



United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Roseburg Service Center  
2593 NW Kline St.  
Roseburg, OR 97471

# Josephine County Local Working Group Meeting & Williams Community Fire Resiliency Project USDA/NRCS and the Farm Bill

**January 30, 2020 6 PM**  
**Williams Fire Station, 211 E. Fork Rd. Williams Oregon**

**Meeting Purpose:** Provide a forum for NRCS to communicate with landowners and conservation partners on NRCS and Farm Bill assistance and address concerns/work on fire mitigation efforts in Josephine County.

**Objectives:** Discuss common and priority resource concerns and share ideas about how the new Farm Bill and NRCS can address them. Set goals for communicating and coordinating fire strategy in Josephine County.

**Attendance:** 34 attendees filled out the roster, with an additional late arriving attendees, other family members, Williams rural fire volunteers, and ODF staff in attendance without signing the roster (60 total).

## **1. Welcome, introductions & meeting purpose**

As attendees entered fire station, roster was filled out and handouts provided. At start of meeting, Chief Rick introduced himself as new fire chief and then explained the recent history of Williams Town Council's wildfire committee work and working relationship with NRCS. At that time, NRCS DC introduced and had attendees all introduce themselves.

## **2. USDA/NRCS and the Farm Bill**

NRCS DC presented Farm Bill programs, NRCS roles within USDA and the explained the recently funded Williams Community Wildfire EQIP/CIS.

## **3. Ongoing activities in Josephine County**

Most of discussion surrounded the wildfire program activity in Josephine County, including the IVFROG activity for the Illinois Valley. The DC also explained that the EQIP High Tunnels and CStP are available to landowners throughout Josephine County as well.

## **4. How planning and project development occurs with NRCS in Oregon**

Embedded within the presentation, DC explains Oregon NRCS CIS development process and collaboration necessary to obtain farm Bills funding. the Williams CIS and the proposed IVFROG forestry project is an example of that. The DC use the Tiller Joint Chief's project as another example of a collaborative process that took more time to obtain funding as compared to the William community.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment.

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## 5. Planned activities and projects in Josephine County

Other on-going planning include the IVFROG forest project, Murphy Ditch and White Ditch water conservation projects.

## 6. Participant feedback

Attendees had questions about EQIP timing, requirements, etc. One attendee was concerned with plastic being burned with pile burning and they are contesting the state rules. Another attendee wanted to know what penalty there could be with withdrawing from a future EQIP contract. An attendee had received a post card from OSU and was confused as to who would be following up with him. One question was in regard to property size limitation for EQIP, and current condition. One wanted confirmation as to who to talk with after the meeting to sign up for EQIP and then who to work with on forest planning. One attendee has most of work done so is interested in CStP. OSU small woodland broad outreach mailer was confused with our outreach. One attendee promoted biochar. One question about broadcast prescribed burning. Defensible space clarification was request in regard to the 300 foot buffer.

NRCS and ODF addressed these concerns and questions and provided an opportunity to follow up individually.

## 7. Closing & next steps

Upon closing the meeting, each participant was afforded to the opportunity to write their concerns or interest in working with NRCS and ODF under the Williams Community CIS/EQIP project. NRCS collected 13 requests to sign up for EQIP at the end of the meeting. These requests will be cataloged and followed up by NRCS and ODF as soon as possible.

