

DROUGHT

Officials discuss solutions

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is one of several completed and more planned in the group's proposed 20-year action plan. More information is at hoodriverwatershed.org/our-work/water-conservation.

■ Hendrixson is working with local landowners to reduce waste and increase cooling shade in streams. Grants are available — up to \$15,000 — to help with irrigation, manure storage and mud management. Providing simple stream crossings for cattle, for example, is among ways to improve water quality and reduce erosion.

■ If well-users draw down groundwater during the drought, will it also impact river and stream levels, Perkins asked. Studies so far are inconclusive, he said, and need follow-up. Past studies have monitored 60 of the nearly 500 well-users in the county, but more studies need to be made to create accurate models.

■ Drought conditions are already clogging his irrigation pipes, according to

Funds help farmers with drought

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is offering \$41.8 million to help agricultural producers in Oregon, Arizona, California, Colorado with immediate impacts of the historic drought conditions. Fund applications are available as part of the federal Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) through local offices of the Natural Resources Conservation Services.

"As ongoing drought conditions in Oregon continue to worsen, we knew we needed to increase our support to farmers and ranchers in dealing with drought and prepare for the challenges of tomorrow," said Ron Alvarado, NRCS state conservationist in Oregon.

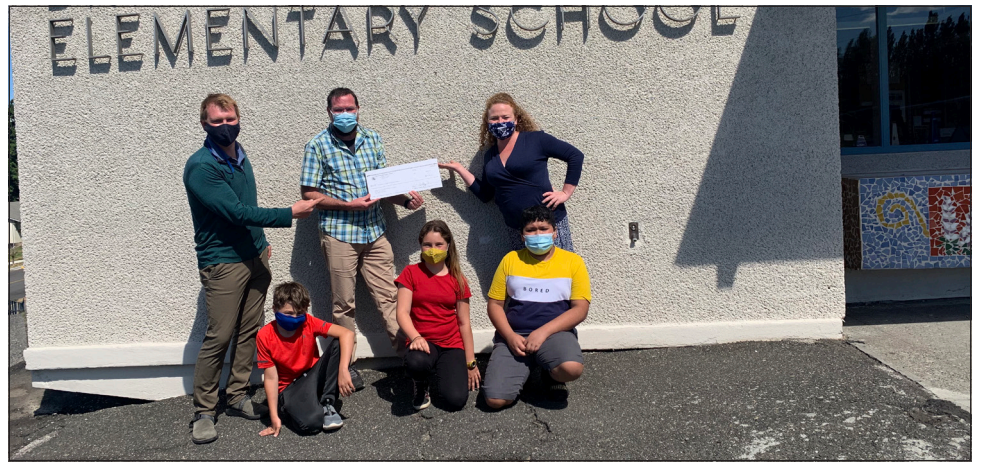
NRCS will set aside \$11.8 million directly for drought-related practices. Practices include forest stand improvement, woody residue treatment, tree and shrub establishment, brush management, prescribed grazing, pasture and hay planting, range planting, livestock watering systems and cover crops.

Gorge-area producers who are interested in this targeted funding can contact USDA Service Center Service Centers in The Dalles, 541-298-8559, and in Parkdale, 541-352-1037. For more information about the Oregon EQIP program, visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/or/programs/financial/eqip.

Oates. "Our water is just too darn dirty," he said. When algae and organic matter from warm and low flows clog the

intake, it is difficult to irrigate with conservation-friendly drip or spray methods.

Trees For Sorosis



Students at Dry Hollow raised \$3,000 to purchase trees at Sorosis Park in The Dalles. Classes competed to raise funds, with the winning class choosing which staff member got to "kiss the pig." The pig, Penelope, was provided by River City Saloon owner Clare Kirkwood. Pictured Left to Right: Dry Hollow Principal Ajay Rundell, Dry Hollow student council treasurer Rivers Kohltfarber, Scott Baker, NWCP district director, Carter Crowe, student council president, Eithan Oseguera, student council class representative, and third grade teacher Emily Stewart. Contributed photo

CHIEF

Worthy familiar with community

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all over the region. The Dalles Area Chamber of Commerce, which represents the business community, is another important relationship to maintain because "public safety is economic development."

It is also important to Worthy to continue the collaborative relationships with community resources such as The Mid-Columbia Center for Living, who in the past has provided guidance and training for officers to safely handle crises concerning mental health, as well as HAVEN, who can provide support in the event of domestic violence.

"We want to make sure that the right resource is attending to the correct problem, and it might not always be law enforcement," he said. "We might be a first responder, but we may not be the ultimate resolution. The officers are very well advised and practiced in contacting mental health [or other] professionals when they need to."

Like the community, Worthy is still getting to

know the department he has recently taken over, but has created goals in a few areas, one being to update the currently used technology.

"I recognize and acknowledge the challenge and expense those projects can bring to an agency, and I also recognize this department could improve in terms of its use of technology in some areas," he said. "Technology moves fast, and we need to keep pace with it. Not because we need new or shiny things, but because of the efficiency and accountability that those tools add for us."

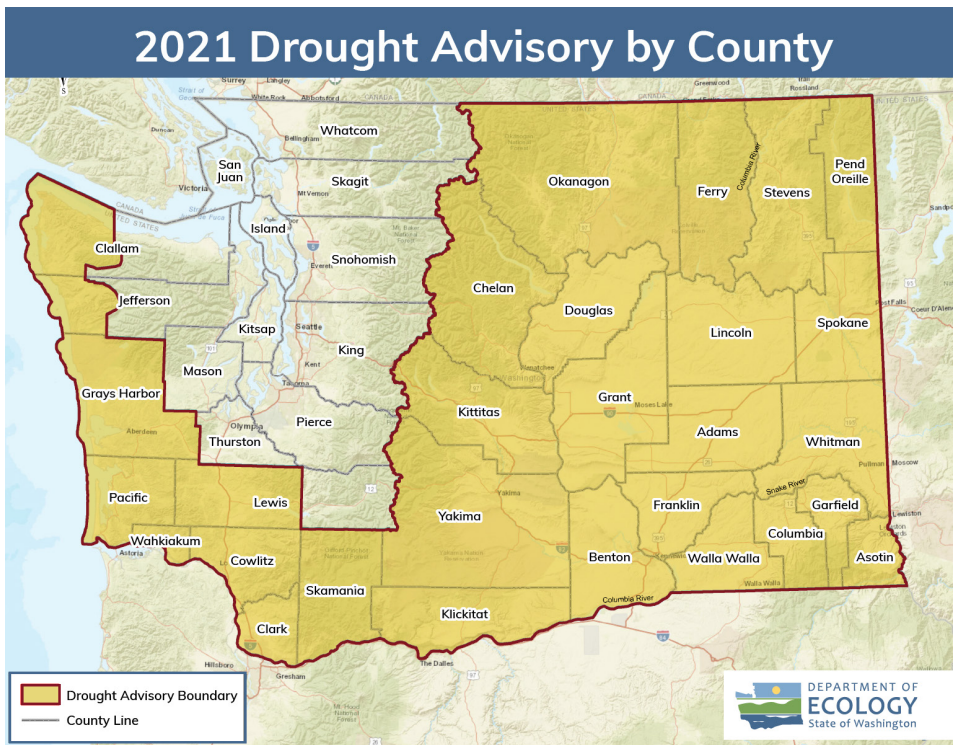
One benefit to installing software such as newer Microsoft Office applications is that officers would be able to implement tools such as voice-to-text, which could save significant time when drafting reports. "It has the potential for returning time to the agency where they can be out in the community keeping it safe, rather than typing out a report which is what we do now," Worthy explained.

Another goal he has in mind is to eventually earn an accreditation for The Dalles Police Department. "I want to ensure that the department is functioning at the absolutely optimal level," Worthy said. "The formalized process ensures that any 'blind spots'

that we (or I) may have are covered. Accredited agencies enjoy less risk than others may and we can demonstrate to our community our commitment to excellence through this process, as well as potential new officer candidates."

To achieve accreditation, the department would need to go through a process in which outside experts evaluate and grade department policies, procedures and work products on several different components. According to Worthy, the process could take up to two years. "I think that we're well poised to achieve accreditation," he said, "but we have to go through the work first, and we have to prove it to the accreditation evaluators, and so we are going to launch that process sometime this fall."

When asked if he had anything he would like to share with his new community, Worthy said that the police department has their back. "We're always here, they can always call us," he said. "With wisdom, and compassion, we are going to serve the community every single day [and] with our community partners — of course we can't do it alone — we want to keep this community as safe as possible every day of the year, no matter what the time."



Klickitat County was among 28 counties included in a Washington Department of Ecology (DOE) drought advisory announcement May 21. DOE graphic

Wash. drought advisory includes Klickitat County

By Jacob Bertram
Columbia Gorge News

The U.S. Drought Monitor, as of Thursday June 8, put the eastern portion of Klickitat County in "extreme drought" conditions, the second highest category of drought severity behind "exceptional" drought. Western parts of the county were measured at "abnormally dry" conditions, to "moderate" and "severe" drought conditions from west to east.

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, April 2021 was the 13th driest April in 127 years of recorded conditions in Klickitat

County, while 2021 has been measured as the 25th driest year in the same time span, suggesting an earlier dry season this year.

On May 21, Klickitat County was among 28 counties included in a Washington Department of Ecology (DOE) drought advisory announcement.

According to the announcement, A drought advisory provides early warning of a possible drought. It promotes awareness and readiness for water users in areas where drought conditions are developing. Drought advisories are informational only, and include

no emergency authorizations or funding. This is the first time the Department of Ecology has issued a drought advisory since it received the authority to do so from the Legislature in 2020.

There are growing concerns for farmers and ranchers in Eastern Washington, according to the DOE announcement. Early observations of crop stress and expectations for reduced yields are being reported, said Water Resources Planner Jeff Marti. Marti said he's already heard anecdotal accounts of problems from wheat farmers and hay producers.

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