



Tillamook County Local Work Group Meeting February 24, 2021 Virtual Zoom Meeting

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Mitch Cummings at 10:00 a.m.

Welcome and Self Introductions

Mitch welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated that the purpose of this meeting is to provide a forum for partners, farm, ranch, forestry representatives and conservation groups to share conservation activities and discuss natural resource problems. These collaborative discussions with our partners help NRCS develop a local strategy to guide farm bill funding to address resource issues in the future.

Mitch gave an overview of the current CIS's and Farm Bill initiatives available for Tillamook County.

NRCS Statewide Initiatives Available in Tillamook County:

National Initiatives: Organic
 High Tunnel
 On-Farm Energy
 Easement Programs

State Initiatives: Animal Feeding Operations
 Western Oregon Wildfire Emergency Stabilization
 Emergency Animal Mortality Management

Basin CIS's: Basin Animal Feeding Operations
 Forest Diversity

Tillamook County CIS: Tillamook/Nestucca Watershed Function

Lower Willamette/North Coast Basin Strategies:

- Forest Diversity – Focus area this year is private forestland in the Tillamook Bay Watershed. Practices include Forest Management Plans, pre-commercial thinning, brush management, tree/shrub establishment and many others. A Forest Management Plan must be in place before implementation practices can be applied for.

- Basin-wide Animal Feeding Operation – Waste Storage facilities and roofs have been added practices this year. A current CNMP is a required for eligibility before implementation practices can be applied for. We have a local North Coast/Lower Willamette basin funding pool so we don't need to compete state-wide for project funding.

Tillamook Strategies:

- Tillamook/Nestucca Watershed Function – New this year! Continuation from the Two-Chiefs projects. Focus area includes Tillamook Bay Drainage and South Tillamook County. Funding will be available for three years. Culverts/Bridges will be one of the main practices. Some of the additional practices include fencing, off-stream watering, access road, Channel stabilization, pipeline, water troughs and others. \$177,000 available for projects this year.

2020 EQIP Program Summary for Tillamook Co. - Received 45 applications; funded 29 contracts totaling \$709,528 practices are expected to provide 3,422 acres of conservation in the county.

Oregon Initiative – Organic:	5 applications,	1 funded,	\$4,269
Oregon High Tunnel Initiative:	5 applications,	3 funded,	\$18,278
Oregon Initiative – Energy:	7 applications,	6 funded,	\$277,612
Basin NC/LW Forest Diversity:	1 application,	1 funded,	\$14,803
Basin NC/LW AFO:	27 applications,	18 funded,	\$394,566

Question: Will funding be available for dairies in the future years? There is a state-wide initiative for AFO which will remain throughout the current Farm Bill. We also have a Basin-Wide AFO funding pool that will funnel money into the local areas rather than competing with statewide projects.

Currently Identified Resource Concerns:

- Water Quality – addressing with AFO funding pool as well as watershed function
- Locally Sourced Food Supply – High Tunnel initiative
- Fish Passage – actively working for past 6-7 years to address this concern
- Forest Health – relatively new to us, doing outreach to gain interest. Focusing on getting FMP's for local landowners.
- Tide Gates – continuing conversations on how we can get involved and join forces with Group in the southern part of the state who is already working to address this.
- Air Quality – Worked with air quality in past CIS. May address it again in the future.

Wym – might consider adding water quantity. There is a current bill at the state legislature that would limit livestock operators to 5k gal/day. Look at water use, how much water is needed, as well as water reclamation.

Chris Laity – failing levees. Should be included with tide gate discussions.

Robert – Stream habitat further upstream

Troy – Climate is a big topic with the new administration. Low stream flows is becoming more important. Air Quality and emissions, reducing methane emissions may be an opportunity in the future – There are possible feed additives that are being developed that may help with this in the future.

Current Focus for Partners

Ray, Tillamook SWCD – ODA along with SWCD's are required to have Strategic Implementation Areas in the state, we will have a big area covering the middle to lower Miami to Hwy 6 – all HUCS – looking at areas of concern, higher priority areas for fencing.

Wym, ODA – focusing on one-on-one compliance with CAFO rules. NRCS technical and financial assistance is crucial to their program. Always looking at bringing in new technology to help operators manage nutrients. There is an interest in remote sensing for real time data out there. Climate change direction for USDA will hopefully provide carbon markets for dairies in the future. Technical resources are still needed, additional staff would be helpful, good to see additional specialists coming on board at the state level NRCS.

Tami, ODFA – technical resources that can assist with CNMP's is also needed, along with financial assistance. NetZero is a 2050 goal.

Troy, OSU Extension – Provided an update on research project looking at tile lines, nitrate and phosphorus levels – they are gathering data. The project utilizes wood chips in bioreactor cells, with a series of check dams to alter flow rates. Finding a 20-60% reduction in nitrates coming out the back end of these cells. Cost to implement will be \$5k - \$10k to install this system, life expectancy 10 years before needing to replace chips. Hoping to have conclusive data to report in the near future.

Michael, Tillamook SWCD – with generation changes in dairy managers, a lot of the younger generations are looking at upgrading milking equipment, such as switching to robotics – is there any opportunity for financial assistance to make that upgrade? Mitch stated nothing in place right now to help with the specific milking equipment, but there are other opportunities where we can work with the new managers to change some of the practices, such as updating energy audits, roofs, updating cooling equipment, alley scrapers, switching PTO pumps to electric pumps, etc.

Chad Allen, TCCA/ODFA – the assistance provided to the dairy operators by NRCS has been greatly appreciated! A lot of attention is being directed to NetZero. Will be several changes in the future to lessen the carbon footprints in the dairy industry. Any assistance NRCS can provide will be greatly needed and appreciated to meet this demanding goal.

Mitch invited everyone to please reach out to NRCS if you want to talk about any opportunities or resource concerns in the county. Partnership is crucial in getting conservation on the ground.

Meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.
Dee Robinson