Oregon Technical Advisory Committee
Meeting Notes for March 18, 2021 – 9:00 a.m. – 12 p.m.
Virtual Zoom meeting

Attendees:
1. Ron Alvarado, Natural Resources Conservation Service
2. Cory Owens, Natural Resources Conservation Service
3. Robert Hathorne, Natural Resources Conservation Service
4. Jason Jeans, Natural Resources Conservation Service
5. Julie MacSwain, Natural Resources Conservation Service
6. Lauren Bennett, Natural Resources Conservation Service
7. Misty Beals, Natural Resources Conservation Service
8. Jericho Winter, Natural Resources Conservation Service
9. Mike Ward, Natural Resources Conservation Service
10. Tom Miewald, Natural Resources Conservation Service
11. Amanda Moore, Natural Resources Conservation Service
12. Chris Chapa, Natural Resources Conservation Service
13. Molly Dawson, Natural Resources Conservation Service
14. Gary Diridon, Natural Resources Conservation Service
15. Jacqui Colston, Natural Resources Conservation Service
16. Andrew Owen, Natural Resources Conservation Service
17. Mike Edwards, Natural Resources Conservation Service
18. Josh Hanning, Farm Service Agency
19. Taylor Murray, Farm Service Agency
20. CalLee Davenport, US Fish and Wildlife Service
21. Ashley Zanolli, US Environmental Protection Agency
22. Greg Apke, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
23. Mikal Cline, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
24. Kevin Blakely, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
25. Nicole Maness, Willamette Partnership
26. Harmony Burright, Oregon Water Resources Department
27. Jillian McCarthy, Oregon Water Enhancement Board
28. Ryan Gordon, Oregon Department of Forestry
29. Al De Vos, Oregon Department of Forestry
30. Tammy Dennee, Oregon Cattleman’s Association
31. Marganne Allen, Oregon Department of Agriculture
32. Tami Kerr, Oregon Dairy Farmers
33. Sam Angima, Oregon State University Extension
34. Kelley Beamer, Oregon Land Trust
35. Keny, unknown
36. Torey Mill, unknown
37. Curtis Martin, unknown

Welcome and Introductions - Ron Alvarado, NRCS STC and Josh Hanning, FSA Acting SED

FSA update - Josh Hanning and Taylor Murray
Spoke to new requirements for funding requests, working through changes
CRP general sign up should have ended Jan. 15, been extended without any deadline
Sign ups are generally delayed, program deadline extensions
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Grazing guidance updated last Dec. 2020 - FSA currently working with National to modify dormant season grazing dates for Oregon
Currently running ECP for ice storm damage from Feb. 2021, ends in April

NRCS update - Ron Alvarado
Climate change is a new priority for the agency, we’re in a good position here in Oregon

Adoption of the Farmed Wetland criteria for wetland determinations that will include two Oregon specific additions. -Cory Owens, NRCS and Jericho Winter, NRCS

Gave overview of CWA, Food Security Act and NRCS Wetland Protection Policy

Updates to Navigable Waters Protection Rule from Jan. 2020 - important to USDA because of changes to “prior converted cropland”. Separate from Wetlands provision of the FSA

July 2020 memo to the field - lined up relationship and roles amongst USACE, NRCS, EPA

Sept 2020 Circular - updated policy and guidance for wetland and highly erodible land conservation policy
  - new labels to identify potential WOTUS features on properties

Aug 2020 - final rule for HEL and Wetland conservation provisions of the Food security Act
  - Further clarified how wetland hydrology is identified for farmed wetlands and farmed wetlands pasture, further clarified and confirmed most changes made by Dec. 2018 interim rule

Local Hydrology Indicators for Identification of Farmed Wetlands presentation
The Aug 2020 final rule provides three options to decide if an area supports required long-term inundation for Farmed Wetlands (FW)
NRCS is seeking input locally through OTAC, federal register, and then in the FOTG

NRCS recommendation to OTAC: Adopt all national FW hydrology indicators with two clarifications to account for irrigation situations: FW-N07 & FW-N08

Took poll on the following decision options:

1. Adopt now
2. Review more - chosen option
3. Meet to discuss
**NRCS Program Updates – Misty Beals, Acting ASTC Programs**

Overview of programs, highlighted CIS map on our website

2021 EQIP deadline – April 19, 2021

CSP – helps ag producers document the good work they’re already doing
- 5 year contracts
- General sign up deadline – April 30, 2021

Conservation Innovation Grants – deadline May 7, 2021
Gave overview on easements

**RCPP Update - Tom Miewald, NRCS**

Overview of RCPP projects
since 2015 - 27 RCPP projects, $77M in NRCS funding, $103M in partner contributed funds
$180M invested in strategic conservation

Briefed OTAC on the RCPP evaluation process on 2020/21 RCPP Classic submissions
- 5 submissions for Oregon
- Selections will be announced in April

New: Western Waters CCA focused on water quality & quantity, and Oregon falls within that area

Overview of state review process:

1. RCPP Coordinator screens for eligibility
2. Individuals review proposals
3. State review team discusses individual reviews
4. STC reviews team feedback & scores
5. State submits consolidated feedback to RCPP team

Project review criteria: impact, partner contributions, innovation, partnerships and project management

FY21 RCPP Alternative Funding Arrangement (AFA) - deadline May 28
- Emphasis on climate smart ag

Other activities: Upcoming webinars, completed comm plan, success stories, infographic, accomplishments tracking database

New RCPP rule announced in Feb 2021
Oregon Tide Gate Partnership presentation & Q&A - Jillian McCarthy, OWEB
Tide gate partnership - started in 2018, goal of achieving more resilient coastal communities by protecting landscapes that support local economies and enhance fisheries

Tide gate inventory - how many are there, where are they, pulled together existing tide gate inventories, looked at local land features where land and water meet and a tide gate may exist

Decision support tool - expected summer 2021, interactive tool that provides informed planning assistance on identifying priority tide gate sites, Nature Conservancy developing tool

Pipe sizing tool - expected summer 2021, purpose of tool is to properly size tide gate pipes to meet fish passage requirements

Regulatory process - all tide gate repairs must meet regulatory requirements and secure permits prior to construction
  - Reviewed tide gate landowner steps for regulatory process - 8 step process

Tide Gate Coordinator - goal is to serve as resource for TG owners, watershed councils, SWCDs, coordinate with partners, help TG owners communication and get funding

Oregon’s Fish Passage Policy in the Tidal Environments at Tide Gates - Greg Apke, ODFW
Review of Oregon’s fish passage policy

Passage is required at artificial obstructions where there is new construction, changes in permit status, abandonment of existing barriers

ODFW administers the rule and issues fish passage approval permits to owners-operators

ODFW recently adopted climate and ocean change policy - framework that addresses a changing climate and ocean through science and proactive leadership

Embarking on a new fish passage rule decision process that is based upon scientific key principles that take in to account cascading climate impacts on watersheds, wildlife, fish pops

ODFW incorporating the relevant science based on key principles into any new department plans or policies, and will revise existing plans or policies to incorporate these principles to accommodate changing climate and ocean conditions

Rules advisory committee will work with stakeholders to engage with public to identify improvements in the rule and recommendations moving forward
Discussed upcoming outreach and communication externally - public input highly encouraged public meetings every other Tuesday until June 1st

2021 Private Lands Partners Day - Steve Jester, Partnerscapes and CalLee Davenport, USFWS Partnerscapes focus is getting conservation work done on the working landscape, promotes public and private partnerships

Private Lands Partners Day been around since 2008 as an organization originally named “partners for conservation”

This year’s PLPD is October 4-6, 2021 (with option for a field tour on Oct 7)
- Eagle Crest Resort in Redmond Oregon

Ag-Municipal Partnership Grant - Nicole Maness & Sara O’Brien, Willamette Partnership

Recently started new project through NRCS Conservation Collaboration grant on supporting ag-municipal water partnerships

The challenge: aging water infrastructure, water challenges that cross urban-rural lines, funding, capacity

Opportunities: leveraging partnerships that accelerate voluntary conservation adoption, with the goal of achieving water outcomes, reduce costs, attract new funding sources, coordinate larger funding pools

Ag-Muni partnerships connect on the ground actions to quantifiable water-based outcomes

WP applied for NRCS Conservation Collaboration grant in 2018
- Working to provide technical assistance
- Plan for 6 pilot projects in Oregon and Washington
- Working with NRCS to align priorities, find opportunities
- Support funding proposals to national programs
- 2020-2022

Looking for Ag-Muni pilots now

Goals for grant:

1. Increase uptake of conservation practices
2. More funding
3. Increase proposals and competitiveness

Debriefing USDA listening session regarding water quantity in the west - Harmony Burright, Oregon Water Resources Department

Western Waters listening session w/ NHQ NRCS available for watching online

Reviewed topics discussed during listening session and take-aways

Closing Comments - Ron Alvarado, NRCS and Josh Hanning, FSA

Ron: Julie MacSwain is retiring, this is her last OTAC meeting
New ASTC for Programs - Kathryn McGee from Georgia, joining us at end of March 2021

Thanks to Misty for stepping into to fill that acting role
Oregon Technical Advisory Committee

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Saved Meeting Chat:

08:49:20 From Julie MacSwain: Good morning!

08:59:25 From Cory Owens, NRCS: Here is our agenda for today:
08:59:29 From Cory Owens, NRCS:

1. Welcome and Introductions – Ron Alvarado, NRCS STC and Josh Hanning, FSA Acting SED – 10 minutes
2. FSA update – Josh Hanning and Taylor Murray – 10 minutes
3. NRCS update – Ron Alvarado-10 minutes
4. Adoption of the Farmed Wetland criteria for wetland determinations that will include two Oregon specific additions. –Cory Owens, NRCS and Jericho Winter, NRCS – 20 minutes
5. NRCS Program Updates – Acting ASTC Programs – Misty Beals -25 minutes
6. RCPP Update – Tom Miewald, NRCS 10 minutes
7. Oregon Tide Gate Partnership presentation & Q&A – Jillian McCarthy, OWEB – 30 minutes.
8. Oregon’s Fish Passage Policy in the Tidal Environments at Tide Gates – Greg Apke, ODFW –15 minutes
10. Ag-Municipal Partnership Grant – Nicole Maness & Sara O’Brien, Willamette Partnership – (10 min) confirmed
11. Debriefing USDA listening session regarding water quantity in the west -Harmony Burright, Oregon Water Re

09:06:36 From Cory Owens, NRCS: FPAC - Farm Production and Conservation. The part of USDA NRCS is under.

09:06:47 From Cory Owens, NRCS: NRCS and FSA are both under FPAC

09:06:54 From Cory Owens, NRCS: along with RMA.

09:42:21 From Cory Owens, NRCS: OR Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Provisions Webpage
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/or/programs/farmbill/cc/

09:50:15 From tami.kerr@oregondairyfarmers.org: Will you share this presentation with the group? Would be helpful to refer back to some of the slides at a later date.

09:58:46 From Curtis Martin: Thank you Ron, Misty, and everyone. Really appreciate the outreach from NRCS and FSA, to bring the current, and anticipated Natural Resource issues as a priority. I look forward to further interactions and communications as Administrative emphasis
continues to be rolled out. Have to drop off now, but again thanks for these presentations to make Private Landowners aware. Much appreciated. CWM

09:59:20 From Cory Owens, NRCS: Basin Team Leaders:
Heather Medina Sauceda - SW
Leo Preston - NW
Kevin Conroy - East Central
Jay Gibbs - East East

10:00:28 From Cory Owens, NRCS: Scroll down to see Basin Team Leader Directory
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/or/contact/local/

10:09:15 From Tom Miewald: RCPP AFA Link:
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/or/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSEPRD1752284

10:27:45 From Jillian McCarthy: www.oregontidegates.org

10:28:41 From Jillian McCarthy: jillian.mccarthy@oregon.gov - 971-345-7016

10:43:13 From Julie MacSwain, NRCS: Send your presentation materials to Julie MacSwain.
julie.macswain@usda.gov

10:43:15 From Julie MacSwain, NRCS: Thanks!

10:50:11 From Greg Apke - ODFW: https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/passage/

10:50:26 From Greg Apke - ODFW: This Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Link will take you to the state's fish passage program website where you will find an electronic link to an online comment form to provide public input and comment into the state's fish passage rule revision initiative as well as an overview of the process and materials related to this rule revision initiative. ODFW is presently accepting public input and will through April 9, 2021. If you have any questions, please reach out and contact me @ greg.d.apke@state.or.us

11:01:54 From CalLee Davenport, USFWS: Partnerscapes web site - Partnerscapes.org

11:09:38 From Julie MacSwain, NRCS: Thank you presenters for sharing your presentations. julie.macswain@usda.gov

11:11:51 From Nicole Maness (Willamette Partnership): Nicole Maness, Willamette Partnership - maness@willamettepartnership.org

11:16:46 From Cory Owens, NRCS: As a reminder, all of the presentations will be available after the OTAC event:
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/or/technical/stc/?cid=nrcs142p2_045923

11:17:30 From CalLee Davenport, USFWS: CalLee Davenport - callee_davenport@fws.gov
11:24:26 From Greg Apke - ODFW: Harmony, How are the state’s native fish represented in the place based strategic strategy moving forward?

11:25:41 From Harmony Burright - OWRD: Hi Greg - The plans need to account for both instream and out-of-stream water needs, which includes the water needs for fish. Every place is dealing with it differently depending on local conditions/needs.

11:26:09 From Harmony Burright - OWRD: I recommend checking out the StoryMap that the Mid-Coast group put together:


11:26:58 From Kelley Beamer (she/her): Julie- you have been such an incredible parter. Thank you for year years of service! -Kelley

11:27:03 From Harmony Burright - OWRD: Would love to follow-up with you, Greg!

11:28:23 From Julie MacSwain, NRCS: Thank you everyone!

11:28:41 From Ashley Zanolli, US EPA: Fantastic presentations! Thanks for hosting and putting together such a helpful agenda.

11:28:45 From Nicole Maness (Willamette Partnership): Thank you NRCS! Good luck Julie!

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