

Minutes of the meeting for the South Fork John Day River Watershed Council

The South Fork John Day River Watershed Council met on the 9th day of March 2020.

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 pm, by Joanne Keerins at the Izee Schoolhouse in Izee, Oregon.

In attendance for regular session:

Phil St. Clair, Vice Chair	Joanne Keerins, Chair	Jeff Maben, Director	Pam Powell, ODFW Alternate Director	Russ Powell, ODFW Director	M.T. Anderson
Ty Callicotte, Landowner	Justin Rodgers, BLM, Associate Director	Jeff Moss, BLM	Hannah Latzo, Program Assistant	Amy Stiner, Coordinator	

Quorum was present because there are currently 8 directors on the board and 5 were represented at this meeting.

I. Agency Reports

- a. **Russ Powell, ODFW:** They have had their budget approved with BPA, waiting on their contract with Grant SWCD. Budget has been reduced over the last couple of years. BPA cutting back on all habitat projects, so they go to OWEB through Grant SWCD to help supplement projects.
- b. **Justin Rodger & Jeff Moss, Prineville BLM:** juniper restoration/aspen restoration project, completed clearance work in 2019, currently working on proposed actions and putting together scope of work for 14 different small project areas. They are looking at combination of juniper thinning around aspen and spring sites, and providing protection for some areas with fencing, and others with brush deterrent. These projects are located on different allotments and operators, some include the Keerins Big Baldy allotment, Morgan Mtn. allotment, the St. Clair allotment, and some for the Dayville Grazing Association. They will be putting these projects out to scoping, and plan to develop an Environmental Assessment this year, with a possible decision this fiscal year and implementation next year. They have decided to defer the Sunflower ck culvert project until next fiscal year, due to concerns over traffic, livestock trailing, and safety. They will work to plan to include a bypass route during construction. Jeff Moss reported that he will be out to start doing redd surveys. The Council asked if additional funding might be needed to implement some of these projects? Justin said that they may possibly need additional funding, could be a need for Fall or Spring OWEB application. They are moving forward on the last segments of SF fence re-construction, after the fire. They would be interested in partnering with the SFJDWC on contracting these projects. There was discussion over what would need to be completed in order to move forward with this type of partnership, probably to include a cost share agreement or MOU. Amy and Justin will work together to dig deeper into what would be required. Phil stated that he was very glad that the BLM took the Council's concerns back to Prineville and came up with work around for the Sunflower culvert, and he is excited about moving forward on projects. Thanks to Amanda, Justin, Jeff, and also Anna.

II. Action Items

- a. February Meeting Minutes: Phil moved to approve as presented, Jeff 2nd, vote passed
- b. February Staff Time: Phil moved to approve, M.T. 2nd, vote passed
- c. Staff Check Requests: Russ moved to approve, Phil 2nd, vote passed

III. Staff Report

- a. Open Projects
 - i. Juniper Prioritization: Amy showed the Council the scope and details of the Juniper Prioritization effort. The Directors/landowners present request to have maps made and sent to them showing their properties

and the Juniper prioritization. The Wind ck assessment is also complete and will be displayed on the Council website. <http://southforkjohnday.com/data---monitoring.html>

- ii. Flat Creek Juniper Removal: all of the juniper has been cut, and just a little piling left to do.
 - iii. Johnson-Tunnel Juniper Removal: on hold, cultural surveys in June, if all goes well maybe we'll put out to contract this fall.
 - iv. R3 Plant Establishment: Ash Creek will come out for one more reed canary grass treatment and interplanting this Spring.
 - v. Permitting for Tex and Murderers Creek projects. The Bureau of Reclamation (Mark Croghan) will likely cover the Cultural surveys for both projects.
 - vi. Magic Lantern: juniper removal and spring development complete, piling juniper.
 - vii. Phil was wondering if we would be able to monitor the effects that juniper clearing has on wildlife. The Council agreed this would be valuable information. May be something to visit with Ryan Torland, Wildlife Biologist at ODFW.
- b. Grant Applications
- i. Hannah submitted the Partners for Fish and Wildlife grant for the Rockpile Ranch, for annual grass treatment, re-seeding, and juniper control
 - ii. OWEB Small Grants
 1. Tobin River Fence & Sawtooth Meadows fence, both in OWEB hands for signatures
 2. Martin Creek Spring Development: application is complete and awaiting signatures
 3. Kee Spring Developments: going on 3/10/2020 to take a look.
 - iii. Bella Vista Foundation for Annual Grass Amendment Study: Amy submitted an application to the Bella Vista Foundation for the study with Oregon State University. After a phone call with the foundation, they stated that they probably couldn't fund the entire request but encouraged us to reduce our budget to \$30,000 for their consideration.
 - iv. OWEB Spring cycle
 1. Brisbois Aspen resubmittal
 2. Rosebud watershed health - Inshallah
 3. Lewis Creek health - Inshallah
- c. Partnerships/education/outreach/trainings
- i. John Day Basin Partnership update
 1. Hannah is working with the Outreach committee on their stakeholder engagement efforts. They are hoping to schedule restoration site visits and are looking for examples of restoration in the South Fork. We thought of the Sheep Creek restoration project on the Izee Ranch, Hannah will contact Richard to ask permission. M.T. also offered their Officer Creek, Aspen brush fence and juniper removal project.
 2. The Outreach committee is also trying to do 4 landowner educational series/talks. Hannah asked what our landowners may be interested in, and the easiest way to get the information to them? Directors listed: Chemical treatment of juniper, Medusahead and Ventanata and how to control, Mule Deer population updates, Wolves moving into grant county, Soil health with target on rangeland not cropland. They suggested advertising on KJDY, Newspaper, hard copy letters, and email.
 - ii. GIS training – Juniper GIS, very comprehensive training for Hannah provided by the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs, in John Day.

IV. Discussion

- a. Bylaw Amendments – Amy walked through suggested edits for our Bylaws that would bring us into compliance with Oregon law for non-profits. Any Bylaw amendments require a vote from all Directors, Amy will email for vote on changes.
- b. Conflict of Interest Questionnaire – We need to complete this questionnaire once a year by all Directors

V. Coming Up

- a. Grant SWCD Annual Meeting, ODA Strategic Implementation Area Discussion: Thursday, March 5th, Grant County Airport: Many Directors attended this meeting and discussed their thoughts on the meeting.
- b. BPA Coordination Group, March 11th, 10:00-12:00, ODF Conference Room
- c. Amy Vacation, March 23-26 (spring break)

- d. Grant County Court Update, April 8th at 9:15 am. We will be presenting in conjunction with the North Fork John Day Watershed Council and John Day Basin Partnership
- e. Connect 2020, April 14th-16th, Postponed due to COVID-19

I. **Joanne adjourned the meeting at 3:15 pm, Next meeting date: Monday, April 13th 2020**

DRAFT