The purpose of the meeting is to receive agency and public input in agricultural interests and natural resources issues to help guide the conservation efforts of the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Tillamook County.

In attendance:
Thomas Gehrkens- District Conservationist (Clatsop County)
Hannah Isaacs- District Conservationist (Columbia County)
Mitch Cummings- Earth Team Volunteer
Bruce Mofatt- Soil Conservationist
Michele Long- ODWF/NRCS
Dave Wells- Technical Service Provider, forestry
Ray Monroe- Tillamook SWCD
Jessica Wells- NRCS- District Conservationist (Washington and acting Tillamook County)
Brittany Milss- ODA
Ian Silvernail- NRCS- plant materials center
Kim Gray- NRCS- Basin Resource Conservationist

Thomas started the meeting at 10:02am. He went over the current funding options both within the state and within the basin. He also went over programs that are completed like the forest emergency fund pool. He described the practices that are within each fund pool as seen below.

**NRCS Statewide Initiatives Available in Tillamook County:**

National Initiatives: Organic
- High Tunnel- addresses local food supply
- On-Farm Energy
- Easement Programs
- RCPP- new program

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 – Rolling out 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. $200,000 available for projects this year.

2021 EQIP Program Summary for Tillamook Co. - Received 29 applications; funded 16 contracts totaling $375,745.24 practices are expected to provide 301.9 acres of conservation in the county.

**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 8 years to address this concern
Forest Health – Focusing on getting FMP’s for local landowners. Practices are being applied.
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. Through the forestry Basin forestry CIS this is now being addressed on the North Coast

**Current Focus for Partners:**

Thomas reiterated that this is the time to speak up and provide guidance for resources in Tillamook County.

Dave wells spoke up to address bush management within the county in forests. He spoke on how fast trees grow in Tillamook County and how he feels the county could have more opportunity to create wildlife habitat rather than harvest as the main goal for land owners. He mentioned how landowners are starting to create gap habitat and other complexities within their forests.
Bruce asked Dave if he had any suggestions on what the NRCS could be doing to make NRCS more approachable for landowners. Dave believes the NRCS is really progressive on working with TSPs who could be a local connection to the community. People are skeptical of government but growing roots and building connections locally will help address needs and help with the resistance producers have towards agencies.

Thomas spoke about potentially creating a new focus area around the Nehalem River and maybe coordinating with Columbia County. This would address water quality concerns, weed management, fencing, and other concerns along the Nehalem River. Michele mentioned the Nehalem River also goes within Washington county.

Dave spoke about his appreciation of NRCS mapping and is curious if mapping is available to the public and what other resources are out there for the public. Michele spoke on needed to protect privacy of clients when giving out information. She mentioned how there are more forest management plans and would like to see more riparian area management. She is interested in doing in stream work for landowners.

Mitch has met with some creamery members and they are interested in RCPP and are excited to talk about that program with the local community. Mitch is excited to see how the program comes together.

Ian Silvernail spoke on how he is interested in proving vegetive solutions to the county. He provided his contact information to the group and encouraged the group to use him as a resource.

Brittany spoke on her work on drainage channels and a new program they have to assist people with drainage work.

Dave Wells spoke on water quality and wildlife and is curious what seeding mixes are good for wildlife (question directed towards Ian Silvernail). Michele spoke up about plant recommendations. Ian spoke about how seedings can be more complexed based on the goals and locations of the seeds, origins, and landowners goals and resources.

Jessica adjourned the meeting at 10:44am