



**UMPQUA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES**

December 12, 2024

Directors Present:

Chair Nathan Baumgartner
Director Tom Black
Director Beth Frakes
Director Bob Miller

Staff Present:

District Manager/Conservation Planner Rhonda Black

Agencies Present:

Heather Y. Medina Saucedo – Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations (Basin Team Leader)
Central Coast/Upper Willamette and South West Basin

Others Present:

Kate Baumgartner, Dawn Miller,
Fiscal Provider Tanya Graham

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

The Chair Baumgartner called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

FISCAL PROVIDER REPORT:

In the Fiscal Provider Graham's absence, the District Manager explained the financial report for the month ending November 30, 2024.

Page 1 - The Balance Sheet. It shows total current assets of \$33,446.19 and total liabilities & Equity of \$33,446.19.

Page 2 - Check Register - General Checking - started the month with \$16,404.14 and ended the month with \$32,723.43.

Page 3 - Statement of Activity - Total Income: \$61,129.4 and total Expenses: \$70,718.52. Leaving a cash balance of \$32,791.90.

Page 4 - Monthly Comparison – As of November 30th - Income: \$0.00 and total Expenses: \$8,355.87. Cash balance of \$32,791.90.

Page 5 – Reports that are due, PTO balances, and beginning of Individual Grant and/or funding source details.

Page 6 through 9 – Individual Grant and/or funding source details.

APPROVAL OF BILLS & TREASURER'S REPORT FOR AUDIT

Chair Baumgartner made a motion, 2nd by Director Miller to approve the bills and the November 2024 Treasurer's Report. The motion **unanimously passed**.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The February 10th Meeting and March 3rd Special Meeting minutes for 2022 were not yet completely transcribed, but will be available at future meetings. All were lengthy meetings.

Chair Baumgartner made a motion, 2nd by Director Miller to approve the November 14, 2024 Business Meeting minutes. The motion **unanimously passed**.

STAFF REPORT:

Conservation Technician/District Manager Rhonda Black:

December 12, 2024

- *OWEB:*
 - *2023-2025 District Operations Capacity Grant –*
 - *6th quarter Capacity Grant reporting due 01/15/2025.*
 - *OWEB Small Grants Program:*
 - *OWEB Small Grants Status:*
 - *Otter-Baumgartner Ranch Livestock Exclusion – 60% of the funds have been used with the majority going to materials and supplies. The landowner has scheduled the gutter and downspout installation for spring 2025. This project is over 75% complete. The landowners are replacing their barn roof in anticipation of new gutters and downspouts.*
 - *Providence Creek Runoff Management – 60% of the funds have been used with the majority going to materials and supplies. This project is over 95% complete.*
 - *Parent Ranch Livestock Exclusion Phase 1 – 60% of the funds have been used with the majority going to materials and supplies. All of the supplies have been purchased for this project and the fencing is 100% complete. The final step is the heavy use areas at the gates and elk jumps. The landowner had knee surgery at the end of August, therefore, the project will be completed at a later date.*
 - *Elk Creek Riparian OWEB Small Grant – 60% of the funds have been received from OWEB. Project work has been completed by SWCD contractor, Ruwaldt Consulting. This project is 99% complete. Summer 2025 will be for blackberry regrowth management and control, along with watering. We will make sure we have proper match then complete the OWEB reporting. Me and the contractor visited the site after a short period of heavy rain to see how project is holding up on 12/06. Project is holding in there.*
 - *Costa Ranch Runoff Management – Grant application submitted September 14th for \$15,000 for gutters, downspouts, drainage line, geotextile fabric, and gravel for the heavy use protection area. The Small Grant Team has reviewed the grant and it has been approved by both the Small Grant Team and OWEB as of 11/22/2024.*
 - *Small Grants Pre-Project Tours –*
 - *NRCS District Conservationist Annie Marion has already requested a tour for the Lincoln SWCD Board of Directors this fall or later this winter.*

- Sarah Sauter with DEQ will be touring these sites 01/29 and 01/30.
 - OWEB TA Grant:
 - We will be resubmitting this grant in the Spring.
 - Application submitted to OWEB on 04/26. Contractor and District Manager working on this for 3-farm bridges, 2 other bridges/culverts, and a tidegate structure. This will be for the design, engineering, and permits.
 - Matching grant from ODFW for \$2,500 will need to be obtained.
 - Geotechnical site visit has been completed.
 - Lots of meetings with engineer.
 - Unfortunately, the OWEB review team recommendation for this grant was, “Do Not Fund”. The OWEB review team recommendation is available from the OWEB Grant Management website. We’ll review the evaluation and apply recommendations and then go from there to reapply to the program.
- BLM:
 - BLM Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination grant, “Umpqua Noxious Weed Control” for both contractor and myself. Waiting to hear back from the BLM on this.
- PARTNERSHIPS:
 - Umpqua 7, Coos 4, Mid-Coast 3 OWEB Small Grant Teams –
 - Umpqua 7 –
 - Working with Lee Russell.
 - Elk Creek Watershed Council has dissolved.
 - Attended the organization meeting for a new Elk Creek Watershed Coalition on 12/10 at the Drain Civic Center where attendees began creating the organization’s bylaws, approving those. At the next meeting on 01/14 we will work on policies and create a board of directors.
 - Offered for Umpqua SWCD to provide administration for the Elk Creek Watershed Coalition at the meeting on Tuesday night. Some of the members are interested in that and asked me to find out from the Umpqua SWCD board if they would be interested in doing that. Had provided Lee Russell and Heather McNeill the document that Curry SWCD uses to provide their watershed councils with administration as a reference document.
 - Small Grant Team:
 - We have used all of the funds for the 2023-2025 biennium after the last small grant submission window.
 - Coos 4 – No new news.
 - Mid-Coast 3 – No new news.
 - Partnership for the Umpqua Rivers –
 - Attended 11/19 PUR meeting.
 - Not sure when tour of Glover site will occur.
 - Glover Lands Estuary Enhancement Project –
 - Keven Keller wants Umpqua SWCD to design the livestock watering system and obtain quotes for the materials and supplies. Will need to work with landowner in order to achieve this. PUR Executive Director Keller said he could provide some funding to the SWCD through PUR for SWCD performing this service. We will find out.

- *All four bridges are installed and the re-channelization work is as complete as PUR is willing to take it. The plans show much more re-channelization work, but PUR is done. Cris Salzar gave a presentation at the PUR meeting about the project.*
- *Made a site visit with Mr. Glover to look at the bridges and other work that has been done on 10/24. One of the bridges has a 6% grade. Not sure how this will work out as far as the “test of time” will go.*
- *Met with Criz Salzar with PUR and Morgan Fay with the Umpqua Native Plant Partnership to discuss planting plan, work on obtaining plants and volunteers to plant plants 12/10.*
- *South Coast Tide Gate Collaborative – No new news.*
- *Tide Gate Affinity Group – No new news.*
- *State Tide Gate – No new news.*
- *Providence Creek Area Updates:*
 - *Port of Umpqua – Attended Port meeting 11/20. Next meeting 12/18.*
 - *Providence Creek Tide Gates –*
 - *The Providence Creek Study Grant to Business Oregon has been awarded in the amount of \$160,000.*
 - *Grant for \$40,000 match will need to be written and our consultant will do that this winter.*
 - *Port of Umpqua approved contracting with Ruwaldt Consulting at their October 16th Port meeting.*
 - *Don Porior will be doing the design and engineering for the project.*
 - *Don Porior created a project timeline 12/11.*
 - *Meeting at the Port with Port Manager Scott Kent, Matt Ruwaldt Consulting, and Don Porior will be joining us by telephone 12/12.*
 - *Leeds Island Park and Restoration Project –*
 - *City Council approved Council Letter 024-036 at the 05/06 meeting, 4 out of 5 Council members. One member of the public spoke up highly in favor of the project. No members of the public spoke up against the project. The letter authorizes Umpqua Soil Water Conservation District, working with Matt Ruwaldt Environmental Consulting and Oregon Parks and Recreation Department on a local Government Grant Program, to move forward planning a Leeds Island project.*
 - *Grant in the amount of \$40,000 will be written for TA.*
 - *A grant to the Oregon Parks & Recreation Department Grant will need to be written for acquisition. Written by Contractor and submitted by City of Reedsport as this grant must be submitted by a city.*
 - *Additional Information:*
 - *Weekly meetings with Engineer.*
- *Douglas County –*
 - *Douglas County Special Projects. Continuing to work with assisting Tracy Pope with her grant.*
 - *Wrote a letter of support for the County’s, “Douglas County Native Plant Greenhouse and Nursery Program” grant application to the OR Department of Land Conservation and Development Community Green Infrastructure Grant Program 11/20.*
- *Smith/Umpqua/Dunes Stewardship Group – Will be meeting soon.*

- DEQ Umpqua TMDL Implementation – Sarah Sauter with DEQ will be visiting Reedsport and Elkton for a tour of our projects in January 29-30, 2025.
 - Forest Service –
 - Tsalila –
 - If anyone would like to assist with this event in the future, please let me know.
 - The addition of bringing back the Tsalila Event T-shirts was a big hit among presenters.
 - Oregon Central Coast Forest Collaborative –
 - Next meeting 12/13.
 - Umpqua Oaks Partnership – No new news.
 - Umpqua Native Plant Partnership – Was planning on attending the in-person meeting on 11/21, but then I got sick.
 - Hydro Breakfast Meeting – Attended meeting on 12/05.
 - USDA/NRCS –
 - AgLearn – Contacted by Wallace Jennings with NRCS and he is working on getting the AgLearn training set up again.
 - Virtual meeting scheduled for 12/17 with Wallace Jennings with NRCS to discuss future programs.
 - Douglas Weed Management Area – Attended virtual meeting option 12/05.
 - Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) – Andrea Krainer is planning a District Manager’s meeting in January 2025.
 - Oregon Conservation Education Association Network (OCEAN) – CONNECT will be held April 8-10, 2025 at the Florence Events Center.
 - Oregon Coastal Zone Management Association – Attended executive meeting on 11/18 to conduct interviews. The executive board chose Blue Ridge Consulting out of Coos Bay to manage the association and move the group forward. Attended general membership meeting virtually on 12/06.
 - Oregon State University Extension Service – Working on a soil health hands on workshop on Saturday, 02/08. We’re hoping to have it at the Great Garden in Reedsport. Haven’t been able to make contact with the person in charge of the Great Garden.
 - Oregon Climate and Agriculture Network – Will be attending the Soil Health Network Regional HUB meeting January 21st and 22nd in Corvallis.
 - OWEB – No new news.
 - **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:**
 - Will be making a site visit to another Elkton/Azaila Drive Vineyard later this year or early 2025 to obtain soil samples.
- Ongoing TA:
- Elk Creek Riparian Restoration Projects:
 - 5 properties involved with this project, one of which is already being worked on through a small grant. Hoping to work with the City of Elkton on these projects, which will fit into their DEQ TMDL plan. This is a stretch of Elk Creek within the City limits of Elkton where there is little to no shade on the creek, and the riparian has been invaded by Armenian Blackberry and at least two different kinds of ivy, along with Reed Canary Grass.
 - Continuing to work with Butler Creek landowner on future OWEB Small Grant to reduce Ag runoff from barn by placing gutters and downspouts. Hoping to fund a water collection storage tank for piping water to livestock water tank on hardened pad.

- *South Side Smith River. Will be following up with water quality plan and OWEB Small Grant on a small heritage pig operation.*
- *Contact made with Smith River ranch owner who is interested in bridges, livestock exclusion fencing, off-stream watering, tide gate replacement, etc. Follow-up in process. Will visit ranch this summer to begin AgWQ planning, mapping, etc. Will follow up in spring 2025 with Umpqua SWCD Contractor for additional site visits and recommendations.*
- *Possible in-stream work, riparian buffer and grant for project at Wild Azalea Vineyards. Will need SWCD Contractor's assistance with this and will make a site visit with him upon his return in early 2025.*
- *Providence Creek – Landowner called about fill and removal, levy repair, fencing, etc. Will follow up in early 2025 when Consultant is available.*
- *Working with South Side Smith River landowner about small grant program application to provide assistance for fiber goat operation to assist with heavy use areas and barn water runoff at various locations on the ranch. Will write small grant in next small grant biennium.*
- **ADMINISTRATION:**
 - *Financial documents, statements, timesheets, etc. recorded, filed, and loaded into Google Drive for Fiscal Provider.*
 - *Meeting information provided to Directors, and ODA WQ Specialist & Program Lead.*
 - *Business Meeting notice provided to media, electronic notice list.*
 - *Will be taking a much-needed vacation 12/20 through 01/03/2025. Will be occasionally checking emails.*
 - *SDAO Best Management Practices Survey completed online.*

Heather Y. Medina Saucedo – USDA-NRCS Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations

- *The Roseburg Service Center had a new District Conservationist who is Bradley Stokes. District Conservationist Stokes is from South Carolina and making the move to Roseburg and should be in Roseburg by the end of December. He will be attending the January SWCD meeting.*
- *General EQIP due November 29th.*
- *At the ODFW Working Lands meeting in Salem on December 12th found out that 2.5% in state funding for natural resources has never been increased and that's what all of Oregon natural resources works out of.*
- *We should try to have "Legislative Days" out in the field and take our state legislatures out on tours to help them understand why we need funding and to understand the kind of work we do.*
- *Wallace Jennings is your contact for the Organic or Transition to Organic Initiative to Oregon.*

Annie Marion – District Conservationist, USDA-NRCS Waldport Field Office

- *Provided a written report to the Umpqua SWCD Board of Directors:*

November 2024

Announcements/Updates:

- *FY25 Wetland Reserve Easement sign-up deadlines:*
 - *IRA 1st batching date Oct. 4, 2024, 2nd batching date Dec. 20, 2024*

Meetings/Site Visits:

- *Nov. 5 – Volunteered with Salmon Watch at Clemens Park on the Alsea River teaching ~30 5th graders about aquatic macroinvertebrates*
- *Nov. 6 – Presented at Coastal Season Extension workshop organized by OSU Extension in Florence (~20 attendees)*
- *Nov. 7 – Presented at Coastal Season Extension workshop organized by OSU Extension in Lincoln City (5 attendees)*

- Nov. 7 – Presented on grazing management and NRCS cost share programs at ODA’s Upper Yaquina TMDL Implementation Plan community meeting in Eddyville
- Nov. 12 – Site visit for CSP forestry certification near Newport
- Nov. 14 – Basin District Conservationists meeting to discuss EQIP funding for FY25
- Nov. 15 - Site visit for EQIP Local Foods application near Deadwood
- Nov. 18 - Site visit to OMSI Camp Gray in Newport with Evie Smith (OSU Extension), Celeste Lebo (USFWS), and Tyler Clouse (LSWCD) to discuss possibilities for coastal prairie/dune restoration project and butterfly habitat
- Nov. 18 – Site visit for EQIP Local Foods application near Yachats
- Nov. 20 – Site visit w/ Bridgett Pneuman, NRCS Organic Specialist/Oregon Tilth, and Dean Moberg, consultant/retired NRCS, for EQIP organic mgmt., nutrient mgmt., and hedgerow site prep certification near Walton
- Nov. 21 – Site visit w/ Kailee & Katie (LSWCD) to farm/forest landowner interested in butterfly meadow and riparian planting in Upper Yaquina
- Nov. 21 – Site visit for pasture assessment for EQIP Upper Yaquina Water Quality application near Eddyville
- Nov. 25 – Dec. 2 – annual leave
- Dec. 3 – Site visit for EQIP pasture application near Logsdan
- Dec. 5 – Site visit for EQIP AFO/pasture application near Siletz
- Dec. 6 – Site visit w/ Seth (Siuslaw SWCD) & Caleb (SWC) to discuss potential floodplain restoration project on N Fork Siuslaw near Florence & EQIP AFO/pasture application
- Dec. 11 – Site visit w/ Cal Knights (NRCS Forester) for EQIP forestry application near Logsdan

PROGRAMS:

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

- FY25 EQIP sign-up deadline was November 29, 2024:
 - Received a total of 17 EQIP applications:
 - 3 Western Lane County (2 Local Foods, 1 IRA – Farmstead)
 - 14 Lincoln County (5 Local Foods, 3 Upper Yaquina Water Quality, 3 Forest Resistance & Resilience, 1 Organic, 1 Forest Management Plan, and 1 IRA –Pasture/Farmstead)

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

- Current CSP Contracts
 - Worked on certifying activities for FY24 annual payments
- FY25 CSP Renewals
 - Working on contracting for 1 renewal application (Lane)

Easement Programs

- [Agricultural Conservation Easement Program \(ACEP\)](#) & [Healthy Forests Reserve Program \(HFRP\)](#)
- New NRCS Basin Staff:
 - Royce Daniels, Basin Wetlands Specialist (Eugene office)
 - Keira Cameron, Pheasants Forever partner biologist (Eugene office)

DIRECTOR REPORTS:

Director Miller:

- Director Miller described how he has enjoyed being a Director on the Umpqua SWCD Board of Directors and how he supports this work.

Director Frakes:

- *Director Frakes also described how she learned a lot from being a Director on the Umpqua SWCD Board of Directors and enjoyed her time on the board, and how she might run for the position again in the future, once her schedule lightens up.*

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Personal Services Contract Policy – Action Item

The District Manager explained how the blanks in the Public Contracting Rules and Procedures Policy have been filled in Umpqua SWCD’s information, which was approved at the November 9, 2023 business meeting. With the Personal Services Contract Policy, the blanks have been filled in using the information from Umpqua SWCD’s Public Contracting Rules and Procedures Policy and this is in draft form. We can update both of these policies after the new year as we see fit. Example policies have been requested from Curry, Coos, and Clackamas SWCDs, so we don’t need to reinvent the wheel.

Chair Baumgartner made a motion, 2nd by Director Miller to approve the Umpqua Soil and Water Conservation District Personal Services Contract Policy. The motion **unanimously passed**.

2. Public Meeting Policy – Action Item

The District Manager explained how the draft public meeting policy is based off of the SDAO sample policy, which has been tailored to fit Umpqua SWCD. The executive session items that do not apply to SWCDs has been removed from the draft policy.

Chair Baumgartner made a motion, 2nd by Director Miller to approve the Umpqua Soil and Water Conservation District Public Meeting Policy. The motion **unanimously passed**.

3. Director Recruitment – Discussion

The District Manager provided an updated director recruitment letter and resources information from the Special Districts Association of Oregon on the topic.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Umpqua SWCD Chair Baumgartner informed the public the meeting was going into an Executive Session citing **ORS 192.660 (2) (i) and ORS 192.660 (8) to evaluate the performance of an officer, employee or staff member.**

Director T. Black declared a conflict of interest as he is related to the District Manager/Conservation Planner and excused himself from the Executive Session.

After completion of the Executive Session, Chair Baumgartner returned the meeting to the regular session.

4. Pay Increase – Action Item

Director T. Black declared a conflict of interest as he is related to the District Manager/Conservation Planner and did not take part in the discussion or vote.

The Board of Directors suggested an increase of \$4.00 per hour, and while that was most acceptable to the District Manager, the District Manager suggested a \$3.00 per hour increase due to wanting to make sure there was enough funding available in the budget to cover the cost of the SWCD's environmental services contractor.

Director Miller made a motion, 2nd by Chair Baumgartner to increase the District Manager/Conservation Planner's pay by \$3.00 per hour. The motion **unanimously passed**.

FUNDING COMMITTEE

Reports and follow up to items.

No new news.

ADJOURN MEETING:

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m. by Chair Baumgartner.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next business meeting for the Umpqua Soil and Water Conservation District is scheduled for January 9, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. by Go-To-Meeting teleconference and/or by computer, tablet or smartphone.

Respectfully submitted,
Rhonda Black
District Manager/Conservation Planner
Recorder