



Grant Soil and Water Conservation District
Kenneth H. Delano Agricultural Service Center
721 S. Canyon Blvd. - John Day, OR 97845 - Phone (541) 575-0135

MINUTES OF GRANT SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S
January 4, 2024 Meeting

Attendance

Directors Attending:

Roger Ediger – Director

Joanne Keerins – Director – via telephone

Rick Henslee – Director

Phil St. Clair – Director – via telephone

Staff Attending:

Kyle Sullivan – District Manager

Matt Wenick – Grant Weed Control Coordinator

Pat Holliday – Program Assistant

Visitors:

Ann Neis – Malheur Forest Supervisor

Trea Nance – OR Dept. Environmental Quality

Roy Walker – District Partnership Coordinator

ADMINISTRATION

1. Call Meeting to Order – Rick called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.
2. Approval of Minutes – **Roger moved to approve the December 7th, 2023 meeting minutes. Joanne gave the second with the motion passing unanimously.**
3. Introduction of Visitors – Roy Walker stated he formerly worked for the Malheur Forest. He is very interested in the work the District is doing and is looking forward to working here.
4. Public Input – There was no public input.

REPORTS

5. NRCS – A NRCS representative was unable to attend.
6. FSA – A representative was unable to attend.
7. South Fork John Day Watershed Council – Joanne provided a report from Amy. The Council has started two OWEB applications for the next round of BLM good neighbor authority projects. A NOAA grant application was submitted for John Day Basin Partnership partner capacity for 2024 – 2028. A bid solicitation has been flown for the four Widows Creek diversions and screen replacements. The South Fork Fire fencing project, replacing seven miles of fence on BLM, will be starting soon. The next South Fork Partnership meeting will be held January 30th.
8. Malheur Forest – Ann stated Colleen Malaney has begun working a detail at the regional office. A virtual open house was held in November focusing on the Forest Plan revision. Approximately 200 comments on the plan were received. The Forest expects to have more formal meetings beginning in February. Work on the Forest Plan will continue through the summer of 2024. Ann stated the Forest welcomes comments on the Forest Plan. Ann explained the process to expand a wilderness designation.

9. ODA – A representative was unable to attend.
11. Department of Environmental Quality - Trea stated she had nothing to report today as she just began working for DEQ a few weeks ago.

DISTRICT PROGRAMS

12. Grant Weed Control – Matt reported he submitted an OR Dept. of Agriculture weed grant for the Top Priority Weeds in Grant County, for \$36,871.00. The equipment is ready, the chem shed organized, and a majority of the herbicide has been ordered to accomplish right of way bare ground treatment on Grant County roads. Grant Weed Control is partnering with the Vale BLM District to receive a truck mounted spray unit that they no longer use. The unit will be mounted on a Weed Control pickup and will enable the weed department to have two vehicles capable of doing roadside spraying.
13. District Programs – The Program Status Report was sent out in the Directors meeting packet. Kyle encouraged the Directors to contact him if they had any questions. He stated the Murderers Creek fence is nearing completion. The District anticipates there will be several fences constructed through the 2024 ODFW contract. The District is officially in charge of the Firewise Program for Grant County. Tereasa and Tyler are studying for and will be taking the drone pilot license test. Kyle has been assisting one of the part-time GIS people with a new work VISA for the United States.

DISTRICT BUSINESS

14. Roy Walker, District Partnership Coordinator – Roy stated he is pleased to be working at the District. Some of his job duties will include; looking at additional grant sources, assisting with the Firewise Program as well as with the Community Wildfire Defense Grant. He is interested and willing to assist where he can. Kyle said he appreciates Roy being with the District and looks forward to working with him. Funding for his position is provided through NRCS to Blue Mt. Forest Partners and then to the District. The intent is to support NRCS with programs that provide assistance to landowners.
15. Audit Review and Approval – Pat Holliday reviewed the District’s 2022-23 Audit, the Independent Auditors Report, and the Plan of Action with the Directors. **Phil moved to approve Grant Soil & Water Conservation District’s 2022-2023 Audit and Plan of Action. Joanne gave the second with the motion passing unanimously.**
16. Instream Water Rights Issue – Kyle stated there has been renewed interest by OR Water Resources to apply for instream water rights in Grant County. The issue originally came up in 1996 and was put on hold. The District will work with John Rowell, Grant County Commissioner, to raise awareness of the issue in the County. John said he has turned the issue over to the county attorney. John feels the County should stay opposed to any filing of instream water rights.

Kyle said he would like to hold an Open House to provide information about the District for potential Associate Board members. The Directors decided on Tuesday, February 13th at 3:00pm.

FINANCIAL BUSINESS

17. Financial Report/Financial Summary – Financial reports for the month of December 2023 were reviewed.
18. Approve Bills – **Roger moved to approve the bills and financial reports for the month of December 2023. Joanne gave the second with the motion passing unanimously.**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15pm



 Board Chair



 District Manager

2-1-24

 Date

2-1-2024

 Date