

## **Assessing Farm Resources**

OSU Small Farm School, September 2012

Presentation by Marisha Auerbach, permaculture designer

[queenbee@herbnwisdom.com](mailto:queenbee@herbnwisdom.com)

[www.herbnwisdom.com](http://www.herbnwisdom.com)

Contact your County Assessor for Maps of your property

Good maps to have: Overhead pictures, GLO land maps, Google Earth (has a historical imagery function)

### **Climate Resources**

USDA Hardiness Zones: <http://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/PHZMWeb/>

Sunset Garden Zones: <http://www.sunset.com/garden/climate-zones/>

Western Regional Climate Center: <http://www.wrcc.dri.edu/>

Climate Wizard: [climatewizard.org](http://climatewizard.org)

### **Make a Sector Map**

Sun Sector: [suncalc.net](http://suncalc.net)

Look up a windrose for your area to learn about the wind sector

Regional Hazards Viewer & more: [oregonexplorer.info](http://oregonexplorer.info)

Surf your Watershed: <http://cfpub.epa.gov/surf/locate/index.cfm>

Assess the flows and terrain on your property.

### **How to do a water audit:**

- 1) Calculate your average annual rainfall.
- 2) Calculate the longest dry period
- 3) Make a list of what you might need water for, i.e drinking water, irrigation, animals, home use, etc
- 4) Calculate your daily water use.
- 5) Calculate your water use per year.
- 6) #4 x #2 = maximum amount of water needed per year
- 7) #6 x 20% as contingency = total amount of water you want to plan to have available.

### **How to Calculate your Roof Catchment Potential:**

Catchment area (sq ft of your roof) x amount of rainfall (convert to feet) x 7.48

(convert ft to gals) x runoff coefficient = amount of rainwater to collect annually

Runoff coefficient = how much water you may lose, depends on roofing material

Corrugated metal roof (.95), Asphalt (.90)

Always consider gravity feed when installing water catchment.

## **Yeoman's Scales of Landscape Permanence**

- 1) Climate
- 2) Land Shape
- 3) Water
- 4) Roads
- 5) Trees
- 6) Buildings
- 7) Subdivision
- 8) Soil

## **Soil Resources**

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS):

<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm>

Soil Tests: A&L Laboratories: <http://www.al-labs-west.com/sections/anservices/sampling>

**Principle of Cyclical Opportunity:** Every cyclic event increases the opportunity for yield. To increase cycling is to increase yield.

Make species lists.

Create different names for different habitats on your land.

Assess what stage in evolution these habitats may be in.

Observe indicator species.

Learn tracking skills.

**Principle of Stability:** It is not the number of diverse things in a design that lead to stability. Stability is based on the beneficial connections between the components. Make a list of all elements and structural components found on your land. Assess how you can create beneficial connections between them.

Check with your county or city planner to learn about your zoning laws.

Call building inspectors and civil engineers to assess your structural resources.

Check for regulations concerning setbacks.

## **Helpful organizations:**

Northwest Cooperative Development Center: [nwcdc.coop](http://nwcdc.coop)

Conservation Districts

Tilth: [www.tilth.org](http://www.tilth.org)

Cooperative Extensions

Department of Ecology

Oregon Department of Forestry Stewardship:

<http://cms.oregon.gov/odf/privateforests/pages/findforester.aspx>

Value Assessments for properties: [zillow.com](http://zillow.com)

**Websites for Grants**

USDA Alternative Farming Systems Information Center: <http://afsic.nal.usda.gov/>

ATTRA: <http://www.attra.org>

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board:

<http://cms.oregon.gov/OWEB/pages/index.aspx>

**Resources if you cant afford land**

Friends of Family Farmers: [www.friendsoffamilyfarmers.org/](http://www.friendsoffamilyfarmers.org/)

Beginning Farmers: [www.beginningfarmers.org](http://www.beginningfarmers.org)

Washington Farm Link: [www.cascadeharvest.org/programs/washington-farmlink](http://www.cascadeharvest.org/programs/washington-farmlink)

Land Stewardship Partners: [landstewardshipproject.org/](http://landstewardshipproject.org/)