



JACKSON SOIL AND WATER  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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# ANNUAL REPORT

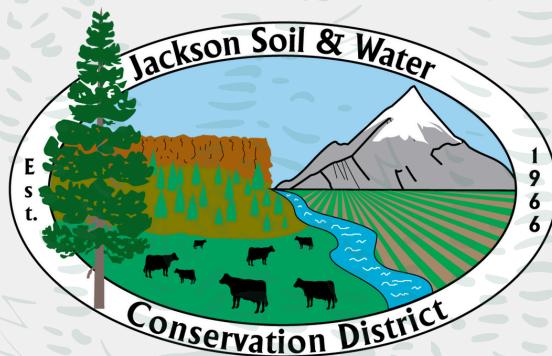
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2023-2024

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# “TURNING NATURAL RESOURCE CONCERNS INTO OPPORTUNITIES”

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# WELCOME

2023-2024 was another year of growth and increasing impact for Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District. Thanks to the dedication and expertise of our staff, we successfully leveraged our local tax base to secure over \$7 million in additional state and federal funding. These resources will be critical in implementing on-the-ground conservation projects across Jackson County over the next five years, benefiting both our local communities and natural landscapes. This success also allowed us to add a new staff member, Michael Skandalis, who will help elevate our forest resiliency projects—an area of growing importance.

In this annual report, you will find examples that highlight the breadth and depth of JSWCD's impact across the county. These accomplishments would not have been possible without the valuable contributions of our partners and clients, whose collaboration is essential to implementing effective conservation practices. Together, we are improving the health of the region's soil, water, and ecosystems, with the long-term goal of creating a more resilient and sustainable future for all. Thank you for your continued support and commitment to conservation.



Sincerely,  
Jill Smedstad  
JSWCD Executive Director

*The mission of Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District is to conserve, protect, and enhance natural resources for the economic, environmental, and quality of life benefits for the residents of Jackson County.*

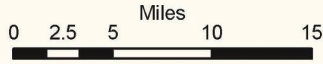
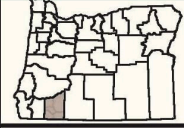
# Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District

Jackson County, Oregon  
1:470,000



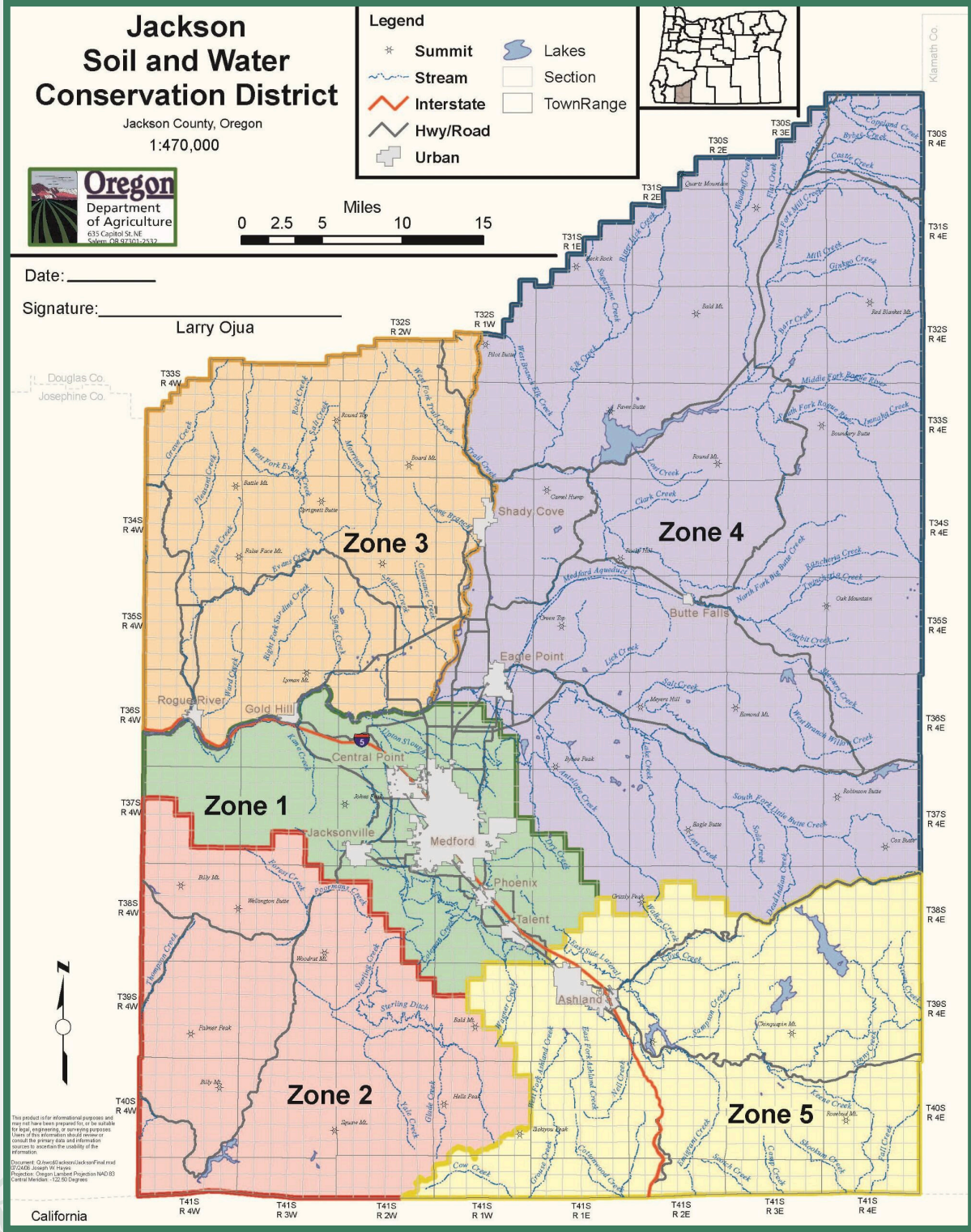
## Legend

- \* Summit
- Stream
- Interstate
- Hwy/Road
- Urban
- Lakes
- Section
- Town/Range



Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Larry Ojua

Douglas Co.  
Josephine Co.



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Disclaimer: Oregon Soil and Water Conservation Districts  
Projection: Oregon Lambert Projection NAD83  
Central Meridian: -122.50 Degrees

California

Klamath Co.

# WHO WE ARE

## BOARD

### ZONE 1

FRANK BARATTA

### AT-LARGE, CHAIR

STAN DEAN

### ZONE 2, VICE-CHAIR

BARBARA NIEDERMEYER

### AT-LARGE

KATELYN DETWEILER

### ZONE 3

MAXINE CASS

### ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

PAM HILLERS

### ZONE 4

DON HAMANN

### DIRECTOR EMERITUS

JUANITA WRIGHT

### ZONE 5, TREASURER

RON HILLERS

### DIRECTOR EMERITUS

NICKY WEBB-SMITH



## STAFF

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

JILL SMEDSTAD

### FOREST RESOURCE CONSERVATIONIST

MEGHAN MONTGOMERY

### BUSINESS MANAGER

TREVOR MORRIS

### FOREST CONSERVATION TECHNICIAN

MICHAL SKANDALIS\*

### OFFICE ASSISTANT

KIM INGRAM

### AGRICULTURAL RESOURCE

CONSERVATIONIST

JOSH BILBAO

### WATER RESOURCES ENGINEER

PAUL DEMAGGIO

### COMMUNITY WATER RESOURCE

CONSERVATIONIST

KORA MOUSSEAU

### WATERSHED MONITORING

SPECIALIST

JENNA SANFORD

### OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

COORDINATOR

ELLIE ZIGNEGO\*

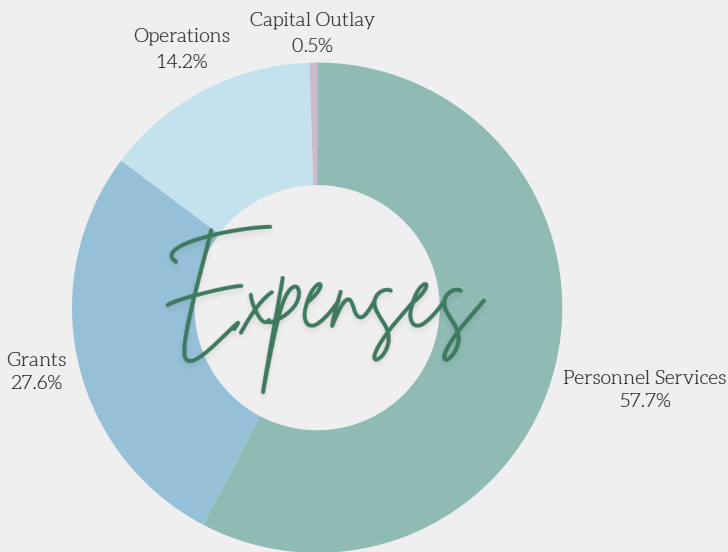
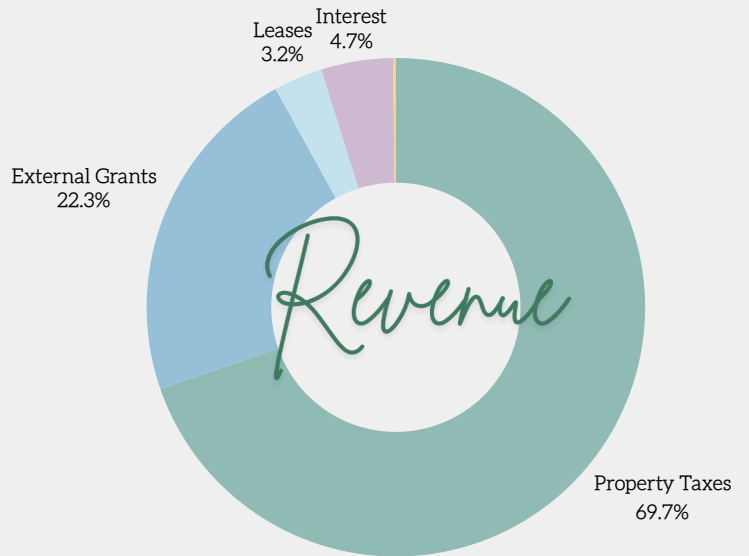
### RIPARIAN RESOURCE CONSERVATIONIST

CLINT NICHOLS

\*JOINED JSWCD IN SUMMER 2024

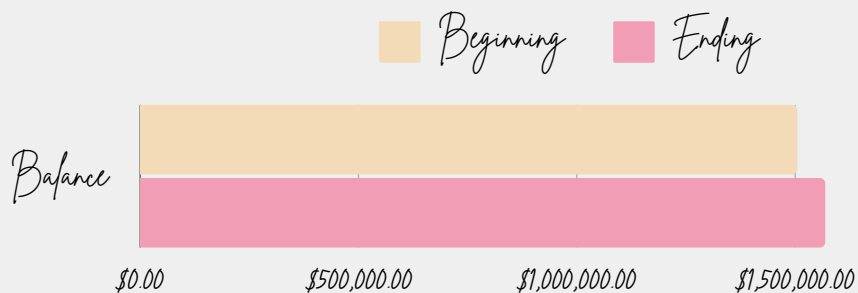
# 2023-24 FINANCIALS

Revenue	
Property Taxes	\$1,234,730
External Grants	\$395,182
Leases	\$56,125
Interest	\$82,605
Miscellaneous	\$3,188
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,771,830</b>



Expenses	
Personnel Services	\$985,442
Materials and Services: Grants (District Funded & External)	\$470,565
Materials and Services: Operations	\$243,228
Capital Outlay	\$8,581
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,707,816</b>

Balance	
Previous Year Ending Balance	\$1,504,821
2023-24 Ending Balance	\$1,568,835
Revenue - Expenses	\$64,014

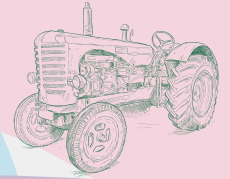


# 2023-24 JSWCD IMPACT



Monitored water quality at **15** field sites across **3** landscape-scale monitoring projects

Rented no-till farm equipment to **33** Jackson County farmers, resulting in **518** acres sustainably seeded



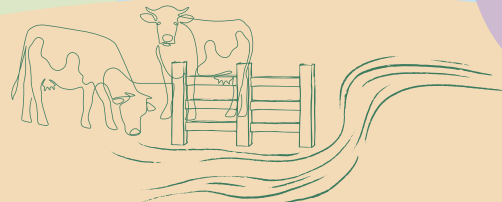
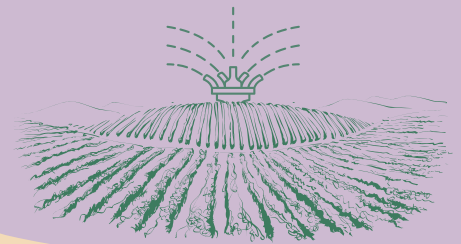
Supported **13** residents in establishing **42,555** gallons of rainwater storage and **500** square feet of rain gardens



Completed **18.3** acres of riparian restoration



Converted **4.5** acres of flood irrigated pasture to sprinkler



Maintained **65** acres of post-fire riparian restoration, including seeding native forbs and grasses and installing **1,219** feet of livestock exclusion fencing

Provided **\$30,000** in grant funding to support **3** non-profit organizations, reaching more than **2,500** youth and teachers with conservation education



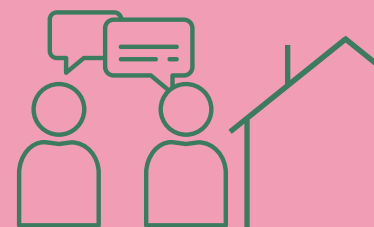
Facilitated **12** classes and workshops for more than **350** youth and adults

Participated in more than **14** natural resource conservation partnerships, technical review teams, and boards

Developed natural resource conservation plans and provided advanced technical assistance for **37** properties covering **1,639** acres in Jackson County



Conducted **317** in-person site visits providing technical assistance to **119** Jackson County residents



# RIVER BUTTE FOREST RESILIENCY

The River-Butte Resiliency Project is a partnership between JSWCD, the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), and the Medford Water Commission (MWC) to protect Big Butte Springs, the Rogue Valley's largest drinking water source, from high-severity fire. In 2023-24, significant planning and outreach efforts have prepared this collaboration to begin implementing approximately \$1.4 million in upland forest restoration work.

This work will treat about 700 acres, including private lands, the Butte Falls Community Forest, and forestland owned by Medford Water. These treatments aim to enhance protection from high-severity fire for 50 homes in Butte Falls, improve defensible space and ingress/egress safety for about 20 homes, and safeguard Big Butte Springs and its infrastructure.



Overly dense forests increase wildfire risks by creating excessive fuel loads, leading to hotter, more intense fires that are harder to control.



Clearing and burning piles reduces fuel loads, decreases the risk of intense wildfires, and promotes healthier forest ecosystems.



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# SOUTH OBENCHAIN RIPARIAN RESTORATION

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Hazards abound in post-fire forests, like this massive cottonwood killed by fire and toppled in high winds.

In January 2021, JSWCD launched the South Obenchain Fire Restoration Project to restore 48.7 acres of riparian forest along Reese Creek, damaged by the 2020 fire. Efforts included controlling invasive species, installing livestock exclusion fencing, and replanting the area with native species.

In the summer of 2023, a new neighbor joined the project, contributing 9 acres at the confluence of the North and South Forks of Reese Creek. By winter 2024, contract crews began removing regrown blackberry and other invasive species from the site. The goal is to restore the area with 6,000 native plants and 100 pounds of native grass and forb seed in fall 2024 and winter 2025.



Contract crews cut around native trees and shrubs to remove blackberry, allowing volunteer plants to naturally revegetate this post-fire landscape.

# PHILLIPS DITCH PIPELINE CONVERSION

7,000 feet of an old earthen and leaky irrigation ditch was piped to provide up to 3.4 cubic feet per second (CFS) to irrigators, providing reliable water to over 100 acres of pasture and cropland.

The Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council spearheaded the project by enhancing fish passage and improving irrigation diversion structures, paving the way for funding for the pipeline.



JSWCD led the engineering design and implementation for the pipeline, while also facilitating seamless communication with irrigators and enhancing collaboration among partners.

A conserved flow of 0.36 CFS was protected in the Little Applegate River, enhancing habitat across 5 miles of the river, from the project site to its mouth.

This project is a great example of a win-win-win situation for agriculture, fish, and the landowners.

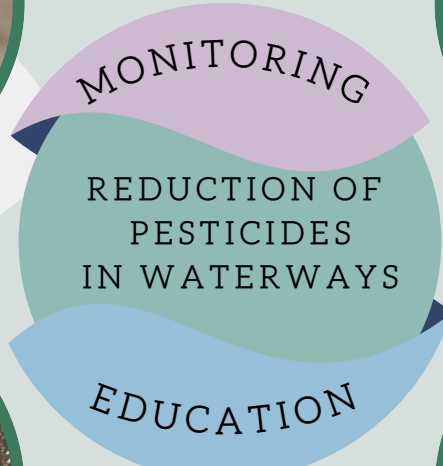
The key achievements included restoring flow to the Little Applegate River and enhancing irrigation efficiency, all at no out-of-pocket cost to landowners.



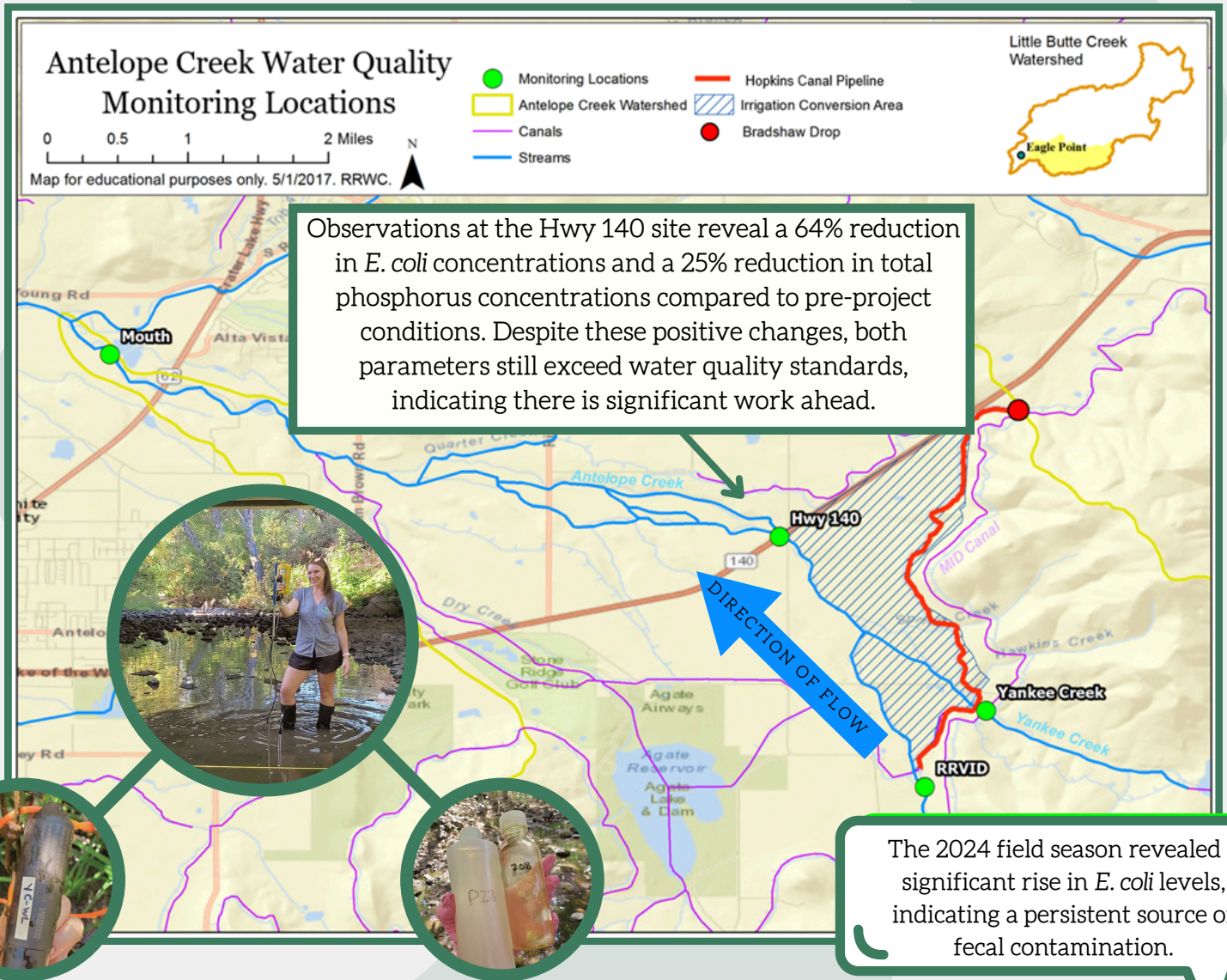
# PESTICIDE STEWARDSHIP PARTNERSHIP

The Middle Rogue Pesticide Stewardship Partnership (MRPSP) focuses on managing pesticide use to protect local waterways. Established in 2014 and led by JSWCD, in collaboration with the Oregon Department of Agriculture and the Department of Environmental Quality, MRPSP conducts regular water sampling at four key locations in Bear Creek and its tributaries.

In 2023, concerning levels of a common pesticide called imidacloprid were identified in Lone Pine Creek near Thrasher Lane in Medford. In response, JSWCD expanded sampling efforts to identify potential sources and the extent of contamination. JSWCD also developed educational flyers about imidacloprid that were distributed by the City of Medford to residents and businesses in the area. The effectiveness of these efforts will be evaluated after 2024 sampling results are available.



# ANTELOPE CREEK MONITORING



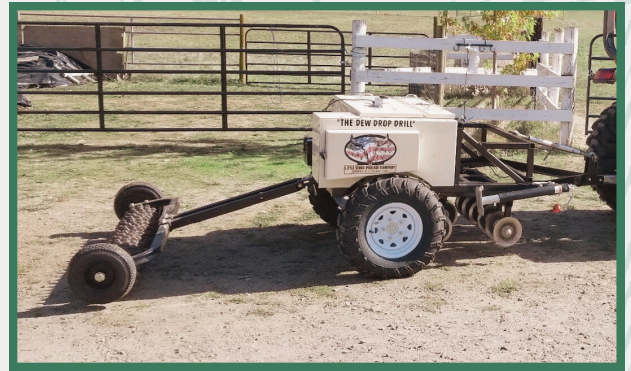
2024 marks the eighth year of data collection for the Antelope Creek Water Quality Monitoring (ACWQM) project, initiated by JSWCD in 2017. The project monitors *E. coli*, total phosphorus, and temperature to track water quality changes downstream of the Hopkins Canal Pipeline and Bradshaw Drop project areas (red line), as well as nearby flood-to-sprinkler irrigation conversion projects. These efforts target runoff from livestock pastures and fertilized fields, which introduce pollutants into Yankee and Antelope Creeks. By reducing runoff through irrigation improvements, the initiative aims to enhance overall water quality in the region.

# EQUIPMENT RENTAL PROGRAM

JSWCD offers two no-till drill seeders for public rental at a nominal fee. This program is designed to enhance soil health across Jackson County. By utilizing no-till seeding techniques, the program preserves soil structure and improves water holding capacity. Additionally, no-till practices promote the accumulation of soil organic matter and enhance fertility, resulting in improved plant vigor and increased vegetative diversity. If you are interested in renting one of our seeders, please visit our site at [www.jswcd.org/equipment-rental](http://www.jswcd.org/equipment-rental).



No-Till Drill Seeder



Dew Drop Drill Seeder and Cultipacker

518  
Acres  
Sustainably  
Seeded!

Unlike traditional tilling, which can greatly disrupt the soil ecosystem and its physical structure, no-till seeders carefully slice into the soil to place seeds just below the surface. This is followed by a set of wheels that close the furrow, ensuring minimal disturbance while promoting healthy soil conditions.



# SOUTHERN OREGON REGIONAL ENVIROTHON

The Southern Oregon Regional Envirothon (SORE) is a one-day, hands-on natural resources competition for high school students organized by JSWCD each April. This year, 48 students from five high schools participated, testing their knowledge in aquatic ecology, forest ecology, soils and land use, wildlife ecology, and a current issue. Teams of 5 students are formed by local teachers.



SORE is modeled after the Oregon Envirothon and connects with similar competitions across the U.S., Canada, China, and Singapore, leading to the annual NCF-Envirothon Competition. Coordinated by the JSWCD and a planning committee of local educators and natural resource professionals, SORE aims to enhance youth engagement with important environmental topics.

# INTERESTED IN OUR ASSISTANCE?



No-Cost Site Visits Offering  
Expert Technical Assistance to  
All of Jackson County



Rebates for Storm Water  
Collection and  
Riparian Restoration



No-Till Equipment  
Rentals



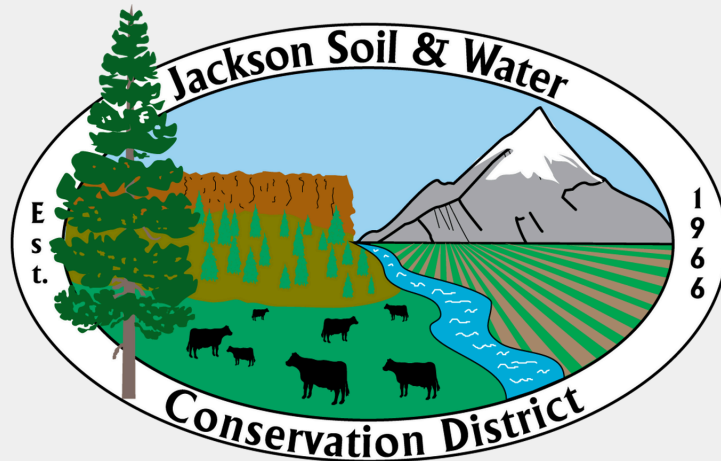
Community Conservation and  
Education Grant for  
Community Organizations



Focus Area Conservation  
Planning and  
Cost Share Assistance



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