willow, cottonwood, and aspen along Willow Creek near the confluence with Coon Creek.

Wrote one proposal to be implemented in 2025-26 to remove juniper on 57 acres in Upper Mud Springs.

**Cropland**

- Wrote 3 proposals that will be implemented in 2025-26:
  - Expand pumpback pond to eliminate flows to Deschutes River in northern Agency Plains
  - Create pumpback pond to eliminate runoff to Campbell Creek via the Gumwood Drain
  - Replace existing flood irrigation infrastructure with pressurized pipe to support conversion to a center pivot system, improving irrigation efficiency and reducing runoff.

**C. Campbell Creek Water Quality**

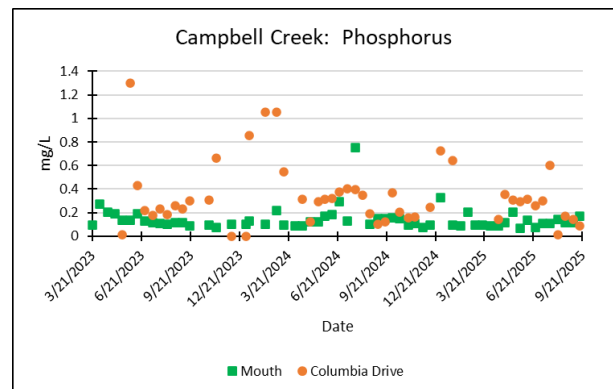
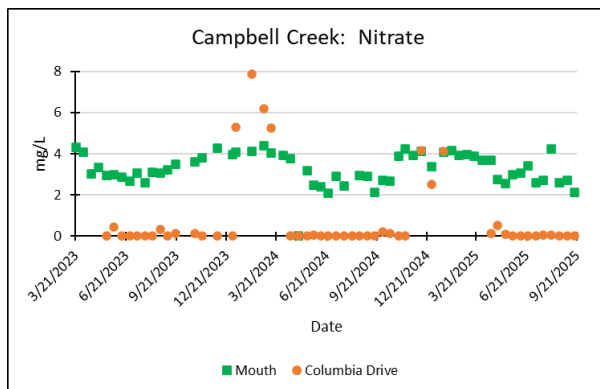
The JCSWCD started monitoring nitrates, turbidity, and total phosphorus in Campbell Creek for the first time since 2008. Current monitoring locations include the end of Lateral 57 at Columbia (photo) and the mouth of Campbell Creek.



The older monitoring indicated that phosphorus was present in irrigation runoff, while nitrates appeared to enter the creek via springs dating from the 1940s or earlier.

Our current monitoring confirmed those older findings. Nitrate concentrations at the mouth of Campbell Creek dropped during the irrigation season; nitrates were consistently < 1 mg/L at Columbia Drive except for an unexplained peak in January/February that appears to be related to very heavy rains and resultant field erosion. Phosphorus concentrations in field runoff have been decreasing in the last few years.

Measuring devices were placed at both locations, so flows can be tracked moving forward.



## D. Middle Deschutes Pesticide Stewardship Partnership (PSP)

The JCSWCD has facilitated the PSP since 2012. The PSP consists of outreach to landowners to reduce pesticide detections in local waterways, guided by water quality monitoring. PSP members include landowners, Jefferson County, Helena, Pratum, NUID, Central Oregon Seeds Inc, OSU, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, ODA, and others.

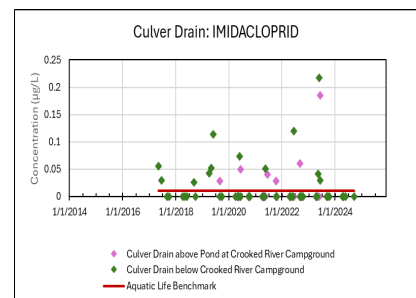
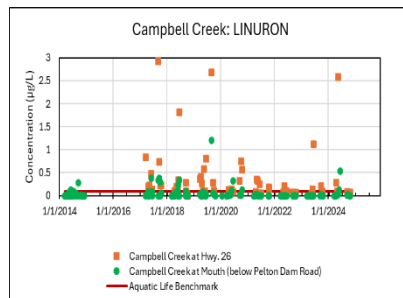
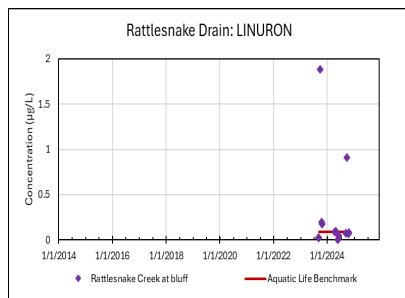
Water was analyzed at five sites in four drainages (Campbell Creek, Mud Springs, Rattlesnake, and Culver drain). Each location was sampled during the irrigation season (March through October). All samples were collected in accordance with protocols established by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and ODA.

Pesticide concentrations are compared with levels set to protect aquatic life. “Pesticides of Concern” are detected most often and/or at concerning concentrations. Monitoring shows pesticides are entering the Deschutes River. We don’t know what percentage are entering waterways via wind drift, overland flows, or infiltration to groundwater.

Pesticides of Concern in Jefferson County, based on presence in waterways				
Pesticide of Concern	Common Trade Names	Type <sup>1</sup>	Common Local Uses	Where of Most Concern?
Dimethoate	Dimate	I	Grass seed, alfalfa, wheat	Campbell Creek
Diuron <sup>2</sup>	Direx, Karmex	H	Bluegrass seed, alfalfa; fencerow, stackyard, right of ways (ROWS), etc.	Campbell Creek, Culver Drain, Mud Springs, Rattlesnake Drain
Imidacloprid	Admire, Gaucho, Merit, Premier, Provado	I	Vegetables	Culver Drain
Linuron	Lorox	H	Carrot seed	Campbell Creek, Culver Drain, Rattlesnake Drain
Oxyfluorfen	Galigan, Goal	H	Carrot seed, bluegrass seed	Campbell Creek
Prometryn	Caparol	H	Carrot seed	Campbell Creek
Sulfometuron-methyl	Oust	H	ROWS, staging areas	Culver Drain

<sup>1</sup> I = Insecticide, H = Herbicide    <sup>2</sup> Being phased out

Based on monitoring results, the PSP decided to concentrate efforts on linuron and imidacloprid. They are refining their monitoring in 2025 to help determine where pesticides are entering the drains. They also are focusing outreach and technical assistance on users of those two pesticides.



## **E. Weed Program**

The SWCD's position of Weed Program Coordinator lasted slightly over one year. The position was returned to the County at the end of 2024-2025.

We had a continuing OWEB grant that assisted landowners in the Trout and Willow Creek drainages with Class A noxious weed treatments and herbicide cost-share. We also had grants for outreach to landowners in the Ashwood area and Crooked River Ranch, along with 100 one-on-one visits with landowners.

Other projects included U.S Forest Service treatments of broadleaf and annual invasive grasses, and outreach events.

We purchased wind socks to help landowners time their spray accordingly.



## **F. Trout Creek Watershed Improvement Project: Highlights** **[\(TC Annual Report.pdf\)](#)**

The primary goal is to improve the habitat (in-stream, riparian, and upland), providing a landscape more resilient to climate change, while increasing the carrying capacity for native salmonids in Trout Creek and its tributaries. The species of focus are the federally-listed Middle Columbia River summer steelhead and their counterpart, the interior redband trout. Our goal is to return the Trout Creek population to "viable" status, with long-term goals of reaching "highly viable".

### **Foley Complex Fish Passage Improvement – Phase 2**

The Foley Creek Project targeted ESA listed Mid-Columbia Steelhead, as well as resident fish and aquatic species by improving fish passage, increasing instream structural complexity, expanding available riparian and floodplain area, along 0.9 miles of Foley Creek, a tributary of Trout Creek in the Deschutes Basin. Project partners include the ODFW Trout Creek Project, Jefferson SWCD, and the landowner, with direct funding provided by BPA, and Portland General Electric

Major restoration activities began in 2023 with relocation of decommissioned bridge. Road realignment, stream re-meander and floodplain work was implemented during the 2024 in-water work period. Revegetation to date includes planting of over 3600 trees and seeding over 500lbs of native grass and forbs. Post project monitoring shows:

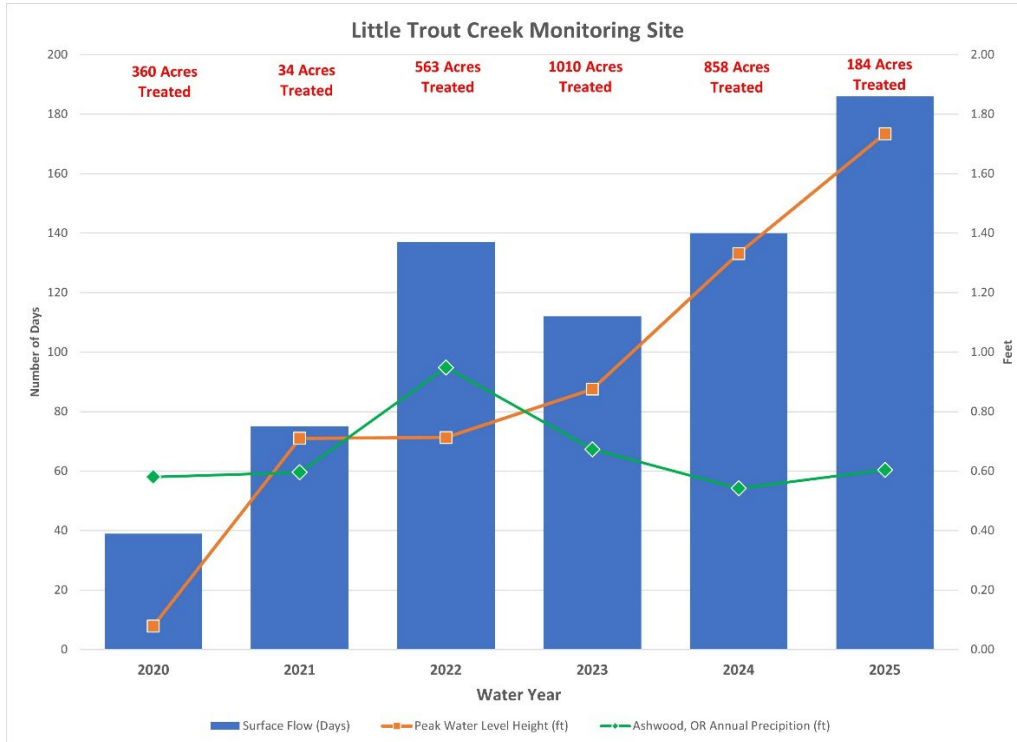
1. Channel: Increased channel length by 246 feet (5.3% Increase), sinuosity (1.06 to 1.11), function, quantity and quality of habitat diversity, and improved sediment transport and sorting
2. Floodplain: Increased channel access to the floodplain from 3.69 to 12.5 acres to (339% Increase) at Q100.
3. Vegetation: 8.5 acres of vegetation planting and improved riparian conditions
4. Pool Habitat: Increased number of pools from 11 to 33 (300% increase) in the project reach. Pools have complex habitat from LWD structures.
5. Fish Passage: Removed seasonal fish passage barrier, allowing access to approximately 7.8 miles of habitat upstream.
6. Created 0.47 acres of off channel ponds to increase hyporheic storage/exchange to the stream in late season.



**Confluence of Big Log and Foley Creeks – Point Bar Deposition following high water event – March 11, 2025**

**House Bill 2010 – Drought Relief**

With this funding, the Jefferson SWCD designated 3 different areas to remove junipers, one in the Little Trout Creek drainage, and the other two in Calf Gulch. This was a strategic move to maximize the footprint and effects of juniper removal on the landscape. Funding received for this effort was \$325,000. Due to the nature of this funding, we selected extremely rough terrain with heavy infestations of western juniper. This project was completed in October 2024. In total, 877.3 acres were treated by a combination of cutting by hand crews using chain saws and pulling and piling with an excavator. The Chart below shows the increase of surface flow days in Little Trout Creek over time in conjunction with juniper removal efforts upstream, even when annual rainfall is less than the previous year.



**Little Trout Creek Monitoring Site Data Chart – Days of Surface Flow (2020-2025)**



**Mule Deer Buck - Calf Gulch Drainage Juniper Removal – December 6, 2024**

## **G. Partner: Middle Deschutes Watershed Council**

### **Outreach**

From July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024, to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, MDWC presented at Farm Fair, the Pelton Round Butte Cultural Resources Work Group Annual Meeting, and to the Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners. MDWC provided an update of the Trout Creek CIS (*Hydrologic Restoration for Steelhead in Jefferson County*) for the NRCS Local Work Group meeting. Conferences attended included the Society for Range Management Annual Meeting, CONNECT, and the Watershed Council Gathering. MDWC also attended an OSU Range Field Day in May 2025, to tour the Camp Creek Paired Watershed Study in Crook County.

In Nov 2024, MDWC offered a field trip (pictured) to partners, board members, and community members of Opal Springs on the Crooked River. The tour was led by the Deschutes Valley Water District and included the hydropower facility, fish passage project, and springs. MDWC also invited interested board members to assist in planting riparian species on Campbell Creek to compliment the BDAs in 2023.



MDWC joined JSWCD on tours to assess restoration project potential at the Enchanted Rocks Preserve and Hay Creek Ranch, and in a meeting at Antelope, OR to identify local conservation needs with Wasco SWCD. In fall 2024, MDWC facilitated an on-site visit with the OWEB regional review team to address questions regarding a Technical Assistance proposal for Upper Willow Creek.

### **Restoration Projects**

MDWC coordinated restoration projects through the proposal, implementation, and monitoring stages. These projects support our mission to enhance and protect the natural resources of the Middle Deschutes watershed.

#### **Upper Trout Creek Tributary Rehabilitation**

Completed in fall 2024, this OWEB project restored six tributaries to Trout Creek on the Ochoco National Forest. Jon Kochersberger (USFS) served as the project manager. In 2024, temperature data from all sensors and wildlife utilization trail camera photos were downloaded. Riparian planting of 11,000 plants also occurred on 7.8 miles of tributaries, totaling 49.4 acres. Overall, this project reconnected incised channels with their former floodplains and added large wood to improve the quantity and quality of water and habitat in Upper Trout Creek tributaries.

#### **Foley Meadow Restoration**

In 2024, MDWC received a grant through the TNC/PGE Salmon Habitat Support Fund to restore Foley Meadow, the largest meadow complex in the Trout Creek watershed. Adam Haarberg (JSWCD) is the

Project Manager. Juniper removal and site preparation took place during fall 2024 and spring/summer 2025, paving the way for planting 2,000 willow, cottonwood, and aspen.

National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) – Upper and Lower Trout Creek Watershed Assessment  
Completed in summer 2025, this project is aimed at mitigating juniper encroachment within the Trout Creek watershed to restore ecohydrological functions for the benefit of threatened steelhead. The completed assessment identified 19,110 acres prioritized for juniper removal in 6 subbasins of the Trout Creek watershed. Prioritization was based on 3 factors: 1) landowner readiness, 2) proximity to previously treated areas, and 3) key spawning and rearing tributaries for endangered steelhead.

#### Roberts’ Campbell Creek Watershed Enhancement

MDWC partnered with JSWCD on a SIA Restoration grant to improve upland and riparian conditions on Campbell Creek to compliment the previous Campbell Creek Watershed Enhancement Implementation project. In November 2024, MDWC board members and volunteers partnered with Central Oregon Habitat Solutions to plant 70 trees, including an additional 936 within a newly constructed enclosure.

#### OWEB Small Grants managed by MDWC in 2024/2025:

- Axehandle Ridge Reseeding
- Headwaters Hay Creek Juniper Treatment
- Little Willow Creek Juniper Treatment
- Simmons Juniper Treatment
- Molony Juniper Treatment
- Upper Willow Creek Riparian Planting
- Upper Mud Springs Juniper Treatment- Phase 1

#### Monitoring Program

MDWC supported JSWCD in implementing the PSP program to monitor pesticides of concern in local waterways and led water sample collection during the fall 2024 and spring 2025 sampling seasons. MDWC continued photo-point monitoring of juniper removal, tributary rehabilitation, and BDA projects. JSWCD and MDWC continued to monitor piezometers and temperature loggers in Little Trout Creek and Beaver Creek in the Trout Creek watershed. Since these were installed in 2019 and annual juniper removal began, data show a significant increase in the number of days with surface flow following juniper removal (see chart on page 14). MDWC supports JSWCD in presenting this data in multiple forums. MDWC also participated in the Campbell Creek SIA Ag Water Quality Local Advisory Committee.

#### Education Program

MDWC partnered with Trout Unlimited to support outdoor education for Warm Springs K-8 Academy, and Madras, Buff, and Metolius Elementary schools within the Jefferson County School District. Programming included hands-on field trips on the Deschutes River and Metolius River, and after-school lessons at Warm Springs K-8 and Warm Springs Museum. Education work was supported by grants from the Reser Family Foundation and Gray Family Foundation. Along the way, MDWC and TU partnered with a Native educator when possible and integrated lessons with Indigenous themes connected to fish and water.



## IV. Financial Summary

Statement of Revenues, Expenditures and Changes in Fund Balance Governmental Funds for the year ended June 30, 2025.

<b>Revenues</b>	
Grants	\$867,823
<b>Expenditures</b>	
Soil and Water Conservation Programs	\$1,012,867
<b>Net program revenues</b>	(145,044)
Change in net position	(145,044)
<b>Net position beginning of year</b>	363,570
<b>Net position end of year</b>	<b>\$218,526</b>

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