

Local Conservation Assistance Available for Private Woodland Owners

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When you walk through your forestland, what do you see? Are invasive weeds steadily taking over your property? Is the understory thick with potential fuel for a forest fire? Maybe you see a setting for improved wildlife habitat? What you may need is a quality forest management plan to make the most of your wooded acres.

Maintaining and managing forestland can be a big responsibility, but you don't have to do it alone! There are a number of local agencies who can offer both technical advice and financial assistance to implement good management practices.

One of the most important things a woodland owner can do is to develop a good inventory and management plan. Both the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service may be able to provide financial or technical assistance in developing a plan. Additionally, there are numerous private consultants available to help develop this inventory and management plan. Classes are often taught to assist landowners in developing their own plan.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)—With local offices in both Clackamas and Multnomah counties, NRCS has several programs available which can provide financial assistance to forest landowners. They may partner with ODF and the Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) on projects to maximize technical and financial resources.

- **Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)**—provides a payment rate per acre for select

management practices. These include brush management, pre-commercial thinning, pruning, and slash treatment

- **Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)**—assists landowners in reforesting land parcels greater than 5 acres which have been vacant or in crop or pasture production. Designed for stands that meet a minimum threshold with the intent to improve the diversity and ecological value of the site. Potential assistance could include forest site prep, tree and shrub planting, herbaceous weed control, woody residue treatment, seeding, and wildlife structures.

Clackamas County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD or District)—This special district may be able to provide technical assistance in developing a conservation plan and implementing your forest management or conservation plan, particularly if the plan involves such natural resource needs as restoration of wildlife habitat, oak habitat, prevention of soil erosion, restoration of riparian buffers, or other water quality improvements. District staff can assist in developing the goals and objectives, timeline, and budget for your project.

Financial assistance may be available from the District to address the natural resource issues that are described in your plan. The District has several funding programs, including cost-share arrangements, grants, and low-interest loans which may be combined to create a customized financial assistance program that best meets your needs and those of the District. These programs do not have a minimum or maximum acreage requirement. However, they

do require that you work with a District or NRCS conservation planner in developing or reviewing your plan and planning your project.

For assistance, please contact Clackamas County Soil and Water Conservation District at 503-210-6000 or the Natural Resources Conservation Service at 503-210-6031. We share an office at 221 Molalla Ave., Suite 102 in Oregon City. Hope to see you soon! ■