

Committee members are reminded to disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest prior to discussion of relevant agenda items.

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Marion Soil and Water Conservation District (MSWCD) Natural Resources Committee Meeting Agenda **DRAFT**

**Wednesday
June 18, 2025
9:30 AM to 11:00 AM**

Our mission is to partner with people in support of thriving lands, clean water, and healthy habitats. We do this through planning, technical assistance, funding, and education.

This meeting will be held by video conference (Zoom), and by telephone.

Call In Number: 1-253-215-8782 | **Meeting ID:** 838 1782 7407 | **Passcode:** 507254

Staff Contact: Cesar Zamora | cesar.zamora@marionswcd.net

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Agenda Changes and/or Additions	Chair
1. Public Comment	Chair 5 minutes
2. Board Updates on Committee Recommendations	Chair 5 minutes
3. April 16, 2025, Meeting Minutes Approval Action - Recommendation	Chair 5 minutes
4. SPG Applications – Hubbell Farms Action - Recommendation	Chair 5 minutes
5. SPG Applications – Stuart Olson Farms Action - Recommendation	Chair 5 minutes
6. EAB LSR Grant Update & Budget Action – Recommendation	Blank & MacKayla Fithian 10 minutes
7. OrCAN Soil Health Network Memorandum of Understanding Action - Recommendation	Zamora & Sage Fairman 10 minutes
8. CAG Review Committee Structure Action - Recommendation	Staff – Sanchez & Ortiz 10 minutes
9. FY 2025-26 Native Plant Sale Plan Review No action required	Staff – Hamilton 10 minutes
10. Conservation Cover and Hedgerow Program Action – Recommendation	Staff – Ortiz, Pineda, Zamora 10 minutes
11. Pilot Grant Programs Review Framework Action - Recommendation	Staff – Sanchez 10 minutes

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Oregon residents can file a written grievance with the Marion SWCD regarding a violation of the Public Meetings Law within 30 days of the alleged violation. The grievance should include details about the alleged violation and be submitted to the Marion SWCD District Manager for review.

12. 2024-2025 Cover Crop Program Final Report

No action required

Staff – Ortiz

5 Minutes

Meeting Adjourned – Chair



Marion Soil and Water Conservation District (MSWCD)

Natural Resources Committee Meeting Minutes April 16, 2025 DRAFT

09:30 AM to 11:00 AM

Facilitator: Cesar Zamora

Recorded by: Chelsea Blank

Approved:

Committee Member Attendance

Cesar Zamora (Committee Chair) - Staff	Present
Rochelle Koch - Director	Present
Nik Ovchinnikov - Director	Present
Chelsea Blank - Staff	Present
Leland Hardy - Associate Director	Present

Staff

Brenda Sanchez
Becky Pineda
Sarah Hamilton
Kassi Roosth

Guests

Darin Olson
Kurt Berning
Mackayla Fithian
Emma Smith

Note: All documents and materials displayed or referenced are retained in the Natural Resources Committee Meeting file at the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District (Marion SWCD or District).

Minutes

Call to Order-Chair: 09:31 AM

Announcements - None

Agenda Additions or Changes - Change the title name for Agenda item #6 from "Landscape Resilience Grant" to "Landscape Scale Restoration Grant".

1. Public Comment - No Comments

2. Board Updates on Committee Recommendations

Zamora updated the committee with the previous Board meeting's decisions about two topics that were relevant to the Natural Resources Committee. First, the SWCD participation in the Soil Health Network as regional pilot hub was approved by the Board on May 7th. Zamora will continue meeting with Sage Fairman with OrCAN to discuss an outline of our scope of work and role in this project. Second, the Board decided to wait to approve the PSP grant application until we hear more from the Pudding River Watershed Council Board decision. This grant project will be done as a partnership between the two organizations.

3. Administrative Committee Meeting Minutes – Month, Date, Year

The committee voted to approve the March 12, 2025 Natural Resources Committee Meeting Minutes as is.

Action: Ovchinnikov motioned to accept as presented the March 12, 2025 Natural Resources Committee meeting minutes, 2nd by Koch. No further discussion. MOTION PASSED (Aye-5 [Zamora, Ovchinnikov, Koch, Hardy, and Blank], Opposed-0).

4. ODA Scope of Work focus area for Ag Water Quality Management Plan (Pineda)

Pineda discussed the upcoming opportunity to renew the ODA Scope of Work (SOW) focus area for the next biennium. Pineda gave an overview of the previous SOW project which helped the District provide landowner engagement, technical assistance and outreach in the headwaters of the Pudding River focus area. This project is focused on providing assistance for landowners with bare ground to implement conservation practices such as cover crops to improve soil health and water quality. The previous focus area, the headwaters of the Pudding River, was located between Sublimity and Silverton. Pineda suggests shifting the focus area to where the current Strategic Implementation Area (SIA) focus area is located, in the Howell Prairie Creek subbasin. Pineda discussed the need that is still present in the Howell Prairie Creek area for assistance with bare ground coverage and water quality improvement and discussed the importance of ongoing relationship building with the landowners there. Pineda will work with SWCD staff and ODA to determine the monitoring plan for the new SOW focus area, which would be very similar to the drive by visual surveys that the District has used before in other ODA Ag Water Quality programs to assess the needs of landowners. The new SOW biennium starts in July 2025, and the SIA ends in December 2025, so there will be a few months of overlap with the two programs.

Koch asked for a map of the PSP Pudding River focus area, and if there's a watershed council for the Howell Prairie creek subbasin that would help with the project. Pineda said that this subbasin is included in the Pudding River watershed and is covered by the Pudding River watershed council and included that Howell Prairie is included in the PSP focus area, but the PSP covers a larger area than the SOW focus area.

Sanchez also mentioned the importance of building strong relationships and continuing assistance to the landowners in this subbasin.

Ovchinnikov expressed his approval of Pineda's idea to shift the SOW focus area to the current SIA focus area.

Pineda gave an overview of the SOW application timeline, which is due to ODA by the end of May 2025. Pineda will be working on the application and will go to

the May 7th Board meeting for approval. The committee supports this idea and agrees with Pineda's proposal to change the new SOW focus area to the Howell Prairie Creek subbasin.

Action: No motion or recommendation needed at this time, just discussion.

5. Should the District Provide Comments on Projects? (Sanchez)

Sanchez brought a discussion topic to the committee, based on an email that she received from the Department of State Lands requesting the SWCD to review and comment on an application for a Remove and Fill permit. Sanchez posed two questions: is this an appropriate role for the District to provide comments on projects? And does this topic need to go to the Board to approve this role?

Koch said that this discussion can go either way, but the staff are educated on these issues and would be able to provide comments, although it might not be a good fit for the District. She asked if it's necessary and mentioned concerns about being involved in any kind of compliance or regulatory issues.

Sanchez mentioned that the staff person to work on this would be Blank since she is the Natural Areas planner who works with wetland type of projects.

Olson commented that some SWCDs do have a history of getting involved in land use issues, but Marion SWCD has always stayed uninvolved because we have no control over compliance. There are other agencies that are better fit for this type of request.

Hardy, Blank, and Ovchinnikov agreed with Olson's statement. Koch suggested leaving this topic open for review on a case-by-case basis for Board approval.

Sanchez mentioned that other SWCDs have also received this request from DSL and have a template that is used for response that is very vague and mostly points to statewide regulations and rules.

Ovchinnikov commented that the state agencies already have safeguards in place to mitigate construction projects, and our comments are not necessary.

Zamora pointed out the potential issue with timing of receiving these requests and not being able to get them approved by our Board in time needed by DSL.

Overall, the committee all agreed that it would be best for the District to stay uninvolved with these requests, unless there is a particularly significant and large project that would have watershed level impacts that should be brought to the Board for review and approval on a case-by-case basis.

Action: No action needed, just discussion.

6. Introduction and Discussion of Landscape Scale Restoration Grant Proposal for Emerald Ash Borer. (Blank and Fithian, Pudding River Watershed Council)

Fithian joined the committee meeting to present a grant proposal that the Pudding River Watershed Council is putting together to apply for funding to help mitigate the impact of the invasive pest, the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). Fithian presented a PowerPoint that gave a brief overview of EAB, the impacts on our waterways and natural areas, and the need for a landscape level project. She listed several of the potential partners that include Clackamas SWCD, Marion County, Tualatin Hills Parks and Recreation, City of Salem, City of Woodburn, Oregon Department of Forestry, ODA, and more. The pre-application deadline is May 18th. If approved, formal application cycle will be in summer 2025 with applications being awarded in 2026. Fithian expressed the need to determine the extent of Butte Creek infestation area to help decide management actions and save money in the future. Objectives of this grant proposal include tree inventories, visual surveys, outreach and education to landowners, Slow Ash Mortalist (SLAM), and replanting. Fithian also noted that the requested contribution to the grant would include some staff time from Hamilton and Blank to help with visual surveys, since they have already done EAB survey trainings through ODA.

Sanchez asked what the budget request would be, which Fithian has not finalized the number yet but estimates that the request of Marion SWCD will be \$5-\$10,000. Fithian said that her first draft of the budget estimates come out to around \$200,000 project total. That means they are seeking a \$100,000 contribution as match from partners. Fithian will bring a budget and grant outline to the NR committee and Board for approval by July 2025 before the final LSR grant application is submitted. Sanchez recommended bringing the budget as soon as possible. The match does not need to be secured by the pre-application deadline in May.

The committee expressed support of this grant proposal and for the District to participate as a contributing partner to provide funding and technical assistance.

Action: Zamora made a motion that Marion SWCD be listed as a contributing partner on the LSR grant application. 2nd by Koch. MOTION PASSED (Aye-5 [Zamora, Ovchinnikov, Koch, Hardy, and Blank], Opposed-0).

7. Plant Health Conservation Practice (Chair):

Zamora brought this topic to the committee for discussion. He asked the main question of what types of 'plant health' practices will the District fund going forward with grants? Zamora gave some examples of how this resource concern has been used in District grant projects in the past, including funding micro irrigation sprinklers for blueberry fields to cool the plants to improve the plant health and vigor. He pointed out the difference between what a resource concern is and what is just actual benefit. He pointed to another example of an NRCS practice that helps with plant health, which is high tunnels. In the same way, this doesn't solve a resource concern but improves the vigor of plant health. Koch

mentioned that 'plant health' is very vague and can be applied to many things. Zamora offered the idea to narrow down the definition of 'plant health' for the district grant policy use. Olson commented on the need to define 'working lands' in this context and pointed out that any practice that's done with District funds needs to have a direct conservation benefit. Hardy commented that with the sprinkler example, temperature control is not the same as irrigation system improvement. The only function of that micro irrigation system is temperature control. Sanchez asked whether temperature control would impact pests on plants, leading to an eligible resource concern. Zamora answered that it's a hard question, but if we agree to help fund pest and diseases on plants, that could lead to getting more requests that aren't conservation related. Olson commented that most crops have drip irrigation, and that particular use of a conservation practice for 'plant health' of blueberries is more helpful for fruit quality and health, not plant health. The difference is between plant health and fruit quality, and the District shouldn't fund fruit quality projects. Koch suggested keeping this topic open for discussion and approval of plant health projects on a case-by-case basis. Zamora suggested that we agree to go forward with projects only focusing on plant health, and the Board will determine approval on a case-by-case basis.

Action: No action needed at this time, just discussion.

8. Cattleman's Association Wildlife Damage Prevention and Compensation Program (Sanchez and Chair)

Sanchez brought this topic to the committee after a representative, Dennis Sheehy, from the Cattleman's Association came to the board meeting with a plan to address wildlife damage to livestock that was approved by the legislature. He is looking to create pilot areas for a program providing insurance for farmers and ranchers to be compensated. The Board asked the committee to discuss this program and proposal for the District to agree to be one of these pilot areas to implement the program. Sanchez said that Sheehy is asking for the District to establish pilot sites in Marion County. This would perhaps include monitoring work and landowner engagement. Zamora clarified that Sheehy wants the District to participate in the insurance, implementation, and administrative staffing portions of the program and we would likely need to hire a crop consultant to help with this. Koch asked if the landowner pays for the insurance. Ovchinnikov asked what it would cost the District, to which Sanchez answered that the Association would pay the District to implement the program. Blank mentioned that it seems to be based on a previous wolf-livestock compensation program and seems to be more relevant to rangeland owners. Sanchez suggested that this proposal would be a better fit for OSU. Koch asked whether the program would continue with or without our participation. Ovchinnikov, commented that this

program would be beneficial for landowners, and the District's role should be to educate landowners about this opportunity, but not to implement the program. Sanchez mentioned that the District staff would not have the capacity to help with this, if the committee and Board wanted to participate, until next year. The committee agreed to decline the offer for the District to participate in implementing this program.

Action: Ovchinnikov made a motion to decline the SWCD participation in this program implementation. Hardy 2nd. MOTION PASSED (Aye-5 [Zamora, Ovchinnikov, Koch, Hardy, and Blank], Opposed-0).

9. Help Facilitate City of Salem Planning Commission Meetings (Sanchez)

Brenda received an email from Michael Slater, a student at Willamette University. He's also the chair of the planning commission for Salem. They reached out to the District to ask for assistance facilitating the upcoming meetings between partners to address the recent wetland decisions in the City of Salem. These decisions were based on FEMA regulations, which are working to implement NOAA assessments of violations of the Endangered Species Act (ESA). They are enforcing floodplain rules that require wetland mitigation for any new development within the City of Salem. There is a need for partnership to identify city property that could be used as mitigation sites in the floodplain. Sanchez said she would ask Blank to be the lead planner to help with this request. Sanchez mentioned that they (NOAA and City of Salem) have been working on Mill Creek for riparian restoration projects. These partner meetings will begin in July or August of this year. Sanchez stated that our role would be in helping connect the partners and running the meetings to support this partnership. Sanchez offered to provide reports after these partner meetings to update the committee and Board.

Action: No action or recommendation, just discussion.

10. Next Committee Meeting date

The committee discussed the schedule for the next Natural Resources Committee meeting. Koch asked if it would be in May, to which Blank mentioned that the committee's regular schedule is typically every other month, unless there are items that need approval sooner. That would put the next meeting in June. The committee agreed that June 18th at 9:30 am will be the next meeting date. Koch and Ovchinnikov asked if the committee packets could be shorter in the future, with less of the background information documents included. Sanchez offered to use Sharepoint to upload the supporting documents for the Committee packets to minimize paper use. Koch and Ovchinnikov said they prefer to print out the packets to read them, they would just like them to be shorter. Zamora offered to reduce the packet items and keep each agenda item to three pages or less from now on.

Adjourn: Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:04 AM



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Marion Soil and Water Conservation District Natural Resources Committee Meeting – Agenda Item Brief

Agenda Item Name: SPG Applications –Hubbell Farms

Date: June 18th, 2025

Agenda Item Brief:

The Committee will discuss its review of two Special Project Grants. The grant is asking for \$10,000 to help with the purchase of Smart Apply airblast sprayer technologies.

Requested Action:

Recommendation to the Board to approve the Special Project Grant application submitted by Hubbell Farms.

Proposed By: Natural Resources Committee

HUBBELL FARMS

SPG: SMART APPLY SPRAYER UPGRADE

CONSERVATION PRACTICE

101 Acres

Watersheds: Beaver Creek, Upper Mill Creek, Lower Mill Creek Marion Creek – North Santiam River

Hazelnut production

RESOURCE CONCERNS

Plants: Productivity, Health and Vigor

Water Quality: Excessive Nutrients and Organics in Ground Water

SOLUTIONS

Implement newer technology to reduce the amount of chemical emitted



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Current tree spacing (April 2025)



MARION COUNTY, OREGON

SW1/4 SEC17 T8S R1W W.M.

Project Location within Marion County



Current tree spacing (May, 2025)



Marion Soil and Water Conservation District Natural Resources Committee Meeting – Agenda Item Brief

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The Committee will discuss its review of two Special Project Grants. The grant is asking for \$10,000 to help with the purchase of Smart Apply airblast sprayer technologies.

Requested Action:

Recommendation to the Board to approve the Special Project Grant application submitted by Stuart Olson Farms.

Proposed By: Natural Resources Committee

OLSON FARMS – AIRBLAST SPRAYING DRIFT REDUCTION SYSTEM

CONSERVATION PRACTICE

SPG

Acres: 2000

Watershed:

Upper Little Pudding River etc.

Brief Description: Purchase and install new Smart Apply LIDAR controller system for airblast sprayers

RESOURCE CONCERNS

Agriculture – Weed and Pest Management

Agriculture – Water Quality

SOLUTIONS

Install smart apply LIDAR systems on all airblast spraying technology to reduce overall pesticide usage.



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Airblast Sprayer to Have Smart Apply System Installed (4/1/2025)

08 2W 10C



MARION COUNTY, OREGON
SW1/4 SEC10 T8S R2W W.M.

Project Location within Marion County



*A Hazelnut Orchard that is Sprayed with the Airblast Systemf
(4/11/2025)*



Marion Soil and Water Conservation District Natural Resources Committee Meeting – Agenda Item Brief

Agenda Item Name: EAB LSR Grant Update and Contribution Approval

Date: June 18, 2025

Agenda Item Brief: The Pudding River Watershed council is applying for a Landscape Scale Resilience Grant to plan, survey, monitor, and implement projects to address the Emerald Ash Borer infestation in the Butte Creek infestation area and the surrounding high risk areas in Marion and Clackamas counties. With the District's previous approval, Marion SWCD was written as a contributing partner for the pre-application proposal that was submitted on May 18th. This item will include an update on the grant budget, with the requested award and contribution amounts from Marion SWCD as a partner. The formal grant application cycle will open in August 2025, during which the Pudding River Watershed council will apply with the finalized budget as approved by the committee and Board.

Landscape Scale Resilience Grant Program (LSR) overview: The LSR is a competitive federal grant program that supports high impact projects that promote collaborative, science-based restoration of priority forest landscapes, leverage public and private resources, and advance the priorities of the State Forest Action Plan. This grant has been used to support Emerald Ash Borer mitigation projects in the Midwest and East coast of the country. Application period: August 2025- December 2025.

- **Summary of Budget proposal for LSR application:** Funds requested: **\$257,441.**

Total project value: **\$528,312**

- Marion SWCD requested cash: **\$10,000**
- Marion SWCD requested staff time contribution: **\$20,430**
 - Two staff (Sarah Hamilton and Chelsea Blank)
 - 6 days (6 hours each) per year, per staff person, for three years to help with surveys

Deliverables:

1. Riparian Replanting: Plant 19,500 native trees and shrubs over three years (6,500/year) in ash-dominated riparian areas to improve water quality and restore stream buffers.
2. Insect and Disease Management: Conduct visual surveys at 30 high-risk sites (10/year) across Marion, Clackamas, and Yamhill Counties, treating 15 acres total (5/year) to detect emerald ash borer (EAB) and inform management plans.
3. Landowner Engagement: Provide EAB-specific technical assistance to 45 forest landowners (15/year) through workshops and follow-up support.

4. Municipal Support: Complete 2 tree inventories in the Pudding River watershed to guide landscape-level planning and resilience.

Outcomes:

- Improved water quality through riparian restoration
- Increased detection and management of EAB
- Enhanced landowner and municipal capacity for forest health response

Requested Action: Recommendation to the Board to approve the Letter of Support and the requested award amount of \$10,000 in cash and \$20,430 in staff time for two staff positions to help implement the LSR grant over the course of three years.

Proposed By: MaKayla Fithian (Pudding River Watershed Council) and Chelsea Blank (staff).



*Helping the people of Marion County
conserve natural resources.*

June 2, 2025

To: Landscape Scale Restoration Grant Program Review Committee
Re: Pudding River W.C. Landscape Scale Restoration Grant Proposal

On behalf of the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District I'm writing to express support for Pudding River Watershed Council's Landscape Scale Restoration grant proposal. Marion Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) works in partnership with the Pudding River Watershed Council (PRWC) to conserve and protect natural areas and streams within their overlapping boundaries. Many of these areas include Ash dominant riparian forests and habitats. Oregon ash is a common species found in these riparian corridors and plays an important role in ecosystem services across the watershed. There is an estimated mortality rate of at least 90% for Oregon ash in the next 10-20 years due to Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). A collaborative effort is needed to proactively manage this emerging threat.

Specifically, at Marion SWCD we're excited because of the following work proposed by PRWC under the LSR program:

- The project prioritizes replanting and underplanting in response to EAB. Private landowners, rural communities, and other land managers need resources and assistance to manage the threats of EAB.
- The proposed project LSR builds upon and expands the extent of EAB response work by adding value, scale, and impact to current and future projects throughout the region.

We support Pudding River Watershed Council's LSR grant proposal to manage the threat of EAB by contributing \$10,000 in cash and \$20,430 in staff time to help implement this important work.

Thank you for your time and careful review of this proposal.

Sincerely,

SIGNATURE

Full Name
District Chair
Phone Number

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Landscape Scale Restoration Grant Project Proposal for Emerald Ash Borer

Budget:

Marion SWCD's Scope

September 2026 - September 2029

Requested Funds	Total	Budget Narrative
Education and Outreach	\$5,000	Cash contribution. Examples of education and outreach activities include: citizen science, workshops to train landowners on identifying Oregon ash and EAB detection
Replanting and Underplanting	\$5,000	Cash contributions to buy planting and underplanting materials
Staff time (mileage, surveys, project management)	\$20,430	Staff time from Chelsea Blank and Sarah Hamilton to complete visual surveys, assist with project management and coordination, and travel to complete visual surveys
TOTAL	\$30,430	

Project Budget (including all partners)

	Project Budget					
		Leverage ¹				
	Grant	Match		Non-Match	Source	TOTAL
	Funds requested	Applicant	Non-federal contributors	Applicant, non-federal, and/or federal	3 rd Party Contributor/s	Total project cost
	Personnel / Labor:	\$83,115	\$26,171		1	\$109,287
	Fringe Benefits:	\$19,034	\$6,301		1	\$25,336
6	Travel:	\$6,750				\$6,750
	Equipment:					
	Supplies:	\$7,975	\$5,000	\$7,500	1	\$20,476
	Contractual:	\$118,526		\$212,469	2,3,4,5,6	\$330,995
	Construction:					
	Consolidated ² :					
	Other:					
	Indirect Costs ³ :	\$22,041				\$22,041
	TOTAL:	\$257,441	\$37,472	\$219,969		\$514,882

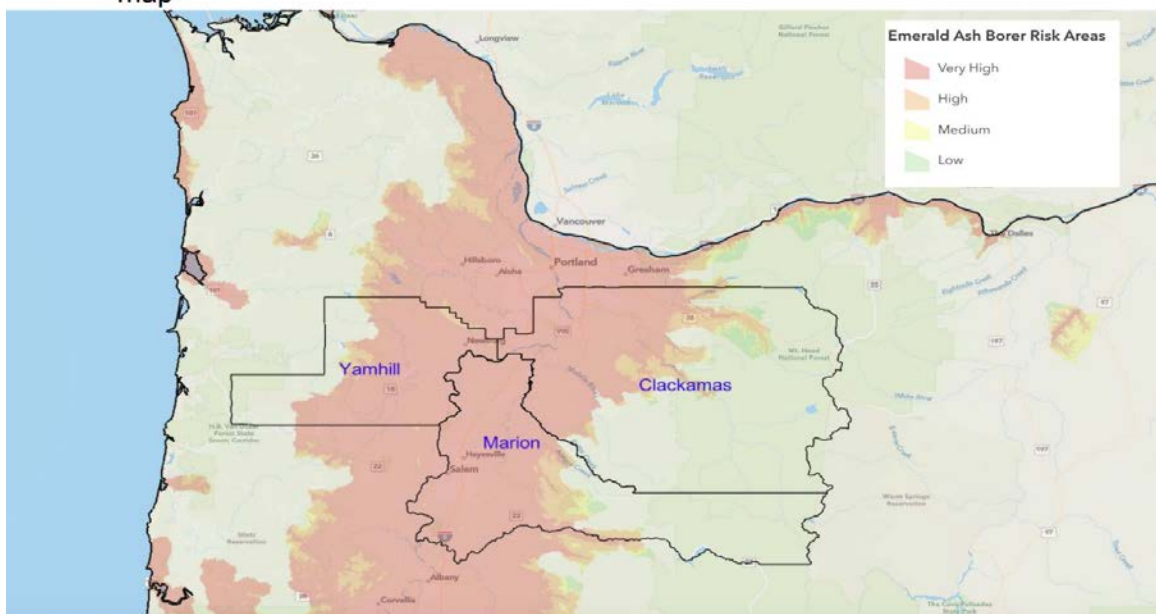
Summary of Grant Application:

- Budget summary: Funds requested: **\$257,441**. Total project value: **\$528,312**
 - Marion SWCD requested cash: **\$10,000**
 - Marion SWCD requested staff time contribution: **\$20,430**
 - **Marion SWCD contribution is 5% of overall project total.**

- **NEED:** Emerald ash borer (EAB) was detected in Oregon in 2022 and newly found in Yamhill, Marion, & Clackamas (YMC) County in 2024. There's a widespread presence of ash trees particularly native Oregon ash across the Willamette Valley. In the next 20 years the estimate is 1 in 1,000 trees will survive. Landowners and local governments are unprepared to manage this emerging threat and need support to slow EAB's spread and reduce long-term impacts.
- **GOAL:** Implement a multi-jurisdictional response to EAB focused on detection, restoration, public outreach, healthy forest landscapes, & building resilience in rural areas of the Willamette Valley. This project is building off an existing EAB task force.

Map:

Proposed project area and northwest Oregon emerald ash borer risk map



Deliverables:

1. **Riparian Replanting:** Plant 19,500 native trees and shrubs over three years (6,500/year) in ash-dominated riparian areas to improve water quality and restore stream buffers.
2. **Insect and Disease Management:** Conduct visual surveys at 30 high-risk sites (10/year) across Marion, Clackamas, and Yamhill Counties, treating 15 acres total (5/year) to detect emerald ash borer (EAB) and inform management plans.
3. **Landowner Engagement:** Provide EAB-specific technical assistance to 45 forest landowners (15/year) through workshops and follow-up support.
4. **Municipal Support:** Complete 2 tree inventories in the Pudding River watershed to guide landscape-level planning and resilience.

Outcomes:

- Improved water quality through riparian restoration
- Increased detection and management of EAB
- Enhanced landowner and municipal capacity for forest health response

- Greater public awareness and engagement in EAB resilience efforts

Other Partners:

- Yamhill and Clackamas SWCD's
- Greater Yamhill WC
- Oregon Parks and Recreation Department
- Oregon Department of Forestry
- City of Woodburn
- Marion County

Benefits:

This proposal supports vulnerable communities by mitigating the impact of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), which poses a serious ecological and economic threat. The proposed actions focus on private landowners, providing them with tools and resources to manage and restore tree canopy impacted by EAB. These communities often lack the resources to recover from ecological damage, which can compound existing social and economic stressors. By targeting EAB response and recovery efforts in counties and tracts with documented high vulnerability, this project engages historically underserved populations and supports resilience in communities already facing significant burdens.

Letter of Support

- We request a letter of support and have provided a template, see attached.



Marion Soil and Water Conservation District Natural Resources Committee Meeting – Agenda Item Brief

Agenda Item Name: OrCAN Soil Health Network Memorandum of Understanding

Date: June 18th, 2025

Agenda Item Brief:

OrCAN has provided a draft memorandum of understanding (MoU) for Regional Hubs participating in its Soil Health Network. The MoU details the responsibilities Marion SWCD will assume including but not limited to; participating in network capacity building, providing resources and technical assistance, supporting access to soil health financial incentives, and identifying regional needs/barriers. Our participation will require us to perform regional outreach on soil health, support soil testing thorough lab referral and test result interpretations, and to host/support in-person gatherings.

OrCAN will provide support in the form of coordinating the network, create a network specific website, work to ensure the network is accessible, and advocacy to create institutional support for soil health. OrCAN will also provide Marion SWCD with compensation for in-person Soil Health Network Convenings, and travel reimbursement.

Deliverables:

1. Quarterly Reports
2. Soil Health Events
3. Number of soil testing referrals and interpretations
4. Outreach activities and participant details

Requested Action: Recommendation to the Board to approve the Soil Health Network's Memorandum of understanding and commit to responsibilities of a Soil Health Network Regional Hub.

Proposed By: OrCAN and Zamora

Memorandum of Understanding

For the Oregon Climate and Agriculture Network's project
to convene an inclusive, collaborative statewide soil health network

Between

Oregon Climate and Agriculture Network

And

Marion Soil and Water Conservation District

1. Nature and Timeline of Agreement

This Memorandum of Understanding establishes the basis for mutual understanding and cooperation between the **Oregon Climate and Agriculture Network (OrCAN)**, a fiscally sponsored non-profit organization with a statewide focus and **Marion Soil and Water Conservation District (Marion SWCD)** regarding collaboration on an inclusive, collaborative statewide soil health network.

Effective Dates

Start date: July 15, 2025

End date: June 30, 2026

2. Background and Purpose

The Oregon Climate and Agriculture Network (OrCAN) is convening an inclusive, collaborative statewide [Soil Health Network](#) to promote soil health for climate resilience. The network aims to provide:

- **Resources:** Streamlined, relevant, and accessible tools to support producers in implementing soil health practices
- **Connection:** Opportunities for peer support, inspiration, and learning for producers across their region
- **Capacity:** Building capacity for farm service providers to meet producers' needs
- **Alignment:** Enhancing collaboration and innovation among farm service providers

Regional Hubs will play a key role in the Soil Health Network. These are existing functional institutions providing place-based support tailored to their region. **Marion SWCD** has expressed readiness to serve in a Regional Hub Lead role.

The purpose of a Regional Hub is to offer a suite of support so that producers gain the skills, resources, and connections they need to build healthy soils. This may include:

- **Outreach** to producers and farm service providers in their region,
- **Technical assistance** via 1:1 consultation and on-farm education events
- **Information and tools** including access to statewide resources, equipment & soil testing
- **Financial Incentives** such as grants/funding and grant writing support

- **Peer Community** via field days and other in-person regional gatherings where producers and farm service providers can share successes/challenges, support and inspiration
- **Connection/referral** to Auxiliary Support Organizations and statewide resource people

The Soil Health Network is currently in a pilot phase, with Regional Hubs, Auxiliary Support Organizations, and Statewide Resource People piloting the structure across Oregon. Regional Hubs are essential to this learning process and will help identify what works, what's needed, and what can be improved.

Regional Hubs look different depending on the place and provide services tailored to their region that can address barriers and support implementation of soil health practices on the ground. Regional Hubs may include Soil and Water Conservation Districts, OSU Extension, nonprofit organizations, and other trusted local partners. Our vision is to have hubs in all parts of the state; in the meantime, in this pilot phase, Regional Hubs will likely be located in these regions in Oregon: Central, Northeast, Southeast, Rogue Valley/Southwest, South Coast, South Willamette Valley, and Mid-Willamette Valley & Coast. Gatherings for Regional Hub Leads will convene network leads for connection, alignment, best practices, and identification of training and resource needs, at least annually.

3. Marion SWCD's Scope of Work:

This scope of work represents a flexible framework for the Regional Hub Lead that can be adapted in partnership with OrCAN to reflect evolving regional context and capacity. As part of a pilot program, we anticipate changes and learning along the way, and invite Regional Hubs to provide feedback and work with OrCAN to adapt to regional needs accordingly.

Regional Hub Leads are asked to provide the following deliverables, separated between "core" (baseline commitments) and "as capacity allows" (additional activities to take part in if capacity/resources are available).

Name of Regional Hub Lead: **Cesar Zamora**

Region served: **Mid-Willamette Valley & Coast, specifically Marion County**

Core Responsibilities and Deliverables

1. Participate in Network capacity building, connection, and evaluation
 - a. Attend the Soil Health Network orientation, annual convenings, and the Regional Hub Lead training series*
 - b. Participate in quarterly check-ins with OrCAN's network coordinator
 - c. Complete feedback surveys and reporting for the Soil Health Network
 - d. Optional: Distribute and collect an annual network participant evaluation survey
2. Provide resources and technical assistance and refer to other support services and

resources

- a. Record technical assistance provided, including hours and examples of assistance provided, *as capacity allows*
 - b. Document resources shared and referrals made
3. Support access to financial incentives for soil health
 - a. Help producers access financial support or grant writing assistance, and document instances of grant writing support
 - b. If offering financial incentives, share the opportunities available and number of producers receiving financial support
4. Identify regional needs, barriers, and success stories and share with OrCAN
 - a. Share any barriers to accessing resources or needs identified by producers and/or farm service providers, and collaborate with OrCAN to advocate for and/or provide requested resources
 - b. Identify and recommend success stories to the Network Coordinator for promotion, including examples of producers implementing soil health practices as a result of technical assistance and resources

*Training series may cover topics including soil health science, existing resources for soil health, communicating about soil health with producers, and inclusive producer outreach.

As Capacity Allows

5. Conduct regional outreach to engage producers interested in maintaining or improving their soil health
 - a. Document outreach activities to producers and farm service providers around soil health
 - b. Track participant details (name, org/farm, acreage, crop type, other demographics if known) of those receiving or providing services and resources for soil health, *as capacity allows*
6. Support soil testing by providing referrals to labs, interpretation of results, and recommended actions
 - a. Track referrals to soil testing labs
 - b. If offering soil testing and interpretation, track number of soil tests conducted and interpreted with recommended actions
7. Host and/or support in-person regional gatherings, including producer-to-producer field days, events, and communities of practice
 - a. Document soil health events supported and/or hosted, including attendance and evaluations

Reporting

Regional Hub Leads will be asked to submit a quarterly report in the form of an online survey to track progress and inform shared learning across the network. The survey will be sent at the start of the following quarter and should be completed within 30 days, as feasible. Hubs will report only on the deliverables completed during the previous quarter. The quarterly check-in with OrCAN's Network Coordinator may be used to review deliverables, discuss challenges and successes, and ask questions.

Reports will include information in the deliverables above as capacity allows, such as the number and type of participants engaged, technical assistance provided (including hours and topics), resources shared or referred, events hosted or supported, and any identified needs, barriers, or success stories from the region.

The information shared in the Regional Hub reports will help OrCAN map the landscape of soil health support across Oregon, identify statewide needs, and inform best practices and strategies to increase implementation of soil health practices. The reported data will also support OrCAN's grant reporting and fundraising efforts to sustain and grow the Soil Health Network. Participant details will be kept confidential, and stories may be shared anonymously unless permission is given to share identifying information.

4. OrCAN's Responsibilities

This section outlines OrCAN's responsibilities in coordinating and supporting the Soil Health Network. OrCAN's role may evolve based on network needs, lessons learned, and available capacity. We welcome feedback from Regional Hubs to ensure our support is relevant, responsive, and grounded in the needs of producers statewide.

OrCAN's responsibilities are organized below into "core responsibilities" (baseline commitments) and "as capacity allows" (additional support OrCAN will provide if additional funding/resources are secured).

Core Responsibilities

1. Coordinate the Soil Health Network
 - a. Establish formal relationships with, and seek funding for/with, network leads
 - b. Convene and support the Network's Steering/Advisory Committee
 - c. Host regular meetings, virtual or in-person, of all Regional Hub Leads
 - d. Provide training for Regional Hub Leads on topics identified by and responsive to Hub needs
 - e. Facilitate and strengthen connection between network leads
2. Create and maintain a user-friendly website for the network
 - a. Host an interactive listing of Regional Hub Leads, Auxiliary Support Organizations, and Statewide resource people
 - b. Share up-to-date statewide resources and funding opportunities
3. Work to ensure the network is accessible
 - a. Offer virtual training on inclusive producer outreach
 - a. Offer materials and resources in multiple languages, when possible
4. Advocate to address systemic barriers and institutionalize support for soil health
 - a. Advocate for, and engage the network in advocating for, streamlined, accessible funding and other resources)

As Capacity Allows

5. Provide additional resources/support to the statewide network and Regional Hubs

- a. Support producer-to-producer events and communities of practice
- b. Offer materials and resources in multiple languages
- c. Provide interpretation and translation services for network events
- d. Fill gaps in resources identified by producers and farm service providers
- e. Work to address barriers to access to resources identified by producers and farm service providers via Regional Hubs

5. Compensation

Marion SWCD agrees to provide the Scope of Work above as in-kind support.

If travel is required for **Marion SWCD** to attend in-person Soil Health Network convenings, OrCAN will provide travel reimbursement. OrCAN may have funding available for in person meetings to be made accessible with child care, travel reimbursement, and translation services.

As described in OrCAN's responsibilities, OrCAN is working on securing funding so that Regional Hub Leads can be compensated in the future.

6. Contacts

The primary point of contact for **OrCAN** is:

Sage Fairman, Program Manager
sage@oregonclimateag.org
831-454-6480

The primary point of contact for **Marion Soil and Water Conservation District** is:

Cesar Zamora
Cesar.Zamora@marionswcd.net
971-372-1341

On Behalf of OrCAN

Sage Fairman, Program Manager
Signature:

On Behalf of Marion Soil and Water Conservation District

Name & Title:

Signature: *insert electronic signature or type your name here*



Marion Soil and Water Conservation District Natural Resources Committee Meeting – Agenda Item Brief

Agenda Item Name: CAG Review Committee Structure

Date: June 11, 2025

Agenda Item Brief:

The Conservation Assistance Grant (CAG) Review Committee is currently comprised of:

- Director: Vacant
- Director Emeritus: Dave Budeau
- Associate Director: Leland Hardy
- NRCS: Theresa Brehm
- North Santiam Watershed Council
- Pudding River Watershed Council

Recommendation to adjust committee and define the role of the CAG Review Committee members:

- Director:
- Associate Director:
- NRCS:
- Watershed Council
- Member of the Public:

Staff will continue to provide support for the committee.

Requested Action:

Determine the role of the CAG Review Committee members.

Appoint individuals to fill each CAG Review Committee position

Proposed By: Natural Resources Committee



Marion Soil and Water Conservation District Natural Resources Committee Meeting – Agenda Item Brief

Agenda Item Name: FY 2025-26 Native Plant Sale Plan Review

Date: June 18th, 2025

Agenda Item Brief:

The Marion SWCD Native Plant Sale Team has been developing a plan for the FY 2025-26 Native Plant Sales. We are planning to move bare-root plants to our autumn sale to improve survival, as this is a better time to plant those plants. We are also working to increase educational offerings during the spring sale to create more opportunities for engagement.

We want to share the plan with you for review and are interested in any feedback.

Requested Action: None

Proposed By: Sarah Hamilton



2025 Native Plant Sale Plan

Marion Soil & Water Conservation District

Marion SWCD is Supporting People in Making Positive Environmental Change.

The mission of Marion SWCD is to partner with people in support of thriving lands, clean water, and healthy habitats. We do this through planning, technical assistance, and education.

District Goals

1. Inspire Conservation
2. Healthy Soil & Clean Water
3. Healthy Habitats
4. Productive Working Lands
5. Effective Partnerships
6. Strong Organizational Health

Marion SWCD Native & Invasive Plants Programs seek to create a flourishing environment in Marion County that supports clean water, healthy soil, abundant wildlife, and an empowered populace through the management and control of invasive plant populations, the protection and increase in native plant populations, and education of the public.

Native Plant Sale Purpose

1. Increase wildlife habitat, protect soil health, build pollinator abundance, and improve water quality in Marion County by improving community access to native plants and supporting the increase of native plant usage on the landscape. (District Goals 2, 3 & 4)
2. Increase knowledge and understanding of conservation within our communities by supporting scholarships for local natural resource students. (District Goals 1 & 6)
3. Build community and connect with residents & organizations through the sales and the volunteer opportunities they provide (District Goals 1 & 6).
4. Connect Marion County residents to local ecology through education around native plants and their roles in healthy ecosystems. (District Goal 1)

Plant Sales

Autumn Bulbs, Seeds, & Bare-Roots

- Provides access to lower-cost and bulk native plants in late autumn, when planting is best for those types of plants.
- Sale is in person, first-come, first-served, and packaging is done by customers to minimize staff/volunteer time.
- Staff members will double-check all purchases.

Spring Container Sale

- Provides container plants in early spring when gardeners are beginning to plant.
- Sale will open online in the winter. Most plants are pre-sold. Orders are pulled and organized before the sale.
- Partner tables and activities make this an outreach event, as well. We are working to increase partner participation and include more fun activities for adults and kids.

This year, we are working to minimize staff time and recruit more volunteers to assist with the sales. We are also looking to build on the Spring Sale by providing more activities and opportunities to learn.

FY 2025-26 NPS Budget

Starting Available	\$27,930.00
Bee & Bird Houses	\$150.00
Bulbs Plants Seeds	\$17,480.00
Note Cards Posters	\$500.00
Stan Vistica Scholarship	\$8,800.00
Stripe & Square Fees	\$1,000.00

Native Plant Sale Timeline

[illegible]

Before, During, and After the Sale

Spring Sale	Autumn Sale	Tasks	PIC	Prep Week	During Sale	Post Sale
		Print and Organize Orders	Native & Inv Plant Spec			
		Receive & Inventory Plants	Native & Inv Plant Spec			
		Organize Staging Area	Native & Inv Plant Spec			
		Organize Order Area	Native & Inv Plant Spec			
		Set Up & Stock Volunteer Table	Vol & Staff Coord			
		Greet, Orient, & Train Volunteers & Staff	Vol & Staff Coord			
		QA/QC Pulled Orders	Native & Inv Plant Spec			
		Care for Plants	Native & Inv Plant Spec			
		Process Returns	Native & Inv Plant Spec			
		Organize Day-of Sale	Native & Inv Plant Spec			
		Set Up Tables & Educational Materials/Activities	Partner & Site Coord			
		Staff the Sale	All			
		Run & Staff the Register	Fin Admin			
		Organize Remaining Order Pick Up	Comm & Out Spec			
		Donate Remaining Plants	Native & Inv Plant Spec			
		Pay Invoices	Fin Admin			
		Thank Yous for Volunteers	Vol & Staff Coord			
		Thank Yous for Partners	Partner & Site Coord			
		Create Staff & Volunteer Reports	Vol & Staff Coord			
		Create Financial Reports	Fin Admin			
		Prepare Annual Sale Report	Native & Inv Plant Spec			



Marion Soil and Water Conservation District Natural Resources Committee Meeting – Agenda Item Brief

Agenda Item Name: Conservation Cover and Hedgerow Program

Date: June 18th 2025

Agenda Item Brief:

Becky, Susan, and Cesar have developed a draft grant program for the Conservation Cover, Field Boarder, and Hedgerow conservation practices. The proposed grant program is modeled after the Conservation Cover Assistance program and includes tiered incentives for each of the practices. The proposed program will have a unique payment structure wherein grant recipients will be provided an upfront payment of 75% to help pay for project implementation.

Requested Action:

Recommendation to the Board to approve the adoption of the Conservation Cover and Hedgerow Program as a pilot grant program.

Proposed By: Ortiz, Pineda, and Zamora

Permanent Vegetative Cover Program

June 2025

Proposal: create program to incentivize establishing and maintaining permanent vegetative cover, consisting of the following conservation practices: Conservation Cover (#327), Field Borders (#386), and Hedgerow (#422).

Purpose: The practices included are used to accomplish one or more of the following purposes:

- Filter, intercept or adsorb airborne particulate matter, chemical drift, odors
- Improve soil health
- Provide or enhance wildlife, pollinator and beneficial organism habitat
- Reduce emissions of particulate matter (PM), PM precursors, and greenhouse gases)
- Reduce ground and surface water quality degradation by nutrients and surface water quality degradation by sediment
- Reduce sheet, rill, and wind erosion and sedimentation

Conditions Where practices apply:

These practices can be applied on all lands needing permanent vegetative cover needing a permanent vegetative planting to improve soil health, prevent and reduce offsite movement of sediment and particulate matter, or establish habitat for wildlife, pollinator and beneficial organisms.

The practice(s) may be applied on a portion of the field or parcel.

These practice(s) do not apply to plantings for seed production, forage production or critical area plantings.

General Criteria applicable to the practices:

Plant requirement: Select vegetative species that are suited and adapted to soil and site conditions, climate, and conservation purpose; select species that do not host pests or diseases that pose a known risk to nearby crops or other desirable plant communities.

Perennial or self-seeding annuals or biennials

Planting: preference for late fall, winter, early spring planting to minimize need for irrigation

Seed Guidelines and Conditions:

- All commercial seed must be tested and labeled following Oregon Seed Labeling laws under OAR 603-056-0030 Hay and Seed.
- Non-commercial seed may be used if tested by ISTA and or AOSA accredited seed testing laboratory. A copy of the seed test results will need to be provided to Marion SWCD.
- All seed shall be free of prohibited noxious weed seed and under maximum allowable number of seed per pound of restricted noxious weed seed as referenced in ORS 633.561 and 633.571
- All seed must have minimum germination rate of 80% following Oregon Standard
- Germination. Exceptions allowed only with prior approval and must be species specific.

Operations and Maintenance

Project operation and maintenance are the responsibility of the grantee/landowner. The following is guidance on how the recommended conservation practice should be maintained to ensure that the practice will meet or exceed the life expectancy.

This will be followed by recommendations for the specific practice, i.e. conservation cover, field border, hedgerow to ensure that the competing vegetation is controlled until the permanent cover becomes established.

Practice Specific Criteria

Conservation Cover - #327

Lifespan: 5 years

Criteria: Conservation Cover is limited to perennial systems, such as orchards and vineyards, the establishment and management requirements apply only to areas planted with this practice (e.g. the grassed alleyways are seeded and managed under this practice, but the vine row or tree row is managed separately).

Field Border - #386

Lifespan: 5 years

Criteria: Minimum width – 30 feet

Hedgerow – #422-Hedgerow

Lifespan: 15 years

Associated Practices: 490 – Site Preparation. 484-Mulching

Criteria: 75% survival rate; One, Two or Three rows; purposes may be drift control or beneficial habitat

Proposed Incentive Matrix

	Conservation Cover	Field Border	Hedgerow Single Row	Hedgerow Two Row	Hedgerow Three Row
Basis for Rate	acre	acre	linear foot	linear foot	linear foot
Base rate:					
Multi-species incentive:					
Native species incentive:					



Marion Soil and Water Conservation District Natural Resources Committee Meeting – Agenda Item Brief

**Agenda Item Name: Review Framework for Evaluating Pilot Programs – Board-
Requested Action**

Date: June 18th 2025

Agenda Item Brief:

Purpose:

The committee is asked to review and refine a proposed framework for evaluating pilot programs, with specific attention to timelines, criteria, and accountability measures. This includes consideration of how pilot efforts—such as the three-year Partner Grant pilot—are assessed at their conclusion to determine effectiveness, outcomes, and next steps.

Background:

At the Board's request, a consistent, transparent process is being developed to guide the review of pilot programs. The goal is to ensure that all such initiatives are evaluated using a clear set of standards that support informed decision-making and long-term program planning.

Action Requested:

Recommend that the Board formally adopt the proposed pilot program review process as a standard practice for evaluating current and future pilot efforts.

Requested Action:

Recommend that the Board formally adopt the proposed pilot program review process as a standard practice for evaluating current and future pilot efforts.

Proposed By: Staff - Sanchez



Marion Soil and Water Conservation District Natural Resources Committee Meeting – Agenda Item Brief

Agenda Item Name: 2024-2025 Cover Crop Program Final Report

Date: June 18th, 2025

Agenda Item Brief:

Staff reporting on the 2024 – 2025 cover crop program

Requested Action:

No action required

Proposed By: Staff - Ortiz

Cover Crop Program

2024-2025

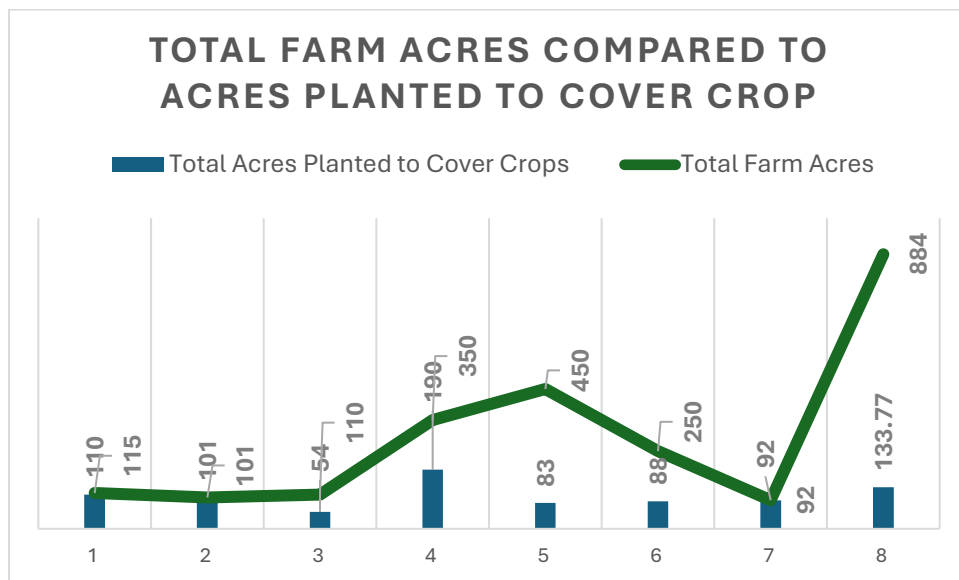
The 2024-2025 Cover Crop Program provided \$45,000 in budgeted funding to implement NRCS Practice #340 – Cover Crop. Applications were accepted from August 1 to October 11, 2024.

There were eight (8) applications accepted for the program; there were additional interested applicants, however funding was limited to \$45,000 so the program closed for applications early as all funds were allocated. One application received less funding than requested due to all funds being allocated

Acres Enrolled: 943

Acres Planted to Cover Crop: 851

Participating Farms ranged in size from 92 acres to 884 acres



Where the Cover Crops were Planted

Watershed	# of Acres	Priority Area
Beaver Creek	77	
Brandy Creek	45	PSP
Champoeg Creek	110	
Headwaters Pudding River	171	PSP / ODA Focus Area
Howell Prairie Creek	89	PSP / SIA
Lambert Slough-Willamette River	282	
Marion Creek - North Santiam River	43	
Upper Mill Creek	34	