**CWMA Monthly Meeting Minutes**

**Harney County Courthouse Basement Conference Room**

**January 18, 2023**

Present: Jim Campbell (Harney County); Sam Cisney (BLM); Kaylee Littlefield (High Desert Partnership); Karen Moon (Harney County Watershed Council); Andrew Donaldson and Zola Gibson (NRCS); Travis Miller (Malheur National Wildlife Refuge); Tyler Goss (Harney CWMA)Jason Kesling and Barbara Pearson (HSWCD)

Jim called the meeting to order at 1:39 pm. Welcome and introductions were dispensed.

Action items for approval

1. Last meeting minutes—Karen reminded Barbara that was had attended the November meeting because she had requested the October meeting minutes be approved. She will be added to the November minutes as an attendee. Jason moved to approve the November meeting minutes with the addition; Karen seconded. All eligible to vote in favor and this passed.
2. Financials--Jason explained report which included open and active grants. He hoped the new report format worked for everyone. Expected costs are not included and percentage calculation of what was expended. Tyler’s salary is being billed to SB and Poison Creek. Poison Creek still listed with a balance but payroll just took place and it will be zeroed out. The report reflects the trailer purchase and equipment for range drill. Tyler said the district has two rangeland drills available and one is in the shop.

Sam asked if the format includes the matching detail budget for BLM? Jason said it did not necessarily; it follows OWEB format. Sam asked about equipment expenditures and compared it to what she encounters with BLM. Asked about equipment expenditures. Jason said it was for the trailer and he suggested moving that expense to material and supplies. Sam said with equipment at BLM need to include retention and disposal. Jason will move this back to material and supplies. Tyler said SOWR funds were used toward the trailer. Jason said with auditing purposes in the HSWCD/CWMA, once a contract becomes complete and unspent funds becomes unrestricted funds and moved to admin. There was further discussion re: funds, expenses, and allocation.

Jason said he forgot to include US Fish and Wildlife funds in the report, which would be $15K for Pepperweed. Travis said he would ask HDP to help with work on refuge. Tyler said they are waiting for Jesse to send an invoice. This would be for knapweed and Pepperweed on private land but would provide data helpful for the refuge.

Travis said he would look into formalizing agreements regarding treatments with the refuge and landowners.

Zola moving account balances (USFS and BLM to Admin) and approving financials; Kaylee seconded. All in favor.

Project progress and updates:

1. Tyler provided 3 maps that represented project funding the CWMA applied for through ODA. The first was to address purple loosestrife and included land of four landowners and the BLM, with the BLM matching. Tyler said Bonnie Rasmussen from ODA said it was a better written project then proposed last. The land includes the Lamb Ranch to Malheur River. The second map was site locations of med sage infestations in the county. Site 3 on this map will need to be corrected. There are currently six different sites in the county to be treated it coming year. Tyler complete the treatments for loosestrife and med sage himself. The third map was a project for Poison Creek where hounds tongue located and added to knapweed treatment. Travis said there was also hounds tongue on the old mill site. Sam was interested in the chemical they planned to use for spotted knapweed.

As for the timeline when this will be approved—there are no dates currently set. Tyler said Bonnie will be at recertification class. The CWMA will not hear until March.

1. Tyler tabled discussion and approve of MOU/MOA for the next meeting. Jim suggested dissolving MOA since CWMA is under HSWCD umbrella. Note: talk to Tyler about updating MOU.
2. Recertification class Tyler provided flyers for the Recertification Class scheduled February 16th at the Harney County Chamber of Commerce. He asked meeting participants to place the flyers at their offices, and he has more to distribute in town and hopes to discuss over radio. The class should provide four credits of continuing ed. Travis asked about the certification process. Sam offered to send him info on certification through Federal government. Tyler also said that if anyone is unable to attend this class there will also be one in Jordan Valley.
3. Title 2 funding: Tyler and Jason met with the Forest Service regarding funding. They met last December and approved project spraying of medusahead throughout Harney County on land adjoining Forest Service land. He will got to Riley to speak to landowners. Tyler obtained a draft of a program through Grant County that sprays for medusahead with a max of $2500. He modified a draft for Harney County but doesn’t have a written agreement in place yet. Grant County’s cost share maxes at $2500, and he wanted to know if the CWMA wanted to do similar with a first come, first served with a 25% cost share or cost cap? Tyler and Jason provided information on how Grant County operates its program. Title 2 will replace the capacity the Forest Service has given to CWMA in the past. Grant County also does broadleaf control.

Zola said it would be nice to have ranking criteria, such as on properties closest to Forest Service, or landowners owning a forest permit being a high priority. The NCRS Forest Fringe funds would be from Riley to Pine Creek. EQIP funding and Inflation Reduction Act funding are coming in (currently an unknown amount for IRA). Jim said agencies consensus would be to at Riley since much of the juniper in that area had burned.

Sam said the BLM will do treatments in the area (Sage Hen, Palomino Butte) this fall. Jim agreed regarding criteria, target area. Sam asked if the criterial was scalable?

Zola thought best to prioritize as it would provide the most bang for the buck. She thought that made more sense than to partially treat several areas. Tyler said he spoke to landowners in the area and they agreed to come to the office to discuss.

Tyler said he also spoke to landowners in Crane-Buchanan area. There is a small land area that wasn’t addressed through SOWR project. He wants to speak to Randy from the Department of State Lands to see if that agency would like to participate in cost share. Projects would have a 2-year completion date.

Jim suggested advertising and then proceed with ranking. The consensus of the meeting participants was to rank and use funds through a ranking pool until exhausted. Jim said at least through first year.

Grant County does 25%, but Tyler said the landowner contribution could be lower. Jason said Grant County found when owners were obligated to 25% they were more involved and followed through on their parts. Jim said if a landowner refused to participate to report to weed board and it would be taken to county court.

Travis asked about perennial grasses treatment and discussion followed. He said there is a site near the Sod House dam, an old cultivation area. Jim said he could remove it and other vegetation. Travis said he would reseed.

The MOU is currently only thing for the next meeting. Unless something urgent comes up it was agreed that the next meeting take place in March unless something urgent comes up.

There were no further questions. The meeting adjourned at 2:48 pm.