

Local crops damaged in storm

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H&N photo by Jill Aho Topsoil was blown from dry and bare fields south of Klamath Falls Monday.

Klamath Basin farmers who experienced crop losses during Monday's storm need to report damaged acreage to their Farm Service Agency office within 15 days of the incident, according to the Klamath County Farm Service Agency.

Fields throughout the Basin experienced shifting topsoil that brought large dust clouds over roadways as winds gusted up to

60 mph Monday. Low moisture content and little to no crop coverage meant Basin farmers may have lost significant amounts of soil or were forced to plow up planted fields.

Wheat crop a loss

That was case with Steve Kandra, a local farmer.

Kandra's spring wheat cover crop was a total loss.

He said low snow levels this winter gave him an opportunity to plant wheat in last year's onion field. The emerging wheat had not developed much and had been heavily grazed by geese, he said.

“(Monday) was a very blusterous day, and there was a lot of dirt moving,” he said. “That’s a problem we have with a dry, open winter. Some of the cover crops we had planted didn’t develop. Under normal operations, it wouldn’t have been that bad.”

Saving soil

Kandra said in order to keep his soil in place, he was forced to till the ground to put wind ridges in it, which meant the loss of the tender plants.

“Whatever’s there, you end up taking out,” he said. “We’re just trying to save the soil resource.”

Tilling the soil caused that field to lose precious moisture, and Kandra said he was unsure whether he would replant considering he had lost both time and water.

Anyone experiencing losses should file a CCC-576 and receive failed acreage credit on acreage reports. Crop insurance may require producers to report the failed acreage to both the FSA and their agents, said Jennifer Simon, Klamath County FSA executive director.

Producers may need to file a separate form for each event that causes crop loss, and may need to file the reports in multiple counties.

Filing a report

To obtain a CCC-576, contact a local Farm Service Agency office. Klamath County: 541-883-6924, ext. 2; Modoc County: 530-233-4391, ext. 2; Siskiyou County: 530-842-6123, ext. 2.

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