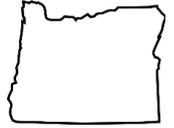




# Oregon Technical Advisory Committee



Meeting Notes for May 30, 2019 - 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
Oregon Farm Service Agency / 7620 SW Mohawk Street / Tualatin, OR 97062

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## Attendees:

1. Nathan Agalzoff, Oregon Department of Forestry
2. Anthony Barber, Environmental Protection Agency
3. Barry Bushue, Farm Service Agency
4. Jonas Parker, Bureau of Land Management
5. Mikal Cline, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
6. Kevin Conroy, Natural Resources Conservation Service
7. Mike Edwards, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
8. Amy Fischer, Natural Resources Conservation Service
9. Jason Jeans, Natural Resources Conservation Service
10. Wes Jennings, Farm Service Agency
11. Tami Kerr, Oregon Dairy Farmers Association
12. Linda Lind, U.S. Forest Service
13. Julie MacSwain, Natural Resources Conservation Service
14. London Milnes, Farm Bureau
15. Teresa Matteson, Benton Soil and Water Conservation District
16. Sara O'Brien, Willamette Partnership
17. Scott Oviatt, Natural Resources Conservation Service
18. Cory Owens, Natural Resources Conservation Service
19. Nick Peak, Environmental Protection Agency
20. Tracy Robillard, Natural Resources Conservation Service
21. Jerome Rosa, Oregon Cattleman's Association
22. Brenda Sanchez, Oregon Department of Agriculture
23. Loren Unruh, Natural Resources Conservation Service
24. Ashley Zanolli, Environmental Protection Agency

## FSA Update: Barry Bushue, FSA

- New FSA program for dairy producers in the Farm Bill
- CRP Sign up has been re-opened for certain practices. Aug. 23 is the deadline for new sign-ups. It's a truncated timeline. See handout with specific changes.
- Hemp – FSA is working through programs as it relates to hemp since it was legalized in the new Farm Bill. More guidance and policy will be forthcoming.

## NRCS Update: Kevin Conroy, NRCS

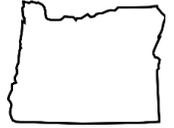
- This time of year represents our peak activity in terms of contracting
- Last week NRCS Oregon leadership team met to review the new Conservation Implementation Strategies that will be available to farmers and ranchers this next fiscal year.

## Farm Bill Update: Loren Unruh, NRCS

- The new Farm Bill did not add new NRCS programs or eliminate any programs; but it made changes to all programs.
- Throughout fiscal year 2018, NRCS is implementing Farm Bill programs as they were in the 2014 Farm Bill.
- In fiscal year 2020, there will be interim guidance issued to NRCS.



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- Regional Conservation Partnership Program – changes to the program will allow for separate RCPP contracts (not under program rules of EQIP or CSP) and RCPP will have their own program rules
- Announcement for Program Funding slated for fall of 2019.
- Partners are encouraged to work with local NRCS Basin Team Leaders if they are interested in submitting a new RCPP proposal this year.
- National category of RCPP has been eliminated in this Farm Bill, so RCPP proposal categories are a state level category and a Critical Conservation Area category. In Oregon, the Critical Conservation Area is in the Columbia River Basin. Goal of eliminating national category is to give states more control and flexibility to invest in local projects.

## **Geographic Area Rate Cap (GARC): Loren Unruh, NRCS**

- NRCS will use the easements subcommittee to consult on the FY2020 GARC. These rates relate to Wetland Reserve Easements.
- NRCS Easement Specialist Bari Williams will reach out to subcommittee members and will present an update at the next OTAC meeting.
- If you would like to be a member of the easement subcommittee, contact Julie MacSwain, NRCS.

## **Prairie Soils for Sustainable Restoration, Teresa Matteson, Benton SWCD**

- Started in 2016 with \$75,000 from NRCS with partner match
- The project targets degradation of upland prairies in the Willamette Valley (Yamhill, Benton and Lane counties)
- Had over 50 partners working on the project and 22 private landowners
- Pulled soil samples through a variety of seasonal conditions; data was analyzed and synthesized into GIS maps
- Greg Fitzpatrick's Point Intercept Frame (YouTube video)
- Provided a tool that matches up prairie vegetation with soil type

## **Drought Status and Water Supply: Scott Oviatt, NRCS**

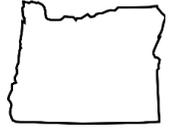
- Observation in the last 5 to 10 years is that snowpack is peaking earlier and melting off earlier.
- Statewide precipitation today is 96% of normal
- Started off the water year Oct. through Jan. as very dry and warm on the West side, yet it was opposite on the East side
- Owyhee reservoir is 98% full, 2-year water supply
- Prineville reservoir is 100% full
- Only 11 percent of the state is in D-0 status, 1.8 percent of the state is in D-1. Those areas are in Northwest Oregon and portions of Wasco, Sherman and Hood River County.
- Secretarial Drought Designations for USDA – allows producers to be eligible for emergency loans
- Douglas and Lane County had a higher designation, which makes them eligible for livestock forage program

## **Oregon Soil Survey Update: Cory Owens, NRCS**

- Differences in provisional ecological site descriptions



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- Surveys in progress in Central Oregon (Deschutes, Crook, Grant county area); Malheur County (divided into north and south study regions); and Klamath region. Anticipated release date in 2021/2022
- Salem soil survey office is working on a survey in the Willamette National Forest though need to sort through some challenges with cultural resources

## **Conservation Innovation Grants and Conservation Stewardship Program: Amy Fischer, NRCS**

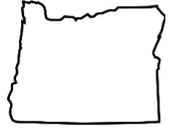
- Announcement went out a few weeks ago for CIG on-farm trials. Proposals are being accepted through July 15. There is an emphasis with this sign up for soil health demonstrations.
- State-level CIG deadline is May 31, 2019.
- The national CIG deadline was just announced for July 30, 2019.
- CIG projects inspire creative problem-solving that boosts production on farms, ranches, and private forests - ultimately, they improve water quality, soil health, and wildlife habitat. All U.S.-based non-Federal entities and individuals are eligible to apply.
- Oregon received 75 applications this year for the CSP general sign up. There were no renewal sign ups this year.
- CSP is switching to a dollar-based program rather than an acreage-based program
- This year CSP is still using the 2014 Farm Bill rules.
- We expect many changes to CSP policy as it is developed under the new Farm Bill.

## **Status of Shared Stewardship with Forest Service and the State of Oregon: Linda Lind, USFS**

- The Shared Stewardship Across Landscapes represents a paradigm shift in how the U.S. Forest Service invests its resources locally. It aims to increase the scale and pace.
- There are 11 national forests in Oregon.
- Fire funding is over 53% of USFS budget
- With strong support from Senator Wyden; fire fix legislation will be implemented in 2020. It is based on last 10-year average of fire costs and provides options to leverage FEMA funding fire-fighting within specified thresholds.
- Working with Oregon Department of Forestry on a shared stewardship agreement
- Governor's Council on Wildfire Response – includes state and federal lands and includes a mitigation component. 3 committees created out of this council: 1) suppression; 2) adaptation and recovery; and 3) mitigation. Reference Oregon Executive Order No. 19-01: Establishing the Governor's Council on Wildfire Response
- The council will help identify high-risk areas in Oregon in conjunction with ODF strategy
- The 2018 Farm Bill expanded the USFS' Good Neighbor Authority, which allows more flexibilities for forest treatments and fuels reduction
- Goals to streamline NEPA process (National Environmental Policy Act)
- Cultural transformation for the Forest Service.
- Shared decision space to allow states to have more of a voice in where the USFS focuses its investments
- Through Good Neighbor Authority, ODF is able to do some of the NEPA work with the USFS which can help speed up the process.
- Draft agreement with the state currently in the Governor's Office. Potential signing toward the end of June.



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- Quarterly forestry meetings with NRCS, BLM, ODF and other agencies have offered a forum for discussion and feedback on the Shared Stewardship effort.
- [www.fs.fed.us/sites/default/files/toward-shared-stewardship.pdf](http://www.fs.fed.us/sites/default/files/toward-shared-stewardship.pdf)

## National Water Quality Initiative: Loren Unruh, NRCS

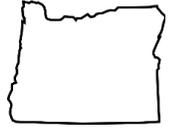
- NRCS Oregon has to designate 10% of its EQIP funds within drinking water source areas (ground and surface water)
- NRCS is working with partners and local work groups to identify potential projects for NWQI funding. See DEQ map handouts.

## Round Robin Updates:

- Jerome Rosa, Oregon Cattleman's Association Mid-Year meeting is coming up with discussions on WOTUS. Canyonville Sevenfeathers Resort June 24 and 25.
- Brenda Sanchez, Oregon Dept of Agriculture: SIA – Strategic Implementation Area, focus areas identified through Oregon Department of Agriculture. There are about 6 a year; desire to ramp that up to 9 per year. Started in 2014 and did 27 SIAs to date. There is leverage dollars from OWEB to support local outreach and capacity building. This program presents more opportunities for agricultural producers to implement voluntary conservation activities in targeted watersheds
- Mikal Cline, ODFW – Kevin Blakely traveling to Washington, D.C. to meet with NRCS leadership to discuss Voluntary Habitat Access Incentive Program. VPA has helped secure more than 320,000 acres of habitat in Oregon.
- Mike Edwards, USFWS – Fine tuning niches on private lands restoration for water quality in Klamath Basin
- Bruce Taylor – Intermountain West Joint Venture hired a new a co-funded position for SGI implementation based out of Hines; and has an additional 5 more positions across the state with support from OWEB Focused Investment.
- BLM update – soil mapping; eastern Oregon soil mapping efforts is a high priority with BLM. BLM is well staffed on soil crew. BLM has a new resource management plan. Looking into tether assist logging which is better for the soil and safer for employees. Re-delineating stream surveys in Southwestern Oregon.
- Ryan Gordon ODF; opportunities for collaboration with USFS with shared stewardship. EFRP; Emergency Forest Restoration Program – projects ongoing in Southern Oregon; Wasco County; Cottage Grove area. 2 new Joint Chiefs projects announced (Douglas County and Klamath County)
- EPA has a grant program in the Columbia River Basin targeted to water quality improvements for agricultural producers. The announcement is slated to come out in July.



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- New state forester is starting in Oregon, a new state resource conservationist, and several new district conservationist positions.
- Sara O'Brien is with the Willamette Partnership; interest in expanding partnerships to other land uses. Ag municipal partnerships – increasing water agencies need to invest in working lands conservation to meet their water quality goals. Last fall finished up a 4 year national CIG on flood plains; looking at development and restoration as it relates to the CIG.
- Next meeting is Aug. 20 from 12:30 to 4 p.m. at the FSA State Office in Tualatin

- END -

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