



UPPER WILLAMETTE

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

2021 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, February 9, 2021 2:30 pm

APPROVED 3/9/2021

Meeting held via Zoom

Directors Present: Al Hrynyshyn, Gary Jensen, Chuck Arrera, Abel Kloster, Mary Durfee. Staff Present: Dave Downing, Clarissa Berndt, Lily Leitermann. Partners Present: Tom Snyder, NRCS; Nancy Toth, EWEB; Sydney Nilan, UWSN; Jared Weybright, MWC. No Public Present.

The meeting was called to order at 2:33 pm by Chair Hrynyshyn. He welcomed all to the 66th Annual Meeting of the Upper Willamette Soil & Water Conservation District.

Approval of Agenda: Director Jensen made a motion to approve the agenda as presented, and Director Kloster seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was approved 5-0.

State of the District: Director Hrynyshyn pointed out that the 2019-2020 fiscal year was excellent financially for the district, being one of the largest in terms of income. The usual projects were continued during this year, including SIA, NWQI, and PWP. In January of 2020, the district ramped up outreach efforts, using DHM to poll the residents of the district as well as Revenue Enhancement Committee meetings with partner organizations to get a feel for the needs of the district and how we can best address those. It was clear that the conservation needs were great, but the district was at max capacity and required more funds to address these needs. In the middle of this, COVID restrictions caused the district to pivot how we went about this outreach, but we were not deterred in our efforts to address the conservation needs of the district. By the end of June 2020, the board was gearing up to decide whether it was the proper time to go for a tax base with all the different circumstances going on. Director Hrynyshyn thanked all who have been a part of the district efforts, and expressed pride in the three dedicated, hardworking employees the district has on board.

Cooperator of the Year Awards: Dave discussed the unusual year that was 2019-2020, and mentioned that during this time the staff and board changed focus to how to bring in the needed funding to further conservation efforts in the district. During this time, the board approved the formation of a Revenue Enhancement Committee with the goal of bringing the area's conservation partners together to collaborate and coordinate efforts. This is when Sydney Nilan, Upper Willamette Stewardship Network coordinator, became involved with the district's efforts. She took on a significant role in coordinating the REC and kept partnerships moving forward. Sydney continues to play a key role in the district's outreach efforts. Her determination and positivity has been instrumental in what the District has been able to accomplish thus far. *On behalf of the entire UWSWCD staff and board, Dave presented Sydney Nilan with a Cooperator of the Year plaque in appreciation of her work in behalf of the district and conservation in the area.*

For very similar reasons, the district also wanted to recognize the entire Upper Willamette Stewardship Network. These partners were all involved in supporting our goals and vision for the district. *On behalf of the entire UWSWCD staff and board, Dave presented the Upper Willamette Stewardship Network, consisting of the Coast Fork Willamette Watershed Council, Middle Fork Willamette Watershed Council, Friends of Buford Park, McKenzie Watershed Council, Long Tom Watershed Council, and McKenzie River Trust, with a Cooperator of the Year plaque.*

Dave expressed a special thanks to Nancy Toth and Karl Morgenstern for their invaluable support. The Board expressed their determination to work hard to continue these partnerships. Jared shared his appreciation for the opportunity to work with the district, and for assisting in laying the groundwork for what's to come within the Upper Willamette region.

NRCS Report: Tom expressed his gratitude for the partnership between the NRCS and the district. He shared the accomplishments of 2020 within NRCS – There were 5 EQIP contracts funded: 1 organic contract equaling 18 acres (\$70,078), and 4 high tunnels equaling .4 acres (\$29,673). There were also 15 Local Conservation Implementation Strategies (CIS) funded: 8 oak restorations equaling 946 acres (\$595,767), 4 McKenzie Riparian equaling 638 acres (\$84,381), 3 forest enhancements equaling 79 acres (\$29,224). The total acres treated through EQIP were 1,681 acres, and the total cost share through EQIP equaled \$809,123.

Priorities will remain the same in 2021. In relation to their future priorities, Tom mentioned that he and Dave are strategizing with all of the Watershed Councils, EWEB, SUB, the City of Creswell and the City of Cottage Grove about expanding the McKenzie CIS to include source water protection for the Upper Willamette Watershed within Lane County. Taylor Larson, representing the Coast Fork Watershed Council, is creating a draft strategy that will be submitted for funding in 2022.

ODA Update: Dave discussed the long standing relationship with ODA in implementing agricultural water quality. He discussed the accomplishments over the past year, including: reaching a little over 500 landowners, 71 site visits, coordinating 4 landowner engagements with a total of 89 landowners responding, 2 landowner meetings (before COVID restrictions were in place), and 13 conservation plans designed. A focus area was also established in the Bear Creek sub watershed. Water quality monitoring temps were submitted to ODA and DEQ throughout this time period.

Within the Camp Creek Strategic Implementation Area (SIA), two landowners were found with potential violations. As a result of working with them, one landowner was removed from violation status. Assistance was provided to the other landowner that he will be implementing to move down in violation status. We also assisted ODA Compliance with two landowners who were in violation, by providing technical assistance. This is still in progress, but the current monitoring is showing a decrease in negative water impacts.

The McKenzie strategic plan (NWQI) was completed and we moved into the Long Tom watershed focusing on water source protection for the City of Monroe. To date, the first of four phases have been completed.

PWP Update: Lily discussed the continuation of collaborative work we are involved in to protect the water quality and wildlife habitat along the McKenzie River. Due to COVID restrictions, the informational session was held virtually; this resulted in some landowner engagement. A few landowners were recruited to the program, but it was not as easy to do virtually. At that point, there were a total of 89 landowners in the program. PWP continued to provide incentives to landowners, including invasive vegetation removal with the help of the Northwest Youth Corp. PWP will continue to provide outreach to landowners, but the focus has shifted to the effects of the wildfire on riparian and wildlife.

Nancy expressed her appreciation for Lily's work, stating that there would have been no way that EWEB would have been able to pull off the recovery efforts without the districts help and the partners working together.

No Public Comment.

Chair Hrynyshyn expressed his gratitude for the hard work of all of the staff, board, and partners. The board echoed his appreciation.

Chair Hrynyshyn adjourned the meeting at 3:10 pm.

All supporting documents mentioned in the minutes are a part of the official record, and are available upon request. Please contact the office at admin@uwsxcd.org to request copies.

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