

Business Notes

Now is time to apply for state Conservation grant

Applications for Oregon Conservation Strategy Implementation Grants will be accepted by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) from May 1 through June 15, 2007. To be eligible for a grant, proposed projects must focus on actions that benefit species and habitats as outlined in the Oregon Conservation Strategy. Application materials are available on the Conservation Strategy section of the ODFW web site.

Approximately \$400,000 is available through the federal State Wildlife Grants (SWG) program. Individual grants will be awarded in amounts between \$10,000 and \$50,000. Private non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and state and local agencies may apply. Federal agencies are not eligible.

For information on the grant application process, contact: Peg Boulay, ODFW conservation strategy coordinator, 503-947-6316; Audrey Hatch, ODFW conservation strategy monitoring coordinator, 541-757-4263 ext. 242; or Jim Gores, ODFW invasive species

coordinator, 503-947-6308.

State Wildlife Grants were created by Congress to provide a proactive approach to conservation, with the intent of preventing species from declining to the point of qualifying as threatened or endangered. The Oregon Conservation Strategy grew from congressional requirements to ensure that State Wildlife Grants were spent in a prioritized, strategic manner to increase effectiveness and efficiency of conservation efforts.

The Oregon Conservation Strategy creates a broad vision for long-term conservation of Oregon's native fish and wildlife. It identifies how all Oregonians can become involved through a non-regulatory, proactive, statewide approach to conservation. With ODFW's leadership, the Conservation Strategy is currently being implemented by a wide range of landowners, biologists, conservationists, agency personnel, hunters, anglers and other interested citizens. For information on the Oregon Conservation Strategy, visit <www.dfw.state.or.us/conservationstrategy/>.

FSA farm loans available for specially targeted population

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) has specially-targeted farm loans available

Jobless rate is static in Columbia County

Columbia County's seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate was essentially unchanged at 5.6 percent in March and about the same as the year before (5.5%). The rate was little different from the statewide rate (5.2%) but higher than the national rate (4.4%). Total employment edged up by 93 from February to 22,687 and the number of unemployed people dropped by 137 to 1,457. Total employment this March was 607 more than one year before but 82 more people were unemployed.

for Socially Disadvantaged Applicants. These loan programs are designed to help farmers purchase and operate family farms.

Socially Disadvantaged Applicants are defined as a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice. For purposes of this program, the groups considered are women, African Americans, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, and Asians and Pacific islanders.

Applications for all FSA direct loan programs are made through FSA's Washington County office at 1080 SW Baseline, Suite B-3, Hillsboro. Additional information is available by calling 503-648-3174, ext. 2, or by email to Nancy.Thompson@or.usda.gov.

Watch test of vote counting equipment May 8th

The public certification test of Columbia County's vote counting equipment will be on Tuesday, May 8, for the May 15, special election.

Testing will begin at 10:00 a.m. in the county Elections

Department at the courthouse in St. Helens.

Ballot drop sites for area voters who do not mail their ballots will be as follows:

- Vernonia Library during regular hours, plus extended

hours on May 15, from noon to 8:00 p.m.

- Mist-Birkenfeld Rural Fire District office during regular office hours. Hours for May 15 will be noon to 8:00 p.m.

A GRAND Opening Celebration!

WHEN:
Friday, May 18, 2007

WHERE:
1010 Bridge Street, Vernonia

WHAT:
Ribbon Cutting, Prizes and Hourly
Cash Drawings including a \$500
Grand Prize

**EVERYONE IN VERNONIA IS WELCOME!
DON'T MISS THE CELEBRATION AT
YOUR NEW VERNONIA BRANCH.**



Wauna Federal Credit Union

Your hometown financial solution

800.773.3236	www.waunafcu.org			
Astoria 325.1044	Clatskanie 728.4321	St Helens 366.1334	Vernonia 429.8031	Warrenton 861.7526


