



# Oregon Conservation Education & Assistance Network

## Happy New Year!

I hope 2023 brings you all the very best. Want to remind you to check out the OCEAN website. We are adding a calendar to it so check it out. Below is the OCEAN Board showing the areas that are represented and by who. We have 4 positions that are currently not filled. If there is someone who would be willing to fill those positions, please let me know ([cynthia.a.warnock@gmail.com](mailto:cynthia.a.warnock@gmail.com)). We meet once a month virtually.

### Rep Areas Members Officers

Columbia Plateau	Herb Winters	Northwest Oregon	Victoria Fischella Vice President
Eastern Oregon	Cynthia Warnock President	<a href="#">Southern Oregon</a>	<a href="#">Currently unfilled</a>
Eastern At Large - A	Deric Carson	Western At Large - A	Cathy McQueeney Secretary
<a href="#">Eastern At Large- B</a>	<a href="#">Currently unfilled</a>	<a href="#">Western At Large - B</a>	<a href="#">Currently unfilled</a>
<a href="#">Eastern At Large - C</a>	<a href="#">Currently unfilled</a>	Western At Large - C	Kelly Dawes Treasurer
Portland/Salem Metro	Jeremy Baker		

Every month the Oregon Conservation Partnership (OrCO) sponsors a webinar for Land Trusts, Watershed Council and Districts. The one in January is an update on DSL mitigation and the one in February will be a webinar on new employer laws. I don't have the dates and times yet, but will get it out to you when I do.

There are new District employees throughout the state and OCEAN may not have their names and emails. We ask that the Districts get those to us so we can keep our data base up to date. Thank you.

Cynthia Warnock

## CONNECT+ 2022 Conference!



Hello Conservation Colleagues!

On September 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>, the Oregon Conservation Education & Assistance Network held its Annual CONNECT conference at the Seaside Convention Center. This was the first OCEAN hybrid conference.

Held in the spring since 2009, and administered by OCEAN since 2012, [CONNECT](#) provides training focused on both the technical and administrative aspects of conservation implementation.

This year's conference planning team included a diverse range of staff representing SWCD's, Watershed Council, Oregon Association of Conservation District, and NRCS. Together, this 15-person team crafted a conference of 8 individual tracks, which provide 64 breakout sessions that included 99 presenters and co-presenters. Tracks were focused on Climate, Administration, Management and Policy, Diversity Equity and Inclusion, Education and Communication, Partnership and Collaboration, Riparian and Instream, Water, Uplands, Forests and Fire. Unfortunately, no field trips were created this year due to the uncertainty of attendance and participants' willingness to participate in close-quarters travel with strangers.

A total of 310 individuals participated in this hybrid event 234 in-person and 76 virtual. Due to the virtual nature of conference, we implemented a mobile app (Webex) specifically for this event which allowed for both in-person and virtual attendees to track their sessions, set up reminders and view content. Of those in attendance, 121 were staff from SWCD's, 84 staff from Watershed Councils, 30 staff from NRCS, 2 staff COLT and 72 staff from "other" partners and municipalities. 18 attendees were provided with registration waiver so that they would be able to attend this training opportunity.

We were honored to have Tony (naschio) Johnson, Tribal Chairman of the Chinook Indian Nation and Chinuk Wawa language teacher as this year's conference keynote speaker. He spoke to attendees about the Chinook Indian Nations culture, lifeways and integral connection to its aboriginal lands (which include the site of this year's conference). He also spoke about his communities' experiences with contact with colonizers and the fight for federal tribal recognition. He also participated in a Q & A session following his address.

92 evaluations were submitted (which is a record of submissions for the number of people in attendance). On a scale of 1-5 (1 = Dissatisfied, 5= Very Satisfied) responses broke out as follows:

Quality of Presenters - Approx 80% of respondents ranked at 4 or 5.

Variety of Presentations - Approx 66% of respondents ranked this at 4 or 5.

Virtual Conference Platform - Approx. 45% of respondents ranked this at a 4 or 5.

Overall event - Approx. 65% of respondents ranked this at 4 or 5. Approx. 27% of respondents ranked it at a 3. Less than 5% were dissatisfied overall.

In reviewing these responses, we are happy with the feedback we've received as the vast majority of people were happy with the offerings and management. However, we also learned a great deal for both in person and especially for our virtual conference management moving forward.

## **Planning the Next CONNECT Conference**

The OCEAN Board of Directors is discussing a plan for the next CONNECT training event. Until this year, CONNECT has always been held in the Spring to better accommodate field work, project management, agency budgeting and attendance by staff. We would like to move it back to the Spring, and we asked for your feedback if we should have CONNECT again in 2023, or if we wait until Spring of 2024. There were 64 responses to the 4-question survey using either the google form or by email.

- 1) Generally speaking, what season would be better for you to attend this training? 75% spring and 25%.

- 2) Would you rather have an online only CONNECT in 2023 knowing there would be no travel/lodging required? 70.3% no 29.7% yes.
- 3) Instead of a full CONNECT training in 2023, would you be interested in a shorter version based on regional/local issues to you? 71.9% yes 28.1% no.
- 4) Would you be willing/available to help plan CONNECT for 2023? 89.1% no 10.9% yes.

We would like to thank those who took the time to weigh in and help us make a decision on the next CONNECT Conference it helped a great deal!

## **Janet Greenup Retires from the OCEAN Board**

by Jason Faucera



As long as I've been a District employee (since 2002), Janet Greenup has been the Treasurer for OCEAN. While I can't prove it or find records from before 2003 I'm fairly certain that she was there at its inception.

If I were to guess why Janet believed in OCEAN enough to be on its board for 30 years and its Treasurer for at least 20 of those years, I would say that it's because she started at a time when most Districts didn't even have an employee. OCEAN was founded in 1992 as an employee's association by District employees that struggled with many of the issues that Districts, especially those without tax bases, have today.

As Districts evolved from one to multiple employee offices with the emergence of Senate Bill 1010 dollars and OWEB grants (then GWEB), the challenges of suddenly having employees and larger budgets was likely daunting if you had to go it alone.

OCEAN was created as a way for Districts to lean on each other and share resources. In her time as a board member, Janet brought stability and later history, and she believed that OCEAN could help all Districts be better through working across borders.

Before OCEAN shifted to education as its primary mission, OCEAN would help plan and deliver the OACD Annual Meeting to District board members and employees. Janet was at every conference I can remember, helping to keep things running smoothly.

She was always in charge of the door prizes and silent auction. If you have ever gone home from the OACD meeting or CONNECT with a prize in hand, you have Janet to thank. Silent Auction money and memberships are what OCEAN functioned on for 15 years before grants helped us deliver CONNECT. She also maintained the membership list and was quick to help you become a member if you weren't already.

The OCEAN board is thankful that Janet, as one of the last remaining founding members, served on the board so long. She was fun to be around, with a dry sense of humor, and she was always willing to lend a hand to help make Districts better. OCEAN certainly wouldn't be where it is today without her effort and leadership. We will miss having her on the board and can't thank her enough for her contributions to Oregon SWCDs. We wish her all the best in retirement.