**CWMA Meeting Minutes**

**February 5, 2025**

**USDA Service Center**

Present:  Aaron Johnson, High Desert Partnership (HDP); Karen Moon, Harney County Watershed Council (HCWC); Dustin Johnson, Oregon State University (OSU); Andrew Donaldson, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS); Jim Campbell, Harney County Weed Department; Sam Cisney, Bureau of Land Management (BLM); Tyler Goss, Harney County Weed Management Area (CWMA); Jason Kesling and Barbara Pearson, Harney Soil & Water Conservation District (HSWCD)

Present, remote: Jessi Brunson, US Forest Service; Travis Miller, Malheur National Wildlife Refuge; Jesse Barnes

**Item #1: Welcome/Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 1:38 pm.  Introductions were disregarded as all present knew one another.

Jesse Barnes arrived remotely at 1:40 pm.

**Item #2: Last Meeting Minutes**

Sam Cisney had a side comment regarding page 2, under D (Weed Identification). She thought it would be a good idea to bring this up with Oregon Department of Agriculture’s Bonnie Rasmussen. Tyler said he thought this would be included in the field tour. Dustin moved and Aaron seconded approving the meeting minutes as presented. No one eligible to vote were opposed and the motion passed.

**Item #3: Financial Report**

Jason said the Admin funds have been shifted to BLM L22 contract. Money is no longer taken upfront. Jason said he had previous misunderstood the agreement. The budget itself is not changed, other than salary. There were no questions. Karen moved and Drew seconded approval of the financial report. No one eligible to vote were opposed and the motion passed.

**Item #4: Project Progress and Updates**

* 1. Harney Hay grower class—Tyler said the recertification class was held last Thursday. There were 17 participants (private, public and some contractors). Sam attended and she it went well. She thought the ODA speaker’s topic was more appropriate to the area than presentations past. Dave Bunker discussed drone applications. Jesse Barnes did a segment on weed identification and Jim Campbell led a label comprehension presentation. Helena Ag Products provided a pizza lunch. The event was held at the Chamber of Commerce. Sam asked about providing Bonnie Rasmussen’s presentation to her because it has palmer amaranth in it. Tyler said he has it and can forward it to her.
	2. Jordan Valley—Tyler said Jordan Valley will hold a recertification class tomorrow is anyone present needs credits.
	3. The Burns BLM/Forest Service Plan 2025. Sam and Jessi Brunson presented four maps (two from BLM and two from USFS and of those ones showing proposed and one showing completed treatment). The maps feature locations of 2024 wildland fires (Poison, Telephone, Whisky Sand, Falls) and county roads to ascertain areas the county has treated and shows known noxious weed species. Discussion followed on noxious weed species or reseeding. A draft of proposed priorities was presented to the meeting participants (it is included with the meeting minutes). Jessi plans to have the information available Arc GIS online for the participants for the March 2025 meeting. Symbology will be fixed. Sam will send a pdf map to the participants. Jessi plans to condense as much information as possible into one map. Jessi is also peaking to Jamie Cronin. She and Sam will coordinate data for downloading purposes.

2:06 pm Jim Campbell arrives.  Travis Miller joined remotely.

There was discussion about cartography layers and sharing the information. Sam proposed a meeting with she, Jessi, Jamie Cronin, and Linda Watts.

Jason asked how this will pertain to the CWMA in 2025? Sam said she doesn’t know as far as funding. She has not heard anything concrete, and for participants to stay tuned.

Jim said he thought the Forest Service and BLM will tie in with priority areas and funding. Sam provided the maps to make sure nothing is missed. For example, there are roads that intersect BLM and USFS land. Jim said the county does the roads but this year treatment would be where fires were. Jessi agreed—this year we have to focus on fires. Jason mentioned Hay Creek, east of Pine Creek on USFS may need to follow up. The road nearby isn’t named; it’s in a northeast portion of the fire. Methods of treatment for priority areas were discussed. Dustin referenced SageCon data layers—consider adding. He offered to assist and mentioned a heat load elevation index which is good for project planning. There are layers showing pre-fire vegetation conditions and what areas are likely to transition to annuals post-fire.

* 1. Outreach events 2025:  Tyler provided a spread sheet to meeting participants present (he will send to remote participants after the meeting). It shows past events that will continue to be done and proposed events. He wasn’t sure how to proceed. Sam suggested the CWMA attempt to do all.
		1. Tyler is working on classroom presentations. Dustin asked about Back in the Classroom. Tyler described how it used to be done and discussed how he may do it. Dustin said he knows educational events is more than just the day it is presented. Jim recommended posters be brought back.
		2. Another was the CWMA will work with the wildlife refuge is teacher education. Treasure Valley Community College’s Marcus Nichols led a workshop that drew in eastern Oregon teachers. Part dealt with noxious weed management. Twenty teachers participated. Travis said he has not yet heard from March for this year. The next one is proposed for late June.
		3. The Career Fair has been moved to March (it is listed on the spreadsheet as May).
		4. Weed ID tours will be brought back, tentatively the end of June. A weed specialist could lead or CWMA may do this. The tours should take place on a Saturday. Location(s) are needed.
		5. Regarding the City-Wide Weed Wipeout, Tyler spoke to Dave Bunker to see if it could be done as a weekend activity. The tentative cost is $50 to $75 per lot, depending on the size. Jim suggested contacting business for their property weed eradication.
		6. Drone Tour—to demonstrate herbicide application. Could the weed ID tour be coupled with the Weed Wipe Out? Priority areas could be highlighted (Scotch Thistle and knapweed and show what weeds can be removed and what should stay). Tyler said the tours could be changed to anytime. Discussion followed on commercial property vs. residential, identified weeds.
		7. No goat head pull this year? Tyler said no, there wasn’t enough interest.
		8. Jim said the county will hold a calibration workshop in early May. Tyler offered for the CWMA to sponsor.
		9. Jim asked Jessi if the Forest Service will do another educational outreach at Idlewild. The last one was conducted October 2020 (Every Kid Outdoors). Jim said he thought it was one of the best kid programs he has ever seen. Fourth graders from Harney and Grant Counties participated. Jim said he would be interested in helping if it’s done again.
		10. Free Spray Day. Discussion followed as to what worked, the volunteers who helped, what didn’t work. In the past the group attempted to have those who received free herbicide first walk through a trailer that displayed noxious weeds but this didn’t work.
1. New business;
	1. Next month’s meeting: the consensus was to hold the meeting at the USDA Service center. The room had been reserved.
	2. Sam asked about CWMA meetings to be held in the field, preferably at a Russian Skeleton weed site and invite permitees and range staff. Tyler suggested mid-August and to cancel the regularly scheduled monthly meeting. Locations, funding on skeleton weed treatment were discussed.
	3. Four-wheeler—information on two four-wheelers and cost were presented to the meeting participants. He led discussion on possibly getting rid of the two now owned by the CWMA and purchasing a new one. Jim said he didn’t care for either choice. He preferred 850 to 1000 because they are heavier machines. Of the two he preferred the Polaris. He said the Honda would last longer but would beat up the driver. The Polaris wouldn’t last as long but would offer a smoother ride. He mentioned the brand Canam and said while he likes that it’s more difficult to clean. The County obtained one for $12K.

The estimates Tyler obtained were through Ontario. When asked he offered to approach Burns Ford as well, though previously Burns Ford gave a quote above $10K

Jason said if the cost of the four-wheeler is under $10K, the CWMA can grant permission to purchase; anything above would require bringing it to one of the HSWCD board. He asked the meeting participants if they were good with spending the money. Travis said for Tyler to “go with what you need.” Jim seconded. No one was opposed.

* 1. Update:  Sam said Grace Haskins began mid-month. She is from the east side of the state. Agreements, priorities and templates have been pulled to get sorted. People should be able to then apply for grants. There was discussion about new agreements. She will send out emails soon.
	2. Jessi said the agreement with HSWCD should be good. The money is obligated.  Jason don’t let us spend any money if you don’t think we will get it.
	3. Meeting adjourned at 3:26 pm.