

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

The South Fork John Day River Watershed Council met on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of November 2020.

The meeting was called to order at 1:08 pm, by Joanne Keerins, at the Izee Schoolhouse.

In attendance for regular session:

Amy Stiner, SFJDWC	Hannah Latz, SFJDWC	Joanne Keerins, Chair	Phil St. Clair, Vice Chair	Aaron Roth, NRCS	Jacob Young, Ochoco National Forest
Richard Nelson, Director	Amanda Roberts, BLM	Jeff Maben, Director			

Quorum was not present because there are currently 8 directors on the board and 4 were represented at this meeting. Electronic Vote will be held for all action items.

### I. Agency Reports

- a. Aaron Roth, NRCS: Upper South Fork John Day RCPP deadline April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021. We are still working through the agreement between NRCS and SFJDWC. Amy, Hannah, and Engineers have been out looking at spring developments and livestock watering developments. Finishing CSP payments for 2020. Working on CSP renewal applications next few months. Update on their staffing, they interviewed for a new soil con, made selection. Flew job for soil con tech, hoping to select and interview this week, making 4 permanent Full-time staff at the John Day Field Office. Amy asked Aaron what the rate is to rent pasture for rest associated with practices like Juniper cutting, re-seeding? Aaron was going to look it up.
- b. Jacob Young, Ochoco National Forest: Range Management Specialist on Paulina Ranger District. They have been working through the Sunflower EA. We have successfully partnered with the ONF to secure funding for cultural surveys and an assessment on Wind Creek, and they are hoping that we can continue to work together, and work to secure funding for projects proposed in the Sunflower EA. They plan to have a Draft EA out by end of November or Dec. with a decision by Spring. Phil: several projects working with BLM, we like watershed restoration across boundaries.
- c. Amanda Roberts, Prineville BLM: Field manager for Central OR Field Office. Submitting long term engineering plans for restoration of Deer Ck road. Sunflower culvert, next August, re-configured to include a bypass. Good Neighbor Authority OWEB grant was awarded for \$100,000. We will need to secure a Cooperative agreement with BLM, this may take a while, and we should begin working on it sooner rather than later. Richard requested the list of proposed BLM projects; Amy will send out list to Directors.

### II. Action Items (electronic vote will be requested)

- a. Staff Reimbursement Request
- b. October Meeting Minutes
- c. October Staff Time
- d. SFJDWC-BLM Good Neighbor Authority OWEB Grant Agreement

**Electronic Vote 11/10/2020: Joanne motioned to approve all action items, Phil 2<sup>nd</sup>, motion passed**

### III. Staff Report

- a. Open Projects
  - i. Completed Magic Lantern & Murderers Ck springs
  - ii. Toured the Bark project area with Fluvial Geomorphologists and Forest Service hydrologists, we will be getting a report within the next couple of months.
  - iii. RCPP Sign-ups: April 2021, with contracts awarded in June or July. Amy will send out the practice cost list.
  - iv. Cultural on Partner's for Fish and Wildlife project on the Rockpile Ranch: Archaeologist completed surveys, but it can take a while getting report completed.
  - v. Phil asked what the status of acquiring a Drone was? We are still trying to work through an agreement for this, but still hope to get licensed and purchase the drone before next spring.
  - vi. South Fork Re-Veg project: Hands planted almost 3000 plants along Phil and Izee Ranch's stretches of river.

- b. Grant Applications
  - i. OWEB BLM-SFJDWC Good Neighbor Authority was awarded
  - ii. Zoom Review team meetings went well. Hannah and I gave presentations and landowners interacted and answered questions. Review team meeting will be held 11/17/2020, with any possible awards not until March 2021.
- c. Partnerships/education/outreach/trainings
  - i. NRCS Engineer field trip to look at spring developments and livestock watering systems
  - ii. Toured Phil's river with Jeff Neal. Jeff conveyed the importance of vegetation and specifically the sedges, that really provide stability.

#### IV. Discussion

- a. Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) Strategic Implementation Areas (SIA): At Grant SWCD's Annual meeting last year, ODA discussed their SIA process. SIA's are regulatory in nature, to ensure Agriculture's compliance with State regulations. ODA wants Grant SWCD to select these areas for Grant County, but the Grant SWCD Board of Directors refuses, seeing this as putting SWCD's in a regulatory role rather than voluntary. Grant SWCD facilitated a discussion with Representatives Finley and Owens with the head of ODA, and have scheduled a meeting on November 18<sup>th</sup>, to give entities from Grant County an opportunity to convey concern of the SIA process to ODA, and try to convince them to look at a more voluntary approach. They would like representation from Grant SWCD, Monument SWCD, the North Fork John Day Watershed Council, and South Fork John Day Watershed Council, to support and speak about what we do, and our vision on SIAs. Amy will put together a vision, stating that we disagree with regulatory approach and encourage voluntary landowner participation, voluntary participation has been very successful to date, and that we believe that programs can be more effective working voluntarily than regulatory. Amy will put it out to all Directors of the SFJDWC, to make sure that she is accurately representing the Council.

#### V. Coming Up

- a. 11/11/2020: Veteran's Day
- b. 11/17/2020: OWEB Restoration Review Team Meeting
- c. 11/18/2020: ODA Strategic Implementation Area Zoom meeting
- d. 11/26/2020: Thanksgiving Day

#### I. Joanne adjourned, Next meeting date: Monday December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020.