

## Drought Resiliency for Jefferson County Agriculture (“Ag Drought Group”)

Meeting #5 = Decide on Vision/Mission, Next steps on Solutions

Monday, March 6, 2023; 1-3pm

### I. Participants

Albert Sikkens (Pratum)	Lloyd Forman (JCSWCD Board & producer)
Ally Steinmetz (MDWC)	Mark Wunsch (producer & County Commission)
Brad Klann (JCSWCD Board & producer)	Mike Badzmierowski (ODA)
Brad Moore (Wy’East RC&D)	Mike Britton (NUID)
Chris Gannon (CRWC)	Rob Galyen (JCSWCD Board & producer)
Collin Cowsill (NRCS)	Scott Duggan (OSU Ext)
Elaine Cornick (Culver citizen)	Scott Klopp (Helena)
Ellen Hammond (JCSWCD)	Scotty Samsel (JCSWCD Board & producer)
Gordon Jones (SOAREC)	Staci Merkt (JCSWCD)
Jeremiah Dung (COAREC)	Theresa DeBardelaben (OWEB)
Jim McNamee (producer)	Tom Osborne (BPA)
Lisa Windom (JCSWCD)	Trevor Derstine (producer)

*New members: Brad Moore (Wy’East RC&D), Theresa DeBardelaben (OWEB), Gordon Jones (OSU-SOAREC), Sam Vanlaningham (OWRD)*

### II. Group Purpose (and Vision and Mission and Funding)

Ellen reminded the Group that their purpose is to identify feasible things to do to help Jefferson County ag thrive in spite of drought. The result is a plan that identifies 1) tools to help JeffCo ag be successful, 2) challenges to implementing them, 3) priorities to work on, and 4) next steps for working on those priorities. The plan will be drafted by June 30. Mark Wunsch mentioned Jefferson County Plans as potential templates for format. Nobody else is doing this kind of process in Oregon, so there are no guides.

Ellen briefly showed a very draft Matrix that lists the tools identified by the Group, the goals each tool addresses, the challenges posed by each tool, and ways to overcome those challenges. She suggested that it would be most efficient to name a workgroup to flesh out the matrix but was over-ruled. **The matrix will form the core of the next meeting and will be emailed out in advance.**

**Ellen asked how much water was adequate and what it would take to make that happen over the long run.** Suggestion was 1”/acre/week, which is 2 af in 24 weeks (~6 months). To provide that, it would require 1) pumping from Lake Billy Chinook and 2) upgrading NUID infrastructure (over 200 miles of canals and laterals).

The Group wordsmithed the Vision and Mission, which has been finalized (for the foreseeable future) as:

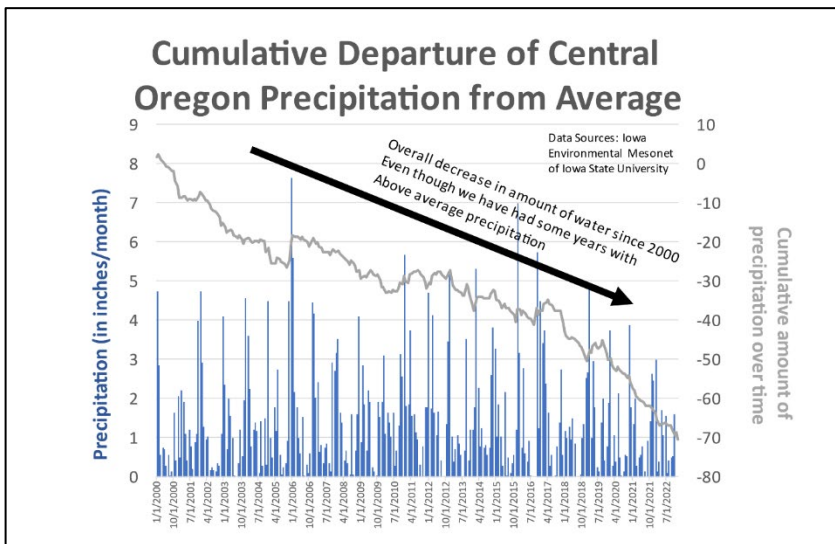
***“Vision: Jefferson County agriculture will thrive by adapting successfully to drought, and will support its people, animals, economy, environment, and culture.”***

***Group Mission: to help agriculture create a sustainable, livable future for Jefferson County by adapting successfully to drought with support from Deschutes Basin stakeholders. We promote innovative solutions to proactively improve watershed health and increase the effective management of water.***

Funding after June 30: it looks like there might be funding from OWEB, plus Mark Wunsch thought the County Commission would look favorably on helping fund the Group (mostly facilitator time and mileage) if needed.

**III. More Data (from Kyle Gorman, OWRD)**

Annual rainfall averages 22" per year at Wickiup Reservoir. In the last 22 years, Wickiup should have received 484" of rain (22" x 22 years). Instead, rainfall has steadily decreased and Wickiup has received 70" less over that time that would be expected.



**III. Legislative update**

1. Governor’s drought declaration
2. SB 5561: emergency drought funds (2021-2023 funds; these are paying to support the Group now)
  - a. NUID = \$5.5 million
  - b. OWEB = 1.1 million for “grants for drought resiliency projects in Jefferson County”
  - c. JCSWCD = 3 million “to support stewardship practices on irrigated land that is at high risk for erosion and soil degradation, and to limit proliferation of noxious and invasive weeds”
  - d. MARK: HELM/OWENS charged with developing something, mentioned funding projects that are a permanent structure. Who knows how it will play out.
3. HB 2998: Soil Health = supports voluntary actions that improve soil health.
  - JCSWCD supports it, so does the Drought Group. Ellen testified in favor.
4. SB 530: Natural Climate Solutions = provides funding for voluntary actions that capture carbon.
  - JCSWCD supports, so does Drought Group.
5. SB 58: tells OWRD to investigate cloud seeding for Oregon
  - NUID supports it, so does Drought Group. Not brought before JCSWCD Board yet.
6. HB3142: supports juniper eradication in central/southern Oregon
  - Supported by JCSWCD. SWCD staff testified in favor.
7. HB 718: non-use for irrigation when Governor declares drought does not count towards the 5 years of beneficial use

Senator Wyden coming to Madras on March 10, 1pm for a Town Hall. Mark Wunsch will be there and can say something if need be.

Mark Wunsch also going to DC at end of March and plans to meet with Sen. Wyden.

#### IV. Moving forward on immediate needs

##### 1. How to disseminate info to land managers?

- a. The Group recommended a page on the SWCD website. Have NUID and other partners post a link to that webpage. Have the webpage be a 'one-stop shop'.
- b. Also, an email list for time sensitive info that people could opt into. Maybe have a sign-up spot on the website?

##### 2. How to inform non-JeffCoAg stakeholders about JeffCo ag?

- a. Video
  - The Group is still very much into a video. We talked about the purpose of the video: why are we wanting to reach out to non-ag stakeholders? The consensus was that we will need support for legislative fixes, funding for improving NUID infrastructure and on-farm practices, and transferring water from COID and potentially other irrigation districts. We need to, at a minimum, reduce the opposition to these activities, by showing JeffCo Ag stewardship so that people will hopefully trust us and respect us.
  - Ellen played the JeffCo Ag video on Jefferson County Seed Growers website and asked the Group what more we needed from a video. Group said: broader scope (not just cropland irrigators), explain the water issues for JeffCo Ag, and show stewardship.
  - Video could be played on Central Oregon Daily News and maybe as part of the DRC's Raising the Deschutes series.
  - Travis Ralls helped create the video on the Seed Growers website. **Ellen to contact him!**
  - **Ellen recruited Trevor and Scott Klopp to help figure out the messages for the video**
- b. Podcasts are popular with the smartphone crowd

#### V. Next steps

**Ellen to clean up the matrix for public review**

**Ellen to meet with Trevor and Scott K to work on messaging, etc for the video**

#### **Next meeting:**

**Monday, April 3, 2023, 1-3pm at the MADRAS AIRPORT**