



Walla Walla County Conservation District

March 2024 Board Meeting

Date: Mar. 11, 2024

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Place: In person and via Zoom

Presiding Officer: Don Schwerin, Acting Chair

Supervisors Present: Alyson Buckley, Jeff Schulke, Jim Kent (zoom)

Supervisors absent: Jesse McCaw

Other Agencies: Guests Stephen Bennett and Eliza Keksi from Anabran Solutions & University of Utah

Also present: Renee Hadley, Jenny Freer, Grant Traynor, Cat Garza, Joanna Cowles-Cleveland, Eila Chin, Annie Byerley

Members of the Public: Dan M.

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Don Schwerin.

Schwerin invited the public to comment. No public comments were made.

Minutes: The Board reviewed the Feb. 12th board meeting minutes. **Motion by Jeff Schulke and second by Alyson Buckley to approve the Feb. 12th board minutes as presented, no discussion, motion passed.**

Financial Reports: The board reviewed the February Financial Reports. **Motion by Alyson Buckley and second by Jeff Schulke to pay the bills, motion passed.**

As of this date Mar. 11 2024 the Board reviewed the Feb. financial reports with no further discussion: Checks 14902 to 14913, revenues \$263,130.44 and expenses \$51,631.09; total of bank accounts \$440,115.53.

(Total Matches Springbrook)

New Business:

- 1. Partner Reports: Hadley** shared on behalf of NRCS information from the local workgroup meeting. There were 9 million dollars received in applications which lead to research regarding a greater need for nutrient management in our area. A supplemental funding request for weed management is in progress for all 5 of the Snake River Team counties. **Hadley** stated that the WSU Extension agronomist will hold a talk about residue management Wed. March 13 at WWCC's Water and Environment Center.

2. Living with Beaver and Washington Relocation efforts: Discussion and presentation from Stephen Bennett from the University of Utah and Anabranch Solutions. Presentation describes the need for beavers. Options given for landowners to trade old ways of trapping beavers for the use of beaver deterrents or relocating them all together. For questions or education needs, email Eliza Keksi; eliza.keksi@anabranchsolutions.com

3. Request to review and approve new projects:

A. VSP Equestrian Riparian project: Traynor presented a project on the Lower Walla Walla. This is west of Detour Rd containing fish and wildlife habitat and possible wetlands. Looking to plant an old pasture and willow stakes adjacent to the Walla Walla River and HOA horse trail. This project has 1.5 acres with a budget of \$18,200.

Motion by Jeff Schulke and second by Alyson Buckley to approve applying for supplemental funds through VSP for Lower Walla Walla Riparian Project as presented: motion passed.

B. VSP Chamberlin Riparian Project: Traynor presented a project that encompasses 2.75 acres for partial and full plantings, along with blackberry control. The cost for this project would be \$17,159.

Motion by Jeff Schulke and second by Alyson Buckley to approve applying for supplemental funds through VSP for Chamberlin Riparian Project as presented: motion passed.

C. VSP Screens and Meters: Traynor presented a screens and meters project that includes six landowners that are in need of replacement screens and meters. Five need one or the other and the sixth needs eight meters and two screens. Several meters are located in the Dry Creek.

Motion by Jeff Schulke and second by Jim Kent to approve applying for supplemental funds through VSP for the select screens and meters as presented: motion passed.

D. Irrigation Efficiency Pivots (2): Byerley stated that an application had been put in for 2 pivots for a total of 93.9 acres with a potential water savings of up to **170 GPM**. The current infrastructure being used is handlines/wheel lines and 2 big guns. The point of withdrawal is from a deep basalt aquifer located east of Walla Walla, less than ¼ from Dry Creek. The amount of money WWCCD asked for is \$249,173. Also requested \$5,000 for Technical Assistance (TA) to work with the producer to create an Irrigation Water Management Plan. This plan will aid the producer in determining and controlling the volume, frequency, and application rate of irrigation water.

Byerley applied for 2 pivots for a total of 48.06 acres with a potential water savings of up to 177 GPM. The current infrastructure being used is handlines. The point of withdrawal

is from a deep basalt aquifer located west of Walla Walla. The Walla Walla River is less than ¼ mile away and Walsh Creek is roughly 1/5 mile away. The amount of money WWCCD asked for is \$105,400. Once this project is accepted, a request for TA funding will be put in to cover the IWM.

Motion by Jeff Schulke and second by Alyson Buckley to approve the Irrigation Efficiency pivots as presented: motion passed.

E. Drought Preparedness Plan: Byerley worked with the Washington Water Trust to submit an application to create a Drought Preparedness/Response Plan. Collaboration with WDFW, CTUIR, City of Walla Walla and others will occur once funded. This plan will include Columbia County and Umatilla County. If funding is awarded, we will hire a consultant to put together a comprehensive and inclusive plan. This plan will be similar to a Hazard Mitigation Plan or Flood Response Plan. We anticipate using the Basin Advisory Committee to get the information needed for the consultant. This will be the plan used in the future for all entities and stakeholders to use basin wide to help address drought.

Motion by Jeff Schulke and second by Alyson Buckley to approve the Drought project as presented: motion passed.

- 4. Summary of NRCS Snake River Local Working Group: Hadley** shared that the specialty pot of funds we asked for last year received \$9M producer applications/\$500k FY24 request for Nutrient Management/Soil Health. Additional request will be sent.

Program Updates:

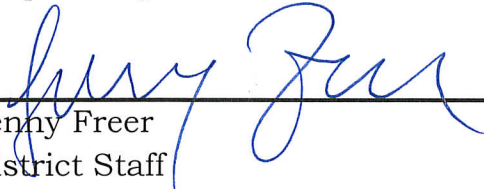
- A.) District Operations: Hadley** shared that the \$51,000 of our funds that were sent to Washington State Department of Revenue as unclaimed funds, has been returned. WWCCD staff is helping NRCS in Columbia County due to staff shortages.

Joint Agency Meetings:

Snake River Salmon Recovery Board: Cowles-Cleveland shared that Jenny Mayberry will be replacing Todd Kimball and grant round process will begin in November with award dates in September the following year.

Hazard Mitigation Plan: Byerley is working with Walla Walla County to update their plan with FEMA.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:53 without a formal motion.
Respectfully submitted,


Jenny Freer
District Staff


Board member

Next meeting: April 8, 2024 at 5:00 p.m.

Motions:

To approve the Feb. 12th board meeting minutes as written,

Motion: Schulke
Second: Buckley
Motion passed

To approve the Feb. Financial Reports and pay the bills, as presented

Motion: Buckley
Second: Schulke
Motion passed

To approve the Lower Walla Walla Riparian project, as presented

Motion: Schulke
Second: Buckley
Motion passed

To approve the Chamberlin Riparian project, as presented

Motion: Schulke
Second: Buckley
Motion passed

To approve the Screens and Meters project, as presented

Motion: Schulke
Second: Kent
Motion passed

To approve the Irrigation Efficiency Pivots, as presented

Motion: Schulke
Second: Buckley
Motion passed

To approve the Drought project, as presented

Motion: Schulke
Second: Buckley
Motion passed