



Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District

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September 2026

Let me know if you want to be ADDED or TAKEN OFF this email list or have something to add: ellen.hammond@jeffswcd.org

September 22, noon-1:30pm

Jefferson SWCD Board Meeting
COAREC

Learn what the SWCD is doing for you. Contact [Kate Haarberg](#) for an agenda and to RSVP for lunch! Agendas and approved minutes are posted on our [website](#) as soon as available.

THE SWCD IS HIRING! Ellen is not retiring, just getting tired. We are looking for someone to start taking over some of her responsibilities so she can work fewer hours. Feel free to contact [Ellen](#) for more information. Please see job announcement at: <https://www.jeffswcd.org/conservation-coordinator>.

WILDFIRE

Coordinated Response for North Central Oregon: Staff from Oregon Department of Agriculture, 7 SWCDs (Wasco, Sherman, Jefferson, Gilliam, Wheeler, Crook, and Deschutes) and 5 Watershed Councils (Wasco County, Sherman County, Mid Deschutes, Mid John Day, and Crooked River) met in Antelope and agreed that we want to coordinate requests for immediate assistance and start long-range planning for wildfire resiliency for North Central Oregon. Three staffers from Senator Wyden and Merkley's offices called in (thanks Sherman SWCD!). Grant County will also be an integral part of this group.



We are drafting a Statement of Need to present to federal and state level policy makers and funders. There is lots of interest in this group and we will start welcoming others who want to participate.

Need Rangeland Seed? We are trying to coordinate seed orders for local suppliers to get reduced pricing for bulk orders. Contact [Adam Haarberg](#) or [Ally Steinmetz](#) if you are interested. We currently have no funding for seed; landowners would be buying it.

Farming through Wildfire Season

A free self-paced resource for farmers and ranchers to assess their risk, identify hazards, manage their fuel loads, prepare their evacuation plan, respond to an active threat, and create long term resilience is available at: <https://farmercampus.com/courses/fires/>.

This is a hybrid online course and network dedicated to helping farmers and ranchers face a future with fire.

More on next page!

CROPLANDS



- **Emergency drought funding:** The SWCD Board submitted their request to the Legislature and for additional funding to help upgrade irrigation infrastructure. No action on this request is expected this year.
- **NUID Water Bank and associated cover cropping incentives:** The Deschutes River Conservancy received funding to design a pilot program, and the SWCD is helping with that work. The current project will result in a plan, not actual funding, for cover cropping incentives but will identify best pathways forward, not just in association with the water bank but for cover cropping in general.
- **Funding for irrigation upgrades:** The SWCD is actively seeking funding to upgrade irrigation modernization needs identified in the Lateral 43 inventory. We plan to also start inventorying the rest of NUID.
- **Engaging landowners in information exchange:** options besides Farm Fair! The Drought Croplands Work Group is focusing on how to better engage landowners, both learning from them and providing information to them.

New Tools from OSU-COAREC!

1. **Free online calculators** from COAREC's [AgroHydrology Research and Innovation Lab](#) to help growers and irrigation advisors turn field measurements into useful irrigation information:

- * Timed-volume calculator = estimates average flow rate.
- * Applied-depth calculator = estimates the total volume delivered and the gross and net depths applied.
- * Catch-can calculator for sprinkler systems = shows how evenly water is distributed.
- * Root-zone calculator = estimates the water missing from the root zone and the depth needed to refill it.

Each calculator includes a short field protocol and shows how the result is calculated. The tools help growers and irrigation advisors interpret field measurements and better understand irrigation-system and root-zone conditions. Explore the [irrigation measurement calculators](#). Contact [Floyd Nicolas](#) for more information.

2. **Irrigation-scheduling resources for Central Oregon growers**

Choosing the right irrigation-scheduling resource can be difficult. A webpage from COAREC's [AgroHydrology Research and Innovation Lab](#) brings together tools and information available to Oregon growers, including Irrigation Scheduler Mobile, AgriMet, OpenET, Web Soil Survey, and OSU and Pacific Northwest irrigation guides.

Growers can search the directory by the irrigation question they need to answer and compare each resource's purpose, access options, best uses, and limitations. The webpage also presents a practical three-check approach: use weather-based estimates of crop water use to understand demand, soil information to understand water storage, and field observations to verify root-zone and irrigation-system conditions. A printable two-page ET guide explains common evapotranspiration terms, shows how ET fits into a root-zone water balance, and includes a worked irrigation-depth example.

Explore the [irrigation-scheduling directory and download the ET guide](#).