

DESCHUTES COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Board Meeting Minutes – November 18, 2021

Meeting location: Zoom

Current Board Members

Director Zone 1 (Redmond)	Leslie Clark, Treasurer
Director Zone 2 (Sisters)	William Kuhn, Co-Chair
Director Zone 3 (Tumalo)	Jeff Rola
Director Zone 4 (Alfalfa)	Susan Altman, Secretary
Director Zone 5 (South County & La Pine)	Andrew Aasen
Director At-Large #1	Robin Vora
Director At-Large #2	Gen Hubert, Co-Chair

Director’s present: Susan Altman, Gen Hubert, Robin Vora, William Kuhn, Leslie Clark

Staff present: Todd Peplin, Lead Planner; Erin Kilcullen, General Manager, Tom Bennett, Conservation Technician

Agency attendees: Lars Santana, NRCS

Other attendees: Andrew Walch, ODFW, Suzanne Linford, Oregon Wildlife Foundation, Jon Nelson, High Desert Museum

Order of business:

1. Call to Order & Introductions: The meeting was called to order at 9:06 a.m.; all attendees introduced themselves.
2. Public Comments: None.
3. Agency Reports:
 - a. Lars Santana: The deadline for all EQIP applications are on November 19, 2021. So far, there are twenty-two applications for the RCPP in the Smith Rock area and the Joint Chiefs project. There are also applications for the CSP, high tunnel, and organic programs.
4. Grant Updates
 - a. Grant Updates: Erin has been working with the Districts intern, Emma Zuber. Emma has developed a new website for the District and has been working on marketing our District through social media and other avenues. Emma has created a newsletter for the District and continues to assist Erin with outreach, marketing, and other tasks. Erin and Emma have been working on the Urban Agriculture Grant with The Environmental Center. The District and the Environmental Center recorded a virtual option for the Soil Health Workshop, which is available on our website. The District was awarded the WaterSmart Grant through the Bureau of Reclamation to create a Watershed Group in the Indian Ford Watershed and begin to complete assessments on the creek. Erin has started the process and is working with the grants management specialist to finalize the budget and contracting. The District continues to meet with COID, DRC, NRCS, and Crook SWCD to collaborate efforts and funding towards the new Smith Rock RCPP. The District in collaboration with DRC and COID have been awarded \$1.45 million of the counties ARPA funds to implement irrigation efficiency projects. Erin and DRC have meet with the County and is awaiting a contract for this grant award. There are many interested landowners in utilizing these county funds to improve their irrigation systems. Erin has collaborated with Lars to perform a second outreach

effort for the Joint Chiefs project. Erin sent out informational letters to fifty-two landowners within the Joint Chiefs boundary. Todd has been communicating with landowners, performing site visits, and providing planning assistance. The Districts capacity Grant is extended until December 2021 or until the projects are completed. The remaining funds are being used to pipe a property in TSID from Whychus Creek. Another project is switching a landowner in COID from flood to sprinkler. This property currently flood irrigates, and their water flows back into the COID canal. Also, Erin will be using some of these remaining funds to plant pollinator gardens at schools and parks in Bend. These projects have been completed and Erin and Emma are working to develop the final documents to send to OWEB to wrap up this grant. The district continues to utilize funds from the current biennium of the Capacity grant. Tom is collaborating with landowners and COID to provide technical assistance and Irrigation water management plans for their properties. There are four landowners that are being signed up for EQIP contracts through the RCPP. Tom is also working with Baxter from COID on a private lateral assessment. This is occurring in COID due to the amount of funding available there. Todd and Erin have been working with OSU extension to apply for a professional development grant through Western SARE (Sustainable agriculture research and education) program. This grant application was submitted, and the District should find out in a couple months if it will be funded. ODA has designated the new SIA to the Little Deschutes and Upper Deschutes regions. The deadline for this application is in mid-February. Erin will be working on this grant application.

5. Wildlife Presentations. The Districts board and staff are interested in obtaining grants to collaborate with private landowners on wildlife habitat improvement projects. Erin has coordinated three presenters to begin this discussion and how DSWCD can fit in to programs and projects that are already in place.
 - a. Andrew Walch, ODFW, habitat wildlife biologist. Andrew works in Deschutes and Jefferson Counties. He collaborates with landowners with wildlife damage on their property. He works with wildlife habitat projects as well as hunter access projects. He also manages the Wildlife habitat conservation management area plan, which is a program for landowners to manage their property for wildlife. It provides a tax benefit for the landowner. ODFW has a rangeland drill that is available for rental for seeding projects. This is a great opportunity for match for projects. ODFW has been working on mule deer population management. There are 1,000 mule deer that have been collared and tracked in their winter range in eastern Oregon. The Tumalo winter range population that spans up to Wickiup reservoir is 40% of what ODFW manages for and the Paulina population is 25% of what is managed for. This large decline in mule deer populations is due to disease, increase in population, habitat fragmentation, and other factors. Andrew has some interested landowners that he has been working with on habitat improvement projects on their property. Erin and Andrew will connect offline to discuss these projects in more detail.
 - b. Suzanne Linford. Suzanne is a volunteer interpreter at the High Desert Museum and with protect animal migration, which is a partner with the Oregon Wildlife foundation. Suzanne works with multiple agencies to perform outreach and education on wildlife migration, importance of not feeding deer, wildlife friendly fences, and why do deer cross the road. She works to reach landowners to provide education on these aspects through brochures and pamphlets. There is a terrific opportunity for the District to partner with Suzanne to get these educational materials to landowners. Lars wanted to point out that Mule Deer is a controversial topic with some landowners and to be cautious when performing outreach and educational efforts to landowners.
 - c. Jon Nelson. Jon is the curator at the High Desert Museum. He has developed a beautiful story map about Mule deer in the high desert, which can be found here: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/7a99d0bcb2bb4d599a098373ace89c55>
He has also created a video about the importance of protecting mule deer, which can be found here: <https://vimeo.com/554809932>

Suzanne and Jon are working on a brochure on wildlife migration and wildlife friendly fences that should be available soon. Jon also might be able to assist the District with connection to landowners and properties that would be suitable for wildlife improvement projects.

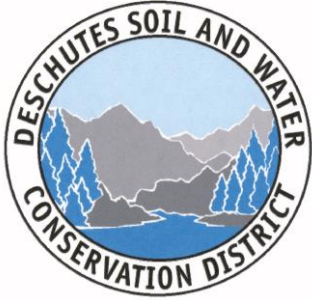
6. Senate Bill 762
 - a. There was available time and Robin wanted to discuss the new Senate Bill 762 that was recently passed. Erin, Todd, and Robin attended a Shared Stewardship field tour that took place in the La Pine area. Ed Keith led this tour and discussed forest health projects that have occurred in this area. It was an excellent group of individuals from various organizations. There were great discussions on how we can begin to work together to address the forest health issues that occur in this area. The Senate Bill 762 is a bill that was passed to award ODF \$25 million to address forest health and fire hazards throughout the state. There are two pools of grant money available. \$20 million is available for landscape scale projects with multiple organizations and \$5 million is available for small scale projects on private land. The grant deadline is January 7, 2022 with a completion date of June 2023. Robin thought it would be beneficial to call arborist companies to see if there was availability to assist with chipping in the South County. There was a discussion about the District buying a chipper that would be available for rental. To rent a chipper, the District needs space, liability insurance, and maintenance funds. Lars discussed the potential to use this opportunity to assist landowners signed up for Joint Chiefs to provide additional funding for projects on their property. Susan recommended that we find a tree service company that could do thinning for a month or two this summer or next and offer a free service to landowners. First, Erin needs to determine if there are areas within Deschutes County that are high priority according to this new bill. There is a second online seminar on Monday November 22 to discuss more information about this opportunity.
7. Manager's Report: See Exhibit A.
8. Treasurers Report: The Districts bookkeeper has been out sick for over a month and so there are no reports to present currently. Once Erin has received these reports, she will send them to the board for approval.
8. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Motion #1 made by Susan Altman, seconded by Robin Vora to approve the October 21, 2021, board meeting minutes. Rollcall vote: unanimous approval.
9. Directors' Reports
 - a. Gen Hubert: Gen had to leave the meeting early.
 - b. Susan Altman: The county has decided to move forward with the Mule Deer inventory. The planning commission meeting tonight will discuss the wildlife inventory, rural ADUs, and the Dark Skies ordinance. Susan thinks it would be great if we added information to our website about local vegetation identification and wildlife footprints.
 - c. Robin Vora: Robin has commented on the Sage Grouse LIT draft report. He would like Erin to send the information about past Sage Grouse projects that the District has worked on.
 - d. Leslie Clark: Leslie showed photos of the Pilot Butte pipe that is currently being installed. The G4 pipe will also be installed this winter. She is working on a grant application to obtain \$10 million as match for the PL-566 pipe.
 - e. William Kuhn: William is interested in the OWRD water conservation management plan. He will talk with Leslie offline in more detail about this. William spent three weeks in Portugal and learned about how Portugal works to reduce fire fuels.
10. Todd discussed a large development that is currently being constructed near Black Butte Ranch with large multi-million-dollar houses and fences. He is concerned because this is prime mule deer habitat. He would like William to check this out if he has time. Why does the county allow these developments to occur while also provoking interest in protecting mule deer habitat? They contradict each other.

The next board meeting will be on December 16, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. This meeting will be held via Zoom if the mask mandate is in place.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:19 p.m.

Erin Kilcullen, General Manager



DESCHUTES COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Board of Directors Meeting – November 18, 2021
Meeting location: via Zoom

Addendum: Motions of the Board Meeting – November 18, 2021

Motions made:	Vote result
---------------	-------------

Motion #1 made by Susan Altman, seconded by Robin Vora to approve the October 21, 2021, board meeting minutes. Unanimous approval. There were no objections.

Exhibit A:

Manager's Report

October 21, 2021 – November 18, 2021

As the general manager, I submit the following:

1. I have been participating in the technical and communication subcommittees of the DBWC to determine next steps in outreach and implementation for the group.
2. I have been working with DRC and COID on an outreach and monitoring strategy for the RCPP and ARPA on-farm projects.
3. I continue to work with Rebecca to continue to improve the Districts books.
4. Todd, Tom, and I continue to work with DRC and COID on next steps and how we can collaborate our efforts and funding sources for the RCPP and ARPA in Smith Rock Way. We are meeting monthly at this point while we wait to hear about exact funding amounts for project implementation.
5. Todd, Tom, and I have been developing an application and prioritization process for landowners to use for ARPA Projects. We are waiting on the final ARPA rules and a contract from the County.
6. I have been working on the Urban Agriculture Grant workshop and pollinator component. We recorded a virtual option for our workshop.
7. I have been working with Emma to on the new website, social media, outreach efforts, Rural Living Handbook, and the Pasture Exchange Program.
8. I am working with our CPA and Rebecca to complete our annual financial statement review.
9. I have been attending meetings with OSU extension to support Todd in applying for a Western SARE Grant that was submitted on November 10th. I assisted in edits on the grant application.
10. I am working to assist in pollinator pathway plantings throughout the city of Bend. These projects are being funded through our 19-21 ODA Capacity Grant.
11. Todd, Robin, and I attended a Shared Stewardship field tour in the La Pine area to discuss potential future forestry projects.
12. I have assisted Lars with a second round of outreach for the Joint Chiefs project. I sent out a mailing to fifty-two landowners within the project boundaries.
13. I attended the ultimate resilience toolbox webinar.
14. I have started to work with the Bureau of Reclamation to sort out the grant the District received to collaborate with landowners on Indian Ford Creek.
15. I was able to enjoy a vacation and my best friend's wedding in Tulum, Mexico.

Thank you all for your assistance to the District.

Erin Kilcullen