

# Grant County Local Work Group

## MEETING MINUTES

**Tuesday, January 29, 2019**

Oregon Department of Forestry (Conference Room)

1:00pm-3:00pm

### **PURPOSE OF THE DISCUSSION:**

Provide a forum for NRCS to work collaboratively with our partners so we can develop a plan that strategically utilizes limited resources in a way that benefits all of us.

### **OBJECTIVES**

Confirm resource concerns identified from past local work group meetings and prioritize projects for Conservation Implementation Strategies (CIS) developments.

#### **1. Introductions (Zola Ryan- facilitator)**

- Each attendee was asked to provide their name, organization or affiliation

#### **2. District Conservationist Transition (Lorraine Vogt, District Conservationist)**

- Lorraine leaving in late March
- Going to Missoula, Montana for an Area Resource Conservationist position
- Office will have an acting District Conservationist until the position is filled
- DC position will be advertised and filled ASAP

#### **3. New Employee: Hannah Mears**

- Soil Conservationist
- Started in mid-December 2018
- Graduated from EOU with degree from OSU
- Worked for Wilbur Ellis and CTWSRO

#### **4. Soil Health Challenge (Aaron Roth, Range Management Specialist)**

- Simple DIY test gauges microbial activity and soil health
- Healthy soil is at the heart of healthy food systems, healthy ecosystems, and healthy communities.
- “This challenge is no substitute for lab testing,” said Cory Owens, NRCS Oregon state soil scientist. “But it’s a fun way to start thinking about what’s going on in the soil. What are your microbes up to? How does your management influence how quickly they can eat your shorts?”
- Contact Aaron if interested
  - Goal is to plant the underwear the first week of April

## 5. Review 2018 EQIP/RCPP contracts (Lorraine)

2018 EQIP Summary			
Funding Pool	No. of Contracts	Dollars Obligated	Acres
RCPP- Blue Mountain Vegetative Health	12	\$ 290,400.00	640
Juniper Removal	3	\$ 65,000.00	300
Forest thinning	9	\$ 225,400.00	340
Northside Mule Deer Winter Habitat	12	\$ 512,600.00	2774
Kahler Upland Improvement	4	\$ 151,600.00	1424
JDU- Basin - Forestry	1	\$ 6,200.00	15
Seasonal High Tunnel	3	\$ 26,400.00	0.3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>\$ 987,200.00</b>	<b>4853.3</b>

- Lorraine provide program updates
- Finished Northside Mule Deer Winter Habitat CIS (goal of 7,500 acres treated, ended up treating ~8,500 acres total)
- At least 1 more year of Kahler Basin Project CIS, great participations
- Izee forestry changed the boundary criteria, hoping to get more interest from this change
- A question was asked about what the Blue Mountain Vegetative Health project were
  - Lorraine explained the project area and focus, juniper and forest thinning

## 6. Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (Jay Gibbs, Basin Team Leader)

- Signed by the President on Dec. 20, 2018
- Still waiting on final rules and policies.
- Programs reauthorized:
  - EQIP increase over the length of the farm bill
  - CSP minor tweaks and new rules will be written
  - ACEP up to 450 million/year
  - RCPP budget has tripled and become permanent program
  - CIG
- Check farmers.gov for news and updates
- Locally lead process will remain

### Questions

- A question was asked about two chiefs
  - Not officially authorized, still hope to have it continue
- Do you think ALE will shift back to west side?
  - Jay thinks not
    - program is based on “right people at the right time” and eastern Oregon should be very competitive

## 7. CREP 2018 summary (Tereasa Perkins, CREP tech)

County/Contract	Acres	Stream Miles
Grant new total	235.07	9.58
Grant Renewal total	69.67	3.73
Baker new total	534.75	13.18
Baker Renewal total	273.6	7.96
	1113.09	34.45

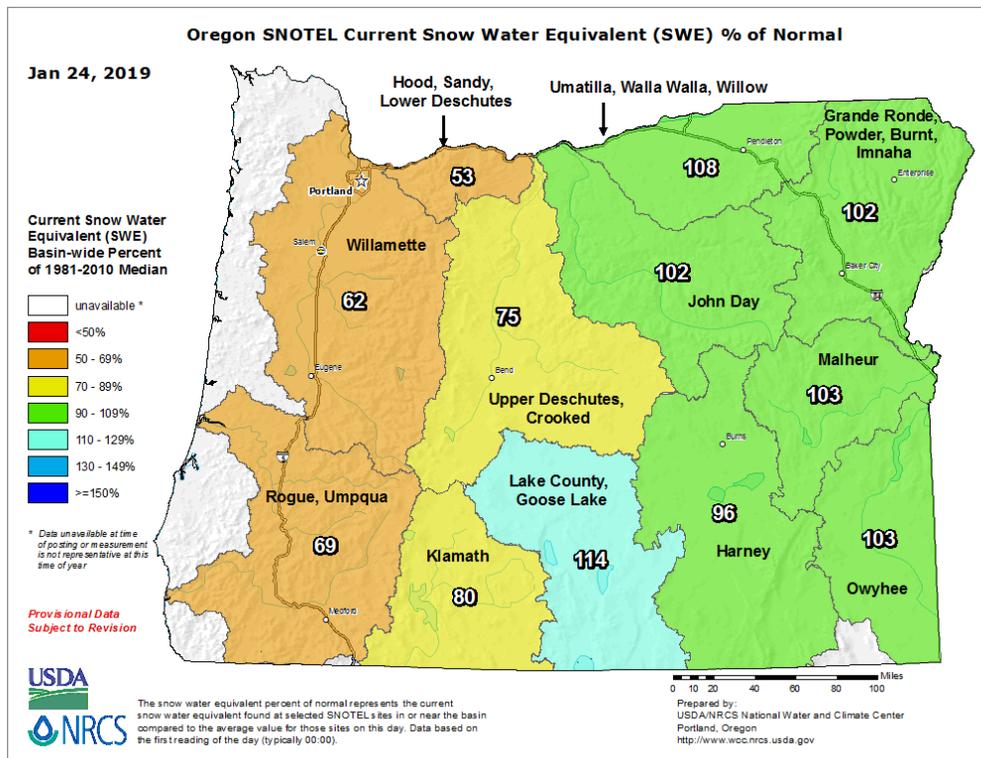
- 3 Mid management plans were designed and implemented in 2018
- Worked on 6 new contracts, 3 of which were contracted in 2018
- 5 renewals contracts completed.

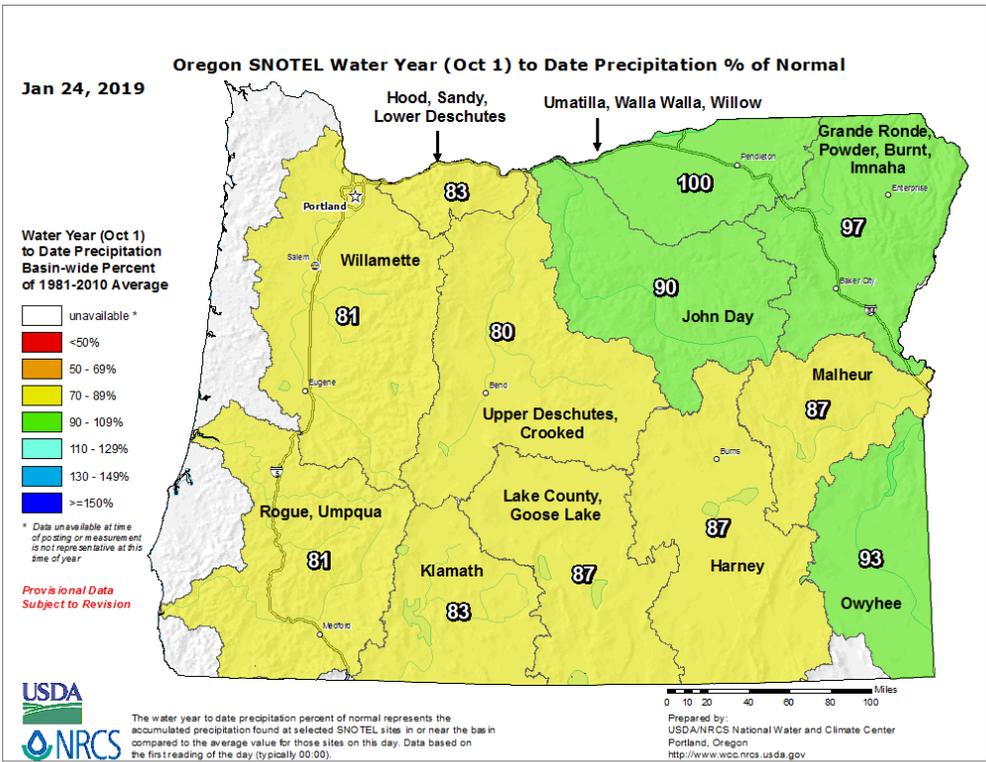
## 8. Conservation Stewardship Program (Lorraine)

- 2018 Summary
  - 5 contract, 4,376 acres, \$91,500/year total
  - 8 applications, only 5 went through ranking process
- 2019 Renewals
  - 6 applications
  - waiting on guidance on how to proceed with these

## 9. 2019 Water Supply Outlook (Lorraine)

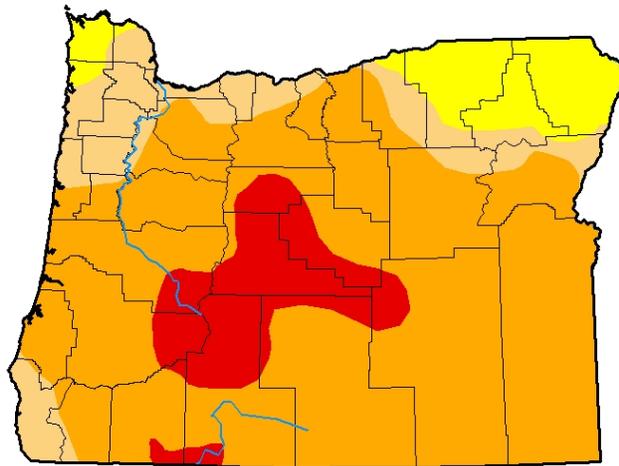
- current year is about normal
- some counties are still in drought classification





## U.S. Drought Monitor Oregon

**January 22, 2019**  
(Released Thursday, Jan. 24, 2019)  
Valid 7 a.m. EST



- Intensity:**
- D0 Abnormally Dry
  - D1 Moderate Drought
  - D2 Severe Drought
  - D3 Extreme Drought
  - D4 Exceptional Drought

*The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.*

**Author:**  
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National Drought Mitigation Center

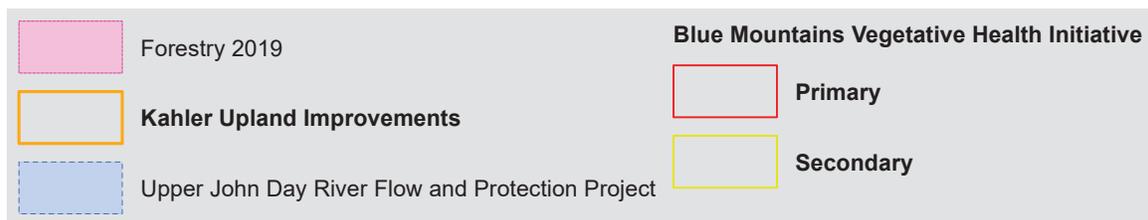
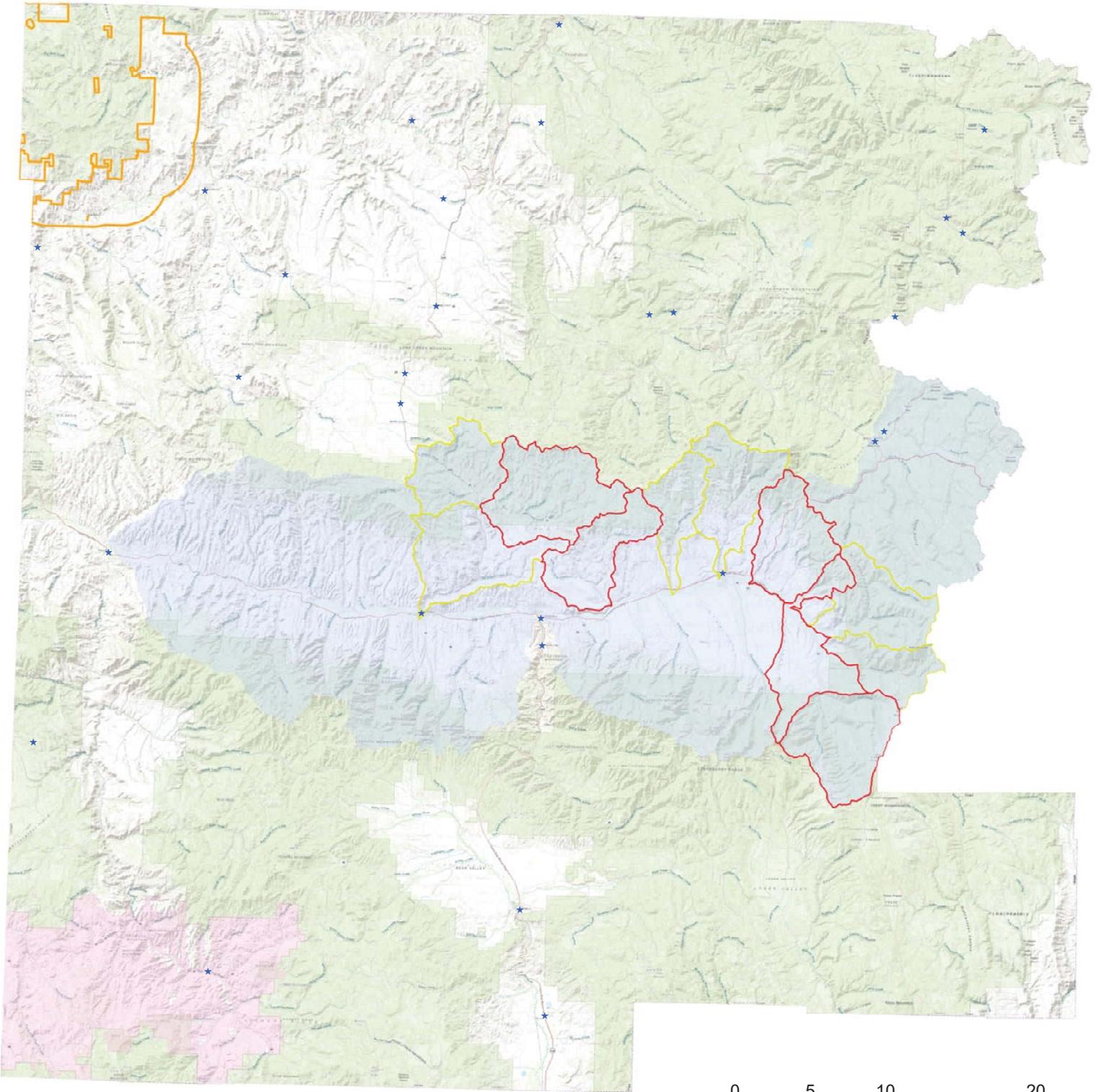


<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>



# 2019 EQIP Priority Areas

Grant County, Oregon



## 10. 2019 Conservation Implementation Strategies (Lorraine)

- Kahler Basin – **tentative budget \$400,000**
  - Basin Forestry – **tentative budget \$500,000**
  - Blue Mountain Vegetative Health Initiative (Grant SWCD RCPP) **\$420,000 – second year total \$1.2 million, \$290,000 EQIP spent in 2018, remaining will be spent next year**
  - Upper John Day River Flow Restoration and Protection (CTWSRO RCPP) **\$260,000 for EQIP– first funding year, 4 million, 2.7 million ALE, 1.2 million EQIP**
  - State (High tunnel, Organic, Energy)
- RCPP 5 year contracts but may finish before the 5 years
  - EQIP CIS both shared with other counties
    - Forestry CIS may continue for the next couple of years
      - Typically, 2-3 years per area
    - Kahler Basin
      - Lots of interest, may go out to a fifth year

### Questions/Comments:

- Will the Ritter collaborative area be a focus for 2020?
  - CIS was submitted last year for review
  - Lots of restoration plans in the area were based on NRCS funding
  - May need to continue to talk with Jay
- ODF bug survey last year had Grant county was a red area on the entire state, lots of bug kill
- Lack of forest interest is due to limited forestry ground, and most of it has been logged in the past.
- Absentee landowners also may not show much interest
- There was an inquiry about RCPP timeline for 2019. Jay said guidance should come out sometime in May.

## 11. Review of County Priority Resource Issues (Lorraine)

- Invasive Species
- Forest Health
- Grazing Management
- Water Quality/Quantity
- Easement

## 12. Adjourn