

Sherman County Soil and Water Conservation District

MEETING MINUTES

April, 2025

8:30 AM

**USDA Service Center Conference Room
2004 First St., Moro, OR 97039**

Board Present

Jess Stutzman
Josh Hilderbrand
Ryan Thompson
Brian Simantel

Others Present

Amanda Whitman, District Manager
Marylou Martin, Office Assistant
Joan Bird, County Commissioner
Jacob Powell, OSU Extension
Misty Strayhorn, NRCS

I. ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 8:35 am by chairman, Jess Stutzman

II. REVIEW/ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

None

III. MINUTES

Josh moved to approve the minutes from the March 11th, 2025 meeting and Brian seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. GUESTS/PUBLIC COMMENT

Joan asked if cities would respond to the Lower John Day Municipal Water Plan.

V. TREASURERS REPORT

Bank statements were reviewed for March. March and April bills were reviewed. Brian moved to approve the bills as presented and Ryan seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. STAFF UPDATES

A. District Manager – See attached

a. Grant Updates –

- Working on Firebreak RCPP and OWEB grant
- New ODA Capacity grant open (Due May 15th)
- Council Capacity Interview—April 30th 12-5 pm
- NRCS IRA TA—received fund request
- Budget prep and training

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

- Tree Sale
 - Lower John Day Work Group meeting
 - Fence field visit w/Taylor
- B. Office Assistant—See attached
- a. Outreach
 - Newsletter
 - Citizen Reporter
 - b. Education Outreach
 - Conservation Awareness Program (CAP)—
 - Birds of Oregon-grades K-2 (69 students)
 - Soil and gardens, homeschool (7 students + 1 take-home kit)
 - Grants
 - Ford Foundation
 - PBUs (Ecology in the Classroom)
 - Submitting in new Fiscal Year
 - Sherman County Cultural Coalition
 - Funding for Cottonwood Field Day
 - Submitted
 - c. Upcoming Outreach
 - Book reading—Preschool
 - Daffodil field trip—grade 2
 - Tree plantings, Highland Poplars—grade 3
 - Beaver lesson--homeschool
- C. Watershed Technician—See Attached
- a. CCS
 - 3 Field visits since last meeting
 - 2 possible Haul Roads
 - 7,742 ft of Cross Fence
 - b. SIA Restoration
 - 1 Cross Fence submitted and pending
 - c. Large Grants
 - Council Capacity submitted
 - Interviews with Watershed Council Officers--April
 - d. Education Outreach
 - Assisted Marylou with Soil Jar tests/homeschool
 - Helping with grade 2 daffodil field trip
 - e. NRCS/FSA
 - Field trip with NRCS to do CRP Reviews

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

f. Conferences/Trainings

- Connect2025 (April 8-10)
- Oregon Watershed Council Conference (May 6-8)
- CREP Technical Training (May 14-15)
- Continuing drone training for ground pilot's license

VII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Personnel

- a. Health Insurance—Board discussed whether or not to stay with current health insurance. It was decided to stay with what we have.

B. County Cost Share

a. 2 new applications

- i. 2 Haul Roads—pictures and maps were presented. Total cost is \$11,223.28 for 5,294 feet of haul road. SWCD 75% cost share is \$8,417.46. Josh moved to approve and Brian seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
- ii. 1 Cross Fence—pictures and maps were presented. Total cost is \$30,348 for 7,742 feet of cross fence. SWCD 75% cost share is \$15,000. Ryan moved to approve and Josh seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

C. Tree Sale

- a. The total number of plants ordered is 177. We are planning on picking up on Monday, April 14th.
- b. Might put a cap on the total number of trees ordered next year, maybe a cap on number of large trees per person.

D. Budget Hearing

The budget hearing will be on May 13th, 8:30am, right before the SWCD Board meeting.

E. Watershed Education Grant

The Board discussed increasing the amount of the Watershed Education Grant to \$2,500.

F. Scholarship Review

The Board looks over the list of scholarship applicants. Brian moves to approve awarding scholarships to 5 applicants at \$3,000 each and Ryan seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

VIII. AGENCY REPORTS

A. NRCS –

- a. EQIP—Only 25% of the budget has been allotted for Oregon. We don't know if it will or won't be released by the end of the year. We are allowed to fund 1 contract out of 40. Becky and Theron have been pre-working on contracts in order to have some ready if funds are released.

- b. CSP—44 working days until deadline for ranking. Still don't know where the funds will be coming from, we will be going forward as General CSP (not IRA). About 25% of state allotted CSP funds, 33 applications this year.
 - c. NRCS is going to lose almost 20 people in Oregon because of the Deferred Resignation and also may lose some due to early retirement. Some jobs may shift to other NRCS agencies.
- B. FSA – Not present
- C. OSU Extension—
- a. Jacob reported that the drone workshop was a success. About 50 people attended. He will try to set up another training in the late summer or early fall.
 - b. Starting to look at ideas for this year's crop tours. Possible date for Sherman County Crop Tour is June 2nd. Hoping to visit a couple of different field varieties and McGregor plots.
 - c. Planning a 2-day tractor training at the Experiment Station, will be free for youth, no dates set yet.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive Session

--ORS 192.660(2)(i) and 192.660(8) was called to order at 9:50am to review employee performance. The Board returned to regular session at 9:57am.

X. OTHER BUSINESS

Plotter—Looking at plotters in the price range of \$2,000 or less.

XI. NEXT MEETING

Next meeting is May 13th at 8:30 am in the USDA Service Center conference room.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business of the board meeting was adjourned at 10:09 am.

Respectfully,

Nick von Borstel, Secretary

Approved by the Board of Directors May 13, 2025:

Jess Stutzman, Chair

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