



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
April 2, 2026 Meeting

Attendance

Directors Attending:

Phil St. Clair – Director – Via phone

Pat Voigt – Chairman

Roger Ediger - Director

Staff Attending:

Kyle Sullivan – District Manager

Danielle Kimball – Program Assistant

Matt Wenick – Grant Weed Control

Visitors:

Didgette McCracken

ADMINISTRATION

1. Call Meeting to Order – Pat called the meeting to order at 4:00pm
2. Approval of Minutes – **Roger moved to approve the March 5, 2026, meeting minutes reflecting the correction. Phil gave the second. Phil St. Clair, Pat Voigt, and Roger Ediger voted in favor. No opposing votes. The motion passed unanimously.**
3. Introduction of Visitors – There were no visitors to introduce.
4. Public Input – There was no public input.

REPORTS

5. NRCS – Kyle reported for Hannah that All Program’s Ranking deadline is May 1, 2026, and the NRCS Local Workgroup Meeting will be held on April 23, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. in the ODF large conference room.
6. FSA – A representative was unable to attend.
7. South Fork John Day Watershed Council – Kyle reported for Amy that Scott Hess, a South Fork landowner and watershed council member, organized a landowner-led response to declining mule deer populations after an ODFW presentation showed roughly 70% of mule deer fawns are killed annually—primarily by coyotes—contributing to a population decline of about 4% per year, alongside ongoing habitat limitations. Although the South Fork has invested \$10 million over the past decade in habitat improvements, landowners felt predation also needed to be addressed, prompting Hess to draft a proposal for coordinated predator control.

As a result, 18 landowners covering approximately 110,000 acres have pooled \$20,000 of private funds to hire Nolan Riis of Livestock Protection Services to conduct aerial coyote removal using a Baker Aircraft helicopter in the Aldrich Hunt Unit, with flights scheduled for Friday and Saturday across areas from Mount Vernon through Dayville. Participants plan to repeat the effort annually for up to five years.

8. Malheur Forest – A representative was unable to attend.
9. ODA – A representative was unable to attend.
10. OR State Forestry – A representative was unable to attend.
11. OR Dept. Environmental Quality – A representative was unable to attend.
12. John Rowell County Commissioner – Was unable to attend.

DISTRICT PROGRAMS

13. Grant Weed Control – Leading Edge arrived at the beginning of March and, over five days, successfully seeded approximately 11,500 acres across Wheeler County and Grant County. Covering Prairie City, Dayville, Fossil Monument, Fox, and Ritter, with about 150,000 pounds of seed applied. Roughly 13,000–15,000 pounds of remaining seed will go to Tyler’s State Fire Marshal program for fall seeding tied to Rejuvra treatments around communities, with about 1,000 pounds retained to sell to landowners that want to purchase. Roadside work is complete in Wheeler County and about 50% finished in Grant County, with only a few Grant County rock pits left for residual spraying; if weather cooperates, all residual work should be finished within five to six days, putting the program about three weeks ahead of schedule. Additional progress includes early broadleaf treatments for private landowners, completion of five forest reports submitted by the March 31 deadline, and publication of the Title II 25% cost-share program for aerial annual grass treatments, which ran in the paper Wednesday and will run again next Wednesday, with applications available in the office and online on April 13 at 9:00 a.m.
14. District Programs – Kyle presented the Rangeland Analysis Platform that Montana State University’s has been developing, which uses satellite imagery to track invasive annual grasses, perennial vegetation, and bare ground across the West, highlighting Prairie City, Oregon as a standout example of successful large-scale treatments that dramatically reduced invasives between 2018 and 2025. The tool provides a powerful way to visually and quantitatively show treatment effectiveness over time, far beyond traditional photos. Kyle also gave an updated on DEQ regarding TMDL “shade gap” analysis concerns, noting that while DEQ claims the process is non-regulatory, there are real worries about indirect impacts to agricultural producers, underestimated business counts, and land-use consequences. DEQ has taken the concerns seriously, requested additional data, and further engagement will continue through advisory committee participation and close review of evolving materials. Resource Fair is on April 17th at the pavilion.

DISTRICT BUSINESS

15. Presentation of the Audit – This is the Grant Soil and Water Conservation District’s required annual meeting. As part of the annual meeting requirements, the annual audit is being presented, and copies of the auditor’s report are available on the table for anyone that would like to review the audit report.
16. Review of 2025 Programs - Kyle presented the 2025 Report on District Activities, noting that the District issued more than \$1.2 million in contracts and secured over \$1.5 million in funding agreements during the year. Weed control efforts treated 22,342 acres with herbicide and seeded 6,225 acres. Projects completed in 2025 included the Airborne Electromagnetic Survey, Ledgerwood Juniper Control Phase 2, and the Lower John Day River Rapid Assessment, and first controlled burn conducted by PBA.
17. Review of District Work Session minutes – Key follow-up items included developing a consulting services outreach strategy, beginning with a one-page flyer for new landowners and additional topic specific materials


focused on weed control, engineering, and assessment services. The Board also discussed transitioning outreach efforts from printed mailers to email communication to reduce postage costs, with initial steps including building and organizing an email contact list. Additional items included expanding video content on the District website to encourage engagement and improve timely sharing of information. Staff will begin developing drafts and concepts for review as time allows, particularly as the field season ramps up.

FINANCIAL BUSINESS

- 18. Financial Report/Financial Summary – Financial reports for the month of February 2026 were reviewed by the Directors.

- 19. Approve Bills – **Phil moved to approve the bills and financial reports for the month of March 2026. Roger gave the second. Phil St. Clair, Pat Voigt, and Roger Ediger voted yes. No opposing votes. The motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 5:04



Board Chair

5-7-26

Date



District Manager

5/7/2026

Date