

Water Quality/SWCD Program Updates

*Soil and Water Conservation Commission Meeting
August 25, 2021*



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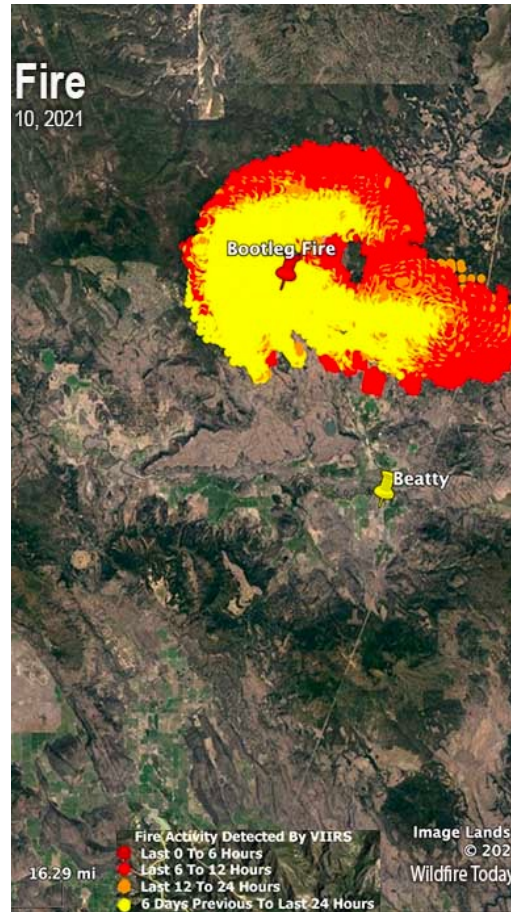
Topics

- Legislature/Budget
- TMDL Reporting
- Focus Area Update
- ODA Reopening



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External Influences & Awareness



- Pandemic creating uncertainty
- Fire season effects
 - Bootleg fire overlapped Sprague SIAs
- Extreme drought conditions

Staff are working to be aware of landowner challenges, adjust accordingly

Legislature/Budget Highlights

- Passed Ag Channel phased rollout (HB 2032)
- Maintained monitoring \$\$
- Maintained, even gained positions



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Phased Ag Channel Rollout (HB 2032)



- Authorized regional rollout
- Will require rulemaking (specify regions, timing)
- Reconvene previous ACDM RAC
- Plan details TBD

New Ag Channel Specialist Interviews
soon!



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Ag Channel Program: We need your help!



- Only 1 notice received!
- OSU Study: Need more landowners

Please help us promote this program and study!

See:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oda/programs/NaturalResources/Pages/AgChannelMaintenance.aspx>



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Soil Health Position



- Thank you Cory Owens at NRCS!
- Funding documents under review
- Position Description drafted and shared



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Climate Change



- 23-25 Policy Option Package ideas?
 - Climate change specialist?
 - Climate change plan?
- Feedback?
- Note: OWEB hiring a water and climate policy coordinator, would coordinate closely



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Legislative Budget for WQ / SWCD

Kept (=)/Gained (+)	Position/Funding	Description
Water Quality		
=	Funding	ODA Local Partner Monitoring \$\$
=	Funding	Ambient WQM on ag lands w/ DEQ
=	Funding	Klamath Lake water quality monitoring \$\$
=	2 x WQ Positions	Regional Water Quality Specialists
+	1 x WQ Position	SIA Capacity
+	Funding	\$650k SIA Capacity (Tech Asst)
SWCD		
=	1 X SWCD Position	SWCD Support Capacity

Bottom Line: Hiring 3 X WQ Positions, 1 x SWCD position, \$650k SIA Services

SIA POP Summary

- 1 X Position
 - Bottom line: “...do more small watershed work each year.”
 - Position functions:
 - Track contract implementation
 - Conduct compliance assistance work
 - Assist with applying for grant resources to support on the ground restoration work
- \$650k Services
 - \$\$ for local partners
 - Regional tech asst support to landowners



Time for your input: Priorities for new staff, \$\$

Water Quality

- 2 X Positions
 - Where?
 - Priorities?
- 1 X SIA Position
 - Where?
 - Priorities?
- \$650k Tech Asst?

- Southern Oregon?
- Willamette Valley?
- Cannabis?
- Complaint response?
- Customer support?
- TMDL/GWMAs?
- Focus Areas?
- Compliance?
- SIA education/outreach?
- Other?

SWCD (1 X

- Staff/program mgt?
- Policy? (climate, fire, etc.)
- Training?
- Education?
- Grant admin?
- Landowner incentives?
- Other?



DEQ TMDL Reporting (Total Maximum Daily Loads)



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Why should I care?

- TMDL = DEQ tool for water quality (WQ) concerns
- ODA = WQ lead on ag lands (TMDL role w/DEQ)
- SWCD = Lead on WQ TA, education, outreach

SWCDs + ODA + TMDL implementation = Clean Water from Oregon's ag lands!



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ODA Contacts:
Cheryl Hummon (NW Oregon RWQS)
Ellen Hammond (Monitoring Lead)

Willamette Mercury TMDL:

- Final TMDL issued by EPA in Feb. 2021
- Next step: Implementation plan (18 months)

Opportunity:

- NOTE: No change in rules
- Focus
 - Erosion/sediment control actions
 - Improved reporting
- Over time - expand basins, parameters, and tools

Focus Area Update



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Focus Areas

ODA Contact:
Cheryl Hummon (NW Oregon RWQS)

2013-2019:

- All 45 SWCDs; voluntary approach
- Challenges: Admin workload, COVID, new initiative (SIAs)
- Adaptive mgt: March SWCC, SWCD input

2021 – 2023:

- Now optional
- 17 SWCDs have 18 Focus Areas
- SWCDs developing measurable objectives



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ODA Reopening?

- Reopening date postponed (not 9/1)

...But

- ODA has option to attend in-person events
 - We will wear masks
 - Staff empowered to not attend in-person (choice)
 - Remote attendance options appreciated
- Just ask ODA staff about
 - Meeting attendance
 - Training, education

Be safe
out
there!



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Questions?

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