

2019 SHERMAN COUNTY LOCAL WORK GROUP MEETING MINUTES

Location: Sherman County OSU Extension Office

Date: March 7, 2019

Time: 1:00pm – 2:00pm

9 Producer/Landowners were in attendance

Aaron Roth and Garrett Duyck were the meeting facilitators led the work group meeting. They started off with the goals of the local work group meeting and the meeting protocols. Then DelRae Ferguson Acting D.C. started off with a powerpoint presentation discussing a FY 2018 Re-Cap including contracts written and acres and dollars that went into EQIP and CSP. After a recap of previous Farm Bill expenditures and priorities, the current Farm Bill was discussed including:

- All current programs received funding
- Specific funds were targeted for Energy Use issues
- More funds into the EQIP pool, less to CSP
- Bill in evaluation, full distribution of funding still being decided

She also gave an update on staffing and said that the District Conservationist position in Sherman county is set to be advertised in the next few weeks, but a full time body should no be expected until May.

Past Resource Concerns were identified as:

- Soil Erosion
- Soil Health
- Annual Grass Invasion
- Noxious and Invasive Species
- Insufficient Livestock Water
- Improper Pasture Utilization

2018 Program Re-Cap (What we have been doing)

EQIP- 21 Fire Disaster Recovery Contracts:

Cover Crop – 6,224.3 ac. \$257,253.49

Herbaceous Weed Treatment– 5,188 ac. \$181,038.46

Rangeland Seeding – 4,501.2 ac. \$521,713.00

Prescribed Grazing – 5,422.2 ac. \$37,238.00

Fence – 55,795 ft. \$132,718.00

CSP- 4 New Contracts, 3 Renewals – 10, 321.2 ac.

CREP- 15 Applications, 52 Re-Enrolls, 1 Approved Contract

Then 2019 funding opportunities in Sherman county were discussed- specifically EQIP monies that are available.

*Pine Hollow/Jackknife Watershed Rangeland Improvement

*Columbia Plateau Grassland Enhancement and Restoration – Expiring CRP Acres Improvement, all of Sherman and Wasco counties are included in this CIS.

Objectives and goals of each project were discussed, and practices included were discussed. Handouts for each CIS were made available to attendees and program applications were on hand.

The discussion then moved onto future treatment ideas/areas in Sherman County.

Cropland was the main discussion point and what else is left for producers to do because majority of the county is now no-tilling and planting cover crops.

- Precision Ag Tech- Remote sensing/imagery utilizing drone technology, smart sprayers if they are not already doing so through CSP.
- Wildfire Mitigation- River canyons go un-grazed now that they are state owned and the fire just ripped through that up to the tops. Some kind of fuel or fire break to act as a buffer would have been helpful. Access roads county wide need improvement and if there was a way to cost share on that there would be interest. DelRae is going to look at the potential of adding access road improvement to the Pine Hollow/Jackknife CIS.
- There was also discussion on terrace reshaping- Some were pro, some were against it since NRCS was probably the ones who paid for them to be installed in the first place.

Kayci Sharp P.T. with the FSA gave a Farm Bill update and what the changes were for FSA. Producers may have to do some re-electing if they were ARC Individual and should check in with the office.

Amanda Whitman, District Manager with the Sherman SWCD gave an update. County cost share program was discussed, annual meeting/dinner, and tree sales.

Jacob Powell with the Sherman County Area Watershed gave an update on OWEB funds. If there is any interest in projects, stop by the office to discuss with him.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00pm by Aaron Roth and Garrett Duyck- Facilitators