

## History of conservation in Morrow County

Interest in organizing a soil and water conservation district resulted from the Conservation Program which was carried on by the Heppner Soil Conservation Service Civilian Conservation Corp camp on Willow Creek and Hinton Creek project area from 1935 to 1941. When it became apparent that the Department of Agriculture was going to provide its technical assistance and other conservation facilities through organized districts, interested landowners who had benefited from the conservation program of the CCC camp inquired of the SCS officials how they could organize a local soil and water conservation district.

An organization committee was chosen and they started holding educational meetings and circulating petitions. The supervisors held their first meeting on October 29,

1941. Overgrazing of range and decreased hay production were the main reasons for the need of a district.

The Boardman Soil and Water Conservation District was formed with the referendum held on May 5, 1947. Some conservation problems in the district were irrigation water management; poor drainage; wind erosion; weeds and rangeland.

In December of 1972, the Heppner District and Boardman District were combined to become the Morrow Soil and Water Conservation District. A total of 1,321,600 acres are included in the district which conforms to the boundaries of Morrow County.

In 1982 interest developed in reactivating the Morrow County Weed Control District. In 1983 this was accomplished and with limited funds, a weed identification poster was published and distributed. In 1984, with the support of the agricultural organizations and Chamber of Commerce, the county budget passed and funds were received to hire a Weed Supervisor/District

Manager.

The Morrow Soil and Water Conservation District administers the ongoing soil and water conservation programs as they relate to the total resources of the district. In addition to basic soil conservation, the SWCD program provides technical assistance in other areas such as: watershed enhancement; pasture, forage, and range improvements; maintenance of soil fertility; irrigation system design; erosion control; wildlife habitat improvement; and resource inventories.

Your district board of directors is comprised of seven members from throughout the county. Directors are elected through a vote of the county's eligible voters on a non partisan ballot at the general election for staggered four year terms.

The Morrow Soil and Water Conservation District has a program to offer every landowner. When you need assistance or have questions call your nearest director or the SWCD office in Heppner.

## Accomplishments

CRP assistance was provided for drill calibrating grass seed varieties and monitoring weeds.

Weed control program continues to be a priority.

A 5 year plan was written to reflect current needs and priorities. A annual work plan is developed each fiscal year.

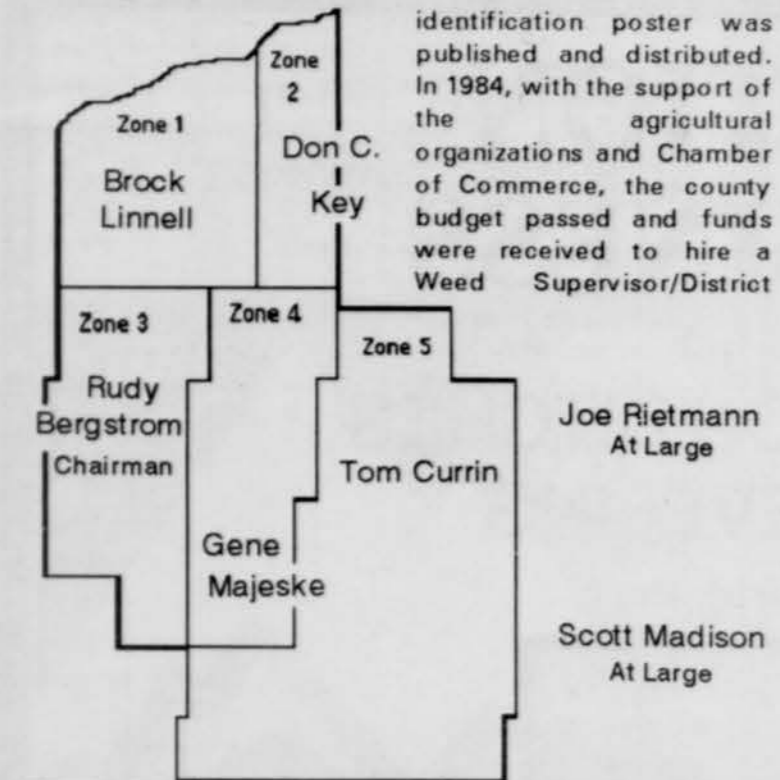
A budget was prepared.

Previously completed grants continue to be monitored.

Watershed planning grant was received in association with Gilliam and Wheeler County. Planner was hired and planning process has begun.

A riparian area was begun on Willow Creek at Hager Park.

Programs to promote Soil & Water Conservation through education, including, soil stewardship, town and country week, Arbor Day, Goodyear contest, Morrow County Fair, 5th grade tree give away and teachers workshop.



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## MORROW



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# 1990 ANNUAL REPORT

Supplement to the Heppner Gazette-Times, Jan. 9, 1991

## Rea family Conservation farm of 1990

The Keith Rea family has been selected as the Morrow SWCD 1990 Outstanding Cooperator. The Rea farm is located eight miles south of lone and they have been practicing conservation since 1960. They have raised four boys on the farm in addition to their crops. Two of their children are in college and two are married. The Rea's have four grandchildren. The Rea farm receives 10 to 12 inches of rainfall a year, is in an area which traditionally has a crop/fallow rotation. It consists of mostly Ritzville silt loams, with some Mikalo silt loam soils as well. The chief erosion concern has been runoff during the winter, especially on frozen soils. Keith has converted the entire farm to a double summer fallow system. Of the 4500 acres of cropland on the farm, 1500 are in the Conservation Reserve Program, 200 are lying fallow, and 1000 are producing wheat each year.

In order to reduce soil erosion Keith has implemented a variety of practices. He leaves as much residue as possible (trashy fallow), and seeds very early, not later than September 15. He also has 4.3 miles in grass waterways and 6.2 miles of terraces in place. His conservation plan is unique in that it specifies a combination of residue and green cover. The farmhouse is protected by a

windbreak planted in 1958, demonstrating a long standing association with the Soil & Water Conservation District.

The heart of the farm is the Howton ranch, 2000 acres of cropland and 300 acres of pasture. Keith began working for his father-in law in 1960. The Nolan place (1400 acres of cropland and 400 acres pasture) was included in 1965, and the Roberts ranch (1200 acres of cropland) was included in 1968. Keith has been farming the entire farm since 1970.

The Reas are an active family in the community as well. Longtime members of the lone United Church of Christ, they also belong to Willows Grange in lone. Keith is a member of the Morrow County School District Transportation Committee, the Morrow County Grain Growers Board and the Oregon Wheat Grower's League. Judy was chairman this year of the lone Church Auction, belongs to the lone Community Agricultural Business Organization and is a member of the Willow Creek Parks Board.

The Rea family is conservation minded and is practicing farming for the future. They are community minded as well, helping lone and Morrow County to be the excellent town and county they are.



Keith and Judy Rea, Outstanding Cooperators

## Morrow Soil and Water Conservation District

### 19th Annual Meeting

Friday, January 18, 1991

Heppner Elks Lodge

- 10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. WELCOME & INTRODUCTION - Rudy Bergstrom  
Financial Report - Don C. Key  
Outstanding Cooperator - Joe Rietmann  
SWCD Manager Report - Jerry Anderson
- 10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Tim Keith - Service Forester with the Oregon Department of Forestry, will discuss forest management from the State's perspective.
- 11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Arleigh Isley - Extension Agent in Wallowa County, will talk about how to be a conservationist in the forest environment while still earning a living.
- 11:30 a.m. - 11:50 a.m. QUESTION & ANSWER PERIOD
- 11:50 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. CLOSING REMARKS - Rudy Bergstrom