

Upland gamebirds-Cooperative

Access Program

In 1994, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) developed the Upland Cooperative Access program (UCAP). The program was de-

Morrow County weed district tidbits

Skeletonweed on the move: several new sites of Rush skeletonweed were found in 1996. A couple of these sites were much further south in Morrow County than those that had been treated in previous years. While the number of plants treated this past year was about the same as in the past years, the fact that this weed's range has extended further south should be cause for concern to dryland wheat farmers. Rush skeletonweed has been documented to reduce wheat yields by as much as 70% in Australia and can be very difficult to control if left undetected for several years. It is very important for farmers and ranchers to be on the lookout for and identify any plants that they do not recognize.

Puncturevine project started in North Morrow County: due to increased concern over the spread of puncturevine in Irrigon and Boardman, the weed control district started working with the cities and the West Extension Irrigation District to control puncturevine along city streets and along the canal road. Improvement was noted in 1996, but more work still needs to be done. Homeowners can help by controlling this weed in driveway and parking areas and reporting any areas that are especially bad along public rights-of-way. Homeowners needing information about how to best control puncturevine can contact the weed control district for more information.

Check CRP fields for noxious weeds: with the expiration of CRP contracts upon us, landowners need to be surveying their fields for noxious weeds so they can be treated and controlled before they are returned to growing wheat. It is evident that some CRP fields have not been maintained to contract standards when it comes to weed control. For this reason, the weed control district has started working with the Farm Services Agency and is doing random spot checks for noxious weeds. Those found out of compliance may face penalties if the weeds are left uncontrolled. If desired, landowners may also request the weed district to assist them with their own field surveys and weed identification.

signed to provide hunter access to private lands in Eastern Oregon to hunt upland gamebirds. During the first year of the program, approximately 22,000 acres of private land were made available for public hunting. In 1995, additional properties were added and in 1996, a total of 52,900 acres were open to public hunting of upland gamebirds.

Under the rules of the UCAP, ODFW signs agreements with the landowners, provides signs, closes roads as requested by the landowners and patrols the properties during the upland gamebird seasons. Landowners are reimbursed at a rate of .50/acre for suitable upland gamebird hunting areas and have an option to use a "Hunting by Permission" or "Welcome to Hunt" format for their properties. Funding for the .50/acre reimbursement comes from a portion of the Upland gamebird stamp revenues earmarked for access.

To prevent overuse and overcrowding of the areas, landowner names and maps of the areas are not given out. Hunters need to locate the hunting areas and if the hunter is required to obtain permission to hunt, the landowner's name is listed on the hunting by permission signs.

Alternative Crops Program at annual meeting

The Morrow SWCD held its 1996 Annual Meeting on Wednesday, January 15, 1997, in conjunction with Town & Country Day. Program speakers for the meeting were Jake Eaton, Potlach Corporation and Don Wysocki, Oregon State University (OSU) Extension, Agriculture Research Service.

Eaton spoke about poplars as an alternative crop for the Northwest area and specifically the plantation near Boardman. Because of the Endangered Species Act and dwindling numbers of lumber mills, supplies of wood shavings and sawdust, needed by the pulp and paper industry, were becoming more scarce. Poplars were the logical choice, because the genetic material was available for trees adapted to the region and poplars produce bright wood that needs less bleaching and short fibers that help give paperboard strength.

Wysocki, OSU Extension, reported on a breeding program for a late planted, winter canola variety. This breeding program is being financed in part by contributions from Morrow, Gilliam and Umatilla counties and also through a grant from Regional Strategies, Northcentral Regional Strategies and Northeast Alliance Regional Strategies Boards. A plant breeder from Idaho has been contracted with to develop canola varieties to

provide diversification of crops, improve disease control for wheat planted in a canola rotation and improve the feasibility of a canola oil processing plant for the area. An agreement has been drawn up between Oregon State University and the Oregon Economic Development Department through the North-



east Alliance Regional Strategies Board. The canola project was sponsored by the Columbia Blue Mountain Resource Conservation and Development Area which includes county courts, ports and Soil and Water Conservation Districts in Morrow, Gilliam, Wheeler, Grant and Umatilla counties.



Jake Eaton, Potlach Corp.



Don Wysocki, OSU Extension

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Raymond French.....Commissioner
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WEB funds aid watershed projects

A watershed improvement project was completed this year on the Bernard Damon property. The project included riparian fencing, plantings, weed control and livestock water system improvements.

PVC pipe was installed from springs to livestock watering troughs built by the Civilian Conservation Corp. Trough overflow was piped to the riparian area for improved wildlife areas. The riparian areas were fenced to protect the improved spring and prevent damage by cattle.

Chemical and biological weed control will be used to encourage the natural encroachment of native grasses for increased forage production for livestock and upland game.

The Damon project is a cooperative effort between the Morrow SWCD, NRCS, ODF&W, the landowner and the lessee. The project is also part of a Coordinated Resource Management Plan (CRMP).

McDowell joins the SWCD staff

There is a new face in the Morrow SWCD office. Merilee McDowell joined the district staff in late September as office manager. Merilee replaces Theresa Pihl who accepted a full time teaching position with Blue Mountain Community College. Merilee will take over responsibility of the district's Education Partnership with county schools, as well as administration of the SWCD office and assistance to the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Merilee's husband, Bill, is employed by Columbia Basin Electric Co-op. as a foreman. Their daughter, Danielle, is an eighth grader at Heppner Jr./Sr. High School.

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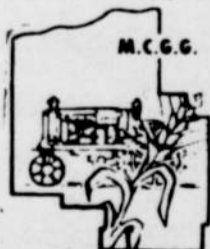
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