

**2021 Harney County Local Work Group
Meeting Notes**

Tuesday, March 2, 2021

2:00 pm – 4:00 pm

*Public Meeting Room, Harney Educational Service District
25 Fairview Heights, Burns
and via ZoomGov Meeting*

Purpose: To build alliances and strategically invest to effectively solve natural resource problems in Harney County.

Objectives:

- 1. Provide an update on current staffing**
- 2. Provide an update on progress made toward implementing the Long Range Strategy**
- 3. Discuss FY2021 funding pools**
- 4. Receive input on FY2022 funding pools and future directions**

Attendees:

Kirk Ausland, Oregon Department of Forestry
Katie Baltzor, Harney County Cattlewomen
Rachel Beaubien, Natural Resources Conservation Service
David Bohnert, Oregon State University
Chad Boyd, Agricultural Research Service
Shannon Brubaker, Harney Soil and Water Conservation District
Chris Colson, Ducks Unlimited
Ed Contreras, Intermountain West Joint Venture
Patty Dorroh, Harney County Court
Carol Dunten, Harney Soil and Water Conservation District
Cody Folk, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Emma Gabriel, Farm Service Agency
Dustin Johnson, Oregon State University Extension
Jeff Mackay, Malheur National Wildlife Refuge
Jamie McCormack, Bureau of Land Management
Karen Moon, Harney County Watershed Council
Rory O'Connor, Agricultural Research Service
Stephanie Payne, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Bonnie Rasmussen, Oregon Department of Agriculture
Jeff Rose, Bureau of Land Management
Aaron Roth, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Zola Ryan, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Roger Sheley, Agricultural Research Service
Kristen Shelman, Harney County Court
Andrew Shields, Roaring Springs Ranch

Brenda Smith, High Desert Partnership
Carlton Strough, Harney Soil and Water Conservation District
Shelby Weigand, Pheasants Forever
Ron Whiting, landowner
Randy Wiest, Department of State Lands
Katie Wollstein, Oregon State University Extension

Opening

Zola Ryan, District Conservationist, welcomed everyone to the meeting and went over some housekeeping items. The 2021 Harney County Local Work Group meeting was held both in person and via ZoomGov meeting. Zola explained that Aaron Roth of the Oregon NRCS Facilitation Cadre was online to help with facilitation, making sure folks participating online were able to participate fully. Those in attendance, both in person and online, were asked to sign in.

Zola reviewed the meeting objectives which were to:

1. Provide an update on current staffing.
2. Provide an update on progress made toward implementing the Long Range Strategy.
3. Discuss FY2021 funding pools.
4. Receive input on FY2022 funding pools and future directions.

Staff Introductions

Zola announced that several new staff were hired in 2020 and introduced new Hines Field Office staff, existing Hines Field Office staff, and other staff and partners who deliver NRCS programs and assistance in Harney County.

Rachel Beaubien started in May 2020 as a Range Management Specialist. She transferred to NRCS from the Burns District BLM office. She is currently working with projects that are part of the Lone Pine RFP project, Sage Grouse Initiative, and Groundwater Savings.

Cody Folk started at the beginning of August 2020 as a Soil Conservationist. He is a soil scientist by training and has accepted a position with NRCS Soil Survey in Montana. His last day in the Hines Field Office will be March 18. Cody has been working on medusahead projects in the Stinkingwater area. Zola will be taking over this workload upon Cody's departure.

Shelby Weigand is a Pheasants Forever employee hired as a Sage Grouse Initiative Range Conservationist in August 2020. She is available to provide assistance to all NRCS field offices with sage-grouse habitat in their counties. However, so far, the bulk of her workload has been in Harney County.

Christina Santana is the NRCS Basin Biologist stationed in Redmond. When the Hines Field Office was short staffed, she came over and provided assistance with contract development and management, especially in the Lone Pine RFP. Christina has been managing several EQIP contracts that she intends to see through to completion. However, she will not be developing new contracts now that the Hines Field Office has staff.

Carlton Strough is a Harney Soil and Water Conservation District employee serving as the SONEC Partner Biologist for Harney County. Most of his time is dedicated to working on flood irrigation infrastructure

projects for waterbird habitat. Approximately one quarter of his time is dedicated to working on water quality related projects for the SWCD.

Jason Kesling and Danielle Reynolds are Harney SWCD employees who sometimes perform work on behalf of NRCS, generally flagging juniper cutting units or inspecting completed practices. This work is funded through a grant the SWCD received from the National Association of Conservation Districts.

Stephanie Payne is the NRCS Small Farms/Organic Specialist for the Deschutes and High Desert Basin. She works in the Redmond office, but handles High Tunnel and Organic Initiative applications and contracts throughout the 9 counties in the Basin, including Harney County.

Following these introductions, Zola asked all in attendance to introduce themselves. She also asked everybody to take a moment to think about the topics they hoped to discuss and write themselves a note. She said that at the end of the meeting she would ask folks to look back at their notes and make sure these burning issues had been addressed.

Progress Report on Implementation

Zola then presented the 2021 Progress Report on Implementation of the Harney County NRCS Natural Resources Long Range Strategy. The current Long Range Strategy covered the period of FY2016 – FY2020. Zola pointed out that that period has passed and it is time to look at updating the plan. She hasn't started working on the revision due to the lack of staffing these past few years, but plans to begin working toward a revision over the course of the next year.

The Long Range Strategy identifies 5 priority resource problems to be addressed by NRCS in Harney County. These are:

- Harney Basin Aquatic Ecosystem Function
- Medusahead Rye
- Riparian Condition in the Silvies Water Quality Demonstration Area
- Groundwater Availability
- Juniper Encroachment

Harney Basin Aquatic Ecosystem Function

This priority is made up of two related issues. First is the issue of invasive common carp and poor aquatic health in Malheur Lake and its tributaries. And second is the issue of maintaining flood irrigated hay meadows for the important habitat they provide for birds migrating through in the spring.

Carp

NRCS developed a Conservation Implementation Strategy (CIS) for Harney Basin Aquatic Health Improvement, which sets forth a plan to reduce and maintain carp populations at a level that allows for good water quality, healthy aquatic plants and animals, and adequate food for migratory birds. Zola explained that a lot of work is happening on issues through the Harney Basin Wetland Collaborative partners such as Malheur National Wildlife Refuge, Oregon State University, USGS, and High Desert Partnership. However, NRCS has not been directly involved in these efforts, and has no activity to report for 2020.

Meadows

NRCS has developed a CIS for Working Lands Waterbird Habitat Conservation, which establishes a goal of securing 10,300 acres of flood-irrigated habitat in Harney County. Of that 10,300 acres, the CIS sets an objective of securing easements on 5,300 acres and an objective of implementing structural or management changes on 5,000 acres. In FY2020, NRCS obligated 4 EQIP contracts for a total of \$183,866 to implement structural improvements on 1,670 acres. This brings the total acres with structural improvements to 3,517, which is 70% of the infrastructure/management objective, and 34% of the total acreage goal for the CIS. There have been no easements secured.

Medusahead Rye

NRCS has developed a CIS for Integrated Pest Management in the Stinkingwater Medusahead Management Area. The CIS identifies the Stinkingwater Medusahead Management Area as the area bounded by Highway 20 on the north, Highway 78 on the south, the Crane-Buchanan Road on the west, and the county line on the east. This area has been subdivided into 5 smaller Phase Areas. The goal of the CIS is to contain the medusahead infestation within the management area, compartmentalize the infestation, and reduce the total acres of medusahead by treating one Phase Area at a time.

NRCS began offering funding for implementation of the CIS in the Phase 1: Beaver Table area in FY2018. In that year, NRCS used general EQIP funds. The Harney SWCD, on behalf of the Harney County Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA), applied for and received a Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) project for implementation of the CIS, and RCPP-EQIP funds were used in FY2019 and FY2020.

For the Phase 1: Beaver Table area, NRCS obligated one RCPP-EQIP contract in FY2020 for \$36,641 to treat 282 acres of medusahead. This brought the total acres contracted within the Beaver Table area to 6,384. The inventory that was done for the Beaver Table area identified approximately 7,500 acres of medusahead on private lands. So, approximately 85% of those acres have been contracted for treatment. Treatments involve spraying for three years, seeding in areas with heavy infestations and/or few deep-rooted perennial bunchgrasses, and grazing rest to allow seedlings to establish.

For Phase 2: Crane-Buchanan, NRCS obligated 1 RCPP-EQIP contract in FY2020 for \$54,077 on 479 acres. This is the first contract within the Phase 2 area. The inventory done for the Crane-Buchanan area identified 9,733 acres of medusahead on private lands. Approximately 5% of the privately owned medusahead acres are contracted for treatment.

Riparian Condition in the Silvies Water Quality Demonstration Area

The Harney SWCD is the Local Management Agency for the Greater Harney Basin Agricultural Water Quality Management Plan, which identifies the Silvies River Watershed as a focus area for demonstrating the water quality impacts of agricultural management practices and watershed restoration projects. The SWCD has developed and is implementing an Action Plan for the Silvies Water Quality Demonstration Area.

The NRCS Long Range Strategy identifies work in support of the Action Plan for the Demonstration Area as a priority resource issue for NRCS, and established a goal of having 60% of stream miles on private ag lands in Silvies watershed in Ecological State A, and 40% of stream miles in lower ecological states exhibiting improving trends.

While the SWCD is implementing their Action Plan, NRCS has not yet developed a CIS or otherwise made progress on this issue.

Groundwater Availability

NRCS has developed a CIS for Saving Groundwater in the Harney Basin Using Efficient Irrigation Technologies. The goal of the CIS is to ensure the continued availability of ground water for sustainable beneficial use in the Harney Basin. The CIS lays out a strategy that involves relying on the USGS groundwater study to assess groundwater conditions and identify areas of depletion, and on the Community Based Water Planning Collaborative to recommend actions to reduce water withdrawals where needed. The CIS also sets forth an early action of providing technical and financial assistance to convert 6,243 acres of groundwater irrigated acres from MESA to LESA systems.

NRCS began offering EQIP funding for MESA to LESA conversions in the Harney Basin in FY2020. One contract was obligated for \$5,742 on 86 acres. This achieves 1% of the 6,243 acre objective.

Juniper Encroachment

The Long Range Strategy establishes a goal of treating 30,000 acres of juniper in Harney County. That goal is divided among three objectives:

- Treat 20,000 acres of Phase 1 and 2 juniper in high priority sage grouse habitat.
- Treat 5,000 acres of Phase 1 and 2 juniper to improve mule deer habitat and/or forest health.
- Treat 5,000 acres of Phase 3 juniper to improve range health, reduce erosion, and improve surface water quality.

Sage Grouse Initiative

The NRCS Hines Field Office has been utilizing Sage Grouse Initiative funding to address the priority for removing juniper from sage-grouse habitat. In FY2020, NRCS obligated 3 new EQIP contracts for \$243,518 on 1,042 acres. This brings the total acreage of juniper removal in sage-grouse habitat contracted to 16,274, or 81% of the objective.

Zola explained that while the number of acres contracted annually has shown a steady decline since 2016, this decline was due to reduced staff capacity in the Hines Field Office, not a decline in demand. There is a healthy bunch of applications for juniper cutting on hand.

Mule Deer/Forest Health

NRCS provided funding to Oregon Department of Forestry to develop fire prevention and management plans with the Rangeland Fire Protection Associations (RFPAs) in sage-grouse habitat across the state. One of those plans was written for and with the Lone Pine RFPA. This in turn became the CIS for Fire Prevention and Management in the Lone Pine Focus Area. The CIS prioritizes fuel breaks, juniper cutting, forest thinning, and water development.

In FY2020, NRCS obligated 2 EQIP contracts for \$164,470. These contracts included 234 acres of juniper cutting. This brought the total acres of juniper cutting contracted in the Lone Pine Focus Area to 2,108 acres, which is 42% of the objective for mule deer/forest health. The target for treatment of conifers within the Lone Pine Focus Area has been met, so NRCS will need to look at developing another CIS in order to treat an additional 2,900 acres for mule deer or forest health.

Phase 3 Juniper

NRCS has not developed a CIS for this objective.

Farm Bill Program Offerings

FY2021 Offerings

Zola showed how to find what funding is available through the Oregon NRCS website. Go to www.or.nrcs.usda.gov. Click on “What’s Available in My County” on the lower right side of the screen. Once you select your county, you will be taken to a page that lists all the Conservation Implementation Strategies and RCPPs that are offered in that county.

The county specific funding pools being funded in Harney County in FY2021 are:

- Fire Prevention and Management in the Lone Pine RFPA
- Saving Groundwater in the Harney Basin Using Efficient Irrigation Technologies
- Stinkingwater Medusahead Management Plan
- Working Lands for Waterbird Habitat Conservation

On the website, below the county-specific opportunities is a link to the NRCS Programs webpage, where you can find funding opportunities that are available at the state level. For FY2021, the EQIP Initiatives that apply to Harney County are:

- High Tunnel Initiative
- Organic Initiative
- Sage Grouse Initiative
- On-Farm Energy Initiative
- Animal Feeding Operation

Stephanie Payne explained that the High Tunnel Initiative provides financial assistance to purchase and install high tunnels to extend the growing season. The Organic Initiative provides financial assistance to farmers and ranchers who are certified organic producers, transitioning to organic production, or exempt organic producers. An exempt organic producer is one who produces less than \$5,000 in organic products. They are required to follow the organic standards, but are not required to be certified. All practices that are eligible for EQIP funding are available under the Organic Initiative and the project may address any resource concern. Anyone interested in the High Tunnel or Organic Initiatives may contact Stephanie Payne directly at:

Stephanie Payne
NRCS
625 SW Salmon Ave., Suite 4
Redmond, OR 97756
Stephanie.payne@usda.gov
541-699-3201

Stephanie said that she is currently working on developing a Basin level CIS targeted to resource concerns and issues commonly experienced by organic producers in the Deschutes and High Desert Basins. She has developed a **Small Farm and Organic Survey** and would appreciate folks taking the survey. It is available at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/899X3RL>.

Zola said that she wanted to make folks aware that there has been a change to the Sage Grouse Initiative this year. In the past, there have been two SGI funding pools – one for conifer encroachment (juniper) and one called “All Threats” which primarily supported implementation of conservation measures identified in site specific plans under the sage-grouse Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA). This year, the screening and ranking questions for these two funding pools have been merged together into one set of questions and there is only one funding pool – SGI – The Oregon Strategy. Zola said that the merging of the pools may result in minor changes to how a project screens and ranks, but most projects will rank the same now as they would have before.

Zola explained that the On Farm Energy Initiative provides funding for operators to get an energy audit for their operation, and then once they have the energy audit they can apply for funding to implement the recommendations of the audit.

The Animal Feeding Operation Initiative provides funding to assist those with AFOs, such as feedlots or dairies, with development and implementation of Certified Nutrient Management Plans.

Brenda Smith asked why Harney County was not eligible for Joint Chiefs funding. Zola responded that we are eligible for Joint Chiefs funding, in that if we had a CIS related to forest health in the private/national forest interface, we could request Joint Chiefs funding for that CIS. When she said that this initiative doesn’t apply to Harney County, she just meant that Harney County does not have an active Joint Chiefs project at this time. The same applies to the Air Quality and Water Quality Initiatives. Harney County would be eligible to receive funding under these initiatives if there was a CIS that fit and they wanted to request special funding. Zola said if Brenda had a project in mind that she thought might be a good fit for Joint Chiefs, she should let her know.

Proposed FY2022 County Offerings

Zola said that her proposal for FY2022 funding pools is to retire the Lone Pine RFPA funding pool, but continue to offer the following three funding pools:

- Working Lands for Waterbird Habitat Conservation
- Stinkingwater Medusahead Management Plan
- Saving Groundwater in the Harney Basin Using Efficient Irrigation Technologies

All changes to existing Conservation Implementation Strategies and Final drafts of any new Conservation Implementation Strategies must be submitted to the State Office for review by April 30, 2021. The NRCS Oregon Leadership Team will review proposed changes and new CISs at their May meeting. A proposed CIS may be approved as is, approved with required edits, or denied. If edits are required, they must be submitted by July 16, 2021. If approved, changes and new CISs go into effect for FY2022.

Working Lands for Waterbird Habitat

Zola asked if anyone felt there were any revisions needed to this strategy. Chris Colson said things seem to be going well. Zola said the only thing she wondered about was if we need to discuss the acreage goals for the CIS, since there haven’t been any easements. Should NRCS consider the CIS complete when the infrastructure objective of 5,000 acres has been met? Or increase the infrastructure objective to the full 10,300 acre goal? Something else? Chris Colson said that IWJV is currently in the process of revising population and habitat goals based on scientific developments in the last few years. He suggested waiting to revise the objectives of the CIS until that larger effort has been completed. Ed

Contreras said that part of the reason easements haven't taken off has been a lack of land trusts interested in holding easements in the area. He said that Oregon Agricultural Trust is now prioritizing easements in Harney and Lake Counties. Katie Baltzor asked what the purpose of the easements were and said it might be an area where education is needed so landowners are aware of easements and have enough information to decide if it's a fit for them. Zola responded that the purpose of the easements would be to ensure the continued availability and quality of spring migration habitat, and prevent conversion to other land uses, such as housing developments. Zola said that as part of the efforts of the Harney Basin Wetlands Collaborative, Tony Svejcar and Esther Lev have been holding some landowner meetings in the area to have conversations about easements, what the interest level might be, what barriers exist, etc. Zola has not personally been a part of these meetings and doesn't have a lot of detail about them, but she agreed that education is a need, and encouraged those interested in learning more to consider contacting Tony Svejcar.

Katie Baltzor also said that Water Resources has been saying that the banks of the Silvies River need a lot of work, being so deep. She asked if the CIS had been used to address that issue, or if it could be. Zola said that the Harney Basin Wetlands Collaborative (HBWC) has received OWEB funding for implementation of projects related to both the carp/aquatic health issue and the meadows issue. Due to the cost and complexity of replacing large in-stream diversion structures, HBWC (with Ducks Unlimited taking the lead) has been using the OWEB dollars to design and construct those larger structures, and some bank shaping and restoration has taken place as a part of those projects. The EQIP dollars have gone to in-field work, but there are opportunities to do some riparian restoration work as part of those projects where it makes sense. She said that one of the first EQIP projects included installation of rock weirs in a stream to slow head cutting, elevate the streambed, and improve irrigation management ability. Carlton Strough told Katie that riparian work on the Silvies is exactly the type of work that he's doing for Harney SWCD, so if there is a specific need, she should contact him and he can hopefully help with that. Zola pointed out that Carlton is also the person people would be working with on the flood irrigation projects, so that made for a convenient one stop shop.

Stinkingwater Medusahead Management Plan

Zola said that she was not proposing any changes to the Stinkingwater Medusahead Management Plan at this time. She did, however, want to give an update, because last year at the Local Work Group meeting, the group had discussed NRCS meeting with the Stinkingwater subcommittee of the Harney County Wildfire Collaborative to explore the potential for revising the current CIS or developing a new CIS that merged the objectives and strategies of the two groups. Zola said that she had followed up with the Wildfire Collaborative. However, between the Local Work Group meeting and the time she was able to reconnect with the Wildfire Collaborative, the Collaborative had backed away from the way they had originally subdivided and prioritized the Stinkingwater area and are now taking a new approach, called the PODS approach. Zola said that, from her perspective, the Wildfire Collaborative is not yet ready to have a discussion about how to meld the two efforts, as they are still trying to develop their plan. Since NRCS already has the RCPP funding and is about halfway through that project, she intends to continue implementing the CIS as is for now, continue participating in the Stinkingwater subcommittee of the Wildfire Collaborative, and consider potential revisions to the CIS in the future as the Wildfire Collaborative plan matures.

Ben Cate said that he agreed with that assessment and was hopeful that with the new facilitator that will be working with the Wildfire Collaborative things will start to move more quickly. Ron Whiting said that he felt hopeful that the new facilitator is going to get things moving as well.

Zola said that the other thing she wanted to mention was that as NRCS has started wrapping things up in the Phase 1 Beaver Tables area and moving into the Phase 2 Crane-Buchanan area, they are finding less landowner willingness to participate. Several landowners have applied or expressed interest, but have then been unwilling to proceed because BLM will not be treating the adjacent lands concurrently. Zola said that she understands their concerns, but isn't sure what to do about it. She had hoped that this could be addressed as part of working together with the Wildfire Collaborative on their Stinkingwater project, so that BLM treatments might be better coordinated with private land treatments. But as stated early, the Collaborative isn't at a place to be able to have that conversation yet. Zola said NRCS will work with the CWMA to continue doing outreach to the landowners in the Phase 2 area and move forward as best they can.

Patty Dorroh said that as a landowner in the Phase 2 area, she shares the concern about BLM not treating, and asked why BLM is not treating or what needs to happen for BLM to be able to treat. Jeff Rose said that this is part of the reason that the BLM started the Wildfire Collaborative and the Stinkingwater Pilot Project – so that BLM has a forum to work with the permittees in the area to collaboratively identify priority areas and schedules for treatment. He said it is not practical or efficient to have those conversations one at a time with each landowner/permittee. He also said that BLM has treated over 17,000 acres of medusahead in the Stinkingwater Area. Zola said that in the conversations she has had with various BLM employees, the issue is not that BLM is unaware or unwilling to treat. The issue, as she has heard it explained by BLM employees, is in a lack of funding that the local staff can direct to local priorities. Most of the funding available for treating medusahead comes as ESR funds after a fire or as funding targeted to Sage-grouse Focal Areas.

Saving Groundwater in the Harney Basin

Zola said that currently the only thing NRCS is funding under this CIS is MESA to LESA conversions. She said she was surprised by how little response this funding pool has gotten. Last year there were 3 applications. One was ineligible, one was funded, and the applicant chose to defer the third application. This year, only 1 new application has been received. She said she was wondering if the Community Based Water Planning group was far enough along to recommend the addition of additional practices and/or changes to the ranking criteria. She said the only thing that differentiates between applications is if the project is within 5 miles of a well with a declining hydrograph.

Roger Sheley said that he would like to see NRCS offer assistance to producers who switch crops from alfalfa to crops that use much less water, like native grass seed. He said that the native seed cooperative that he mentioned was being proposed last year is now officially established, with a web site (EcoSourcenativeseed.com). Zola asked if he thought there could be a write up ready for submission to the NRCS state office by the end of April, or if he thought it was something that should be worked on over the course of the year and proposed for funding at the Local Work Group meeting next year. Roger said that he was willing to write it up if Zola would let him know what the requirements are.

Katie Baltzor asked if conversions from wheellines or handlines to pivots were eligible for funding. Zola said that a conversion from wheellines to a pivot with LESA could be funded as a conversion from mid-

elevation to low elevation. However, it would be paid at the same rate as if there had already been a pivot there that was just being converted to LESA. So the payment received would be very low compared to the cost of the project. She said that there have been a fair number of inquiries from producers about converting from wheellines to a pivot. Zola said the concern with moving ahead with these more expensive investments has been concern that NRCS might pay for a brand new pivot, and within a few years that pivot could be shut off due to having junior water rights. Katie said she understood that concern, but felt there was so much uncertainty around the situation and NRCS shouldn't let uncertainty keep them from doing good things in the Basin. She suggested that one option would be to establish ranking criteria that gave more points to applications with older (more secure) water rights. Karen Moon said that it will be 2022 before we have a published groundwater study and then OWRD will have a year for their rule making process. She said that she felt anything we could do to save groundwater in the Basin in that time period would be beneficial. Zola said that she would want to know that the community (using the term broadly) would stand behind NRCS if they were to move ahead with funding conversions that ended up sitting idle due to water regulation. She said she is very aware that the funds that NRCS puts to projects are tax payer dollars, and it is important to spend them wisely.

Zola said that since time was very short, she wanted to get a quick sense of what the level of support for adding practices to the CIS for funding was. She asked that those in the room raise their hands and those on the Zoom call use the "Raise Hand" function in Zoom to indicate if they were in support of NRCS pursuing the addition of both practices to support conversion to seed production and conversions from wheellines to pivots. Approximately 10 out of 27 people raised their hands.

Closing

Zola apologized for running late and asked that those who could please stay on for a few minutes. Emma Gabriel, County Executive Director for FSA gave a quick update on FSA programs. The Harney and Grant County FSA offices are now combined as of January 1, 2021. Emma asked for patience if response times were a bit longer, as staff are now working with clients from two counties.

Livestock Forage Program (LFP)

For forage losses from 2020, Harney & Grant counties qualified for a 4-month payment. Payment is based off your livestock numbers and the pasture you graze (federal, state, or private)
FSA is working on these applications in date order and will be in contact once they reach your application

Acreage Reports

Deadline for NAP Insurance producers is April 15th
Deadline for spring planting and non-NAP Insurance producers is July 15th

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Grasslands

Bid-in process, able to hay or graze acreage per your Conservation Plan built with NRCS
Rate for Harney County = \$11 per acre

Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP-3)

We will notify producers as soon as guidance is released about this potential program

Hiring

A Program Technician position located in the John Day office, new employee is starting at the end of March.

Zola asked everyone to look at their burning issues they had written down and asked if anyone had something that hadn't been discussed that they wanted to talk about quickly. Ron Whiting said that he wasn't sure he was tracking with Zola on the numbers that she gave for juniper cutting on the Lone Pine RFP, but that he would call her individually in the next few days to talk about it.

Zola asked everyone to answer the evaluation questions for the meeting. Those in the room had evaluation forms at their seats. Zola presented the questions online for those in the Zoom meeting and asked that they send their responses to Aaron via the chat box. Zola thanked everyone for their participation and closed the meeting.