

CONSERVATION CONNECTION

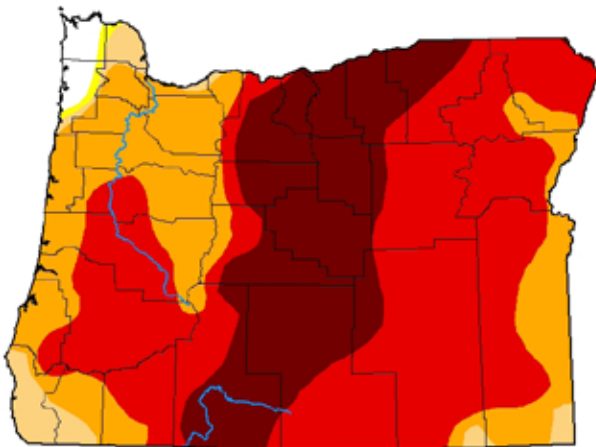
Wheeler SWCD Annual Meeting returns in person December 8th in Spray

The Wheeler Soil & Water Conservation District's annual meeting and dinner will be held at 6:00 pm, December 8, 2021 at the Spray Grange Hall.

Join us as we hear about Pacific Northwest and Oregon Drought from Oregon State University Associate Professor Larry O'Neill and about the AgriMet Weather Network from Jama Hamel, AgriMet Program Coordinator with the US Bureau of Reclamation. In addition to the speakers, there will be photos and displays of District projects, the annual report and audit will be presented, and staff can answer your questions about future projects you may want to do on your property.

U.S. Drought Monitor Oregon

November 9, 2021
 (Released Thursday, Nov. 11, 2021)
 Valid 7 a.m. EST



Intensity:
 None
 D0 Abnormally Dry
 D1 Moderate Drought
 D2 Severe Drought
 D3 Extreme Drought
 D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author:
 Curtis Riganti
 National Drought Mitigation Center



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

Please RSVP as soon as possible (deadline is December 2nd). There is limited seating at this very popular dinner meeting so don't wait! This delicious prime rib dinner with all the trimmings is \$20 per person. Please plan to arrive early as the event begins promptly at 6:00 pm. You must be in attendance to receive a dinner.

This is a wonderful time to meet with other landowners, district staff and directors, and to learn about Wheeler SWCD's and the Mid John Day-Bridge Creek Watershed Council's activities.

RSVP by email: Administration@wheelerswcd.org or call 541/468-2990



Statewide Pesticide Applicator Training

Oregon State University's Pesticide Safety Education Program are offering 12 upcoming webinars that cover a variety of topics this season. Due to the COVID-19 status in Oregon all events will again be delivered as seminars that can be viewed in the comfort of your home or office. More information on the course contents, dates, times, and how to register can be found on the website:

<https://agsci.oregonstate.edu/psep/recertification/live-webinar-courses>



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“B” Rated Weeds

A weed of economic importance which is regionally abundant,
but may have limited distribution in some counties

Tree-of-heaven
Ailanthus altissima

Other common names:

USDA symbol: AIAL
ODA rating: B



Introduction: Tree-of-heaven is native to China. Many of the west coast populations were the result of Chinese laborers importing and growing the plant for use in herbal medicine. It forms thickets utilizing creeping roots that are difficult to remove or control.

Distribution in Oregon: The first documented site of Tree-of-heaven in Oregon was in 1904 in Wasco County. Currently it is scattered throughout western Oregon, mostly escaped from urban plantings. It is very abundant along the Columbia River and populations are also expanding along the pools of the Snake River Dams at Brownlee and Hells Canyon.

Description: Tree-of-Heaven can reach a height of 25 to 50 feet. The leaves are often mistaken for sumac, with prominent leaf scars on the bark remaining when they are detached from the stem in the fall. The flowers are small, yellowish to reddish in color, and have five petals. Tree-of-heaven has a rank odor, similar to foul smelling peanuts.

Impacts: Tree-of-heaven creates problems in natural systems by forming large thickets via root suckering. Riparian areas are especially affected. Western Oregon populations invade road rights-of-way, parks, and private property. Its growth outpaces many native trees, which reduces the biodiversity of important habitats. Lateral rooting can push up pavement and sidewalks and has been noted to ruin septic tank drain fields in its search for moisture. It produces large numbers of seeds and vigorously resprouts after cutting, making control difficult. Herbicide applications while the tree is leafed out have been minimally successful.

Biological controls: Biological control is not yet available for tree-of-heaven, but researchers are seeking approval for the release of the weevil *Eucryptorhynchus brandti*.



Oregon Department of Agriculture • Noxious Weed Control Program
635 Capitol Street NE • Salem, OR 97301 • 503-986-4621
www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/Weeds/Pages/Default.aspx

Photos by Eric Coombs, ODA

Wheeler SWCD welcomes new staff

Please welcome Wheeler Soil and Water Conservation District's newest staff members.

Randy Williams was hired as the District Manager in June. Randy has over 35 years' experience with natural resource management and served previously as Executive Director of Teton Conservation District in Wyoming, as a County Planner, and as an environmental specialist for native American tribes. He has served as a technical advisor to develop the University of Wyoming Collaboration in Natural Resources training series, as an executive member to represent Wyoming counties and conservation districts in National Forest Management Planning, as a core member of regional Biomass Utilization Groups, and was appointed to the Wyoming Carbon Sequestration Task Force. His extensive fisheries, watershed management and water quality monitoring, grazing allotment management, and federal land management multiple use analysis has included intensive work with 12 National Forests and a number of

BLM Districts. Randy and his wife Denise are parents of five sons and eight grandchildren. He is an avid hunter and loves fishing and camping with his family and friends as well.

Daniel Goodell is a Conservation Technician I for Wheeler SWCD, and started in mid-August. Daniel grew up in Klamath Falls before attending Butte College for two years followed by Oregon State University where he earned a bachelor's degree in Agriculture Business Management in 2019. After college he worked as the Yard Manager for Intermountain Livestock in La Grande. Recently married, Daniel and his wife, Sarah, moved to Spray to pursue a career in agriculture and conservation. Daniel and Sarah manage the Corncob Ranch just north of Spray. In his free time, Daniel enjoys fishing and leather work with his wife.

Both staff members can be reached at the Wheeler SWCD office by calling 541 468-2990.



Mid John Day-Bridge Creek WC Awarded Restoration Grant

(Salem) – The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) awarded \$91,101 to Mid John Day-Bridge Creek Watershed Council for a restoration project at their October 2020 Board meeting. The awards are three of 61 grants totaling \$9,284,183 provided to local organizations statewide to support fish and wildlife habitat and water quality projects.

Mid John Day-Bridge Creek Watershed Council's Middle Alder Creek Watershed Improvement 1 will remove over 339 acres of western juniper upslope of Alder Creek, improve grassland habitat by treating noxious weeds and reseeding, and develop five off channel water sources for both wildlife and livestock use. The increase of western juniper has created a decline in desirable shrubs and herbaceous vegetation in the watershed. Decreased infiltration and increased runoff reduce water quantity and quality during critical times of the year. Partners on this project include OWEB, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Mid John Day-Bridge Creek Watershed Council and two private landowners in the watershed.

Funding for grants awarded by the OWEB Board comes from



three primary sources – the Oregon Lottery, Salmon License Plate revenues, and Federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery funds provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.





Wheeler Soil & Water Conservation District
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UPCOMING EVENTS & MEETINGS

12/1	5 pm	Mid John Day-Bridge Creek Watershed Council Meeting, Spray Grange Hall
12/7	10 am	John Day Basin Partnership. Virtual Meeting
12/8	6 pm	Wheeler SWCD Annual Meeting and Dinner, Spray Grange Hall
12/21	10 am	Lower John Day Working Group Place Based Planning, Virtual Meeting
1/27	6 pm	Wheeler SWCD Board Meeting

*Everyone is welcome to attend these events. For more information please contact
Debra Bunch, Watershed Coordinator*

541/468-2990 or midjohndaywc@wheelerswcd.org.