

Golden Chair and members of the Committee.

I'm Gary Harris. I support Senate Bills 77 and 78, because I'm concerned about the continued eroding of the land base that farmers need to farm.

I farm 578 irrigated acres in Jefferson County's North Unit Irrigation District. My farm is composed of three (3) non-contiguous tracts in a five-mile radius on the Agency Plains north of Madras. I grow carrot seed, grass seed and wheat.

I will be 80 years old in September and am still actively farming. I belong to several agricultural groups: Farm Bureau, Wheat League, Central Oregon Seed Growers, to name a few.

I served as an LCDC commissioner from 1996 -2004, where I learned that all the Statewide Planning Goals were to be treated equal. Yet, Goal 3—preserve agricultural land for farm use has been under attack by development interests for decades, and it's getting worse.

The number of nonfarm uses allowed in the exclusive farm use zone has grown from 6 at the beginning of the program to over 60 now. This proliferation of nonfarm uses threatens the integrity of our exclusive farm use zone and undermines its purpose, which is to preserve and maintain agricultural land for commercial agriculture. They aren't creating any more farm ground.

Governor Tom McCall and Hector McPherson would roll over in their graves to know of the continued erosion of EFU lands that they so valiantly saved.

Agricultural economic production relies on a critical mass and economies of scale. The 59,000 irrigated acres of the North Unit irrigation district supports tractor dealerships, seed fertilizer and chemical warehouses which are necessary for ag to survive. What do solar panels, non-farm dwellings, large retail roadside stands, overblown home occupations outside the home, and large replacement McMansion's, add to ag business infrastructure incomes? What will a bed and breakfast or an accessory dwelling unit, ADU, add to the John Deere dealer's income?

I tell farmers, you purchase your farmland at ag price to farm, and then you should sell at farmland prices. Why after 52 years of land use planning rules and a new generation of farm owners, why should you expect to gentrify your farm with uses which no beginning farmer can afford. A young rancher wants a ranch with one or no home on the property. My philosophy is YOLO, you only live once, don't encumber your land with costly additions.

To farm today, the economies of scale require more land and larger expensive equipment. Of the 3590 patrons on 42,666 acres in Deschutes County Central Oregon Irrigation district with an average of 11.9 acres per farm. According to the agricultural census, the income from Deschutes County farms is a negative amount to Oregon revenue. With their llamas and horse pastures, they are not buying \$300,000 tractors and/or \$650,000 combines.

Because of drought and endangered species, Deschutes Basin irrigation districts are spending over \$100 million of public dollars to modernize their water delivery. North Unit's current project is \$35 million to pipe lateral 43. Those improvements are for commercial agriculture and not the 60-some allowed uses eroding the critical mass. The Madras Wilbur Ellis farm dealership closed due to water shortages and low wheat and grass seed prices. Idle ground with no production is the blame. Struggles of today do not mean we open the rules for more non-farms uses. When have you heard a farmer say "I can't make a living, a want to subdivide" when he builds his \$450,000 home or wants an additional residence.

The 20-year buildable land inventory for housing inside UGBs requirement is coming to Jefferson County. We have two planned 100 plus home subdivisions on irrigated hi-value land next to Culver and Metolius Instead of in Madras on sagebrush lands, this is wrong!

Jefferson County farms are the heartland of Central Oregon's agricultural economy. Producing \$83 million is direct economic output. Its warm days and cool nights at 2400-foot elevation is a prime seed crop region with great pollination. Non-farm housing has never been allowed. We discourage the proliferation of non-farm uses. The E in EFU means "exclusive" and reserved for agricultural crop endeavors only. Hi-value soils only comprise 2-3% of Eastern Oregon.

I'm encouraged your committee is engaged to solve the erosion of prime farmland. Hopefully, this needed legislation will curtail the abuse.

Respectfully submitted,



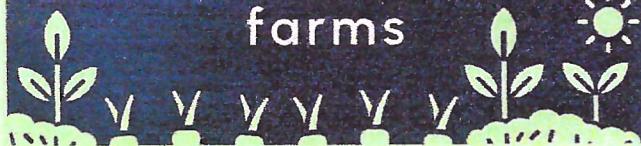
Gary Harris

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# The Economic Contribution of NUID

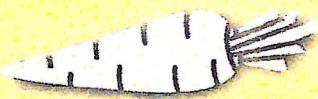
North Unit Irrigation District (NUID) provides irrigation water to some of the most productive and valuable farmland of the Deschutes River Basin in Central Oregon.\*

NUID supports over  
**950**  
farms

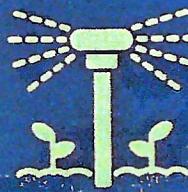


NUID agriculture contributes over  
**800 jobs**  
to the local economy



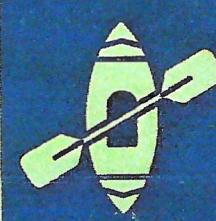
  
NUID carrot seeds can produce enough carrots to feed over  
**1 billion people**  
annually

NUID irrigates almost  
**60k acres**  
of farmland annually



NUID agriculture production supports  
**\$83 million**  
in direct economic output and supports an additional  
**\$53 million** in economic output across the broader Jefferson County economy.

Through extensive contributions to the Deschutes River Basin Habitat Conservation Plan, NUID contributes to **critical habitat** and recreation opportunities in the region.



NUID water supply supports over **900,000** outdoor recreation trips annually, generating up to **\$32 million** in local and non-local spending.



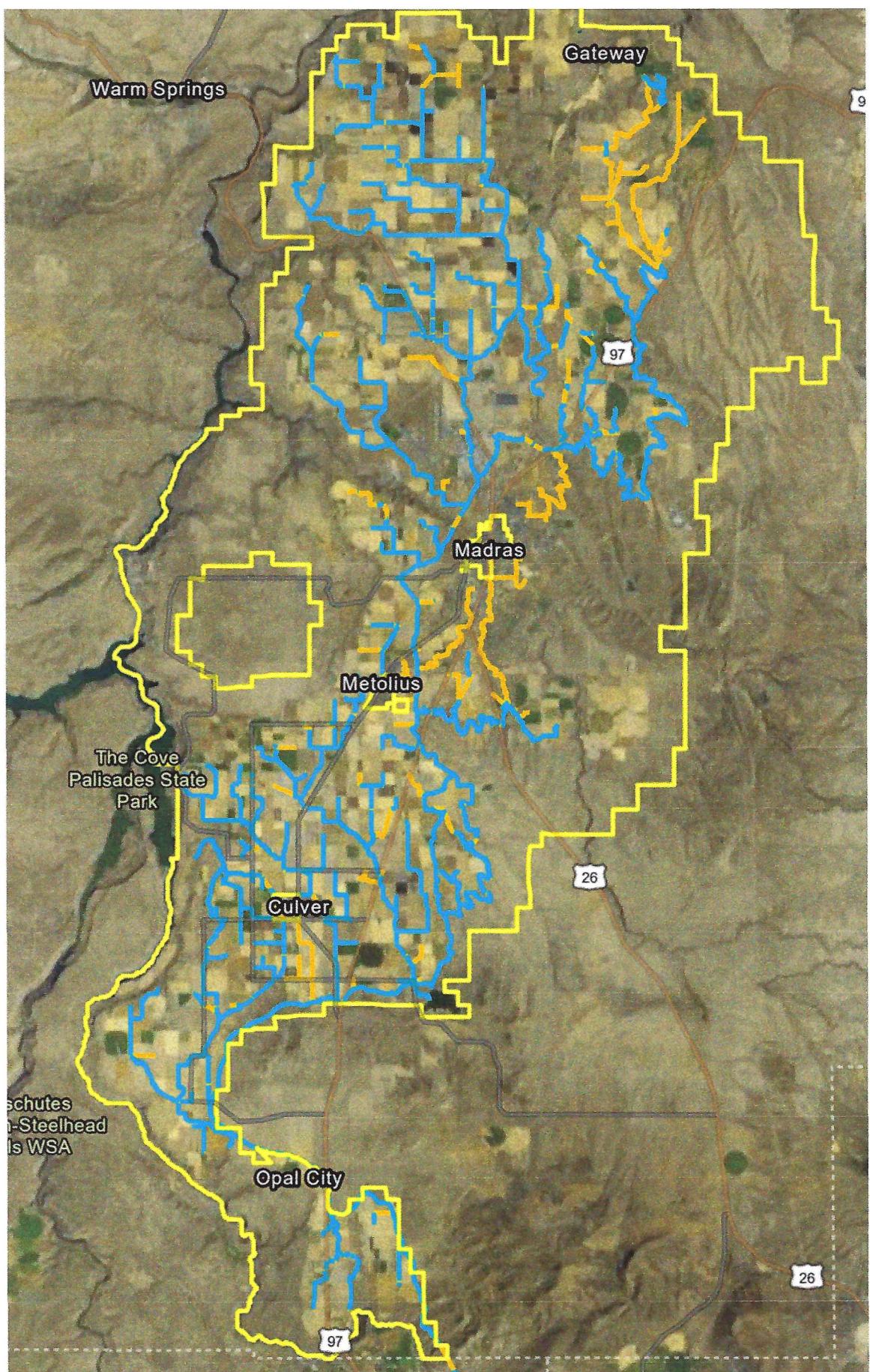
\*NUID boundaries generally follow Jefferson County, and much of the data for NUID is represented at the county-level.

 **ECOnorthwest**

Lateral 43 Pipeline

a \$35 million project over four years.





58887 acres served by NUID canal, 65 miles and ditches, 235 miles. Orange are ditches already piped. Current project lateral 43 is 7500 acres and almost 13% of the district. A five-year project, lateral 43 cost alone \$35 million

## AG BUSINESS INFRASTRUCTURE - BIG FOUR

	<u>\$ VOLUME</u>	<u>EMPLOYMENT</u>
HELENIT	20-25 M	44 people
CENTRAL OR SEEDS	20-24 M	23 people
DATUM CO-OP	15-17 M	23 people
WILBUR BROS	8-10 M	16 people

NAS TRACER	8.4 M	19 people
PAPER-JOHN SCENE	#16 M	13 people

TOMUS	\$ 90 M+	120 people
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### OTHERS

NORTH UNIT JURISDICTION DISTRICT 28 people

3 PHASE STORE

AIRPLANE CROP PILOT

OSU EXPERIMENT FARM

BANKS

\* ALL NEED THE CRITICAL MASS OF FARMERS IN JEFFERSON COUNTY TO SURVIVE

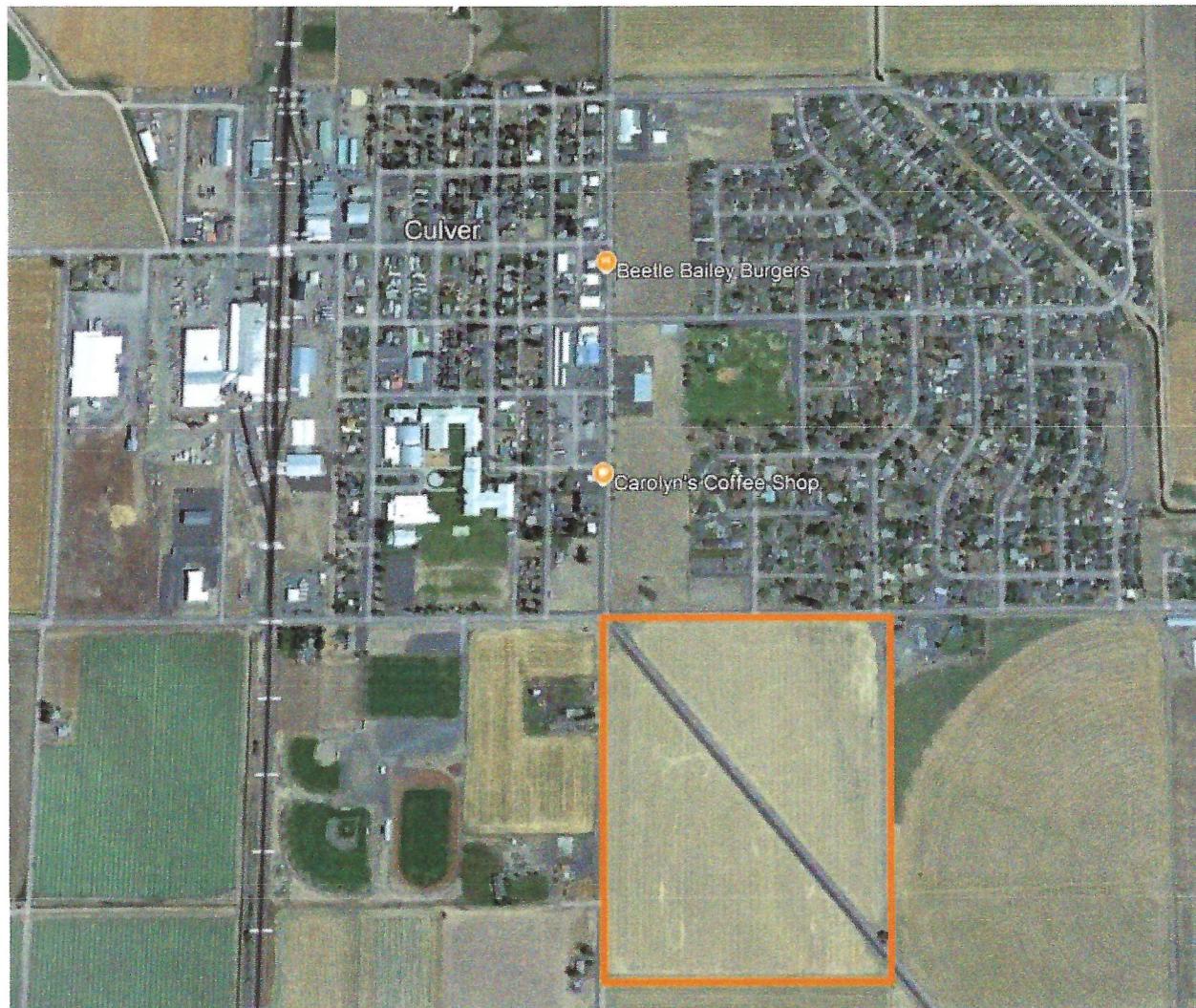
## 2024 Farm Equipment Prices

IH MX 340 300 HP TRACTOR	\$472,000
STEIGER 420 TRACTOR	\$82,000
MC DON M1240 SWATHER	230,000
CASE PRO 107 SPRAYER	384,000
CASE/IH COMBINE 7230	710,000
GRASS HARRIER	\$3,000
IH SPREADER	180,000
MASSEY LB 2234 BIG BALER	215,000
QUARTER MILE "WHEELLINE"	34,000
145 ACRE IRRIGATION PIVOT depending on options like swing arms & drop nozzles	\$175 to 250,000
w/ pump, wings & pins	

THE DAYS OF A FARMER MAKING  
A LIVING ON 80 acres WITH A  
75 HP TRACTOR, GRAIN DRILL &  
A SHOVEL WTS 1940's & 50's.

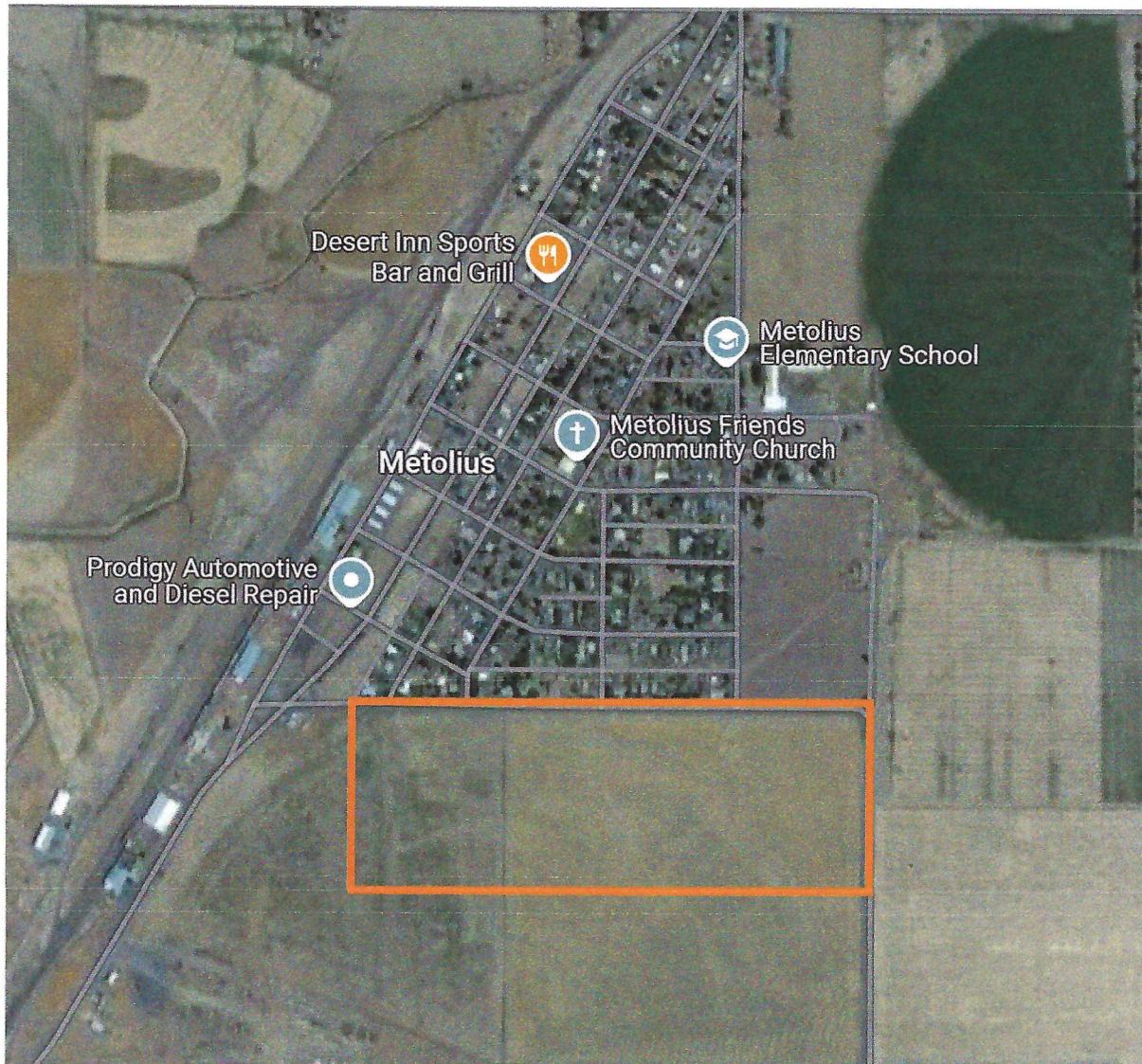
JUST 15 years ago THAT 34,000  
WHEEL LINE WAS \$12,000.

## CULVER

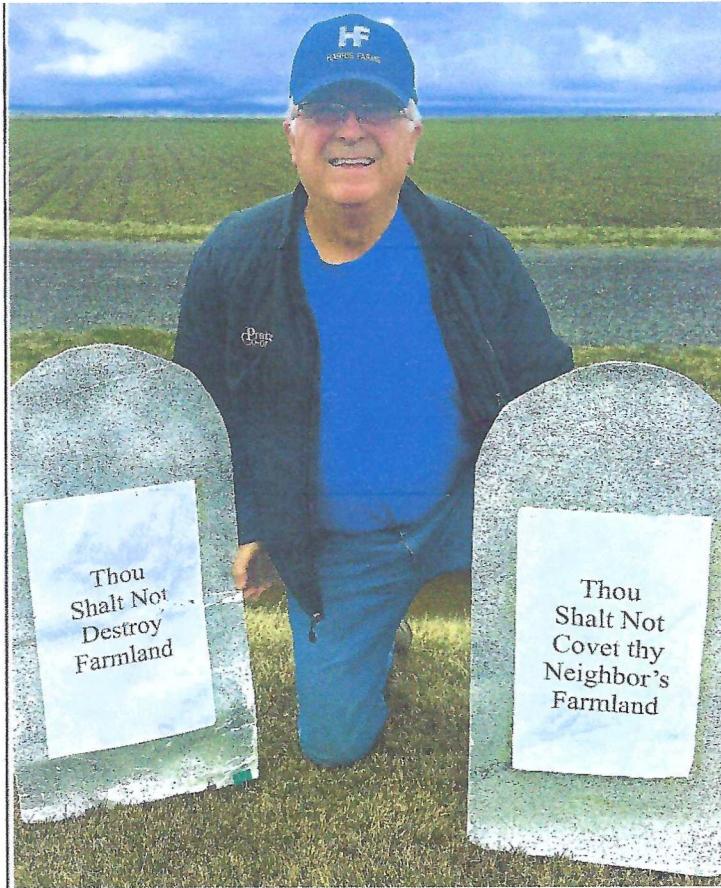


The little ag town of Culver on a railroad track that was once all on one side of main street. With its seed and fertilizer warehouse and potato cellars. All surrounded by some of Jefferson Counties' best hi-value irrigated farmland soil. That land is slated to be homes, most likely for people to have affordable housing and commute to jobs in Redmond and Bend. Once the sewer infrastructure is augmented. Why couldn't the Jefferson County Court assign that Portland State population forecasted growth be placed in sagebrush lands east of Madras?

## METOLIUS



Another cancer to Hi-values soils in North Unit irrigation district. Metolius started as a railroad stop in 1915 and later an industrial site with Gourmet French Fry factory. These 37 acres are now slated for homes for retirees or people commuting for jobs outside the town. The irrigation pivot will then no longer go around the full circle, sad.



Bio: Farmer, Gary Harris  
7000 NW Danube Drive  
Madras, OR 97741

I farm 578 irrigated acres within the North Unit Irrigation District's 59,000 irrigated acres of Jefferson County.

My three farms are on the Agency Plains plateau North of Madras where my father received the first delivery of irrigation water in June 1948.

I graduated from OSU with an Agricultural Economics degree in 1969. I've been farming for 57 years. Currently, I'm the oldest active farmer in Jefferson County.

My father purchased the first 160 acres for \$25 per acre in 1946. I have purchased additional land for \$1200

and \$4500 per acre. I farmed for eleven years before building my home on a 160-acre parcel in 1980. The first farm was paid for with ladino clover seed, potatoes, fat cattle and a fresh potato packing plant.

I'm a past Jefferson County Farm Bureau president and now serve as Vice President I serve on two Oregon Farm Bureau state committees, taxation and land use. I belong to the Jefferson County Seed Growers.

I currently grow hybrid carrot seed (since 1985), rough blue grass since 1999, for overseeding on golf courses greens, plus winter wheat annually. My past crops include peppermint for 35 years, onion seed for 27 years, garlic seed for 24 years, potatoes till 1974, sugar beets for 4 years and bluegrass since 1960. Farmers are price takers and not price setters and our crops change to fit the market niche.

I was appointed by Governor John Kitzhaber, I served as a Land Conservation and Development Commission board member from 1996 to 2004.

My last crop before I retire will not be houses or a destination resort!