

Dear Fellow Field Trialers,

The **Northwest English Springer Spaniel Club** is pleased to invite you to their 2012 spring trial to be held on February 25 and 26, 2012 at our new grounds Knaupp Farm, Rickreall, OR. These are private grounds which are being maintained under the Willamette Valley Wet Prairie initiative. Please read the information regarding this initiative below. We ask that all participants and visitors take care to follow all signage with regards to off limits areas. **Please do not park off the roads.**

Our Amateur and Puppy Stakes will be Saturday, February 25th and the Open Stake Sunday, February 26th. **Entries close on February 18, 2012.**

Judges: This year, we are very pleased to have Ben Martin from Ohio and Paul McGagh from North Dakota as our judges for the Open and Amateur Stakes. As well as Gunther Boettcher from Washington as Apprentice Judge. Puppy Stake judges are Daryl Roth and Cindy Williams both from Oregon.

Reception and Awards: Awards for the Amateur and Puppy will be presented during a cocktail party at the host hotel Saturday evening. Awards for the Open will be presented on the grounds Sunday after the end of the trial.

Motel: Field trial headquarters will be the Best Western Dallas Inn & Suites 250 Orchard Drive, Dallas OR 97338 phone 503-623-6000. Mention the NWESSC Field Trial for a discount

Lunches: Lunches will be available both days for a nominal fee.

Emergency Contacts: Emergency contacts, per AKC regulations, will be posted at the picnic area and listed in the catalog. There will be cellular phones available in case of an emergency. Coordinator is Daryl Johnson, 7225 Ridgeway Rd, Sheridan OR 97378 phone 503-539-0055

Training Day: Daryl and Jan Johnson have graciously offered their private grounds for training Friday, February 24, 2012 at 1:00 PM: A limited quantities of pheasants will be available for \$9.00 each. Please call or email Jan Johnson to reserve birds. Phone 503-539-5564 email jjohn@onlinenw.com,

Willamette Valley Wet Prairie

Prairies were once widespread in Oregon's Willamette Valley. Many of these sites could support forest vegetation, but remained open prairie because of prescribed burning_by the native Kalapuya. The Kalapuya burned in the Valley during the late summer to increase growth of food plants and improve hunting. Frequent burning reduced the abundance of shrubs and trees, favoring an open prairie with a rich variety of native herbaceous plants and animals.

After Euro-American settlement in the 1830s, regular burning of prairies ceased and most of the Valley was gradually developed for agricultural or urban uses. Woody species and non-native herbaceous weeds invaded remaining natural areas. As a result, native prairies now cover much less than 1% of their former area, making them among the rarest of North American ecosystems. The decline in native prairies and their increased fragmentation has led to the decline of many native prairie plants and

animals. Even so, remnants of these highly diverse and complex ecosystems provide necessary habitat for many rare species.

As acreage of wet prairie habitat has continued to decline, the creation and restoration of tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*) wetlands has become the focus and goal of many Willamette Valley wetland restoration and mitigation projects. While tufted hairgrass is a dominant species in the native Willamette Valley wetland prairie community, it was never a monoculture, it is interspersed with a diversity of other grass and forbs. Many of the other forbs associated with this plant community are designated as state threatened species.

Today in the Willamette Valley, new and innovative land stewardship projects are reclaiming valuable wet prairies to restore and protect endangered habitat. These projects are being carried out by both public and non-profit organizations, and by farmers who are changing their farming practices to restore native ecosystems. TWC's Willamette Valley Wet Prairie Restoration video shows four restoration projects that have been underway for at least five years to illustrate the steps, patience and flexibility required to successfully restore Willamette wet prairies.