



# CROWN HILL FARM CONSERVATION EASEMENT

*By Tim Stieber, District Manager*

**C**onservation easements represent one of the most effective and flexible methods currently available for protecting natural resource values. Yamhill SWCD Resource Conservationist/Technician Dean O'Reilly, Yamhill SWCD Associate Director Phillip Bergen, and myself have worked closely with Lucien and Juliette Gunderman of Crown Hill Farm to develop a conservation easement for their property. We consulted forestry professionals, other easement holding organizations, and Larry Ojua of the Oregon Department of Agriculture for guidance throughout the development process. Crown Hill Farm contains 720 acres located six miles west of McMinnville along Baker Creek Road. The property is used for forestry and cattle grazing and is home base for several small enterprises operated by the Gundermans.

The Crown Hill Farm easement protects in perpetuity this large land holding from subdivision, and also places restrictions on clear cutting, mining, and business development other than home-based businesses. These restrictions ensure that the conservation values associated with Crown Hill Farm will be protected. These include wildlife habitat, water quality protection, and scenic open space values. The Gundermans believe Crown Hill Farm is a unique part of rural Yamhill County that is worth preserving. The family is establishing the

easement as a memorial to their predecessors. Yamhill SWCD is co-holding the Crown Hill Farm easement with the Oregon Department of Agriculture. The easement was officially signed on January 9, 2002, and will be inspected by Yamhill SWCD annually.

The Gundermans are to be commended for taking steps toward preserving their property for the benefit of future Yamhill County residents. Lucien and Juliette cite previous conservation efforts by deceased family members as the primary motivating factor for establishing a conservation easement for Crown Hill Farm. They state that preserving their land is the right thing to do in light of rapid development of Yamhill County and surrounding areas.

Landowners interested in more information on the Crown Hill Farm conservation easement (or easements in general) can contact Yamhill SWCD at 503-472-6403. The district looks forward to establishing additional conservation easements that will preserve the rural character of Yamhill County.



*Crown Hill Farm property site.*



*From left to right, Tim Stieber, Stan Christensen, Juliette Gunderman, Dean O'Reilly, Lucien Gunderman and Phillip Bergen at official signing of easement.*