

THE CONSERVATIONIST

JACKSON SOIL AND WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2009 VOLUME 6 ISSUE 1



The Oregon Garden —
environmental use of plants



grass & flower seed production



organic
family farm



aquaculture



horse-powered farming



sustainable forestry

FARRM & JSWCD Annual Tour to the Willamette Valley!

—innovative farming operations incorporating sustainable methods—

Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District is your gateway to natural resource assistance. Board members and staff work with the Natural Resource Conservation Service to ensure educational and on-the-ground technical assistance opportunities take place which help the landowners of Jackson County.

**Jackson
Soil and Water Conservation District**

Staff:

Randy White, NRS/District Manager
 Angie Boudro, Senior Planner
 Vickie Simpson, Urban & Community Conservationist
 Dan Scalas – Natural Resource Engineer, EIT
 Markie Germer, Bookkeeper/Office Assistant
 Heidi Wacker, Webmaster
 Margaret Meierhenry, Newsletter Editor

Board of Directors:

Charlie Boyer, Chair, Zone 4
 Barbara Niedermeyer, Vice Chair, Zone 2
 Keith Emerson, Secretary/Treasurer, Zone 1
 Marilyn Rice, Director, at Large
 Brian Gebhard, Director, Zone 3
 Keith Corp, Director, Zone 5
 Allan Campbell III, Director, At Large

Associate Directors:

Ed Vaughn Martha Straube
 Bob Lozano Margaret Meierhenry

Office Hours:

Monday—Friday 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM

Board Meetings: All are welcome to attend!
 November—April 4 PM May—October 7 PM

USDA

Natural Resource Conservation Service

Staff:

Nicola Giardina, District Conservationist
 Peter Winnick, Soil Conservationist
 Bill Cronin, Irrigation Engineer

Farm Service Agency

Staff:

Joe Hess, County Executive Director
 Diane Rabbe, Program Technician
 Donna Finch, Program Technician

County Committee members:

LAA 1 - Suzanne Ginert, Chair
 LAA 2 - Charlie Boyer, Member
 LAA 3 - Lori Mefford, Vice Chair

**Tax Deductibility for
Donations / Contributions**

Please think of Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District (JSWCD) if you are interested in donating, gifting, granting, and/or bequeathing items, real or personal property, or monetary contributions for soil and water conservation efforts. Conservation Districts are political subdivisions of state government. IRS Code, **Section 170(c) (1)** states: Contributions or gifts to a state or any of its political subdivisions, i.e., conservation districts, are “charitable” contributions for tax purposes, and are, therefore, **tax deductible.** (See *IRS Publication 526: Charitable Contributions*).

Your help is greatly appreciated.

**Contact: Markie Germer(541) 776-4270
 markie.germer@jswcd.org**

**573 Parsons Drive, Suite 102, Medford, OR
 541- 776-4270 X3 FAX: 541-776-4295**

**District's New
Natural Resource Engineer**



Dan Scalas

Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District is pleased to have Dan Scalas join the staff as a Natural Resource Engineer, Engineer-in-Training (EIT). He recently received his Bachelors of Science degree in Bio-Resources and Agricultural Engineering from California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo. In addition to Dan's studies at Cal Poly, he was involved in two major projects. Dan and five team members designed and built a 2'x3'x16' model hydraulic flume specifically for the Cal Poly Civil Engineering department where they received an award from the university for best capstone class project. He was also involved in designing and building a research apparatus for washing and recycling PVC irrigation pipe.

Dan grew up in a small town on the central coast of California and made a recent move to Oregon. He loves anything outdoors: fishing, hunting, hiking, and dirt bike riding. He is also very interested in anything that involves water—from wastewater treatment plants

and municipal water supplies to irrigation for both agriculture and landscape. This interest in water resources and management is what brought him to us at Jackson SWCD.

Dan kicked off his first week as a camp councilor for the Forest and Range Day Camp offered by the District and loved working with the kids. He is excited to work with the District and foresees many great projects in the future.

He loves talking to people and strongly believes in an open door policy, so be sure to come visit him. You can also contact him at 541-776-4270 X114 or dan@jswcd.org.



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Manager's Message

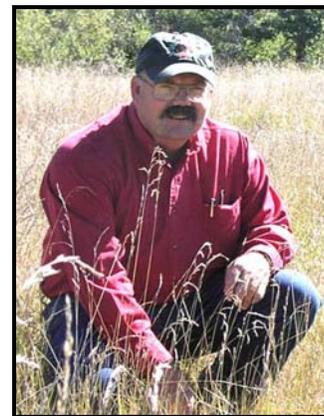
Hi everyone.

The previous Manager's Message was an update on the first 6 months of Fiscal Year 08-09. We are now two months into Fiscal Year 09-10 and moving quickly toward the end of summer. The District has been so busy that it is hard to believe fall is almost here. Below is a short list of what the District has been doing since the last update, followed by a summary of our accomplishments for FY 08-09.

1. We hired Dan Scalas to be our Natural Resource Engineer, EIT. Dan graduated from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo with a degree in Bio-resource and Agricultural Engineering. He started on June 15th and has many projects in progress. However, his first activity was helping with the District's Forest and Range Day Camp--approximately thirty--4th through 6th grade children. And he is still with us!
2. The District has conducted 27 on-site visits and helped five landowners complete conservation inventories and get started on conservation plans. Three more applicants received funding from the District's Landowner Assistance Program (LAP). One of the LAP's has been completed, which made improvements on over 3000 feet of a flood irrigation system on 65 acres.
3. We are still working on several irrigation and riparian projects. The focus is on developing group projects with landowners on both urban and rural soil and water conservation projects.
4. Over 693 people received technical assistance from direct walk-in and phone calls.
5. The District received several grants to work on a large, stream water quality improvement project.
6. The District distributed over 1000 copies of the last two newsletters; published one rain garden brochure; completed one rain barrel workshop; facilitated five Farm and Ranch Resource Management (FARRM) meetings; manned a booth at the Southern Oregon Home Show; and gave a presentation to 130 real-estate agents on grazing and pasture management
7. District staff attended approximately 20 meetings with Watershed Councils, OSU, and other agencies; started the development of a partnership with OSU, Jackson County Extension to do a watershed prioritization project and facilitate the District's Smart Horse Program during FY 09-10
8. The District is monitoring soil moisture on two flood irrigation methods.
9. All of the statewide Smart Horse Workshops have been completed with over 15 Districts taking the training.
10. The District is partnering with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) on two landowner group irrigation projects with Talent Irrigation District (TID)

Randy White

**JSWCD District
Manager**



11. The District put on its second Forest and Range Day Camp, help coach a team for the Envirothon state contest, helped out with Resources and People (RAP) camp, and OSU's Hands-On-Ag Day.

The following table summarizes some of our activities for the year:

Landowners contacted by JSWCD (all activities)	3986
Technical assistance provided	1362
Workshops	10
Presentations	6
Demonstrations	2
Tours	1
Displays	2
Elementary / High School classes visited	2
Fact Sheets Distributed	4
Newsletters Distributed	4
Newspaper Articles/Radio/TV	5 radio 1 TV
On-Site Evaluations/On-Site visits	73
Sites Monitored for Water Quality	2
Projects Submitted for Funds	10
Farm/Ranch Plans Completed	6

We had a great year and look forward to serving the citizens of Jackson County in the future. Our Staff now includes:

- Randy White – District Manager
- Angie Boudro – Senior Planner
- Vicki Simpson – Urban & Community Conservationist
- Dan Scalas – Natural Resource Engineer, EIT
- Markie Germer – Bookkeeper and Office Assistant

We are very close to having a Natural Resource Technician, on a half time basis, as a staff member to provide additional technical assistance. Please don't hesitate to call. The Directors and Staff of JSWCD would like to—

“Take your Natural Resource Concerns and turn them into Opportunities”.



Across the City Fence

By Vicki Simpson, Urban & Community Conservationist

Rain Gardens: simple and beautiful problem-solvers

Rain gardens are slightly sunken areas of the landscape that are filled with native plants. They do their work as catch basins during a rainstorm when water directed into them slows down, spreads out and begins to soak into the ground with the help of long-rooted plants.

Why build rain gardens?

We've altered the land from what it was naturally. As towns and cities developed, dealing with mud and floods compelled people to get rid of stormwater by sending it 'somewhere else'. The efficient network of hardened surfaces and drainage pipes that we built to give us safe, quick access to markets and hospitals, dry homes and buildings is very successful. It is a fast and easy way for stormwater to travel away from where we live--most often straight to streams, ponds, lakes, and rivers. We now know that this is not good for many reasons.

We can restore the land's natural ability to manage stormwater. Today's motto is: "Try to keep rain where it falls." There are all sorts of methods for catching runoff and infiltrating it adjacent to every kind of hardened surface--whether downtown along busy streets, in residential areas or on acreage near a house or barn. In this article, we are focusing on rain gardens as one of the easiest, least expensive and possibly the most fun way to catch and infiltrate rain water.

Where to begin!

➤ Choosing the site where the rain garden will be created

Look at your property and notice the areas where water could drain into a rain garden. Rooftops, driveways, patios and areas with compacted soil tend to produce runoff that rain gar-

Water flowing off impervious surfaces (for example a roof or driveway) can be delivered to the rain garden through a swale lined with decorative rock or plants, through a pipe, or across a landscape area.

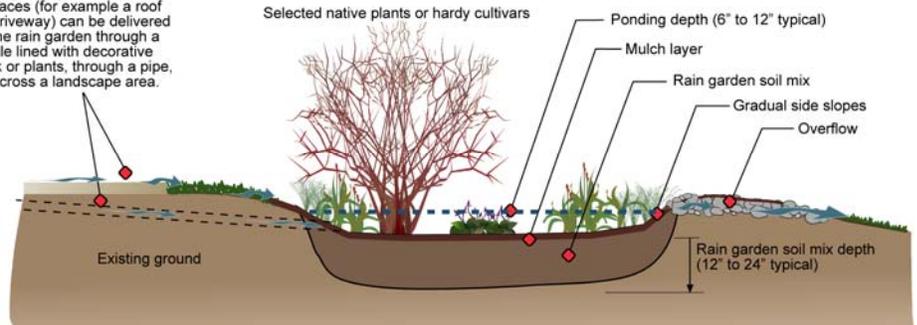


Illustration from, *Rain Garden – Handbook for Western Washington Homeowners*, Washington State University Extension, Pierce County

dens can filter and absorb. Rain gardens can be sized to fit a variety of locations. As an example, you may want to direct water from one roof downspout to a rain garden in the backyard and water from another part of the roof to a rain garden in the front yard.

Choose the place for your rain garden, maybe on a patch of lawn, and outline the shape with a garden hose or string. The size of the rain garden should equal about 10% of the area being drained. Make sure you are at least 10 feet from the foundation of any building to avoid water getting into basements or crawl spaces. Make sure that water will drain down to your new rain garden and not back towards your building. Do not put your rain garden near a septic drain field or tank, or on a steep slope. If the slope is more than 15%, you will need professional help to engineer it safely. Make sure that any excess water that might overflow your rain garden will not flow onto your neighbor's property.

➤ Call 1-800-332-2344 before you dig

It is advisable to dig a test hole to check your soil's drainage ability before starting the rain garden. Be safe and call this number first, at least 2 days before you dig, to find out where your power, gas, phone, and water lines are located. Also call your local jurisdiction to find out if a permit or a special requirement is needed to disconnect the downspout in order to use roof runoff.

➤ Test for drainage

Your rain garden needs to drain rapidly with surface water present for only 1-2 days. Dig a hole 12" square and 12" deep. Fill the hole with water, let it drain, fill it a second time and see how long it takes to drain. If it drains about 1" per hour, you are in good shape to create a rain garden there. If it takes longer to drain, then the soil should be amended to make better-draining soil. This means about 70% sand and 30% organic matter, such as yard compost, purchased peat moss, etc. A sandy loam mix is ideal.

➤ Excavating the soil within your rain garden outline

Dig about 4" to 8" deep, using a yardstick to measure. As you dig, soil can be placed on the downhill side to make a berm or moved offsite. Loosen another 6" to 12" of soil in the bottom of the rain garden. If you have a large design or you found poor drainage in your test you may need to dig out the basin 1-2 feet deeper. Remove the soil and back fill with the well-blended sandy loam mix creating your 4" to 8" deep basin. Slope the edges, level the bottom and pack any berms you created on the edges. Leaving a gentle slope all around makes the edge stable and easier to maintain.

➤ Planting your rain garden

Choose native flowers, grasses, shrubs, and trees for your garden. Natives tolerate both rain and dry spells and are dis-

(Continued on page 7)



Director Profile

Charlie Boyer—Chair Zone 4

Editors Note: This is the fifth in a series introducing Jackson SWCD Board of Directors.

Charlie has been a director on the Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District Board since 1998. He became involved with the District because he believes in their mission to help landowners implement conservation practices on private lands that conserve, protect, and manage natural resources for not only their personal gain, but for the benefit of us all.

Charlie and his wife, Pam farm sixty irrigated acres near Eagle Point, having moved there in 1991. They grow grass hay for the local market, as well as raise sheep and sell grass finished locker lamb directly to customers. They have practiced management intensive grazing for their livestock and have great success with this approach for grazing the pastures. Good pasture and grazing management is Charlie's passion. This has led to working with Randy White, JSWCD District Manager in developing an intensive forage resource management-training course, which teaches people how to develop, and implement better-managed livestock grazing on their land.

Before becoming involved with JSWCD, Charlie worked for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) until he retired in April 1997. He worked in BLM offices located in Idaho, New Mexico, Nevada, Colorado, and Oregon. The last position he held was Medford District Environmental Coordinator. There he was responsible for technical review of environmental assessments and environmental impact statements prepared in the Medford District. In addition to his work in the Bureau of Land Management's environmental program at various times, he held positions of

district planning coordinator, range conservationist, natural resource specialist, realty specialist, and resource area manager. In these positions Charlie worked with a variety of programs, such as; the wild horse and burro program, livestock grazing management, desert land entry program, coal and oil and gas development, gold mine, and wildlife habitat development and management.

He just recently completed two--four year terms on the Oregon State Soil and Water Commission that provided recommendations through the Oregon Department of Agriculture Director, directly to the Governor on issues relating to soil and water conservation across the state. Charlie is the current President Elect for the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD). This organization works with all member soil and water districts across Oregon helping them become better at providing conservation knowledge and assistance to landowners. The goal is to help landowners reduce their impacts on the environment while improving their economic returns.

Charlie would like to pass along one final thought. He believes that finding a balance between environmental protection and resource use is one of the most critical issues people in Oregon, our nation, and the world face. It is crucial to find a way to protect, manage, and increase endangered wildlife populations without compromising the rights of landowners to utilize their land and to earn a fair profit for their labors. The greatest damage to natural resources around the world occurs when the people living and depending on the land are kept in poverty, thus having to maximize the use of the natural resources at their disposal until those resources are destroyed.

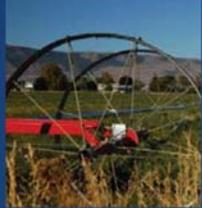
Flex Time Initiated at JSWCD

The staff at JSWCD have started a Flex work schedule. This schedule still allows the District office to be open five days a week, Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm as usual. However, staff will have every other Friday off, on an alternating basis. Consequently, there are fewer staff in the office on Fridays.



**New Phone
Number for
Jackson SWCD
Office
(541)
776-4270 Ext. 3**

Farm Bill 2008



To learn more, contact NRCS at the Medford Service Center:

USDA NRCS
573 Parsons Dr., 102
Medford, Oregon

(541) 776-4267



Helping People
Help the Land

An equal opportunity
provider and employer.

What's in it for you?

The voluntary conservation programs of the 2008 Farm Bill can help you improve and protect natural resources—and enhance productivity—on your working lands.

If you are a private landowner, farmer or rancher who wants to enhance your land's sustainability and profitability, take a look at the new and improved conservation programs of the 2008 Farm Bill. These programs offer financial assistance and technical expertise to enhance forestlands, reduce forest wildfire risks, increase irrigation system efficiency, protect water quality, improve grazing lands, and much more.

The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) manages the Farm Bill's private land conservation programs. More information about the programs listed below can be found online at:

www.nrcs.usda.gov.

PROGRAM	PURPOSE	ELIGIBLE LAND	LENGTH OF AGREEMENT	FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	PARTICIPANT OBLIGATIONS	NEW IN THE 2008 FARM BILL
Conservation Stewardship Program	To help producers maintain existing stewardship and adopt additional conservation.	Private ag land and non-industrial forests not enrolled in CRP, WRP, GRP or the Conservation Security Program.	5 years	Annual payment is based on land use and contract details and limited to \$40,000/year and \$200,000 /contract	Develop and follow a plan which addresses at least one additional priority resource concern by end of contract.	-NEW PROGRAM- Continuous nationwide signup.
EQIP Environmental Quality Incentives Program	To help producers undertake structural, vegetative and management practices to conserve soil, water and related resources on working lands.	Private working land, including cropland, grazing lands, and non-industrial private forestland.	2 to 10 years	Set practice payment rates, generally 50-75% of average costs; limited to \$300,000 per contract or participant over 6 years	Develop and follow a conservation plan; confined livestock operations must also prepare a comprehensive nutrient plan.	Enhanced program opportunities for organic operations and private forestland.
FRPP Farm and Ranchland Protection Program	To keep farm and ranchland in agricultural uses with matching funds for entities with farmland protection programs to purchase easements.	Private land including forestland and land serving as a buffer from development.	Permanent easements with an eligible entity	Easement payments based on the appraised value	Continue to use the land for agricultural purposes. Develop a conservation plan.	
GRP Grassland Reserve Program	To help landowners protect grazing uses and conserve natural resources on working grazing land.	Private grassland, shrub land and land containing forbs.	10, 15 or 20-year restoration agreements; permanent easements	Easement payments based on an appraised value or annual payments based on contract details	Develop and comply with an easement and/or restoration plan; assist with restoration costs.	Limits rental payments and cost share to \$50,000 per year.
HFRP Healthy Forest Reserve	To promote sustainable timber harvests while improving habitat for threatened and endangered species.	Private, working forest land capable of contributing to existing northern spotted owl habitat.	10-year restoration agreements and permanent easements	Easements payments are based on the appraised value; practice payments are 75-100% of average costs	Prepare and follow a forest stewardship plan for sustainable timber harvests and spotted owl habitat.	Includes participation in a Safe Harbor agreement for the protection of spotted owl habitat.
WHIP Wildlife Habitat Incentives	To help establish and improve fish and wildlife habitat on private lands.	Private ag and forest land not in CRP, WRP, HFRP or similar program.	2 to 10 years	Set practice payment rates, generally 50-75% of average practice costs	Prepare and follow a wildlife habitat development plan; assist with installation costs.	Limits payments to \$50,000 per individual annually.
WRP Wetlands Reserve Program	To restore, protect and enhance wetland functions and values on private property.	Privately owned land that is restorable and suitable for wildlife benefits.	10-year restoration agreements; 30-year and permanent easements	Payments of 75-100% of the easement value and/or 75-100% of restoration costs	Follow a restoration and maintenance plan; assist with restoration costs.	

Rain Gardens (Continued from page 4)

ease resistant. You can add hardy cultivars and ornamentals, also. For best success, plant from April through September and use potted or bare-root plants instead of seeds. Smooth the berm and begin planting with the three basic planting zones in mind. Leave 12" to 17" between plants depending on what their mature size will be. Apply 2" to 3" of shredded wood mulch (better than chips) around your plants. Water and keep weed free until plants are established.

➤ **Maintaining the garden**

Because we live in a climate with dry summers, you will need to water your plants 2 or 3 times when it is hottest. If you save rain water in a barrel or tank, this is a perfect source to use for summer watering. Rainwater helps to rinse salts out of the soil. As the garden matures, reduce crowding by giving transplants to neighbors. Continue to weed and trim old growth to maintain the garden's beauty.

➤ **Choosing plants**

Since your rain garden is basin-shaped, it has three basic zones within it.

Zone 1 is at the bottom of the basin so put in plants that can tolerate wetter conditions.

Zone 2 is starting up the slope that circle the basin, so this is a good place for plants that can tolerate occasional standing water.

Zone 3 is on the upper part of the slope where plants that prefer drier conditions are the happiest.

Check our website www.jswcd.org for lists of local native species appropriate for each zone of your rain garden. We also list local nurseries where you can buy native species, offer tips that can help you succeed with your rain garden, show photos of rain gardens, give useful formulas for use in planning your rain garden, and offer links to more resources. JSWCD and OSU Extension Service have collaborated in developing a rain garden booklet that will be published soon. For more information: Contact Vicki at (541) 776-4270, or vicki@jswcd.org

Jackson SWCD Partners in Conservation Education**Resource and People [RAP] Camp 2009**

A certificate of appreciation was awarded to Jackson SWCD for contributing to the success of Resource and People [RAP] Camp 2009.

Camp Director/

Coordinator
Shirley Kerns

of the Fremont-Winema National Forests reports about sixty High School students from Oregon and northern California plus eight teachers enrolled in Southern Oregon University's MAT Program spent the week of June 14 – 20 in an activity packed event focusing on natural resources.

Held at Camp Esther Applegate on the shores of Lake of the Woods there was a staff of thirty adults. Fifty-five instructor/presenters guided hands-on sessions with topics including aquatic invertebrates, fish dissection, fly-tying, ornithology, archeology, geology, botany, forest ecology, fire management, wetlands, hydrology, orienteering, hiking and range/botany.

The volunteer instructors came from USFW, BLM, OSU Extension, USF&W Forensic Lab, Ft. Klamath Museum, Klamath Bird Observatory, Klamath County Flycasters, The Nature Conservancy, and the Oregon Departments of both F&W and Forestry. Along with natural resource information, presenters spoke with enthusiasm about their careers and education. SWCD volunteers were Klamath District manager T.J. Woodley and West Multnomah director Brian Lightcap.

A travel day took campers to tour a fish hatchery and Crater Lake National Park.



Pictured are 3 of a dozen teens attending from Jackson Co.

There was a BBQ at Ft. Klamath Ranch featuring a roping demonstration, management concerns, and cowboy poet Leon Flick

Billy David & family of the Klamath Tribes presented a campfire program of culture and dance. Another evening local writer Richard Moe gave his Night Sky Talk. Campers entertained with a talent show during the farewell gathering.

The culminating activity divided campers into small groups for land management simulations. Using insights gained during the week they discussed the impacts of forestry, mining, ranching, wildlife, hunting, water quality & quantity, fire, recreation, etc. They explored the pros and cons of social, cultural, environmental, and economic interests. Finally each group presented their ideas to the entire group.

RAP Camp is endorsed by the Oregon Department of Education and campers can request school credit. There is an introduction to resume writing and job search techniques. For high schoolers over sixteen some jobs may be available through the BLM or Forest Service. In addition to learning about natural resource careers students prepare for the future while working cooperatively with others in a multicultural setting. The SOU teacher training provides curriculum development as well as a unique experience with teenagers and community members working in other fields.

Marilyn Rice—JSWCD. Director at Large

Up Coming events — JSWCD will have a booth at:

- Bear Creek Festival — October 3, 2009
- Valley of the Rogue Park — "See Our Salmon"—October 10, 2009



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On the web at: www.jswcd.org

If your mailing address has changed,
please call us at (541) 776-4270 Ext. 3
or e-mail markie.germer@jswcd.org

Jackson SWCD prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital of familial status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Jackson SWCD is an equal opportunity employer.

The Manure Exchange is Back!!!

PRODUCERS: Got too much brown and gold? Does the horse seem to put more out the back than you put in the front? Don't fret! There are many folks who would love to get their hands on all that great fertilizer! Simply go to www.jswcd.org, and click on "manure exchange" in the left column. Fill out the provider form, and then wait for the phone to ring!

Gardeners: Hankering for some great compost? Go to www.jswcd.org, click on the manure exchange tab in the left column, and search for some great poop in your area. Then call or email the provider and set up a time to pick it up! Its as easy as one, poo, three!



There has been a change — the JSWCD office number is now 541 776-4270