

# OTAC Q3 Summer Meeting Notes

## Attendees

1. Greg Becker, NRCS OR
2. Claire Tachella, NRCS OR
3. Heather Medina Saucedo, NRCS OR
4. Erin Kaczmarczyk, NRCS OR
5. Lauren Bennett, NRCS OR
6. Damon Brosnan, NRCS OR
7. Sergio Villasenor, NRCS OR
8. Jericho Winter, NRCS OR
9. Eric Moeggenberg, NRCS OR
10. Nathan Adelman, NRCS OR
11. Marissa Theve, NRCS OR
12. Gary Diridoni, NRCS OR
13. Larencia Williams, NRCS OR
14. Paul Long, FSA OR
15. Sarah Hanlon, FSA OR
16. Martha Blair, FSA OR
17. Alex Moreno, FSA OR
18. BJ Westlund, FCA
19. Misty, Klamath SWCD
20. Nick Sirovatka, ODA
21. Penny, Working Lands
22. Kevin Fenn, ODA
23. Sarah Gardner, Pollinator Partnership
24. Matt Penberthy, COLT
25. Amie Loop-Frison, Yamhill SWCD
26. Barbara Grant
27. Becky Pineda, Marion SWCD
28. David Primozech
29. Ivor Kincaide, OAT
30. Debbi Bunch, Mid John Day WC
31. Jamie Oskowski
32. Bre
33. Jason Kesling, Harney SWCD

34. Amanda, Oregon Wheat
35. Daniel
36. Erica Hansen
37. Kristina Peterson
38. Lincoln SWCD
39. Mikal Cline
40. Nancy, EWEB
41. Nicholas Peak
42. Pheobe Autry, OAT
43. Raija Bushnell, FCA
44. Robert Wallace
45. Sage Fairman, OrCAN
46. Sarah Gardner, Xerces
47. Tara Olson, OAT
48. Taylor Larson, OWEB
49. Our Village Gardens

#### Welcome from Greg Becker, NRCS State Conservationist:

- Received an additional \$7M EQIP, additional \$12M in CSP
- Gary Diridoni serving as a member of Chief Bettencourt's team to streamline the planning phase and increase efficiency for PL566
- Appreciate all our partners for their patience and dedication over the last few months
- Agreements for FY25 deadline is July 15, internally working on these now. Greg also asks that Partners with current agreements funding needs and activities also prioritize communication with their NRCS program manager and Chris Martin.

#### Welcome from Paul Long, FSA Deputy State Executive Director:

- Paul is acting State Executive Director
- New programs rolling out alongside normal FSA programming
- Bill Beam, new administrator, at FSA=

## FSA Program Updates:

- Producers impacted by 2024 or 2025 fires have access to Emergency Grazing funding, opening up July 15
- Drought programs available to assist through Emergency CRP, Livestock forage, Emergency Livestock assistance
- Crop Assistance program sign-up expected to go through August

## CRP Policy Items:

- Hoping for discussion on post-emergent mowing during a CRP establishment period
- Traditionally, after a producer is done seeding CRP, weeds are problematic and post emergent mowing is prescribed, prior to stand certification
- FSA procedure allows for one cost shareable post emergent mowing
- A second mowing is often effective in controlling weeds
- FSA State Office is looking at submitting a proposal to our national office, so to DAFP, our Deputy Administrator of Farm Programs for an Oregon amendment to policy allowing cost share on more than one instance of post-emergent mowing during the CRP establishment period
  - Damon Brosnan, NRCS, voiced support for importance of mowing more than time for weed control, due to inability to use herbicide in grass/forb mixed stands
  - Kevin Fenn, ODA, supported this action

## NRCS Program Updates:

### *Regional Conservation Partnership Program*

- 167 producer contracts over 13 RCPP projects
- 173 producer applications
- Total financial assistance awarded through RCPP - \$21M
- 4 RCPP proposal offers rescinded due to agency not moving forward with IRA funding
- 2 FY25 RCPP renewals
- Expedited timeline for RCPP revised FY24 selections and FY25 renewals – about 60 days
- RCPP Notice of Funding Opportunity, no official word yet but likely will be announced fall 2025, closing by end of year

### *Agricultural Conservation Easement Program – Wetland Reserve Easements*

- Proposed using professional appraisals versus an area wide market analysis to determine fair market value
- Proposal that Geographic Area Rate Cap values for permanent easement offers will be 85% of fair market value for each application based on appraised fair market value
- FY26 WRE Ranking Pool – used FY25 ranking pool
- Reviewed FY26 WRE ranking questions
- Reviewed state priority areas for FY26
- Call for folks interested in being on the easement subcommittees
  - Reach out to Eric Moeggenberg for more info or with interest

### *Agricultural Conservation Easement Program – Agricultural Land Easements*

- Reviewed ACEP-ALE in general, program purpose and basics
- Currently have 13 closed easements, total acres protected to date – 57,574 acres
- Currently working on closing 11 easements that will protect 12,021 acres
- FY25 applications – Received \$1.1M for ALE allocation
  - Received 9 applications
  - 3 applications moving forward to protect 4,121 acres
  - 5 applications deferred to FY26
- For FY 26 – anticipating 7-10 applications to protect 19,801 acres
- Reviewed FY26 ranking updates and national criteria
- Grassland of Special Environmental Significance updates, proposal for a GSS map to highlight GSS priority area across state

### *Environmental Quality Incentives Program*

- FY24 – Obligated \$51.9M through 722 landowner contracts across 456,000 acres
- FY25 - \$32M available
  - \$22M obligated to date across 184k acres and 336 landowner contracts
- National Water Quality Initiatives program – Four funded with \$559K obligated with 6 landowner contracts across 2,395 acres
- Reviewed Source Water Protection areas

- Updated county-based cost lists is automatically selected when selecting county in a new application in NRCS business tools internally

### *Conservation Stewardship Program*

- Reviewed FY24 and FY25 allocations and obligations
- Received an additional \$12M this year for CSP
- CSP state priority resource concern categories map
- Currently no payment limitations but there are contract limitations - \$200k for individuals, \$400k for partnerships and joint ventures

### *State Off-Site Methods for Food Security Act Wetland Identification*

- Looking for input from OTAC group to adopt the State Off-Site Methods process for Food Security Act Wetland Identification by August 1, 2025
  - Contact [Jericho.Winter@usda.gov](mailto:Jericho.Winter@usda.gov) with input.
- Background - To participate in most USDA programs, agricultural producers agree to comply with the wetland conservation provisions, which means they will not farm converted wetlands or convert wetlands.
- A key takeaway from all of this is that if the agency expert completing a technical determination finds that the available remote resources do not adequately characterize the site, then an on-site evaluation will be conducted.
- More info on conservation compliance: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/getting-assistance/financial-help/conservation-compliance>