

Q2 OTAC Meeting

Attendees:

1. Greg Becker, NRCS OR
2. Claire Tachella, NRCS OR
3. Lauren Bennett, NRCS OR
4. Christina Santana, NRCS OR
5. Paul Long, FSA OR
6. Addie Candib, American Farmland Trust
7. Devyn Meilleur, Oregon Wheat
8. Emily Carlson,
9. BJ Westlund
10. Gary Diridoni, NRCS OR
11. Heather Medina Saucedo, NRCS OR
12. Heidi Hartman, OWEB
13. Jane Compton, US EPA
14. Jaime Stephens, Klamath Bird Observatory
15. Jason Kesling, Harney SWCD
16. Jericho Winter, NRCS OR
17. Jessica Wells, NRCS OR
18. Katie Blauvelt, ODF
19. Ken Yates, OWRC
20. Kevin Fenn
21. lakec
22. Marc DesJardin, ODF
23. Martha Blair
24. Marissa Theve, NRCS OR
25. Nancy Toth, EWEB
26. Nathan Adelman, NRCS OR
27. Nick Peak
28. Paul Demaggio, Jackson SWCD
29. Penny
30. Robert Wallace, Wy'East RCD
31. Sabrina Cerquera
32. Sage Fairman, OrCAN

33. Sara E-Peters, Pacific Birds
34. Sarah Hanlon, FSA OR
35. Sarah Kipp, OAT
36. Sarah Gardner
37. Shiny, Black Food Sovereignty Coalition
38. Tracy Hanger, NRCS OR

Notes

- Claire Tachella kicked off meeting, will be facilitating

Greg Becker, NRCS OR STC

- Greg introduced himself, spoke to Chief's 5 priorities
 - o Preserve and Protect Agricultural Land
 - o Modernize NRCS Infrastructure and Technology
 - o Recenter Field Engagement and Technical Assistance
 - o Strengthen Partnerships by Streamline Processes and Accountability
 - o Shift to Outcome-Based Conservation and Farmer Empowerment
 - Regenerative ag

Paul Long, Deputy Director at FSA OR

- Introduced himself
- Announced new State Executive Director at FSA OR – Tootie Smith – unable to attend today
- Big push to help producers use login.gov accounts, integrate login.gov accounts to FSA programs
- New farmers bridge coming out, first program to be using login.gov

Sara Evans-Peters, Pacific Birds US Assistant Director

Jaime Stephens, Klamath Bird Observatory

- Highlighted Migratory Bird Joint Venture projects
- Celebrating 40 years
- Mission of Pacific Birds
- Prioritize coastal wetlands and western forests
- 9 oak partnership projects across the PNW
- All of these partnerships come together to form the Pacific NW Oak Alliance

- New investment strategy for the Prairie Oak Partnership project that centers work around the 9 partnerships
- Working with NRCS OR to implement strategic plan to bring more resources to oak habitat conservation, build field capacity, expand landowner interest and enrollment in easement programs, and increase technical transfer and knowledge
- Spoke to investments from 2020-2025 through various farm bill programs, EQIP, RCPP, CSP
- Developed a new landowner guide for restoring oak habitats in Southern OR and N California

Tracy Hanger, NRCS OR Acting ASTC Programs

- Highlighted NRCS Priorities
- FY26 Oregon financial assistance allocations – ACEP, CSP, EQIP - \$57.3M
- Still waiting on RCPP FY26 allocation
- Program sign-up deadlines passed in January
- EQIP program updates – streamlined contract management. Landowners get one application, one contract per program. Removed unnecessary restrictions and admin work, reduced inefficient processes.
 - o Reduced number of ranking pools nationally.
 - o Oregon has 4 ranking pools, with similar categories as years before (forestry, sage grouse, cropland, etc.)
- FY26 has CSP Ag and Forestry ranking pools, reviewed resource concerns
- Don't have authority to obligate IRA funds
- Regenerative Ag Pilot Program (RPP) – new program that focuses on soil and water resource concerns
- Every state will use 25% of initial allocation for RPP
- RPP harnesses whole farm assessments and mandatory soil testing in first and last year of contract
- RCPP – just ended producer sign up. Waiting for Notice of Funding Opportunity for FY26.

Claire Tachella, NRCS OR ASTC for Partnerships

- Remain committed to locally led conservation
- LWG and locally led conservation is at the foundation of NRCS OR work

- Shared a form to solicit priorities and data. This will be used to collect input from LWG meetings across the state. Plan to share results from form at next OTAC meeting

Sarah Hanlon, FSA OR Farm Programs Chief

- Many programs changes with Big Beautiful Bill
- Internal database challenges with data, working to fix errors
- Reviewed updates to payment processing and payment limitations
- Reviewed deadlines and timelines for various FSA programs
- County committees are able to recommend alternative rates for grasslands, contact county office if interested
- Working with NRCS OR to potentially create an Oregon CREP practice
- Assistance available in three counties for drought assistance
- Continuing work on past year extreme weather events, i.e. flooding, wildfire
- Updated list of commodity and specialty crops, OR is inquiring about grass seed

Greg and Paul closed the meeting out and thanked everyone for attending.