

THE CONSERVATIONIST

JACKSON SOIL AND WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2008 VOLUME 5, ISSUE 1

Forest and Range Day Camp WHAT A BLAST!

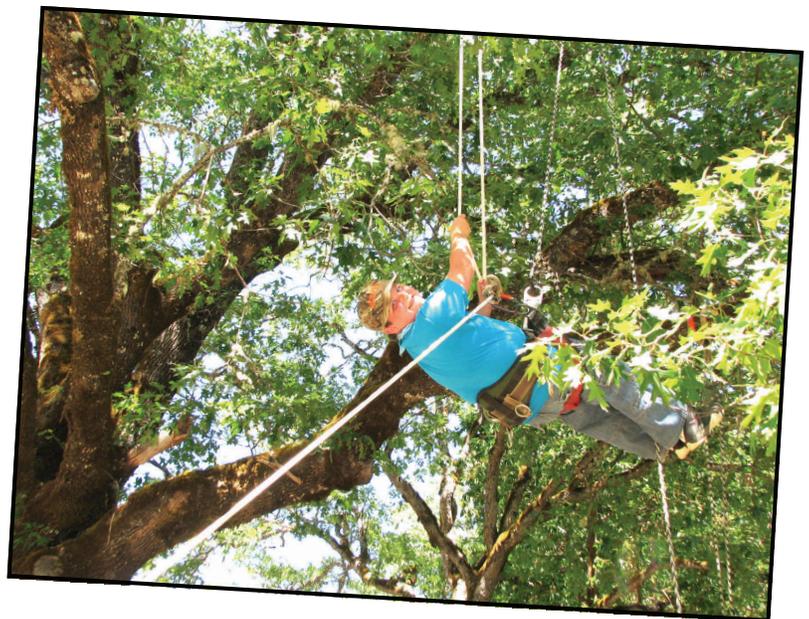
By Mark Wiest

During the week of June 16-20, 2008 a stretch of the upper reaches of Sardine Creek northwest of Gold Hill experienced a serious energy surge. Marion and Bill Collins' property was the site for the first JSWCD Forest and Range Day Camp, attended by forty-eight fourth through sixth grade students from throughout the Rogue Valley. Many thanks and appreciation is conveyed to the Collins for hosting this activity.

The Collins' property allowed for exploration of a creek area, an open meadow, a log landing, a barn, and several different levels of forested areas. This variation nicely accommodated the wide variety of activities, presentations, and demonstrations that were planned for the week. All the students were divided by age into four different groups for the week. Group leaders included volunteers Joan Devlin, Josh Cobb, and Garrett White, as well as District personnel Mark Wiest and Patricio Quinde.

A typical day up Sardine Creek included a thirty to forty-five minute presentation, depending on the topic. Along with the usual snack and lunch times, free times included a coloring/drawing table as well as organized games and hikes. A quiet/reflection/journaling time was held in different locales each day and a trash clean-up effort ended each day before leaving. Journaling focused on writing or drawing about what an individual saw, heard, or felt at that specific site.

(Continued on page 8)



In This Issue:	

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, Natural Resources Specialist
Heidi Wacker, Public Education & Outreach Co-ordinator/Grant Writer
Mark Wiest, Natural Resource Technician
Patricio Quinde, Experience International Trainee
Markie Germer, Bookkeeper/Office Assistant
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!
October-March 4 PM April-September 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 Ginet, Chair
LAA 2 - Mel Morris
LAA 3 - Lori Mefford

**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) 734-3143
markie.germer@or.nacnet.net**

**573 Parsons Drive, Suite 102, Medford, OR
541- 734-3143 FAX: 541-776-4295**

Horses and Wilderness Seminar

A Great Success!

By Angie Boudro



On July 26th, the third seminar of the Smart Horse Program was held at the district office. This seminar, titled Horses and Wilderness, included learning how to navigate using a GPS, the basics of packing, and a talk on responsible backcountry use. The High Desert

Trailriders Chapter of the Backcountry Horsemen of American shared the concept of 'Leave No Trace Principles'.

The day included a hands-on packing demonstration, a discussion about common illnesses and injuries of horses, and how to treat them in the backcountry. There was also a hands-on practice doing horse health exams and leg wrapping. We had a pleasant surprise at lunch when Dan Applebaker was convinced to share some of his cowboy poetry!

A very special thanks to our presenters: Ken Berg of Jackson County Search and Rescue, Ed Kupillas of Kupillas Ranch, Dan and Betty Applebaker of the Backcountry Horsemen and Leave No Trace, and Dr. Katie Moore of the Crater Animal Clinic. Lunch was provided and prepared by Markie Germer and Ken White. A special thanks for their help, without them these educational events would not be possible.

**NEW COUNTY****FSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

The Jackson-Josephine County Farm Service Agency has a new County Executive Director (CED). Joe Hess started his position on May 27, 2008.

He was raised on a ranch in Klamath County and gained experience working on a cow/calf operation. He was a Program Technician in the Klamath County FSA office for 4 years prior to coming to Medford. Joe's thorough knowledge of FSA programs, farming practices/customs will be valuable assets as the new CED.

District Manager's Message

By Randy White

At the writing of this message we are half way through our first quarter of the new fiscal year. The District is now fully staffed to the level we outlined in our five-year plan and all the staff is settling into the new office space. I would like to take this opportunity to get everyone up to date on the new and exciting things that are taking place.

You met Heidi Buettner in our last issue of this newsletter. What you may not know is she got married between then and now...congratulations Heidi! Her name is now Heidi Wacker. She has been extremely busy networking with watershed councils, writing grants and representing the District at several meetings and activities.

The District hired Mark Wiest as our Natural Resource Technician in June. One of his first duties was helping with our inaugural Forest and Range Day Camp for 4-6 graders. Mark wrote a great article for this newsletter that describes the activities of the camp and captures some of the thoughts of the young participants. (see front page).

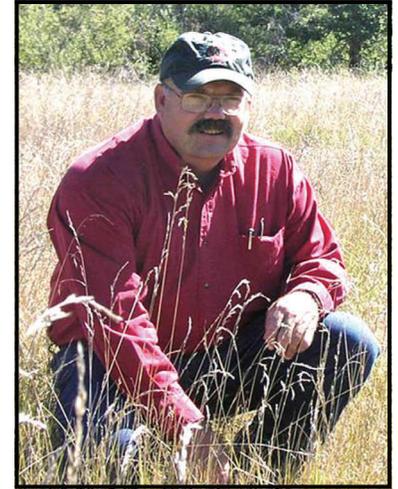
The District also hired Patricio Quinde from Ecuador, on a J-1 visa, through Experience International. Patricio has a degree in Agricultural Engineering and is working on irrigation improvement projects with Bill Cronin, the NRCS Irrigation Engineer. Look for both Patricio's and Mark's bio page 4.

Here is a short list of the projects and activities that District Staff have been involved in over the last few months:

- **SMART HORSE** — Angie Boudro initiated this program to help horse owners improve horse health and natural resource management and has completed two workshops. The first workshop focused on health pastures, healthy horses, and healthy water while the second covered issues with horses and wilderness. Through Angie's hard work the District has received funding from the Oregon Department of Agriculture to take this program Statewide and do regional trainings so other district's can start this program in their county. See how it went on page 2.
- **MANURE EXCHANGE** — As Jackson County farms get smaller, it has become harder to properly dispose of livestock manure and to protect our soil and water resources. The manure exchange offers a great way for livestock owners to dispose of manure and for gardeners, landscapers and other homeowners/farmers to find the black gold that is such a wonderful soil amendment. Visit our web site at www.jswcd.org for more information.
- **FOREST AND RANGE DAY CAMP** — For kids with an interest in the natural world, the Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District offered a weeklong educational day camp for youth in grades 4-6. We had 48 participants. The article begins on the front page.

• COOPERATIVE WEED MANAGEMENT

AREA – The District worked with several organizations and agencies to put on a county-wide weed event called "Let's Pull Together" see page ___ for photos and details. Six sites were selected, throughout the county, for the general public to help with weed eradication while being educated about invasive species.



Following the weed-pull all participants were treated to a Bar-B-Q and various agencies offered educational displays. Heidi Wacker put together a display board about what Jackson SWCD does for Jackson County citizens.

• TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED — PROJECTS INITIATED

— Over the last four months District Staff developed partnerships and provided technical assistance to several landowners in which planning efforts resulted in the funding and/or initiation of the following projects: 2 irrigation efficiency, 1 wildlife habitat enhancement, 1 riparian fencing and off stream watering, 1 water quality monitoring project, 1 rain water catchments and rain garden demonstration, 2 irrigation efficiency monitoring, 1 water quality improvement, 1 forage variety trial and 12 dry land seeding variety trials.



Welcome
Mark Wiest
New
District Natural
Resources Technician.

On June 2, 2008 Mark joined the Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District and two weeks later he found himself as a group leader in charge of sixth grade level students at the first annual JSWCD Forest and Range Day Camp.

Mark grew up in Chiloquin, Oregon and graduated from Sacred Heart Academy in Klamath Falls. He attended Southern Oregon University in Ashland receiving a degree in Biology and is one class short of his BS in Chemistry. He has been involved in agriculture in southern Oregon all his life. His family still have their ranch on the Williamson River southeast of Chiloquin. Mark and his wife have a small farm in Sams Valley, as well as hay and pasture properties in Grants Pass and Lake Creek.

He joins the District with a very diverse background having worked for several county agencies: Jackson County Vector Control, Oregon Department of Water Resources, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Oregon State University Experiment Station. Over the years he has managed a pure bred cow-calf operation in Eagle Point for an absentee owner, ran a small commercial dump truck business, operated a computer-controlled aggregate production plant, and managed a large agricultural operation in the Cave Junction area for a group of investors located in Houston, Texas. This background has allowed Mark exposure and familiarity to most areas in southern Oregon on both sides of the Cascades and to agricultural people over the same range.

Hiking, mountain climbing, canoeing, snow skiing, water skiing, and horseback riding are activities Mark enjoys. He is a basketball referee going into his ninth year this coming season.

He looks forward to the positive attention that agriculture is continuing to receive and the increased realization of agriculture's importance in people's everyday lives. Mark feels that the potential for improved efficiency and use of resources is only going to increase as demand increases. He looks forward to working with property owners in the private and public sectors of society to make significant progress toward these ends.



Welcome
Patricio Quinde

Patricio has been hired by the District and will be training in soil and water conservation through the Experience International Program. This will be an exciting year for both Patricio and for the District.

Patricio grew up in Cuenca, a historic and beautiful city of 400,000 in southern Ecuador. The elevation of Cuenca is over 8,200 feet and the average temperature is 60 degrees Fahrenheit. It is located 10 miles from Cajas National Park.

Patricio received his degree in Agricultural Engineering from the State University of Cuenca. After graduating, he worked for the illustrious municipality of Cuenca in 2004 as a Planning and Territorial Ordering Assistant. Later, he worked on a 400-acre tropical crop irrigation system in Santa Isabel. He then joined the "Quimsacocha Mining and Sustainable Project Exploration" and currently works there in the Community Relations and Environment Area. He is on leave from his position at Quimsacocha for one year to work at JSWCD via the Experience International Program.

Quimsacocha is located 300 miles south of Quito (the capital of Ecuador) and 25 miles southwest of the city of Cuenca in southern Ecuador and is 12,136 feet above sea level. Quimsacocha carried out its initial drilling in 2002 and discovered a three million ounce gold resource which it announced on October 28, 2005. This project actively and constantly demonstrates its appreciation and respect through initiating programs which genuinely address the needs and desires of local communities to create a higher quality of life. Patricio and all the team of the Community Relation and Environment of Quimsacocha Project are committed to allocating all the resources necessary to minimize the environmental impact of the activities and to initiate solutions for sustainable development.

Patricio and the technical team take their responsibility as stewards of a precious resource within the natural environment very seriously. The potential mine at Quimsacocha offers many benefits, but only if it is developed and operated with great care for the environment.

Mining activities must respect the delicate balance of the natural world, while enabling people and communities to benefit from the development of this important natural resource. Patricio is prepared to accept a new challenge that represents a significant step in his career with the JSWCD. He believes that development is compatible with the environment in Jackson County and he desires to apply his experience in a new country and community.



Across the City Fence

By Angie Boudro — Natural Resource Specialist

Pavement That Lets Water Through?

As the landscape in Jackson County becomes more urban, we often hear folks lament that hayfields are growing houses. But have you ever thought of how much land is buried under pavement? According to Bruce Ferguson, Director of the school of Environmental Design at the University of Georgia in Athens, pavements fills twice as much space as buildings in urban settings. In addition, he says that two-thirds of the rainwater that falls on impervious (not allowing passage through) surfaces in urban areas falls on pavement, whether it be street, parking lot



Pervious Concrete!

• Durable Plastic Grid

Several companies have also created pervious “grids” made of heavy duty, durable plastic. The plastic provides a framework

to support the weight of vehicles (including hay and gravel trucks). The center of the grid can be filled with sand, gravel or planted as a lawn. The plastic grid prevents the vehicle from crushing the plants. This technology has been used on a large scale in parking lots and for fire/emergency lanes at public venues. In

addition to the benefits outlined above, this and other forms of pervious pavement also encourage tree root growth allowing water, oxygen and nutrients to cycle through the soil faster.

• Gravel, Mulch, Stepping-stones

Another way to reduce the amount of impervious surface is to use gravel or mulch for driveways and walking trails. Stepping-stones also reduce impervious surfaces. Stepables, a type of vegetation that handles foot traffic, plays a role in holding the soil and providing beauty in a yard while eliminating impervious surfaces.

• Pervious Pavement in Action

Here are several local examples where these techniques have



Impervious asphalt!

the wall of heated air as you move into the paved area? This is the heat island effect. Research has found that there can be a 15-degree difference between an urban and rural area due to the amount of pavement, cars, tall buildings that prohibit air movement, and a lack of vegetation.

• Pervious Concrete, Pervious Asphalt

New technologies are challenging the idea that our driving and walking surfaces must be impervious. Pervious concrete and pervious asphalt were both developed around 1970, and although designed differently, both allow hundreds of inches of water to infiltrate per hour. Both help prevent flash flooding and pooling of water, increase rainwater infiltration into the soil, increase groundwater recharge, and keep large and small pollutants out of streams and rivers. Instead, large debris can be picked up by street-sweepers and small pollutants that are dissolved move into the soil, where plants and soil microbes break down the pollutants and filter the water. The applications for pervious pavements are widespread, but it is important that the project be designed for the specific site and its intended use.



Ecogrid been



used. Rogue Valley Sewer Services used a grid system in the lawn in front of their office for overflow parking.

(168 W Vilas Rd in Central Point) Farmer’s Feed in Grants Pass, who is also a distributor for Ecogrid, used the grid system filled with gravel for a delivery driveway that has held up under constant heavy vehicle traffic. We have samples of the pervious concrete pavement here at the JSWCD office. If you are thinking of putting in a driveway or new walkway, consider one of these pervious options. If you have any additional questions or would like some planning ideas, please call us! 541-734-3143 and ask for Angie.

— 2008 Annual Tour —

Seeing Agriculture at its best!

By Vicky Simpson

I don't ranch or farm. I live in town, run a small business, and raise a vegetable garden in the summer. I am interested in agriculture and water issues, particularly the concerns of local agriculture. I think that with the gathering global crisis, our community's insurance for a possible future is our support of the local ranchers, orchardists, farmers, and dairymen who feed us. We can also support them by supporting the agencies that assist local agriculture with science and development, water supply and quality, predator and waste management, and land use. So, I went on the 4-day JSWCD Annual tour in the company of people for whom agriculture is a way of life. We visited ten different venues to do some learning.

NORTH VALLEY FARMS CHEVRE'

Our first stop was a small, immaculate dairy goat farm in Cottonwood, California. Deanne and Mark Ashcroft told us why they chose the different breeds of goats to produce milk for fresh, soft cheese. They direct market their gold-medal-winning products. Stringent cleanliness standards prevent them from hosting regular tours. I suspect that the very long workday is another reason, but they made a special exception for us. After a tour of the facilities they served us samples of their cheese on salads, breads, and as delectable deserts. Demand for their product is increasing, but for now they are selling locally.



They grow their own feed to control quality and supply. The Ashcroft's have also gone the extra mile to earn the humane animal treatment certification. On our return trip we tried to buy cheese, but they were sold out. A testament to the high quality of their cheese.

CLOVER STORNETTA FARMS

A different view of a quality dairy with a long history of success and a broader business plan unfolded at Clover



Stornetta headquarters and bottling plant in Petaluma under the ever-present cartoon



smile of Cover's mascot, Clo the Cow. Here, management and the 19 contributing dairy farms decided in the 80's not to use the growth hormone rBST. It was a big gamble at the time, however it has paid off with a growing consumer following, allowing them to expand into additional milk products and the organic market. They contract with other small companies to make their yogurt, ice cream and hand-churned butter.

Part of the long relationship of Clover Stornetta with its nineteen family farms is the mutual high standards based on tested purity of the milk, sustainable agricultural practices, and even ranch appearance and curb appeal. Mike Griffin was an ideal guide because he has seen the changes in growth at the company and happily answered all the questions we asked. Currently, marketing to the high-end organic buyer has prompted the making of a video loop that will run in Whole Foods markets' produce sections. It was so persuasive that I was ready to buy and I'm lactose intolerant.

HOPLAND RESEARCH AND FIELD STATION

Mendocino County marketing technique is probably the only thing that is not a big concern here. This is my home county and it used to be the land of hops. But now, the research station places emphasis on studying how to grow ever-better varieties of grapes. Wine grapes have replaced the hops! Lots of other aspects of agriculture are studied on the 5,000 acres of rolling rangeland, from 500 to 3,000 feet above sea level. Right now the station has



support for thirty-seven projects and we toured high and low elevations to see the study areas for oak woodland ecology, coyote predation, and sheep-breeding management. Even the thirty miles of roads were studied and improved several years back when a team from Humboldt State College came down to look at each turn and banked



straightaway in order to improve road maintenance and prevent erosion. Their decisions of whether to ditch above or below the road and how to grade each section seems to work nicely.

Members of the tour praised the efficiency of the lambing and shearing facilities. Portable cubicles allow close observation of the mothers and newborns to quickly deal with any problems. They are also successful with using ‘lamb jackets’, where a mother ewe accepts an orphan lamb as her own. The orphan lamb wears a jacket previously worn by one of the ewes’ lambs, thus transferring that lambs smell to the orphan lamb.

We learned about the benefits of controlled burns and grazing as a part of replanting oak trees, as well as managing invasive Jointed Goatgrass — a serious threat in California.

SIERRA NEVADA FOOTHILLS RESEARCH AND EXTENSION STATION



It was at the two research stations where I first began to hear two terms which kept coming up on the tour — movable electric fencing and site-specific applications. If you want to keep your goats or sheep grazing down the noxious vegetation here, but not wander over there, use movable electric fencing. To create a grass buffer to lessen the leaching of cow patty pathogens into your wa-

ter source, use electric fencing. (We later learned what could happen if someone steals your solar battery electric source while your livestock are on the job!) In the studies conducted at the research and field stations, the information gained was usually thought about in terms of applying to a specific site, of course. And that’s where local (tour members) experience comes in. It was great to meet and hear extension station personnel like Ken Tate and Dan Myers talk about watershed studies and the improvement of pasture with the introduction of Australian varieties of legumes.

**DR. FRANK MITLOEHNER, U.C. DAVIS
AIR QUALITY EXTENSION SPECIALIST**

I know that the earth doesn't get rid of anything. Every-

Two terms which kept coming up on the tour: Movable Electric Fencing and Site-Specific Applications.

thing just gets changed into a new form. Right now the earth seems to be getting choked with bi-products we call waste. All through our tour the issue of waste

and what to do with it demanded a lot of study and discussion. So, even at the end of a long day we were very excited to hear what Dr. Mitloehner told us about using animal and human waste; from sewage and cow manure to restaurant waste; grass-clippings and cardboard to create non-polluting energy. He has engineered the construction of a \$3 million methane digester prototype that serves 500 households near the U. C. Davis campus. It is only slightly different from a digester power plant he co-designed five years ago in his parents 500 household village in Germany. The digester ferments the waste in tanks and the gas is pumped into natural gas pipelines and is used to produce electricity taking this village completely off the grid.

Another bi-product is hydrogen gas that can be used for fuel cell powered cars.



Our energy certainly kicked up a notch thinking about the possibilities that this type of power plant represents. Benefits of the plant include reductions in nitrous oxides, VOCs, and methane in the air, less waste in water treatment plants, lessening of pathogens and organic matter leaching into water sources, and high energy output.

Dr. Mitloehner also showed us a time-lapse display of a

(Continued on page 9)

Forest and Range Day Camp

(Continued from page 1)



There were twenty-five formal presentations given during the week by District staff, invited individuals, and agencies. Group leaders gave instructions to their group on such topics as: poison oak identification; being

mindful, careful, and respectful in general; how to read a map; how to use a compass; how to use a GPS unit; watch out for snakes and spiders; and at the top of the list -- have FUN. There seems to be little doubt that the students easily accomplished the last item. The adults on site with the students held two objectives at the top of their lists:

Keep all students safe and immediately address careless behavior and Make sure all students went home at the end of the day looking forward to sleeping--wear them out by keeping them busy and active.

Learning activities included:

- use of goats and other livestock for clearing, weed control, and fuel load reduction in potential forest fire situations
- forest thinning and potential ladder fuel removal to reduce fire potential
- how to brand livestock and where to brand on the animal using a water-based paint on a live steer. (This was a big thrill, especially when it came to washing the paint off the steer by hand.)
- how to rope a steer's horns using real lariats while sitting on saddles placed on straw bales. (Some did amazingly well, others roped themselves, but had a good time.)

Two of the best competitive games/demonstrations was carrying and stacking hay bales and tug-of-war. It was obvious that the majority of students had never done either before and they had a real ball with it.

The US Forest Service, OSU Extension Service, Oregon Department of Forestry, Fish and Wildlife, Jackson County Sheriff's office, and RVCOG all gave presentations. Private business included The Society of American Foresters, Southern Oregon Tree Care, Seven Basins Watershed, and the Klamath Bird Observatory. Peter

Winnick and Chris Garvey shared wilderness survival skills; Marilyn Hahn and Ern Russell demonstrated sheep herding by commanding dogs with a whistle; Susan Kendle and Jenny Kennedy spoke about livestock grazing permits on public lands; Bob Lozano demonstrated fence building techniques and fencing for range management; and Jack Decker showed techniques on shearing sheep. The students were very focused on the wilderness survival subject. Hands-on experience included building a Forest Service fire line; building a fence; boring into a tree to obtain a core and counting the number of growth rings; handling various wild animal furs, pelts, and claws; identifying trees and shrubs using a key; meeting Smokey the Bear; bird watching; digging out blackberry roots and planting shrubs; and wading in the creek, netting, and identifying aquatic invertebrates.



Will Gingg of Southern Oregon Tree Care seemed to provide the students with the biggest thrill of the week. Will is a modern day 'spiderman'! He uses a sling with ropes and pulleys to hoist himself up and around in trees above the ground with impressive speed, strength, and grace as he goes about his business of tree care. Will set up his gear in one of the large black oak trees and gave all the campers, including a few adults, a hoist up into the

tree about thirty feet. The facial expressions were definitely one of the highlights of the week.

The Grand Finale for the week long camp was just that, Grand! The closing ceremonies took place at the covered picnic

area at Emigrant Lake, right next to the water slide. JSWCD Board Member Keith Corp and Marsha MacCormack graciously funded a deluxe barbecue. Randy White served as Master of Ceremonies as each of the four groups put on a skit related to one of the topics or activities covered during the week at camp.

It was a fun camp with positive experiences and good memories. The students will remember the 2008 Forest and Range Day Camp on Sardine Creek years from now and smile.

Editors Note: District personnel Angie Boudro, with major help and support from Heidi Wacker and Markie Germer, spearheaded the organization and coordination effort. District Board Member Allan Campbell and Manager Randy White also contributed to pulling it all together and assisting on-site daily during the week.

—Hands-on experience—

Carrying and stacking hay bales !

Building a forest service fire line!

Being a modern day 'spiderman'!

Annual Tour

(Continued from page 7)

week's worth of pollution drifting directly from China to our California San Joaquin Valley and a visual compilation of pollution issued from ocean tankers making their way into San Francisco Bay docks. His team had to completely adjust the calibration of their equipment to be able to register the magnitude of pollutants coming from those vessels' stacks. It is bad! And the media blames pollution on cattle?

CLAFFIN FAMILY ORCHARDS AND JENNY BROWN OF HIGH SIERRA BEEF

While these two enterprises are very different in many ways, they both epitomize the changing market direction from wholesale to selling the same amount as before to many individual buyers, many of who will come to the producer to pick up and pay. Its 'direct marketing' to the consumer at the local farmer's market, at local natural food stores, stopping by their on-farm stores or going to web based online sales. Both businesses also include other local producers of food products in their stand farm.

The Claffin Family Orchards located in Oroville, California, have farmed the 5000 acres since the patriarch bought the land in the 20's. Olives, used for oil are the main crop for this diversified family farm, but they also grow a variety of fruit that is picked at the peak of ripeness during their season. They often contract with a neighbor to make jams from some of the fruit. Claffin Family Farms produce grass fed beef, lamb, and goat meat, as well as both pastured poultry chicken meat and eggs. They use goats and sheep to eat down the weeds among the orchard



trees so they don't have to disk as much.

In the orchards, they pasture older breeds of poultry to keep insect populations down and provide a mobile egg house as a place for the chickens to lay eggs. Hybrid chickens haven't fared well because moving the fenced-in flock around makes them agitated and nervous. This leads to constant pecking and they tend to lay fewer eggs.

Jenny Brown charmed and impressed us with her dedication, entrepreneurship and personal presence as she described the beginnings, the rise and challenges of her

High Sierra grass fed beef business. Like all ranchers in drought suffering California, one of her main problems currently is water and hay. Ranchers have to feed earlier than in good water years and hay is difficult to find. She has decided to use a smaller, hardy type of bull to breed in order to bring her steers to weight earlier. She too has a store on her property and carries local products, selling her own beef, as well as beef from co-operating ranches in the area. She goes to fairs, local events and gives community support by donating her products.

HOME

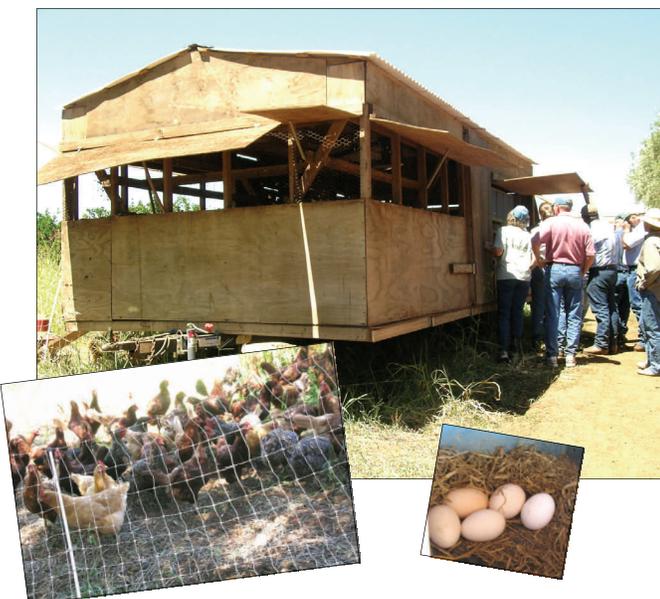
The two vans which carried us on the tour were information digesters as we traveled to the next venue and then home. Some of the information inspired more research, some opened up new possibilities, some confirmed experience.



It was wonderful to meet the people who are making a success in their businesses and to meet the people who are behind the science that seeks to answer the difficult questions.

I learned a lot and feel genuinely lucky to have gone on the tour with this group. A big 'thank you' goes to Angie Boudro. Her connections with the people and places we visited made it possible for the tour members to visit them.

Editors Note: *Special thanks to Vicki Simpson for sharing her views on this recent agricultural tour. JSWCD sponsors an Annual Tour each summer, usually around the first week in August. If you are interested in joining us next year, please call Markie in the office and we will notify you of the dates. Come join us next year!*



"Weed of Distinction"

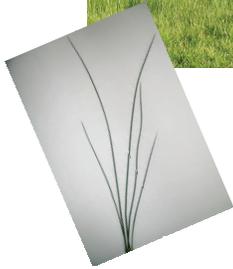
By Margaret Meierhenry

Are these WEEDS invading your irrigated pasture?



Rush Family

**Too much water —
Pastures become wetlands!**



Rush (*Juncus* spp.), sometime called Wire Rush because of its mature wiry stems, is a long-lived perennial that is often seen in pastures forming a tough uniform carpet of clumps that become unsuitable habitats for other grass species. The plant has smooth, dark green, leafless, wiry, round stems with clusters of small flowers on the side of the stem near the top. The roots are thick, stout, long-creeping, horizontal rhizomes with an extensive fibrous root system. Rush is a fair to poor forage source, but cattle will graze on young shoots until the stems mature and become tough. Most Rush species are difficult to control with herbicides because of the nature of the 'round' stems and growing in wet sites. See



Sedge Family

**Too frequent water —
Poor drainage—
Soil becomes saturated!**



**Sedges have edges!
Rushes are round and hollow!**

Yellow Nutsedge (*Cyperus esculentus*) and Purple Nutsedge (*Cyperus rotundus*), are tough customers! Nutsedges are an aggressive perennial resembling a grass, but has a 3-angled (tri-angular in cross section) pithy stem. The leaves and stems have a waxy or shiny appearance. It can spread by seed, creeping rootstocks, or by many small hard, brown underground nutlets. The nutlets lie dormant in the soil for years before producing new plants.

They grow up to 30 inches in height and clusters of straw-colored seed-heads form on the central stalk about two months after plant emergence. Mature nutsedge can produce hundreds of millions of seeds per acre. However, the viability of a mature seed is relatively low, depending on favorable environmental conditions. Seedlings often perish due to their small size and lack of vigor. The nutlets in the soil are more difficult to eradicate and there are different options too numerous to explore in this article. Contact JSWCD for advice on control measures.



Smartweed — water-loving weed!

In the Pacific Northwest there are more than 30 species of plants commonly called Smartweed or Waterpepper. These annual weeds, with stems one to three feet long may start new roots at the lower nodes. Leaf nodes are conspicuous and sheathed (lower part of the leaf surrounds the stem), a common trait of the Buckwheat Family. Flowers are small and maybe white to rose-colored depending on the species. Leaves are narrow, lance-shaped and alternate along the fleshy stem. Smartweed can become troublesome in irrigated pastures competing with good grass forage.

Since this weed is an annual the best control is to manage it before new seed development. Using a herbicide specific for broadleaf plants is generally effective before the plant blooms. Hand pulling is easy and is an alternative once large areas are under control.

The CWMA's First Annual "Let's Pull Together" A Success!

By Heidi Wacker

On June 28th 2008, the Jackson County Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) held their inaugural annual weed pull and education event called "Let's Pull Together". This first year of "Let's Pull Together" in Jackson County was a huge success!



Braving temperatures over 100 degrees, a total of 82 volunteers headed to one of their favorite places around Jackson County to help halt the spread of noxious weeds. The six sites where volunteers worked included: North Mountain Park in Ashland, Prescott Park in east Medford, Bear Creek Greenway in Central Point, Denman Wildlife Area in White City, Jefferson Nature Center off Highway 99 and



the Valley of the Rogue State Park.

After all their hard work learning about and attacking weeds in the morning, volunteers were treated to a barbecue, beer, educational booths from local organizations that are concerned with noxious weeds and bluegrass music at Hawthorne Park in the afternoon.

Thank you to all the individuals and organizations that supported the event through their time, labor and/or donations!

See you there next year!

Across the Fence



By Randy White — FARRM Member

A few years ago, we put cattle on 55 acres of irrigated pasture where the invasive Rush plant had taken over 70 percent and most areas were predominately wet. It has taken time and there are still some plants, but we have managed to restore the pasture to less than 30 percent of the Rush clumps.

The first step was to move the cattle off and re-ditch the main source of water and how it was distributed over the fields. A four-inch pipe with eight-foot gate intervals was installed. The idea was to distribute the water evenly by being able to control how much water came out of specific gates; more or less depending on how it flowed over the land along the 'checks' (defined areas between raised soil bars). Barriers were also constructed so the cattle could not get into the ditches or displace the pipe.

The cattle were put back on the pasture. Following rotation of the cattle, the pasture was then mowed (using a rotary mower) to a four-inch height—grass and rush plants alike. The cattle also ate the young rush plants and weakened its dominates. Over a two-year period, the results of good water management and controlled mowing along with rotation, the grass species are beginning to dominate once again. No re-seeding or use of herbicides has been used .

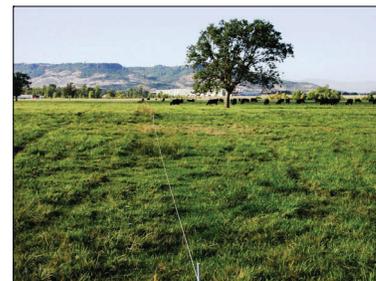
Year 1



Year 1 - Mowing, pasture and grazing management – irrigation ditches still not re-done,



Year 2 - Irrigation water management, mowing and pasture and grazing management.





Jackson Soil & Water

Conservation District

573 Parsons Drive, Suite 102,

Medford, Oregon 97501

Telephone: (541) 734-3143

FAX: (541) 776-4295

On the web at: www.jswcd.org

If your mailing address has changed,
please call us at (541) 734--3143 or
e-mail markie.germer@or.nacdn.net

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.

You've got mail!

Starting in September, JSWCD will be sending out monthly postcards in addition to our quarterly newsletter.

Keep an eye on your mail box to see our first postcard that will remind and update you on upcoming events and keep you informed and connected to us here at the JSWCD.

Please call us at (541)734-3143 or contact Heidi at heidi.buettner@or.nacdn.net if you would like to add a friend (or removed your name) from our mailing list!

← Mark Your Calendar →

September 13—Horses and Mud
Learn how to manage mud BEFORE the rainy season

September 18—FARRM Potluck Time 7:00 pm
USDA Service Center Conference Room
Presentation/review of our latest Annual Agriculture Tour

September 24—Workshop: Succession Planning for Farm and Ranch Families
OSU Research and Extension Auditorium

September TBA—Meeting to discuss the possibilities of an organic digester as an energy source:
Frank Mitloehner, Ph.D., Department of Animal Science at UC Davis is the Director of the Agricultural Air Quality Center.

October 4—Salmon Festival Time 11 am—4 pm
Visit our exhibit at North Mountain Park Nature Center for a day of learning about salmon and water in our area. More info at: www.bearcreeksalmonfestival.org

October 11—See our Salmon Time 10am—2pm:
See us and the salmon at Valley of the Rogue State Park

October 16—FARRM Dessert 6:00 pm
Ponds 1: a presentation on permitting and water rights

October 25—Rainwater Catchments Workshop
Time TBD: Sam's Valley Elementary School
How to save and use rainwater

October 31-November 3
OACD Annual Meeting and Convention

November 20—FARRM Potluck 6:00 pm
Ponds 2: a presentation on pond construction

Check our web site www.jswcd.org for more information