

Soil Conservation Unit Marks 10th Anniversary

By DON BALDWIN

From a rather quiet start 10 years ago the Klamath Soil Conservation District has developed to its present size and stature. Originally it was a rather small district covering the Midland and Spring Lake areas, organized by the landowners to provide technical assistance in drainage, land leveling and irrigation improvement, soil management, pasture improvement, etc. In 1954 after a successful election the rest of the agricultural land in the southwestern part of Klamath County was added to the district. With the addition of the new area many new types of service had to be added such as range management, forestry (both timber and Christmas tree production), wildlife management and others.

The main function of the Klamath Soil Conservation District has been to obtain and provide assistance to farmers and ranchers in conserving their soil and water. The district is managed by a board of supervisors elected by the landowners. They have no power to levy taxes, or charge for any technical assistance provided by the government. The present board of supervisors is made up of seven farmers and ranchers, Leon Andrieu, chairman; Jim Flowers, vice chairman; John Kerns, Myron Taylor, Bob Embree, Bob Petrick and Phil Blohm, secretary. Myron Taylor has been a supervisor since the district was organized. The board of supervisors meets the first Monday of each month at supervisors' homes and any interested person is invited to attend.

One of the first acts of the Board of Supervisors was to enter into a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to obtain assistance. Under this agreement a staff of conservation technicians from the Soil Conservation Service was assigned to the district and has been maintained ever since. Other agencies of the

U.S. Department of Agriculture have also provided assistance to the district. The Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Committee (the old AAA and later PMA) has paid half the cost of hundreds of conservation jobs. The Farmers Home Administration has lent money to farmers to improve their places. Government agencies from other departments, such as the Bureau of Reclamation have also helped.

State agencies also have cooperated. The State Soil Conservation Commission helped to organize the district and has continued to provide guidance to the board of supervisors. Oregon State College through both the Extension Ser-

THE COVER

Bob Lynn, Keno district rancher, is shown in this picture in the middle of a field of meadow foxtail seeded on his place for range. The picture was taken by Don Baldwin of the Klamath Soil Conservation District, who also helped out with much of the work on the Lynn place.

vice and the Klamath Branch Experiment Station has given technical and educational help and also research work on soil fertility and other problems.

The most noticeable work done in the district has been the land leveling and drainage work. This type of work has been seen by almost everyone in the Klamath Basin at one time or another. Soil Conservation Service Engineers have helped district cooperators level over 15,700 acres of land. They have also helped farmers construct over 55 miles of drain ditches. These drains have improved drainage on approximately 9,400 acres.

Several thousand acres have been seeded to improved pastures.

Several new grasses have been introduced to the area by the district. Grasses such as Topar Pubescent Wheatgrass, Greenar Intermediate Wheatgrass, Alkar Tall Wheatgrass, Manchur Smooth Brome and creeping Meadow Foxtail were developed at the Soil Conservation Service Plant Materials Center at Pullman, Washington and then sent to Soil Conservation Districts such as this one for conservation seedings.

To help get money to meet some operating expenses the district in 1950 purchased a Brillion grass seeder. This implement is rented out to farmers for a nominal fee to seed pastures and hay fields. In 1956 the Soil Conservation Service gave the district a 4 yard dump truck, which is also available to farmers and ranchers for conservation work.

Any farmer or rancher in the district can get help by merely asking for it from either a supervisor or direct from the Soil Conservation Service office on the third floor of the Post Office in Klamath Falls.

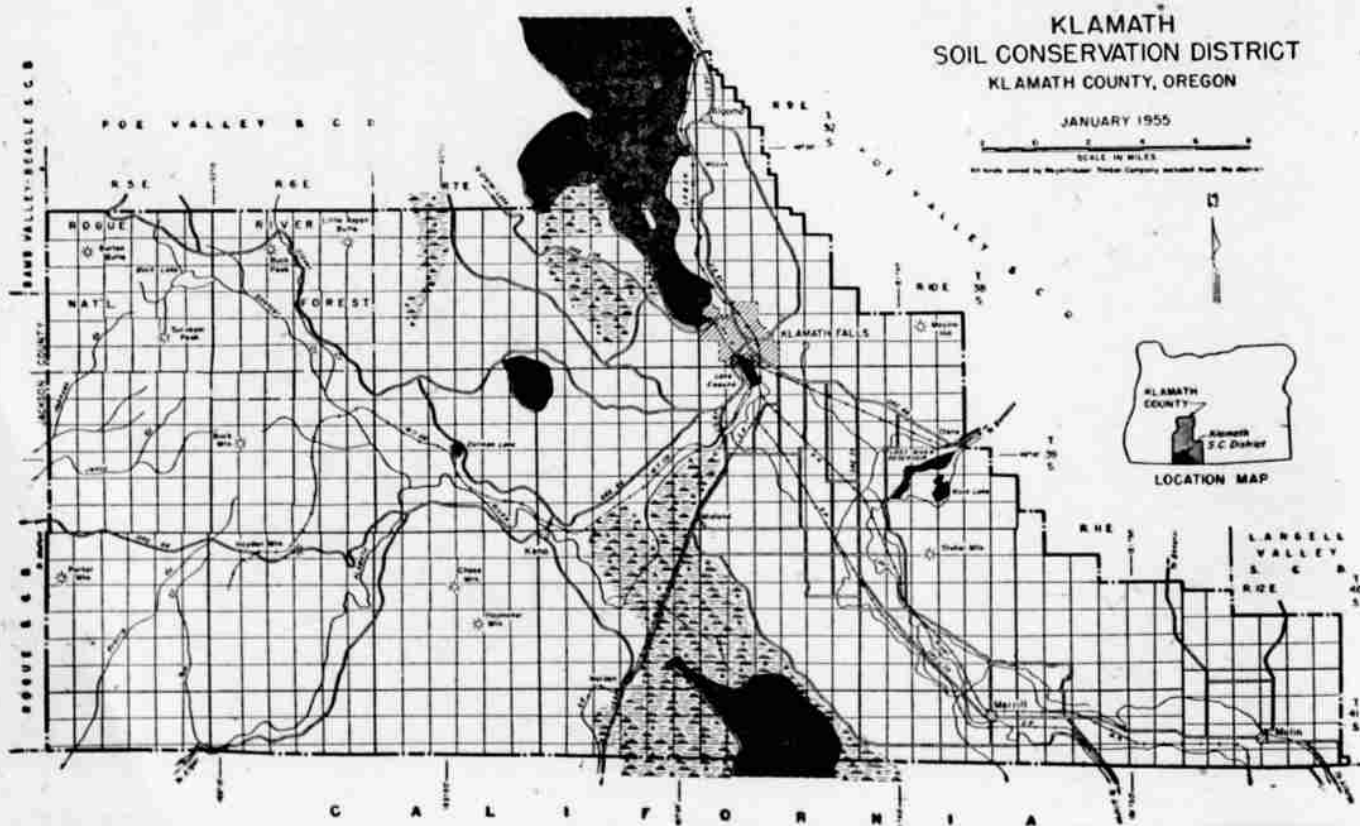
The district also furnishes assistance to groups of farmers when a problem involves more than one landowner. At the present time planning work is being done on an overall drainage program for the Shasta View Irrigation District. Another group drainage project is being planned in the Midland area.

Each year more farmers and ranchers have taken advantage of the help offered by the Klamath Soil Conservation District. In 1958, over 200 people were given assistance. Many others received benefits indirectly. Conservation work done in the past has materially increased the value and earning of a lot of farms. Last year over \$200,000 was spent on conservation work. This work will all pay for itself. Needless to say, it is big business and many people on the farms and in towns are benefiting.



THIS AREA NORTHWEST OF MALIN in the Klamath Soil Conservation District has been leveled and a strip border system of flood irrigation installed for maximum control of water. Good water control such as this conserves water and prevents accumulation of alkali salts in the soil.

—Photo by R. A. Johnson



A LOT OF PROGRESS has been shown over the past 10 years by the Klamath Soil Conservation District. From a small start the organization has spread to cover the area pictured above. Much credit is due the staff

and members for their efforts in providing better farm and ranch lands for the Klamath Basin.