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# GETTING INVOLVED

Marion County offers many opportunities for its citizens to get involved. But these opportunities can be difficult to find if you do not know where to look. Both Marion County and its residents benefit when citizens participate and have their voices heard. Grant programs, policy meetings, social groups and sustainable partnerships are some of the forums and resources that benefit from increased citizen participation.

These opportunities also allow residents to meet new people and discover new aspect of Marion County. Residents can pass this new-found knowledge on, spreading awareness through personal stewardship. Make sure your voice is being heard and that you are not missing out on any of the resources available to you.

## *SECTIONS*

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*8.1 Local Groups*

*8.2 Local Events*

*8.3 Conservation Programs*





# LOCAL GROUPS

*Have your voice heard*

**M**ahatma Gandhi said, “Be the change you want to see in the world.” This mantra requires citizens to be proactive in creating a world which they envision to be ideal. Marion County provides one of the best opportunities because it houses the state capital. Many of the government and non-profit organizations in the state have their offices in Salem and hold regular public meetings and work groups. These opportunities provide the citizens of Marion County with the power to influence change in their community and to meet like-minded people. The following list of groups and organizations focuses on the agricultural and natural resource communities, but there are many groups not listed here that are equally important to both the county and its residents.

## **OREGON FARM BUREAU (OFB)**

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The Oregon Farm Bureau is a voluntary, grassroots, non-profit organization representing the interests of the state’s farmers and ranchers in the public and policy-making arenas. It is the state’s largest general farm organization with about 54,000 members; 8,900 are professionally engaged in agriculture. Becoming a member of the OFB requires annual dues of varying cost depending on the county where you live.

**Contact Information**

3415 Commercial St. SE  
Salem, OR 97302

503.399.1701  
800.334.6323 (toll free)  
[www.oregonfb.org](http://www.oregonfb.org)

## **OREGON WOMEN OF AGRICULTURE (OWA)**

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The Oregon Women of Agriculture is an all-volunteer group that focuses on nearly all facets of agriculture. Membership requires an annual fee and provides members with pertinent information related to agricultural production and an open forum to discuss, use, and develop ideas and skills.

**Contact  
Information**

630 NW Hickory Street Suite 120  
Albany, OR 97321  
[info@owaonline.com](mailto:info@owaonline.com)

503.243.3276  
[www.owaonline.org](http://www.owaonline.org)

## LOCAL WORK GROUPS

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**SWCD** - The Marion SWCD has monthly board and committee meetings open to the public. Citizens may become active board members if they meet certain requirements and win in a public election. The dates and times of the Marion SWCD meetings can be found on the Marion SWCD's website.

**NRCS** - The NRCS holds its work group meetings twice a year with local stakeholders to discuss natural resource concerns in the county. This information is used by the NRCS to develop priorities for their long term strategic plan. Contact Les Bachelor (503.399.5741), if interested in participating in the work group.

**FSA** - FSA holds its meetings once a month to discuss with its constituents their programs and the policies that dictate their process. For more information about the meetings contact Martin Nguyen (503.399.5741), Executive Director.

All of these meetings are held at the USDA Service Center; 650 Hawthorne Ave, SE, Suite 130, Salem, Oregon, 503.399.5741. Be aware that there are other opportunities throughout the county for the public to work with government and policy-making agencies. If interested in a certain issue or aspect of government contact the regulatory or administering agency to see if they have any work groups available.

## WATERSHED COUNCILS

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Watershed councils allow the public to get involved in protecting and restoring a watershed. These groups are independent and volunteer based. Here is a list of watershed councils in Marion County:

Claggett Creek Watershed Council  
Mill Creek Watershed Council  
North Santiam Watershed Council  
Pringle Creek Watershed Council  
Pudding River Watershed Council  
Mid-Willamette Watershed Alliance

*More information about the watershed councils can be found at the Network of Oregon Watershed Councils website: [oregonwatersheds.org/oregoncouncils/willamette-map](http://oregonwatersheds.org/oregoncouncils/willamette-map)*

## LOCAL GRANGE

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The Local Grange helps promote sustainable local economies and communities; they believe local farmers, food producers and their support networks are critical to that goal. The Grange both creates and partners programs to enhance their capacity. The Grange provides opportunities to its members for local engagement, addressing local issues through solution development, and learning leadership skills. Membership does require a fee, with fees varying between granges; so check with your local grange. To find your local Grange visit: .

## 4-H

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4-H is a non-formal, community focused, experiential education program for today's youth. The program combines the cooperative efforts of youth and adult volunteers with community and Extension resources. The mission of the 4-H program is to help young people build competence, confidence, connection, compassion and character as they learn and grow. If interested in getting involved in 4-H as a participant or volunteer visit their website:

*extension.oregonstate.edu/marion/4h*

## OREGON FFA

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The Oregon FFA is a program for students that develops their potential for premier leadership, personal growth, and career success. FFA encourages the practical and applied study of math, science, english, social science, and leadership using agriculture education. To join the FFA you must be enrolled in an Ag Science Education Course in your local school. Contact your school's counselor or Ag Science instructor to enroll in Ag Ed and join the FFA.

## LOCAL INDUSTRY OR COMMODITY GROUPS

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A number of groups focus on a specific agricultural commodity or industry. These groups come together to discuss market issues, local pest problems and possible new practices that can assist growers in being more successful. In addition, they work to establish policies that better support a thriving business model, while protecting the environment. Here is a short list of currently active groups:

Oregon Wheat Growers League.

Oregon Cattlemen's Association.

Oregon Sheep Growers Association.

Oregon Association of Nurseries.

## LOCAL EXTENSION AGENT

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Your local extension agent offers objective, research-based information to help Marion County youth and adults solve problems, develop life skills, and manage resources wisely. Their agents can assist in answering questions by telephone, in person and by e-mail relating to natural resource concerns, crop/land appropriateness, and current agricultural marketing trends. They also coordinate information tours, conferences, short courses, workshops, and demonstrations.

***Oregon State University Extension Service, Marion County***

3180 Center Street NE, Room 1361

Salem Oregon 97301

Ph. 503.588.5301

Web. *extension.oregonstate.edu/marion*



# LOCAL EVENTS

*Support local events*

**T**hroughout the year Marion County celebrates and brings attention to the culture and agricultural values of the region and the state. These events help bring the community together to showcase the resources produced here and the people who make this region special. Come and help support the local economy by buying local products from local producers; help keep our dollars here while increasing the capacity of local businesses.

## **FARMERS MARKETS**

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### ***Salem Saturday Market***

Green Parking Lot  
Corner of Summer and Marion Street  
May - October

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### ***Salem Public Market***

1240 Rural Avenue, SE  
Year-Round, every Saturday

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### ***Salem Wednesday Market***

Chemeketa Street NE  
(between High and Liberty St.)  
May - October

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### ***Stayton Farmers Market***

400 West Virginia Street  
Year-Around, every Monday

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### ***Silverton Farmers Market***

S. Water St. & Division St. NE  
Year-Around, every Tuesday

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## **NATIVE PLANT SALE**

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The Marion SWCD holds a Native Plant sale each year, with all of the proceeds going to fund two scholarships. At the sale you can purchase a large variety of native plants at a relatively low price. The sale is usually held in March so check with the Marion SWCD for the exact time and place of the sale and for a list of plants that will be available. Volunteers are needed.

## **AG FEST**

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Ag Fest occurs annually on the last weekend of April. This is where you can touch, taste and experience life on the farm. In addition you can learn where our food and fiber come from, how livestock is raised, the importance of forests for our ecology and survival, plus much more.

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### ***Ag Fest***

Oregon State Fairgrounds  
Salem, Oregon  
Last weekend of April  
Saturday - Sunday

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## **EARTH DAY**

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Each year the Oregon Garden holds a free Earth Day event to celebrate our wonderful planet. Come and learn about reducing your ecological footprint. Talk with local groups and people who are trying to make the county and the world a better place for current and future generations. Check with the Oregon Garden on the specific day and time of the event.

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### ***Earth Day***

Oregon Garden  
879 W Main ST  
Silverton, Oregon  
503.874.8100

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# CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

*It pays to be aware*

**M**any of the grant programs available to property owners can assist them in implementing conservation practices on their property. Programs have specific requirements on the practices that they will support in addition to caps on the amount of dollars that are available. Some programs require property owners to provide an in-kind or cash match. The following is a partial list of programs available to property owners so check with other federal and state agencies to see what types of programs they provide. If you have questions or would like to apply for one of the following programs contact the program’s administrator.

## MARION SWCD



### *Property owner Assistance Program (LAP)*

Helps fund projects that work to solve specific natural resource issues (such as erosion, weed control, overgrazing). Property owners who have gone through the conservation planning process with Marion SWCD are encouraged to apply.

**Eligibility:** Preference will be given to small acreage property owners who have difficulty finding financial assistance through other state and federal programs. Property owner projects must also be compatible with the goals of the local Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan.

Max. Amount Awarded	<b>\$5,000</b>
Property owner’s Contribution	<b>50% in-kind &amp; cash match</b>
Length of Contract	<b>1 year (June project deadline)</b>
Application Deadline	<b>May</b>

### *Special Project Grant Program (SPG)*

The SPG program seeks those cutting-edge conservation practices currently under represented in Marion County. These projects will serve as models for others to follow. Funded projects will offer the potential to work towards solving local area resource concerns.

Max. Amount Awarded	<b>\$5,000</b>
Property owner’s Contribution	<b>50% in-kind match</b>
Length of Contract	<b>1 year (June project deadline)</b>
Application Deadline	<b>July - February</b>

### *Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Small Grants (OWEB)*

OWEB funds projects designed to improve water quality, water quantity, and fish and wildlife habitat. This program funds on-the-ground watershed restoration and enhancement projects on forest, agricultural, range, urban, and rural residential lands.

**Eligibility:** Any person, tribe, watershed council, soil and water conservation district, community college, state institution of higher education, independent not-for-profit institution of higher education, or political subdivision of the state that is not a state agency, applying through a recognized local Watershed Council or Soil and Water Conservation District.

## USDA CONSERVATION PROGRAMS



The following programs are all administered by the USDA. In order to be eligible for these programs property owners and producers must meet both the program requirements and producer requirements. Producers must meet the USDA's average adjusted gross income requirement, and depending on the ground conditions, such as having highly erodible soils, they may need to meet additional requirements for eligibility.

## NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE



### *Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)*

Property owners develop a farm plan to install erosion control, water conservation, and wildlife habitat improvement measures such as manure compost storage, fencing, hose pumps, cover crops, no-till practices, tree planting, wildlife habitat, and other practices.

**Eligibility:** Property owners with conservation plans that rank high in water quality improvement, water conservation, and erosion control.

### *Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP)*

CStP is a voluntary conservation program that provides property owners with financial and technical assistance to conserve and enhance soil, water, air, and related natural resources on their land. CStP provides opportunities to recognize excellent stewards and deliver valuable new conservation practices.

**Eligibility:** CStP is available on tribal and private agricultural lands, as well as nonindustrial private forests. The program provides equitable access to all producers, regardless of operation size, crops produced, or geographic location. Eligible lands include cropland, grassland, prairie land, improved pasture land, rangeland, nonindustrial private forest land, and agricultural land under the jurisdiction of an Indian tribe.

### *Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)*

WRP funds projects that restore wetlands, flooded areas, and adjacent upland areas for fish and wildlife.

**Eligibility:** Property owners must prove ownership and land must be suitable for restoring wetlands that are valuable for wildlife.

### *Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)*

Property owners develop a farm plan that installs wildlife habitat measures such as planting native trees, shrubs, and grasses, creating snags, fencing off natural areas, and installing bat boxes, snake hibernating mounds, and raptor perches. Property owners must pay the up-front costs of the conservation project and once completed, the property owner will be reimbursed 50 to 75 percent of the projects cost.

**Eligibility:** Property owners, tribes, and local and state agencies that own or have control over land. Property owners are encouraged to partner with other agencies or groups to help offset costs.

## FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA)



### *Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)*

CREP provides funding to eligible property owners through cost-share assistance for the installation of conservation covers such as filter strips and forested buffers. These conservation practices help protect streams, lakes, and rivers from sedimentation and agricultural runoff. CREP also helps property owners develop and restore wetlands through the planting of appropriate ground cover.

**Eligibility:** Generally, property owners with cropland or pasture land that borders streams under a water quality management program or a historic wetland.

### *Conservation Loans*

The FSA provides loans to eligible property owners who want to implement conservation practices on their property.

**Eligibility:** Activities must be listed on a NRCS-approved conservation plan.

### *Other Agencies with Conservation Programs*



#### **Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife**

Programs: *Habitat Resources Program*  
*Wildlife Habitat Program*



#### **Oregon Department of Forestry**

Programs: *Forest Stewardship Program*  
*Reforestation Tax Credit*  
*National Fire Plan*