

**Program # 10028 - Soil & Water Districts****Version 2/04/2005 s****Priority:** Vibrant Communities**Lead Agency:** Non-Departmental - All**Program Offer Type:** Existing Operating**Program Contact:** Julie Neburka**Related Programs:****Frameworks:****Executive Summary**

West Multnomah SWCD provides services which particularly target the rural private landowners of the west county to implement valuable conservation practices to protect and improve soil and water quality and wildlife habitat. A relatively small investment by Multnomah County in the SWCD helps to leverage many times that amount in state and federal funds and private participation to change landowner behavior and implement conservation practices and restoration work resulting in a healthier, cleaner environment.

**Program Description**

The Soil & Water Conservation District provides conservation planning assistance, education, and restoration work to landowners for the purpose of protecting soil and water quality and improving wildlife habitat. County funds at the very basic level allow the District to function in it's role coordinating with the Oregon Department of Agriculture;, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service;, the Farm Services Agency administration;, the City of Portland;, Multnomah County Departments;, the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board;, neighboring Soil & Water Conservation Districts;, the Clackamas, Multnomah, Washington, and Clark County Cooperative Weed Management Area;, the Northwest Oregon Resources Conservation & Development Council Board;, Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife;, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality;, US Army Corps of Engineers;, Sauvie Island Drainage Improvement Company;, Forest Park Ivy Removal Project;, The Nature Conservancy;, the Three Rivers Land Conservancy;, OSU Extension Service;, the Granges;, watershed councils;, citizen watershed groups;, neighborhood groups;, and individual landowners. The primary focus of the District is on- the- ground implementation of conservation practices and watershed restoration work on privately owned land.

**Program Justification**

This program fits within the County's priority for Vibrant Communities, contributing to the Healthy Environment factor. As stated in the County priorities, "The personal choices that contribute to the health of the environment, balanced land use practices and conservation of natural resources are critical contributions to the outcome." Through direct work with landowners, the West Multnomah SWCD encourages personal responsibility for conservation practices and provides technical assistance to protect and improve soil and water quality, improved wildlife habitat and wise use of natural resources. Much of our work is targeted towards rural landowners on Sauvie Island and other unincorporated parts of west Multnomah County, though we also do significant work in targeted watersheds such as Tryon Creek and Balch Creek. Through partnerships with the Oregon State Department of Agriculture, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and others, the District is able to bring additional funds to the local area for conservation work. Funds from Multnomah County enable the District to provide the administrative support and coordinating work necessary to complete projects which are funded by other sources.

**Performance Measures**

Conservation practices implemented as a result of District support. Numbers of landowners educated and provided assistance. The value of conservation work completed.

**Summary of last year's program results and this year's expected results**

The West Multnomah SWCD provided conservation planning assistance to 8 private landowners covering approximately 868 acres. Additional conservation technical assistance and implementation support was provided by staff of the East Multnomah SWCD through grants which support that work in four local Districts. Provided site-specific technical assistance to an additional 11 landowners regarding conservation and development issues. In coordination with the Clackamas, Multnomah, Washington, and Clark County Cooperative Weed Management Area Group, and separately with neighboring Soil & Water Conservation Districts, we have developed educational materials for invasive weeds control and conservation practices. Provided educational materials and encouraged adoption of conservation practices at 32 public meetings and events reaching an estimated 700 residents.

#### Program Mandate: 4 Program and Funding Level Choice

Multnomah County's contribution to the West Multnomah SWCD is a discretionary General Fund expenditure.

#### Revenue/Expense Detail

	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds	Proposed General Fund	Proposed Other Funds
<b>Program Expenses</b>	2005	2005	2006	2006
Contracts	\$24,790	\$0	\$18,000	\$0
Internal Services	\$384	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subtotal: Direct Exps:	<b>\$25,174</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$18,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>
Administration	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Program Support	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subtotal: Other Exps:	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
Total GF/non-GF:	<b>\$25,174</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$18,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>
Program Total:	<b>\$25,174</b>		<b>\$18,000</b>	
Program FTE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Program Revenues</b>				
Program Revenue for Admin	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Revenue:</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>

#### Explanation of Revenues

The West Multnomah SWCD receives revenues primarily through grants from state and federal sources. Multnomah County's contribution helps the district provide staff support for its projects.

#### Significant Program Changes

The District now has two part-time staff who have been working with landowners and other stakeholder groups to improve watershed restoration, conservation practices, and invasive weed controls. During the 2004-05 fiscal year, the District was able to increase outreach, educational and technical assistance work by using grant funds that had carried over from the previous year. Having spent down those carry over funds, the District will face a reduction in staff time during the 2005-06 fiscal year, unless other resources are found to supplement the existing grant funds. It is anticipated that the Oregon Department of Agriculture funding for District work will be reduced. In addition, a federal grant administered by East Multnomah SWCD which funded conservation implementation work in four districts, will be ending, and might not be renewed. (New property tax revenues available to East Multnomah SWCD can only be used for services within that District, so cannot replace the federal grant for services provided in the other three districts.). \$18,000 from Multnomah County would enable the West Multnomah SWCD to maintain the current level of services, by supplementing state and other grant funds.

With rollout of the Conservation Security Program from USDA, we can expect a number of landowners who have worked with the SWCD for decades, to be eligible for millions of dollars in federal conservation support payments.

Having seen the successful passage of the permanent tax rate for East Multnomah SWCD, it is likely that the West Multnomah SWCD will seek similar voter approval in the near future. Until that becomes available, however, the West Multnomah SWCD District will continue to depend on grants and County support to maintain services at their current level.