

**South Fork John Day Watershed Council
Meeting Agenda
June 13th, 2022**

**1:00 pm, Izee Schoolhouse
Conference #: (844) 857-5555, Access Code: 5526001**

The South Fork John Day River Watershed Council met on the 13th day of June 2022.

The meeting was called to order at 1:01 pm by Phil St. Clair.

In attendance for regular session:

Amy Stiner, SFJDWC	Richard Nelson, Director	Mike Keerins, alternate Director	Phil St. Clair, Vice Chair	M.T. Anderson, Director
Brandon Ferguson, ODF	Jim Dovenberg, landowner	Aaron Roth, NRCS	Tereasa Perkins, NRCS	Jack Vaughn, ODFW
Dan Somers, ODFW	MaryLou Welby, BMRD	Renee Hollowell, BMRD		

Quorum was present because there are currently 7 directors on the board and 4 were represented at this meeting.

1. Public Comment

2. Agency Reports

- a. Aaron Roth, NRCS: staffing update, Hannah Smith has moved on to be the District Conservationist in Baker City. Lela Culpepper is on maternity leave. These were the 2 staff working with SFJD RCPP, Tereasa Perkins will be taking that over. CSP had classic sign up a few weeks ago. Only 2 of the new 22 applications approved. RCPP 2023 funding application deadline in November. Drought monitor is looking better for Grant County especially North end of county.
- b. Renee Hollowell, District Wildlife Biologist, Blue Mtn Ranger District, Malheur National Forest: working on Malheur for 9 years. Started on Range NEPA and is filling behind Dustin Hollowell. She would like to learn more about the Watershed Council, and how we can partner in the future.
- c. MLW, District Hydrologist: Bark on soft pause, short staffed on Blue Mtn. Thanks to Loren Stout and Council for questions at BMFP meeting. Pulling together work on small streams, wrapping data analysis, exploring restoration opportunities. All to do with elevations and gravity, considering FPB inventory. As move forward on Veg management of project, recognizing patterns of streams and roads, work closely with logging folks in and around the RHCAs.
- d. Brandon Ferguson, ODF: in process of hiring additional community wildfire Forester. Important to SFJD LSR project.
- e. Jack Vaughn, Dan Somers, ODFW PWSWA: Jack will be leaving at the end of month, introduce Dan as his replacement. Dan will be working out of Pendleton for foreseeable future. Working on spring projects, cows moved around on wildlife area. working on fence issues above ranch house. Dan Somers: working as habitat biologist in Pendleton. He has been all over state of Oregon. Originated from Quincy, WA. Graduated OSU. Running grazing program on Bridge Ck Wildlife Area.

3. Action Items

- a. Staff Reimbursement Request: MT motioned to approve, Richard 2nd, motion passed

- b. May Meeting Minutes: Richard motioned to approve, Mike 2nd, motion passed
- c. May Staff Time: Richard motioned to approve, MT 2nd, motion passed

4. Staff Report

- a. Project Updates
 - i. RCPP enrollment: 3rd round of Sign-ups are open now until Fall 2022. Contact Amy or Hannah to get a project plan put together.
 - ii. BLM Projects: 3 out of 6 complete. BLM and OWEB are working on another round of funding, this time they are trying to secure up to \$10 million over 5 years that will be allocated to partners. BLM tour a couple weeks ago to look at completed projects and discuss new issues.
 - iii. Ochocho National Forest Projects: Sunflower Allotment projects were funded during the April 26th OWEB meeting.
 - iv. Landscape Scale Restoration South Fork John Day Partnership Update
 - 1. Dayville School Educational Program: April 20th, Amy, Hannah, Brandon Ferguson (ODF), and Jacob Putney (OSU Extension) did a forestry education workshop for grades 3-5 and 6-8 at the Dayville School.
 - 2. SFJD Partnership meeting: We hold Quarterly meetings to develop a Forest Restoration Action Plan and check-in on progress for the Landscape Scale Restoration Projects. Partners attending include Malheur National Forest, ODF, ODFW, OSU extension, Jim Dovenberg, and Amy, Hannah, and Jeff Maben for the SFJDWC.
 - 3. ODFW Phillip Schneider Wildlife Area Forestry Projects: Units established, and prescription in progress. ODF is currently thinning around Aspen stands and roadways. Planning to contract about 130 acres of forest bordering Widows Creek Ranch
 - 4. Malheur National Forest Aldrich Treatment Area: USFS has secured a Categorical Exclusion NEPA clearance in order to treat fuel loads bordering Widows Creek Ranch, and Phillip W. Schneider Wildlife Area. We will apply for Title II funding to implement work.
 - 5. Widows Creek Ranch Bridge Creek Forestry OWEB Application submitted May 2nd, 2022, to treat private land forest
 - 6. After forest treatment we will attempt to move forward with cross boundary, controlled burns between private land, ODFW, and USFS
 - v. Grant Applications
 - 1. OWEB Spring 2022
 - a. Goen to Fields Wildlife Enhancements: This project is partnering with Mike Martin, located halfway between Mt. Vernon and Dayville. Upland work including Juniper thinning, juniper clear cutting, and water developments. Amount Requested \$112,049
 - b. Bridge Creek Forestry: Amount Requested \$148,957
 - c. Indian Creek Diversion Relocation and Pipeline Designs: amount requested \$75,000
 - 2. Upcoming Opportunities:
 - a. America the Beautiful Challenge: Implementation grant
 - b. Title II: White Ck Riparian Fence

5. Discussion

- a. Bark Project Area: Phil, Joanne, Amy, Hannah, Mark Webb, met with Malheur National Forest Supervisor, Deputy Forestry Supervisor, and District Ranger to discuss planning efforts for vegetation and aquatic treatments in the Bark Project area. Amy and Jeff attended the BMFP meeting when Loren Stout spoke on concerns over the issues in the Bark project area. Wild horse Management Plan was also discussed.
- b. Bio Control Release Updates:
 - i. Hoary Cress/White top – there was a big set back in the lab at Montana State University in 2019 that set the *Aceria draba* populations back and, unfortunately, Covid made it impossible to resupply that colony, but the good news is that they took in the field and we are expecting our first mites in the greenhouse in Idaho next week (the is a HUGE step). As I said to Phil, you guys in Oregon are at the top of the list once we get enough releases to move around. I will coordinate those releases with Joel Price in Oregon. The *Ceutorhynchus caradariae* petition was re-submitted in 2020 and there was some additional testing recommended that should wrap up in 2022, so we're optimistic we'll have access to those weevils in 2024.
 - ii. Houndstongue – the seed feeding weevil, *Mogulones borraginis* petition is in the final stages of what I hope will be approval. We are waiting on Tribal consultation which should wrap up soon and then the formal Environmental Assessment process begins which includes public review. I don't think there will be any hang ups there and I'm optimistic we'll have releases in 2023. *Mogulones crucifer* is continuing its march south from Canada where it was legally released, but it is still not legal in the US. We are expecting a petition for release to be submitted to APHIS any day to make its use legal. Until then, please make sure nobody plays with it. Fines and penalties are steep and this will be controlled with biocontrol once agents are approved for release.
 - iii. Canada thistle – There are three agents approved for release with one caveat. Those agents are 1) *Hadroplontus litura* (stem-mining weevil), 2) *Urophora cardui* (stem-galling wasp), and *Puccinia punctiformis* (Canada thistle rust fungus). The first two don't really do much and I wouldn't waste my time trying to get them established. The rust is showing great results, but it is currently in regulatory limbo. EPA and APHIS can't decide who should be able to approve releases and until that's solved there won't be any releases outside of those done via an experimental permit that is overseen by Dr. Dan Bean with Colorado Department of Agriculture at their Palisade Insectary. If you're interested in this, I'd make sure to coordinate with Joel Price as he's an expert on it and in your backyard.
- c. Bylaw and Policy Review: directors reviewed suggested edits. Would like more information regarding Health insurance options.
- d. Richard requested an Organization Chart of each agency, our contacts, and they're projects, and phone/email
- e. Richard asked if there were funding opportunities for stockwater/dry water sources. FSA ECP program for stockwater. Follow up with Emma Gabriel. RCPP would be an option, but won't pay for dry wells. NRCS is looking at creating EIS for stockwater systems.

6. Coming Up

- a. Murderers Creek Mussel Monitoring 2022: 6/13-6/19/2022
- b. Juneteenth: SFJWC Offices Closed, 6/20/2022

- c. OWEB Site Visits: 6/21/2022
 - d. John Day Basin Partnership Fox Creek Site Tour: 6/22/2022
 - e. Fourth of July, SFJDWC Offices Closed: 7/4/2022
- 7. Adjourned meeting at 2:49pm, Next meeting date: Monday, July 11th, 2022.**