



Oregon Technical Advisory Committee



Meeting Notes for October 18, 2018 - 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife / 4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE / Salem, OR 97302

Attendees (26)

1. Brad Siemens, U.S. Forest Service
2. Karl Dalla Rosa, U.S. Forest Service
3. Eric, OWEB
4. Lauren Smith, Oregon Water Resources Congress
5. Tami Kerr, Oregon Dairy Farmers Association
6. Jim Johnson, OSU Forestry
7. Dan Nelander, ODF
8. Sam Asai, Farm Service Agency state committee
9. Bruce Taylor, Oregon Habitat Joint Venture (Intermountain West and Pacific Birds)
10. Taylor Murray, Farm Service Agency
11. Bruce B, Farm Service Agency
12. Ron Alvarado, Natural Resources Conservation Service
13. Jason Jeans, Natural Resources Conservation Service
14. Loren Unruh, Natural Resources Conservation Service
15. Scott Oviatt, Natural Resources Conservation Service
16. Kevin Blakely, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
17. Mikal Cline, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
18. Samantha Bayer, OR Farm Bureau
19. Anna Freitas, OACD
20. Mike Merrill, Natural Resources Conservation Service
21. Julie MacSwain, Natural Resources Conservation Service

OTAC Meeting Opening / Introduction

Ron Alvarado, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service:

- Ron thanked everyone for attending today's meeting and emphasized the importance of this committee being co-chaired by NRCS and FSA.
For us to share, whats; working, areas we want to adjust, try new things, you provide valuable feedback
- Jason Jeans is the new Assistant State Conservationist for Management and Strategy
- Welcome to Barry Bushue and NRCS looks forward to continued coordination with FSA

Barry Bushue, Director FSA:

- Farm in Boring, nursery, u-pick berries, vegetables, pumpkin farm festival, production ag and retail only now.
- Enjoy working with FSA to date.
- Thanks for having me and look forward to many more meetings.

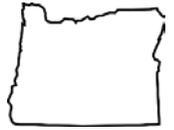
FSA Update

Taylor Murray, FSA

- Lots of things on hold because the Farm Bill has not been passed
- CREP, CRP, Emergency Conservation and Forestry programs too.
- Software and approvals have been locked down.
- Inhibits doing corrections or revisions but hopefully in a month or so we can make changes



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- Revamping Procedures and email guidance
- Excited about FPAC between FSA and NRCS
- Paying out for fires in Wasco and Sherman Counties and determining which fires may be paid out by private and which by us
- Busy time but working with Partners for Farm Bill questions

Drought Status and Water Supply Update

Scott Oviatt, Snow Survey Supervisor, NRCS

- Water supply, stream flows haven't improved since July
- Photos... Wickiup in Deschutes
 - 1% capacity
 - Today is 5%, recent precipitation allowed some in flow.
 - Still releasing for instream needs, very little will be left for storage
- 100's of individuals sending email/phone conversations to help compile and inform Drought Status;
- Trying to gather information to inform the Drought Monitor and reflects conditions on ground
- Support from Merkley and Wyden and Greg Walden
- Hope to have meeting with them
- Jordan Valey, should be native grasses but just dry ground
- Not overgrazing
- Dust issues for health and distance to travel for water
- County roads just dust Wheeler, Harney, Malheur
- Not concerned with FSA but want Drought monitor to reflect conditions
- SNOTEL sites
 - 85% of normal finished the water year
- Deceptive, because most of the water came early in water year
- Last large event – mid June 21
- 35 Snotel site of all time low or 2nd lowest for precipitation
 - Excessively dry conditions
- Statewide precipitation for this water year
 - 117% - skewed because such low numbers needed
 - We are not getting our normal 2-day rain events
 - A few areas ok, but most are not building up soil moisture as is usual
 - Using NWS maps, last water year
 - 50 to 75 % of normal
 - Last 30 or 90 days show well below normal
- Information from OWRD, Ken Starr
 - County basis; Inflows in Crook, into reservoirs can be 0 and very dry conditions
 - Look at September (last month of water year)
 - Drought monitor missed Gilliam, underrepresented there
 - Graph showing monthly % of streamflow and Cumulative – values are way down for streamflow, well below normal year
 - Hydrograph, for 7-day average runoff
 - After April peak now we are well below normal
 - Siletz river, peaked above in April, rapid decrease from 2015 (drought)
- NWS Forecast – 8-14 above normal temps, some rain, but nothing substantial
 - Nov, Dec, Jan – below normal precipitation, above normal temps



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- Drought Monitor – last 5 years
 - 2015 – 90%, 2016 better, 2017 good snow pack but got so hot so went into drought conditions
 - 2018 100% DO-D3, want to extend it into Wheeler
 - Question what do D-measures mean: D0 abnormal, D1 Moderate, D2 severe D3 extreme
 - NWS – maybe improvement Oregon still in bad situation
- Governor's declared counties – requested by counties – see map
 - Allows OWRD to loosen some regulatory authority.
- Taylor, USDA FSA – Secretarial declaration does not cover 5 counties in NE, but likely should
 - May not have ability to graze next fall
 - Allows emergency loans, to dig a well
 - Used to trigger other programs but don't any more
- Sept 30, % of pasture/rangeland in good or very good condition
 - Oregon is 4% - lowest in nation
 - Stakeholders are providing feedback
 - % in poor or very poor condition – 78% for Oregon – highest in nation

Fire Issues

Ron Alvarado, NRCS

- Hold off 'Water in the West' talk for future
- Follow up on fires
 - 3 counties, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam
 - Investing \$8M in cover crops, wind strips, fencing, spraying
 - Partnering with FSA so we don't overlap with FSA investments
 - SWCD were instrumental to coordinate seeding and aerial spraying
 - Difficult for one landowner, so SWCD was liaison entity to get better cost and materials for landowners
 - Still actively working in the area to meet needs
 - Kevin, ODFW is getting acres seeded but funding timing is difficult and with SWCD assistance they are able to get acres seeded soon and then funding will come.
- Brad, USFS
 - Taylor and Klondike are mostly federal lands but approximately 7,000 acres of private lands
 - NRCS, ODF, USFS – work together to bring TA to these private acres
- Taylor, FSA
 - FSA can bring resources as well, working with TA and estimates and have requested \$
 - One issue FSA, duplicate benefits issues and who can pay. For example, a transformer or combine blew up; they may have to reimburse if they get FSA and NRCS \$

CIG Update

Mike Merrill, NRCS

- CIG nationally started in 2004 and Oregon based projects had been very successful and many national CIGs have either been from Oregon or have had part of their focus in Oregon. A lot of Ecosystem market-based CIGs as well as any other topics.
- Due to this success, Oregon started funding State level CIG grants since 2009. Approximately 35 grants have been funded since then.



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- Great diversity in partners and topics that get covered with the State CIG
- See Oregon CIG webpage for summaries and list of past and current CIGs.
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/or/programs/financial/cig/>

EQIP/CSP Streamlining Conservation Assessment Ranking Tool

Loren Unruh, Leader for Programs, NRCS

- CART
- Each program has a Ranking system
 - EQIP, CSP, Wetland Easement, ACEP
 - Have worked well, but need to streamline and consolidated
 - Come out with a system, so it is transparent, and partners can see it better, how projects are scored
 - New ranking tool
 - Start with EQIP (and CSP)
 - Eventually will move out to Easements
 - We have a lot of resource inventories and gather data, yet every time we get an application we have to re-rank,
 - Goal to reduce gathering time and reduces paperwork
 - Reduce the time between application and implementing
 - Increasing program delivery, not spend time in office with ranking but getting assessments and practices planned
 - Improve scientific integrity, consistent interpretation
 - Reduce time
 - Consistently using best tools
 - Improve Customer Service – spend
 - 83% staff budget is for program delivery
 - Should be straightforward program
- CMT – inventory goes in and black/box spits out ranking, need to be transparent and understand the system/ranking
- Shifting focus from documenting resource concern problems to addressing resource concern solutions...
- Bruce B, FSA – have you done some test runs. A: not far enough along.

Nutrient Management Planning Tool

Tom Thomson and Bruce Wilson

- Thank you to Tami Kerr and ODFA for the suggestion for this Tool
- Started out as a CIG – Tom Thomson
 - Something that farmers could record their nutrient management activities
 - Started out as excel, but didn't always work on all computers
 - Make it a website – ODFA, Tillamook, Marion SWCD, ODA-CAFO,
 - \$50K – ODART – online decision and record keeping
 - Group in NM was going to sue that this might impinge on copyright
 - Turned it into a planning tool
 - Each farm can log in and password



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- No FOIA either because not a public entity
- Tool can enter information regarding: Operation information, Animals, Storage, Equipment, Fields, Phosphorus Index with the plan, Crop History, Test results, Soils test for fields, Reports
- Tammi Kerr
 - Oregon Dairies are highly regulated and this will help
 - CAFO plan and NMPT
 - If you record applications then this can send report by March 15
 - Inspectors come every 10 months so you see different times of year
 - Larger farms have more requirements on frequency
 - Tom and Bruce have done a wonderful service to production ag
 - Oregon CAFO, make cells turn red when positive values
 - Planning aspect – business plan component, description of operation, how handling waste
 - O&M portion for storage and handling system
 - Maps – load in field maps,
 - Soil Reports – NRCS program, Web Soil Survey
 - Phosphorus index
 - Works for east and west
- <https://Nmpt.online>
- Can do a lot from cell phone
- Will be doing more trainings through ODFA this winter
- Looking at setbacks as well
- Grazing activity as well, nutrients directly applied via grazing
- Question
 - Julie – sign it or not, but not electronic
 - Yes, 2x for NRCS
 - Yes, ODA-CAFO plan as well
 - Attach the permit for it
 - Tech Support
 - Tom Thomson
 - Bruce Wilson

Closing Comments

- Danny – ODF
 - Normally Ryan Gordan would be here – Acting as Public Affairs
 - Thomas Whittington – moved position
 - Old position will be advertised soon
 - Adjustment to Executive team structure
 - Fires- still busy, 12-acre fire in N. Cascades, 80-acre fire – out now Klondike – sent fire
 - 897 fires (8% above) on ODF protected
 - 1700 fires on all lands
 - Just SW \$60M
 - ODF - \$100M
 - All agencies - \$520M
 - Agency initiative – bolster fire side



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- Add capacity for private and state forests
- 12 new stewardship forester and admin
- Rulemaking for Marbled Murrelet and Food Plots
- SOD – front – new NRCS CIS – starting to be implemented - \$900K U1 strain focused, ODF Board has \$1M for SOD eradication, continue to do monitoring and treatments in cooperation with USFS and SAFE task force on south coast

Taylor, FSA

- eFRP – still moving forward – shortages for seedlings everywhere for all species, makes it difficult for emergency, bed space is booked out through 2020
- can get extensions up to 4 years... will need additional waiver for shortages; trying to lump requests for smaller NIPF, hopefully better access to seedlings in future

Jim Johnson, OSU Forester – Saturday is Homecoming; OSU beat CAL

- October, new dean for ag school from Texas A&M
- College of Forestry from Texas A&M
- Legislative session, board of trustees, taking proposal increase for research and extension support
- Specialty crops, precision ag, water quality and fire
- Director of Extension service, Scott Reed, retiring

Eric, OWEB

- Fire updates – board supportive of tech assistance for post-fire assistance in wasco, Sherman, Gilliam counties – should have answer soon
- FIP – released evaluations, multi-year landscape scale involving partnerships, 10 proposals submitted, subcommittee will interview partners which submitted proposals to recommend which ones will go forward
- OR Ag Heritage program – agency request of \$10M for grants for working lands easements and management plans

Tammi Kerr, ODFA

- Milk prices are below cost of production
- Tough prices with trade challenges, hopefully Farm Bill
- March 4-5, annual dairy farmers meeting
- After elections we will work with
- Working with OWEB on tide-gates, and pilot programs on permit process, one in Tillamook and one in Coos Bay area. Looking forward to being less onerous permitting process. Lots of Tide Gate needs.

Brad Siemens

- \$550K to Clackamas SWCD to purchase land for a community forest land

Karl – USFS

- SOD, good topic for future agenda
- Have invested \$20M to slow the spread, NRCS is really appreciated for private land owners



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- Leadership transition in USFS, Vicky C. new chief; new regional lead
- Big concern – danger hazard tree in public campground areas in a Strategic way; lots of dead and dying trees where folks are recreating;
- Legacy ponderosa pine dying near Sisters, ODOT responsibility and sprayed herbicide; trees will have to come down and which ones will need to come down.
- Aerial detection survey, 74th consecutive year flying OR/WA all available to public;
- Will be an announcement – wood innovation funding – innovation in technologies that help develop markets for material that is by-product of timber production and restoration projects; up to \$250K grants
- Offer private landowner assistance through forest stewardship program; trying to address that now and bringing in back in USFS mission. 2/3 nations forests are privately owned. Need to work more with outreach and assistance with partners with NRCS.
- State and private forest ‘road shows’ to all National Forests and give staff updates on what private lands work is happening now with FS and NRCS.

Bruce Taylor, Pacific birds and Intermountain Joint Venture

- OR Ag Heritage program
- OWEB put out potential requests - \$30M in potential requests = high demand, then big bump in demand for FARM BILL for non-federal match.
- Westside – oak woodlands and grasslands a priority, OWEB is funding 3 local programs; PDX Metro, east cascades, rest of Willamette Valley, Klamath-Siskiyou groups. Looking for larger scale investments; new group in the Umpqua
- Eastside – Sage Grouse – Sage Con
- Wetlands – SONEC in Harney, NRCS is in hiring mode again
- Water in the West for IMJV – larger regional effort around flood irrigation hay meadows

Sam – FSA

- Training session for FSA County Committee members; Peggy Brown is now Dept. Admin for FO for USDA
- Bailout for Corn, wheat, dairy, also almonds and cherries
- Barry will be at State Committee meeting

Mikal – ODFW

- Open Fields grants – access habitat – public access
- New Coordinator –
- Large scale annual grass treatments for winter mule deer, in John Day basin, funded with Mule Deer Initiative funds
- Several acquisitions
 - Wildlife mitigation - \$5.4M Santiam Kingston Hills (greenbelt land trust)
 - Molalla basin – Clackamas – Oregon Chub properties
- Road kill Salvage approved
- Expansion of Klamath ~200ac) and Summer Lake (560 acr)
- Sage Grouse – down about 10%, but one bright spot is Paulina PAC was up, good response to large scale Juniper removal



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Anne, OACD

- Excited about New Clack SWCD community forest
- Great partnership
- New to job so don't know what updates you may need
- John Keith, Exec Direct. – out so feel free to CC
- Following OHP in legislative session
 - Need to support technical assistance and planning grants come with it.

Samantha Bayer, OR Farm Bureau

- We are involved with Tide gate conversation
- Also, a focus and interest is the OR Ag Heritage program
- Big convention for first week of December
- Smoke damage also an issue, not just fire.

Closing comments

Next meeting, Quarterly in Thursday, February 14th

Thank you from Barry B. – impressed with the solution-oriented approach this partnership is taking. We are not relying on the regulatory and mandates. Look forward to February.

- END -

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