

# ASCS Report

During fiscal year 1984 (Oct. 1, 1983 through Sept. 30, 1984) according to Judy Buschke, the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) paid out \$144,223 to Morrow County producers through the Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP). ACP is a cost-share program between the government and the producer to solve conservation problems on agricultural land.

The main objectives of the program are:

- A) To solve the highest priority conservation problems which cause a reduction in the productive capacity of the nation's land and water resources.
- B) To obtain maximum public benefits for public funds expended.
- C) To conserve and protect soil, water, woodland, wildlife, and wildlife habitat which otherwise would not be accomplished.

The highest priority conservation and pollution problems in Morrow County, listed in order of importance are:

1. Loss of soil from erosion on cropland from excessive water and wind.
2. Loss of soil from erosion on rangeland aggravated by inadequate vegetative cover often caused by encroachment of competitive shrubs.
3. Undeveloped, understocked and poorly managed woodlands.
4. Deteriorating water quality in streams due to excessive runoff, streambank erosion, and pollution from livestock wastes.
5. Excessive loss of irrigation water.
6. Shortage of livestock water on grazing areas.

The practices used to earn the \$144,223 this year were:

SL 1 Permanent Vegetative Cover Establishment	\$ 9328
SL 2 Permanent Vegetative Cover Improvement	5440
SL 4 Terrace Systems	27117
SL 6 Spring Development	375
SL 7 Windbreak Establishment	779
WC 1 Water Impoundment Reservoirs	2531
WC 4 Irrigation Water Conservation	6093
WP 3 Sod Waterways	2309
SL14 Reduced Tillage	12188
SL15 No Till	13205
SP10 Streambank Stabilization	3500
	\$82865

Long Term Agreements:

SL 4 Terrace Systems	\$52628
WC 4 Irrigation Water Conservation	3500
FR 2 Forest Tree Stand Improvement	3500
SP35 Water Management Systems for Pollution Control	1730
	\$61358

## SWCD awards Last Straw Ranch as Outstanding Cooperator



Mike Bunch accepts Outstanding Cooperator award for Last Straw

Ranch from Chairman Dick McElligott. Bunch farms with his father Al Bunch.

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## Rancher is good neighbor, conservationist

Terry Thompson believes that every rancher is a conservationist.

He's got to be, or he wouldn't be in business," affirms the cattle and wheat farmer who oversees thousands of acres in the same area around Heppner as did his father and grandfather before him.

Many farmers accept Thompson's conviction, but few apply their principles and invest their cash on their neighbor's land. Thompson does.

Thompson holds a grazing permit on land managed by his neighbor, the Umatilla National Forest. Under the permit, he grazes 360 cattle on

the Ditch Creek Allotment located 25 miles south of Heppner. A small stream, Mallory Creek, crosses the portion of National Forest where Thompson's cattle graze.

Mallory Creek is a wet weather stream which disappears underground in the summer, but continues to nourish lush mountain meadow grasses along its banks. Cattle are naturally drawn to the sweet grasses.

Unlike most stockmen who are pleased to see their cattle flourish wherever they find forage, Thompson became upset last summer when he noticed that his cattle were damaging the creek bank.

"It was trampled, stripped out," Thompson describes the terrain, target area for his one-man reclamation project.

Thompson set about to change these conditions. His primary goal

was to intercept the underground flow of the creek, which is several feet below the streambottom, and return the water to the surface where the flow would benefit the fish. He also wanted to promote wet-growing vegetation unpalatable to livestock which would add to the aquatic habitat and also discourage grazing.

He sought the advice of Earl Fishburn, resource assistant, and Robin Metz, range conservationist, on the Heppner District. They told him about the stream restoration

work being done by John Andrews, fisheries biologist for the Umatilla National Forest.

Relying on the Forest Service specialists for guidance, Thompson rented the necessary heavy equipment, and took the lead on the project.

Work started when he felled a couple of large larch trees which

were then eased into the streambed and embedded four feet deep in selected places along a one-mile section of the stream.

Willows were cut from Thompson's private land and planted along the banks to provide shade and cover for fish. Later the areas were fertilized to hasten growth.

Before the summer was over, the stream had surfaced; pools formed; water flowed. Thompson has the pictures to prove it.

Exciting prospect to Thompson is that there is a possibility that anadromous fish may one day again spawn and thrive in Mallory Creek.

Cost of the weir construction was \$500 per weir, but Thompson figures

that he can cut that cost next time. And he expects there will be a next time.

"It is very, very important that our creeks are left in good shape and that fish habitat is protected," he allows himself to be quoted.

And he's not too concerned about whose creeks, whose land and whose fish are protected.

He's a conservationist.

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