



Walla Walla County Conservation District  
March 2025 Board Meeting

Date: March 10, 2025

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Place: In person and via Zoom

**Presiding Officer:** Jessee McCaw

**Supervisors Present:** Jim Kent, Don Schwerin

**Supervisors absent:** Jeff Schulke, Chair

**Other Agencies:** Corrie Thorne-Hadley, WDFW; Allisa Carlson, SCC; Lindsey Williams, WWCC

**Also present:** Renee Hadley, Grace Cooper

**Members of the Public:** Matt Williams, Wa-Hi FFA Chapter

***The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Jesse McCaw.***

McCaw invited the public to comment. There were none.

**Wa-Hi FFA Student Presentation:** The student presentation was moved up on the schedule. The students presented their Agricultural Issues Forum in preparation for going to state.

**Minutes:** The Board reviewed the February 10th board meeting minutes. **Motion by Jim Kent and second by Don Schwerin to approve the February 10th board minutes as presented, no discussion, motion passed.**

**Financial Reports:** The board reviewed the February Financial Reports. **Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Jim Kent to pay the bills, motion passed.** There was no discussion regarding the February Financial Reports, but Hadley did inform the board that some funds were returned to the state at the end of January/beginning of February.

**As of this date March 10th 2025 the Board reviewed the February financial reports with no further discussion: Checks 15118 to 15137, revenues \$143,239.99 and expenses \$182,517.43; total of bank accounts \$289,990.58.**

(Total Matches Springbrook)

**New Business:**

**1. Partner Updates:**

- a. **NRCS: Hadley** shared that the Snake River NRCS team lost four probationary employees during federal firings. A task order was approved and those four employees were rehired by the WWCCD.

- b. WDFW: Thorne-Hadley** shared that they are currently working on monitoring chronic wasting disease, there have been six positives in northern Washington. Corrie expects a lot of restrictions coming soon. They are also working on habitat work and will be getting lots of trees. They will have extra ponderosa pine trees and are willing to donate.
  - c. WSDA: Hadley** shared that WWCCD has partnered with WSDA and they will be doing groundwater pesticide testing starting in April with 40 landowners in Walla Walla County.
  - d. SCC: Carlson** shared that there is a lot of uncertainty at the state level right now. The new state governor plans to make up for \$12B budget shortfall and there may be cuts to various programs' funding. They are in the process of revising the grants manual, which will come out in the spring for review. They will be back in May for final assessment of Conservation District compliance to legal code.
- 2. Request to approve new projects as presented:**
- a. 5<sup>th</sup> pivot for 2024-2025:** Hadley shared that this was previously discussed in November 2024. Funds were received in February 2025. The project will upgrade a handline system to pivot.  
**Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Jim Kent to approve implementation of the pivot project, as presented: motion passed.**
  - b. Hazard Mitigation Resolution:** Hadley emailed the Hazard Mitigation Resolution to board members on 3/10/25 before the board meeting for review.  
**Motion by Don Schwerin and second by Jim Kent to approve Hazard Mitigation Resolution, as presented: motion passed. All board members present signed document for approval.**
- 3. Review of 2024 stream projects post high flow runoff:** Hadley showed pictures of four 2024 stream projects from when they were first completed and pictures of their current state after a period of high flow runoff. Three of the four projects are doing well and show no implications for liability. A combination of high winds, abnormally high amounts of debris, and fast high flows damaged some areas of the project on Coppei Creek section 7. One landowner had fence damages and another saw flooding in areas they have not experienced before. The stream runoff created 3 new log jams and there is erosion behind some of the originally installed structures. WWCCD has reached out to the insurance company, lawyer, engineer, and contractor and is working to get an expedited permit from WDFW to repair damage to project.

### **Program Updates:**

- A.) Voluntary Stewardship Program for Walla Walla County:** **Cooper** shared a presentation on the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP). She shared background information on the program, recent updates, and what is currently being worked on.
- B.) District Operations:** **Hadley** reviewed district operations including staff updates, outreach efforts, and upcoming updates to the WWCCD website.
- C.) Workshop discussion of long-range plan priorities:** **Hadley** shared how the Conservation District has ranked priorities for projects and funding in the past. Board members and Hadley discussed ways to shift priorities to better reflect what they find most important to work on. There was discussion on areas that should be

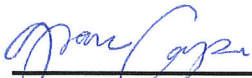
lowered like forestry (not much interest from the community) and fisheries (funding is decreasing and low hanging fruit has been completed). While the group agrees soil should be moved up on priority list, they realized we will have to get creative to acquire funds for it. Some suggested tying soil priorities in with education and drought tolerant heritage gardens. Members also agreed that the current priority should be to find money to fund soil initiatives rather than the priority being to complete the work. Hadley and members agreed that suburban/urban related projects should be a subcategory of education as that is the primary benefit of urban projects and outreach. While Hadley shared that the Conservation District has a hard time finding projects to work on for range, Thorne-Hadley shared that WDFW has a new range specialist that may be helpful for new ideas. The current, but not permanent, priority list is ranked as follows:

1. Water Quality / Water Quantity
2. Soil
3. Education
  - a. Subgoal: Suburban/Urban
4. Wetland
5. Air
6. Fisheries
7. Forest / Range

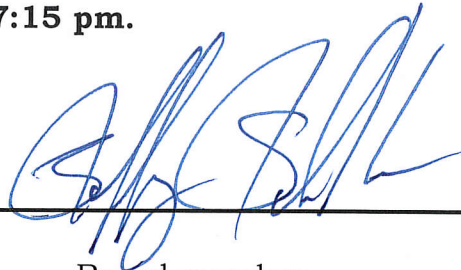
**Misc. Discussion and Public Comments:** NA

**Meeting adjourned without a formal motion at 7:15 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,



Grace Cooper  
District Staff



Board member

**Next meeting: Monday, April 14, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.**

Motions:

To approve the February 10<sup>th</sup> board meeting minutes as written

Motion: Kent  
Second: Schwerin  
Motion passed

To review the February Financial Reports and approve paying the bills, as presented

Motion: Schwerin  
Second: Kent  
Motion passed

To approve the 5<sup>th</sup> pivot project for 2024-2025, as presented

Motion: Schwerin  
Second: Kent  
Motion passed

To approve the Hazard Mitigation Resolution as written

Motion: Schwerin  
Second: Kent  
Motion passed