



Hood River
WATERSHED GROUP



MULTI-BENEFIT SOLUTIONS

IMPROVING POLLINATOR HABITAT

Wild and managed bee pollinator populations are in decline, impacting growers in Hood River County and across the United States. Oregon bees are challenged by the same array of pressures that impact pollinators in other states, yet one of the biggest challenges to bee health and fitness is the loss, fragmentation, and alteration of their habitat.

THE CHALLENGE

Production agriculture critically depends on healthy and robust populations of pollinators, which are currently responsible for pollinating more than two-thirds of the world's crop species. Hood River County agriculture consists of high-value specialty crops such as pears, cherries, and apples that depend on high levels of visitation from bee pollinators, including native bees, to maximize yield.

- > Production agriculture critically depends on healthy and robust populations of pollinators but bee populations and habitat are dwindling.

THE OPPORTUNITY

In the western United States, irrigation infrastructure modernization provides a unique opportunity to explore and implement cost-effective pollinator conservation efforts. With over 50 miles of canals already converted to pipelines across Oregon in the past 5 years and over 1,000 miles worth of projects already identified, the opportunity for increased, diverse pollinator habitat is immense. The conservation of water and creation of these pipelines opens up an opportunity for putting pollinator habitat back into the landscape. This project is the first of its kind to use irrigation district pipeline corridors for native pollinator habitat establishment or rehabilitation.

KEY BENEFITS

- > RESEED PIPELINE CORRIDOR WITH NATIVE PLANTS
- > INCREASE NUMBER & DIVERSITY OF POLLINATORS
- > PROVIDE A MODEL FOR OTHER PIPELINE PROJECTS

PROJECT OVERVIEW FARMERS IRRIGATION DISTRICT

The Hood River Soil and Water Conservation District has been working with Farmers Irrigation District to implement pollinator corridors along piped sections of district infrastructure. The Farmers Irrigation District encompasses approximately 12,000 acres located in northern-central Oregon within the Hood River Basin.



PVC TUBES CREATE NESTING FOR BEES AND ALLOW FOR EASY DATA COLLECTION.

By replacing invasive weeds along irrigation pipeline with native flowering plants, new pollinator pathways can be established to support increased bee diversity. Native plants and grass seed were planted along 2.7 miles of pipeline.

This project was supported with funds from NRCS and in partnership with Farmers Irrigation District, Farmer's Conservation Alliance, OSU Extension, Hood River Soil & Water Conservation District, and the Hood River Watershed Group.

LEARN MORE

- > fcasolutions.org/pollinator-corridors