



Okanogan Conservation District

1251 S. Second Ave, Room 102

Okanogan, WA 98840

TO: The Record
SUBJECT: February 6, 2025; Board of Supervisors Meeting
LOCATION: Okanogan Conservation District Office, Okanogan, WA and
Remotely via Microsoft Teams and Teleconference
FROM: Natalie Torres, Administrative Assistant

PRESENT:

Jerry Asmussen, Vice Chair	Eli Loftis, Wildfire Community & Resiliency Lead
Steve Colvin, Supervisor	Emmy Engle, Communication & Outreach Lead
Phil Dart, Supervisor	Brant Rosenthal Smith, Science Data & Mon. Coord.
Edd Townsend, Supervisor	Chevelle Yeckel, Water Quality & Riparian Lead
Craig Nelson, Executive Director	Celeste Acord, NRCS
Becky Drenner, Finance Director	Jack Owen, Irrigated Ag. Natural Resource Tech
Jordana Ellis, Irrigation Lead	Tanya Margerison, Finance Assistant
Terri Williams, Planner Trainer	Kim Kogler, Grants & Contracts Director
Rosalie Powell, Communications Technician	Taylor George, Agriculture Planner
Fellow	Natalie Torres, Administrative Assistant

Meeting Call to Order: Jerry Asmussen called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Becky Drenner completed a roll call of Supervisors, Associate Supervisors, staff, partners, and the public.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Agenda Approval: Jerry Asmussen moved to approve the agenda as amended. Steve Colvin seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Phil Dart moved to approve January 2, 2025, board meeting minutes as amended. Steve Colvin seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report #861, which covers the checking account activity from January 3, 2025, to February 6, 2025, inclusive, was presented for the Board's approval. The following checks/payroll/direct withdrawals/electronic payments were approved for payment:
Two direct deposit payrolls, 01/01/2025 – 01/15/2015 totaling \$36,253.25 and 01/16/2025 – 01/31/2015 totaling \$37,041.31
Checks – numbers 12631 – 12654 totaling \$195,478.77.
Electronic payments – totaling \$59,140.22.
Deposits totaling \$235,301.03 were made.

Becky presented Treasurer's Report #861. Steve Colvin moved to approve Treasurer's Report #861. Phil Dart seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Reports:

Phil Dart – Phil reported that winter weather has arrived, with recent low temperatures dropping to 9 degrees below zero. While the cold is necessary to help mitigate insect pressure on the orchards later in the season, the ground has not yet fully frozen. As a result, grasshoppers are expected to pose a potential issue this summer.

Steve Colvin – Steve reported that the ground temperature in his area, measured at an 8-inch depth, is 28 degrees. He mentioned that drying winds have been a challenge, with steady winds of 20 mph and higher gusts. However, the lambs have survived thus far.

Jerry Asmussen – Jerry mentioned that the ground in his area is quite dry and remains free of snow. While the birds have not yet moved down into the valley, there has been a noticeable increase in deer presence.

Edd Townsend – Edd reported that the ground is bone dry, with frost in the valley moving into the soil. Calving season is underway, and everything was going smoothly until the septic tank broke.

Associate Supervisor Reports:

There were no associate supervisors present.

Staff Reports:

Craig reported on the WACD Legislative Day, where one-third of the staff attended. Presentations included a talk from Senator Chapman, who spoke on behalf of the Grays Harbor Commission and expressed strong support for districts and mentioned the budget is tight. Staff started the day with a meeting with Mike Poteet, the new VSP hire, who was brought on specifically for his GMA understanding and public planning background. Poteet is a former planner for Pierce CD and favors regulation first, rather than focusing solely on meeting the intent of the bill. The tabling event took place in the Columbia Room of the Legislative Building, where the WACD Commission tabled several discussions. Many staff members were available to answer questions from representative aides. After the tabling staff met with Dave Upthegrove Commissioner of Public Lands, stakeholders, including Ryan Williams (Cascadia CD), Becca Hebron (Foster Creek CD), Mary Malone (Pend Orielle CD), Pete Tagun (Cascadia CD Board Supervisor), Pat Ryan (DNR), Al Lebowitz (DNR), and others, discussed support and funding collaboration for Forest Health and Wildfire Resiliency. OCD staff spoke about the CWPP and Community Wildfire Defense Grant. OCD staff also invited Dave, Pat, and Al to Okanogan County for a tour and our annual Conservation Celebration. Next staff hurried to attend a meeting with Derek Sanderson, Director for Wa State Department of Agriculture. Craig mentioned he was not forthcoming in his responses to pointed questions staff and stakeholders asked him. OCD staff and stakeholders ended the day and met with legislative assistants for Senator Shelly Short and Legislative Representative Andrew Engel regarding funding for Forest Health, including bills related to removing the per-parcel cap and limiting funding percentages for Rates & Charges. Senator Short is expected to call about the DDT project, with a positive response on proposed rollover funding for other remediation efforts.

Craig also shared his first impressions of Representative Abell were that he is new to the role and somewhat unprepared, though he asks good questions. His initial response tends to be 'no,' but he is more focused on prioritizing issues. There is a total of \$19 million in FH projects, with a \$4 million budget. It's believed that he will ultimately be supportive, as he has met with all the districts in his area.

Craig lastly mentioned the intention to organize a tour for Upthegrove, as well as one for the new representatives, focusing on the Chewuch Canal.

Becky reported that things are going well - out for vacation next week.

Eli reported that the initial copies of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) were printed despite some challenges. He also shared that he enjoyed attending Legislative Day. Eli discussed the district's focus on HB 1539, which aims to establish a permanent home hardening cost-share assistance program from the State. Additionally, he mentioned that a bill is being developed to create a state-wide WUI map. Eli and Patrick Haggerty are considering applying to represent Conservation Districts on the State WUI Technical Advisory Board.

Chevelle reported that the Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE) Centennial Grant was approved (\$480,000), will be developing the contract for the next month or two.

Jordana expressed that she enjoyed Legislative Day and thanked Emmy and Rosalie for developing a 1-page handout and booth materials, which were helpful for staff in communicating with representatives and their staffers. She also mentioned that she recently finished the acronym page for the Board and has distributed copies for review.

NRCS Report

Celeste Acord – Celeste directed the Board's attention to Sarah Troutman's written report, noting that the recent Snowtel report had been sent out. She also thanked Emmy for her assistance with NRCS's first Earth Team volunteer.

Partner Reports

There were no other partners present.

Review, Approve and Sign Contracts and Conservation Plans:

Conservation Celebration 2025: Catering – Emmy provided details about the Okanogan CD's Conservation Celebration, scheduled for Wednesday, May 7th, 2025, at the Okanogan County Fairgrounds in the Agriplex. Two local businesses submitted quotes for catering dinner for up to 150 people. Okanogan County Catering offered two options: a BBQ dinner for \$29.50 per plate (\$5,596 total after taxes and fees), which includes BBQ pork ribs, smoked chicken, baked potatoes, baked beans, a vegetarian option, coleslaw, and bread; or a prime rib dinner for \$35.00 per plate (\$6,641 total after taxes and fees), featuring prime rib, fettuccini, green beans with bacon, a vegetarian option, Caesar salad, and bread. Smallwoods also proposed two options: a BBQ dinner for \$35.00 per plate (\$5,250 total after taxes and fees) with pulled pork or a mix of pulled pork and chicken thighs, along with 3 homemade sides, coleslaw, or Caesar salad; or a

BBQ dinner with brisket for \$45.00 per plate (\$6,750 total after taxes and fees). Emmy recommended considering a higher-tier dinner option to mark the 85th anniversary but emphasized keeping the cost of admission at \$30 per ticket regardless of the dinner choice. Steve Colvin moved to approve Okanogan County Catering as our caterer with the prime rib option for the 2025 Conservation Celebration and authorize Craig Nelson to sign the contract. Edd Townsend seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Conservation Celebration 2025: Keynote Speaker Personal Services Contract – Emmy announced that Nick Zentner, a Senior Lecturer at Central Washington University, has been selected as the keynote speaker for the 2025 Conservation Celebration, scheduled for Wednesday, May 7th, 2025, at the Okanogan County Fairgrounds - Agriplex. Nick has confirmed his availability and agreed to speak at the event, presenting on the topic of geology with his presentation titled "J Harlen Bretz and the Ice Age Floods – New Discoveries." His speaker fee is \$750.00, which will cover his fee and assist with related travel costs. Edd Townsend moved to approve the personal services contract at the rate of \$750 for Nick Zentner to be our keynote speaker for the 2025 Conservation Celebration and authorize Lorah Super or Craig Nelson to sign the contract. Phil Dart seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Work Order #2025-01: Okanogan CD CRM Working Lands Assistance and Coordination– Chevelle shared that Trout Unlimited (TU) has secured grant funding from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to establish a regional Coordinated Resource Management (CRM) group. This project aims to collaborate with voluntary landowners and producers in Okanogan County to restore aquatic and riparian ecosystems and conserve water quantity. TU has invited the Okanogan Conservation District (Okanogan CD) to provide technical assistance and help coordinate partners for the project. Okanogan CD will assist in planning, development, coordination, and administration of the CRM group and its projects, including managing monitoring activities, sharing data, and ensuring alignment with other planning efforts. Key deliverables include developing an action plan, holding regular coordination meetings, creating funding plans, and providing detailed billing for personnel costs and services. The project will run from January 1, 2025, to June 30, 2028, with a total contract value of up to \$98,622. Phil Dart moved to approve the Work Order #2025-01 Okanogan CD CRM Working Lands Assistance and Coordination and authorize Lorah Super or Craig Nelson to sign the contract. Steve Colvin seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

WSSC-RGP Outreach Project Addendum - Chevelle explained that Okanogan CD has applied for a \$20,000 grant from the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSSC) Riparian Grant Program (RGP) to support an outreach project on floating treatment wetlands and riparian vegetation. If awarded, Okanogan CD will collaborate with the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation (MSRF), which will work with the Methow Okanogan Beaver Project (MOBP) to implement the project. MOBP will provide hands-on training and demonstrations at Peters Puddles, near the Methow River. The project will engage high school students, landowners, conservation professionals, and community members in designing, constructing, and installing seven floating treatment wetlands. The initiative aims to improve surface water quality and riparian habitat while promoting multi-generational learning. The WSSC requires an addendum confirming Board approval before grant funds can be allocated. The total project cost

is \$20,000, and all funds must be spent by June 30, 2025. Phil Dart moved to approve the WSCC-RGP addendum upon award notification and authorize Lorah Super or Craig Nelson to sign it. Edd Townsend seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

MOA for Water Quality Education between Okanogan CD and MSRF - Chevelle shared that Okanogan CD seeks Board approval to finalize a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation (MSRF), which will oversee the Methow Okanogan Beaver Project (MOBP) as a subcontractor for an educational project aimed at improving water quality in Okanogan County. This MOA is contingent on receiving funding from the Washington State Conservation Commission (WSCC) Riparian Grant Program (RGP). If funded, the project will focus on hands-on training for landowners, conservation professionals, and community members on floating treatment wetlands and riparian vegetation at Peters Puddles. High school students will assist with the design, construction, and installation of seven floating treatment wetlands, promoting multi-generational learning and providing affordable water quality solutions. The project is expected to be completed by June 30, 2025, with ongoing monitoring as funding allows. The total project amount is up to \$20,000, with a duration from the signing date through June 30, 2027. MSRF will be responsible for administering the agreement, coordinating the project, managing finances, and ensuring compliance with the grant. MOBP's responsibilities include hosting workshops, publishing a newsletter article, designing and installing the wetlands, and conducting student-assisted monitoring. Okanogan CD will oversee MOA implementation, ensure grant compliance, and coordinate between MSRF, MOBP, and the landowner's representative. Phil Dart moved to approve the MOA between Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation and authorize Lorah Super or Craig Nelson to sign the agreement once it has been negotiated and finalized by both parties. Edd Townsend seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

DNR/WSCC Post Fire Reforestation Cost-Shares – Eli explained that Okanogan CD has requested \$72,637.30 in funding to support the Mac Donough and Allen reforestation projects, through funds from the DNR passed to the WSCC as a work order. The Mac Donough property was affected by the 2021 Walker Creek Fire, and the Allen property was near the point of ignition for the 2023 Eagle Bluff Fire. The projects will involve reforestation on 35 acres—25 acres for Mac Donough and 10 acres for Allen—implemented as cost-share efforts. Okanogan CD will cover 75% of the projected costs, up to \$28,125 for Mac Donough and \$11,250 for Allen. Initial work will begin in the spring, with plantings scheduled for fall 2025 or spring 2026. Additionally, Okanogan CD has received \$33,262.30 in technical assistance (TA) as part of this award from the WSCC. Phil Dart moved to approve the Post Fire Recovery Addendum and authorize Lorah Super or Craig Nelson to sign the cost-share agreements for the MacDonough and Allen post-fire reforestation once the agreements are ready for signature. Steve Colvin seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

WA DNR Forest Health ILA – Eli shared that Okanogan CD staff are collaborating with WA DNR on the Hackett Forest Health Project on Pontiac Ridge, which was previously authorized as a cost-share project. After discussions with WA DNR Service Forestry, it was decided that Okanogan CD and WA DNR could work together to complete the project, with WA DNR providing equipment and hand crews funded by Okanogan CD's current Forest Health funds

from the WSCC. WA DNR recently acquired masticators and is looking for locations to use them as part of a proof of concept to treat fuel loads around homes and communities. Okanogan CD staff are proposing to enter into an Inter-Local Agreement (ILA) with WA DNR to facilitate this collaboration, with payment to DNR not exceeding \$50,000. This amount would cover the Hackett Project costs and possibly other opportunities if they arise this spring. The ILA will expire on June 30th, 2025. Steve Colvin moved to approve the WA DNR Forest Health ILA and authorize Craig Nelson to sign the interlocal agreement with WA DNR for Forest Health once the final agreement is available for signature. Edd Townsend seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

National Monitoring Conference – Brant expressed interest in attending the 14th National Monitoring Conference (NWQMC) in Green Bay, Wisconsin, from March 10-14, 2025. The conference provides high-quality training focused on monitoring, assessing, and managing water quality, which is rare and valuable. The knowledge and networking opportunities could significantly benefit the VSP Monitoring Program by providing the most current insights from fellow practitioners. The estimated costs for flights, lodging, rentals, staff hours, per diem, registration, and associated fees total \$3,000, which can be covered by the RGP grant budget. The grant administrators have already approved the expenses. Steve Colvin moved to approve Brant to attend the 14th National Monitoring Conference and incur the purchases mentioned to do so. Phil Dart seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Okanogan Chamber of Commerce Membership - The district became a member of the Okanogan Chamber of Commerce around 2015. Membership in the chamber is helpful to make sure the district remains connected to local community events and increases opportunities for us to speak about our programs to local businesses and community members. Recommended action: What decision do you recommend the board make? Staff recommends the board approve the annual membership and authorize payment of \$150.00 dues for the Okanogan Chamber of Commerce. Steve Colvin moved to approve payment of \$150.00 for Okanogan Chamber of Commerce membership fees. Phil Dart seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Public Comment – There was no public comment.

Water Bank Update – Jordana provided an update on the water bank. For the first acquisition, Ecology has approved our justification for a purchase price higher than the initial appraisal. OCD, Aspect, and the seller met to negotiate the sale, and the seller raised a few points. These include leasing back a portion of the right to responsibly follow the land and ensuring the vegetation transitions from crop to native grasses to reduce the risk of weed invasion. The seller would also like to retain 0.6 acre-feet of 60.8 acre-feet to maintain the ability to irrigate a lawn/garden, which would help protect property value. The aspect is working to finalize the purchase and sale agreement to include these points. The next step is determining how to structure the change application permitting, with a few options presented by Aspect. OCD, Aspect, and Ecology are planning to meet next week to discuss these options and seek guidance from ECY.

Regarding the second acquisition, the appraisal process is still ongoing, with the original estimate being 6-8 weeks. Given the holidays, this timeline is expected to conclude by the end of February or early March.

Additionally, the county's application for the Pine Creek acquisition has been posted for public comment, along with several other grant proposals. It appears that multiple organizations are applying, and ECY has indicated that the funding pool is nearly fully allocated. The planning team met to discuss the purchase and sale agreement for the first acquisition, the business and guidance documents, business forms relating to intake and requests for allotments, and website development. OCD staff is also working to finalize the draft of the Request for Qualifications for legal services, which is due to be posted next week. In response to Jerry's question about managing other OTID leases, Jordana mentioned that she has been discussing this with DOE. If staff can develop a pathway to utilize 'over the counter' permits rather than the normal permitting process, which can take years, this could be a viable option. The next steps will include developing a wide area permit with a map and establishing boundaries.

5-Year Plan Update – The Board and staff conducted a second planning session on February 6th, 2025. It is not anticipated that another meeting will be necessary. The next steps include incorporating edits suggested during this session, followed by review by staff and the board, review by partners and possibly key cooperators, and a public comment period. The planned completion date for presentation to the board is the May board meeting, scheduled for May 1st, 2025.

Conservation Celebration – Craig asked the board and staff to begin thinking about cooperators and partners to recommend for the various awards.

DDT Project – Craig discussed the project with several contacts during Legislative Days and felt there was good potential to reorient the funds toward a better approach to addressing the initial resource concerns. He is hoping to advocate for the money to be funneled through WSCC instead of DOE.

Other -

New Business:

Public Comment – There was no public comment.

RCW 89.08 Review - Craig recommended that conservation district board members review RCW 89.08 (Conservation District Act) at least annually to ensure that those in decision-making positions are familiar with the district's authorities outlined in the legislation.

OCD Logo Wear 2025 Budget – Emmy explained that the current Okanogan CD Logo Wear Policy, outlined in the 'OCD Brand Clothing Allowance Policy' under section '2.15 District Branding' and sub-section 'C) Logo Wear,' requires district officials to wear OCD-branded clothing and materials at district-hosted events, community events, and other public outings. The district will cover the cost of these materials, and the board will approve an annual budget allowance to be fairly divided among district officials. For 2025, the proposed budget for logo

wear and branded materials is up to \$4,500. This includes a maximum of \$1,200 for the Board Supervisors and Associates, and \$3,300 for OCD staff and other district officials involved in district business, such as volunteers. Edd Townsend moved to approve the 2025 Logo Wear budget allowance for district officials, not to exceed \$4,500. Steve Colvin seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Jerry Asmussen adjourned the meeting at 7:39 PM.

Summary of Motions

Jerry Asmussen moved to approve the agenda as amended. Steve Colvin seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Phil Dart moved to approve January 2, 2025, board meeting minutes as amended. Steve Colvin seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Steve Colvin moved to approve Treasurer's Report #861. Phil Dart seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Steve Colvin moved to approve Okanogan County Catering as our caterer with the prime rib option for the 2025 Conservation Celebration and authorize Craig Nelson to sign the contract. Edd Townsend seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Edd Townsend moved to approve the personal services contract at the rate of \$750 for Nick Zentner to be our keynote speaker for the 2025 Conservation Celebration and authorize Lorah Super or Craig Nelson to sign the contract. Phil Dart seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Phil Dart moved to approve the Work Order #2025-01 Okanogan CD CRM Working Lands Assistance and Coordination and authorize Lorah Super or Craig Nelson to sign the contract. Steve Colvin seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Phil Dart moved to approve the WSCC-RGP addendum upon award notification and authorize Lorah Super or Craig Nelson to sign it. Edd Townsend seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Phil Dart moved to approve the MOA between Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation and authorize Lorah Super or Craig Nelson to sign the agreement once it has been negotiated and finalized by both parties. Edd Townsend seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

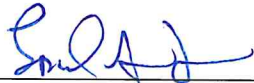
Phil Dart moved to approve the Post Fire Recovery Addendum and authorize Lorah Super or Craig Nelson to sign the cost-share agreements for the MacDonaugh and Allen post-fire reforestation once the agreements are ready for signature. Steve Colvin seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Steve Colvin moved to approve the WA DNR Forest Health ILA and authorize Craig Nelson to sign the interlocal agreement with WA DNR for Forest Health once the final agreement is available for signature. Edd Townsend seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.


Steve Colvin moved to approve Brant to attend the 14th National Monitoring Conference and incur the purchases mentioned to do so. Phil Dart seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Steve Colvin moved to approve payment of \$150.00 for Okanogan Chamber of Commerce membership fees. Phil Dart seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Edd Townsend moved to approve the 2025 Logo Wear budget allowance for district officials, not to exceed \$4,500. Steve Colvin seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.



Lorah Super Date
Chair



Natalie Torres Date
Administrative Assistant