

2018 Clackamas and Multnomah Local Work Group Meeting Session Notes

The meeting started on time with introductions and proceeded to Kim Galland providing a breakdown of current Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) funding pools within Clackamas and Multnomah Counties. Funding trends were also reviewed showing that, since 2015, there has been an increase in the number of contracts obligated and an increase in the amount of contracted dollars spent for both counties.

The Oak CIS (first year 2018) is on track to spend the full allocation with round 1 applications.

The Soil Health CIS (first year 2016) has less applicants than last year at this time. This is probably due to the increased funding under the High Tunnel Initiative and strong advertisement at the state level.

Forest Diversity (first year 2017) has less applicants than last year at this time. Most of the applicants from last year were the result of outreach efforts of Michael Ahr at West Multnomah.

Water Quality – Multnomah (first year 2017) did not have any applicants as of the date of this meeting.

Pinchot RCPP (last year 2019) has two applications. This funding pool is in the process of wrapping up.

The Organic Initiative has one application that did not rank very high and will most likely remain un-funded.

Kim Galland also provided a brief overview of additional programs available in addition to EQIP that included the Conservation Stewardship Program (CStP), Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), and Easement Programs such as the Agricultural Land Easement (ALE) and Wetland Restoration Easement (WRE).

Kim Galland also gave the group a brief overview of Client Gateway.

The group felt that the current CIS and state initiatives were working well with the exception of the Multnomah Water Quality CIS. It was suggested that this funding pool would probably have more participation if it included Clackamas County.

The Oak Habitat CIS needs to be reviewed to update screening and ranking questions. A few practices such as cover crop and livestock watering facilities should be considered.

The priority resource concern for the group was determined to be water quantity.

Amy Kim, watermaster for the district, helped lead a discussion on barriers to implementing practices such as ponds and the importance of verifying water rights prior to any irrigation project.

Some of the water rights barriers facing irrigation projects would be that there are no surface water rights available, the process to get water rights is expensive and not guaranteed and there may be a 12-18 month delay in getting a water right.

Other barriers for irrigation projects were the need for designs that may overwhelm the existing engineering staff. This may put pressure on vendors for designs that would still need NRCS approval or increase the need for SWCD employees to be trained. A formal agreement between NRCS and SWCD would be needed in order for SWCD employees to be able to obtain JAA for engineering practices.

Gary Diridoni pointed out that water quantity is a resource concern listed in most of the long range plans throughout the state and it may be a better strategy to ask for a state wide funding pool instead of trying to do a local effort.

Scott Gall from West Multnomah state that Sauvie Island is more of a water quality concern and they have producers that are interested in agrichemical handling facilities. It was suggested that this practice may be able to be added to either the Soil Health CIS (row crop producers) or the Water Quality CIS.

Kim Galland suggested that the boundaries for the Clackamas portions of the Forest Diversity CIS should be reviewed due to the fact that there are NIPF owners/operators that have NRCS funded FMPs that are outside the current boundary.

Actions:

1. Kim Galland will look into adding the ag. Chemical handling facility practice to either the Soil Health or the Multnomah Water Quality CIS
2. The Oak Habitat CIS will be reviewed for ranking and screening question changes and adding practices that would support the existing list of practices (cover crop, watering facilities)
3. Kim Galland will look into the boundary change for the Forest Diversity CIS
4. Kim Galland will look into creating a Livestock CIS for Clackamas County that would have no first year funds so that outreach can be completed and plans can be started