

Sherman County Soil and Water Conservation District

MEETING MINUTES

November 12, 2024

8:30 AM

USDA Service Center Conference Room

2004 First St., Moro, OR 97039

Board Present

Jess Stutzman

Nick von Borstel

Josh Hilderbrand (phone-in)

Trevor Fields

Others Present

Amanda Whitman, District Manager

Marylou Martin, Office Assistant

Taylor Bullock, Watershed Technician

Ryan Gardiner, Watershed Coordinator

Joan Bird, County Commissioner

Jacob Powell, OSU Extension

Dean Dark, Lower Deschutes CWMA Coordinator

Brent Smith, ODA (phone-in)

I. ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 8:33 am by chairman, Jess Stutzman.

II. REVIEW/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

None

III. MINUTES

Nick moved to approve the minutes from the October 8th, 2024 meeting. Trevor seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. GUESTS/PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. Joan Bird said thank you for putting on the solar meeting last week.
- b. Brent Smith introduced himself as the new ODA Ag Water Quality lead. He has been with ODA for 2 ½ months since they put new regions together, one just for the John Day. Previously, Brent worked for ODFW for 22 years with fish habitat, restoration, and other things. Currently, he is working on SIA monitoring for the Lower Deschutes and put in a SIA at Hay Creek, east side of the John Day. Brent and Amanda will be meeting in a couple weeks.
- c. Dean Dark is the new Lower Deschutes CWMA Coordinator. He will help landowners with weed control. Dean is getting grants up-to-date.

V. TREASURERS REPORT

Financials were reviewed through October. October bank statements and October-November bills were reviewed. Jess asked about having the two Life Flight bills instead of one. The company billed each person's account separately. Nick moved to approve the bills as presented and Trevor seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

*Documents/attachments mentioned in minutes can be obtained by request

VI. STAFF UPDATES

A. District Manager – See attached

a. Grant Updates –

- ODA—
 - Submitted Quarter 5 Report and fund request
 - SIA
 - Working on Fund Request
- OWEB BDA Grant
 - Working on permits
- Small Grants—
 - Assisted staff with new applications
- NRCS TA
 - Meeting w/ Damon on SOW 11/26

b. Other

- Audit
- Employee training/staff meetings
- Updating Employee Handbook
- Solar meetings
- OACD Conference

B. Office Assistant—See attached

a. Conservation Awareness Program (CAP)

- Poster contest winners
- Salmon and Trout Enhancement Program
 - Fish release by SWCD and NRCS staff in Burnet Pond
 - Field trip with 4th grade—fish release and tree planting

b. Upcoming Outreach

- Animal habitats with K-5
- Waiting to hear on OCF grant for 2025 funding
- Received \$3,500 from Roundhouse Foundation for outreach

C. Watershed Technician—See Attached

- a. Field visits for small grants and CCS
- b. Small grant for fencing
- c. Field visit with NRCS and an Archeologist for CR
- d. CSP renewals and EQIP apps for NRCS
- e. Virtual fencing
- f. In person and on-line trainings

D. Watershed Coordinator—See Attached

*Documents/attachments mentioned in minutes can be obtained by request

- a. Small Grants
 - Cross Fence
- b. Large Grants
 - Sherman County NRCS IRA TA
 - Eastern Lower Deschutes SIA
- c. Education Outreach
 - STEP fish release
 - CAP—daffodil planting, classroom lessons, looking for more funding
- d. Upcoming Watershed Council Meeting
 - December 10th at 7:30am
 - County Court update in December

VII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Personnel

- a. Amanda has been working on the Employee Handbook. There are a lot of additions, so the board is only presented with ½ of the handbook to go through and make notes. The other ½ will be presented in December.
 - i. Cell phone policy—should we get a new cell phone? Both the Technician and Coordinator will be using the cell phone a lot. Will revisit the first of the year.

B. County Cost Share

- a. No applications

C. RCPP Tractor Upgrade

- a. Umatilla County has reached out to the farming counties in the Columbia Basin about the RCPP program for NRCS. This is a tractor upgrade program. The SWCD can work with NRCS on this program. It is similar to EQIP. Amanda will continue to have details on the program.

VIII. AGENCY REPORTS

A. NRCS

- a. NRCS technicians and Taylor are working on EQIP applications for virtual fencing. This is considered a climate smart practice. The deadline is November 29th. This would be a 5-year contract with NRCS paying for the collars and the station the first year and prescribed grazing the next 4 years.
- b. Working on CSP renewals (8 obligated by the end of the year) and new CSP contracts
- c. NRCS is planning an upcoming working group meeting and a fire break meeting
- d. The new GS-11, Micheal, started in November. He will be working with Sherman, Wasco, and Hood River counties.

B. FSA—

- a. There is no Farm Bill

*Documents/attachments mentioned in minutes can be obtained by request

- b. Acreage reports are due on December 16th.
 - c. Grazing is allowed on CRP for anyone who was affected by fires in other counties but will need to be approved.
 - d. Nick asked about base acres if you put solar in. Every acre that goes into solar, FSA takes it out of cropland, so it reduces the % of CRP for the county.
- C. OSU Extension—
- a. Upcoming trainings
 - i. November 13—Beef Quality Assurance at CGCC
 - ii. December 6—Pesticide webinar, broadcasting from CGCC
 - iii. December 17—Pesticide updates at CGCC
 - iv. December 19—Pesticide updates at OSU Extension in Moro
 - v. January 15—Farm First Aid in The Dalles
 - b. Research Bio Control
 - c. Applies for grants for soil pH management (lime trials)

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. None

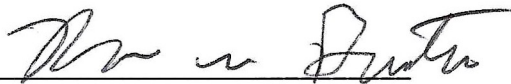
X. NEXT MEETING

Next meeting is December 10th at 8:30 am in the USDA Service Center conference room.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

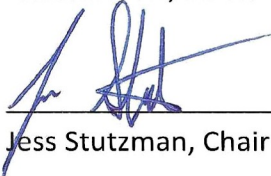
With no further business of the board meeting was adjourned at 10:02 am.

Respectfully,



Nick von Borstel, Secretary

Approved by the Board of Directors December 10, 2024:



Jess Stutzman, Chair