



News Release

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[Oregon Water Resources Department Recognizes Water Conservation Efforts](#)

The Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) has announced five recipients of its 2018 Stewardship and Conservation Awards, which recognize the efforts of entities and individuals that are making concerted efforts to conserve water. The award recipients include Woody and Megan Wolfe, Central Oregon Irrigation District, City of Bend, City of Ashland, and the City of Lake Oswego.

“The Stewardship and Conservation Awards celebrate those making a meaningful difference in conserving Oregon’s water resources,” said OWRD Director Tom Byler. “These awards recognize the role that water users play in balancing water demands with sustainability, while providing an avenue to share innovative ideas and successes with the public at large.”

As early adopters of conservation practices, Woody and Megan Wolfe in Wallowa County are recipients of the Tyler Hansell Award for Efficiency in Agriculture. The Wolfe’s – with assistance from The Freshwater Trust, Oregon Water Resources Department, Nez Perce Tribe, and Columbia Basin Water Transactions Program – converted 872 acres of land from flood irrigation to efficient pivot irrigation. Using the Water Resources Department’s Allocation of Conserved Water Program, a portion of the conserved water will go instream to benefit fish, while some will be used to irrigate new lands.

“Conservation to me is an effort to reach sustainability. With an ever growing population, how we use and don't use our natural resources matters more now than it ever has,” said Woody Wolfe about the importance of water conservation efforts.

Central Oregon Irrigation District (COID) received the Best Conservation Program Award in the Commercial/Industrial Category. Since 2000, COID has implemented water conservation projects to restore streamflows.

“COID is looking forward to spearheading additional conservation projects that improve the health of the Deschutes River and benefit fish and wildlife,” said Craig Horrell, managing director for COID.

The City of Bend and the City of Ashland tied for the First Place Gold Award for the Best Conservation Program in the Large Municipality and Water Supplier Category (serving more than 1,000 people). The City of Lake Oswego received the Second Place Silver Award.

“Water conservation is a community value, and Bend has enhanced its WaterWise program by implementing a more integrated approach that uses many strategies to ensure a long-term, sustainable water supply. From our investment in smart meters, to a robust leak detection system, to innovative water conservation and education programs transforming our landscapes, the Bend Utility Department is poised to continue this important conservation and efficiency work as a key part of its supply portfolio,” said Mike Buettner, City of Bend water conservation program manager.

“Water conservation is about doing more with less, not going without. Being water efficient not only helps to lower water bills, it also helps minimize negative impacts during drought years, and helps to keep more water in stream for fish and wildlife. Being proactive and taking steps to reduce water use, benefits our entire community now and into the future,” said Julie Smitherman, water conservation specialist for the City of Ashland.

“This recognition shows that the Lake Oswego community does not take our resources for granted, understands the importance of efficient water use and has a strong appreciation for the value of its water; in and out of the Clackamas River,” said Kevin McCaleb, City of Lake Oswego water conservation coordinator.

For more information about the awards and recipients’ conservation efforts, please visit:

<https://www.oregon.gov/OWRD/programs/WaterRights/Conservation/Awards/Pages/default.aspx>

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