

Summary of Drought Meetings #1: in prep for Meetings #2

I. Givens

1. Agriculture drives Jefferson County culture, economy, and land conditions
2. Temperatures are likely to keep rising while precipitation decreases and becomes more erratic

II. Concerns

1. Social/Cultural
 - a. Perception of ag vs non-ag
 - b. Water regulations limit options
 - c. Farming is in trouble and farmers are not prepared for drought
 - d. If farmers quit farming, loss of institutional knowledge
 - e. If farmers quit farming, loss of their livelihood and purpose
 - f. Snowballing, complex, connected issues: equipment not being maintained, weeds, lack of labor or technology to replace labor, costs of inputs going up, fewer acres being planted with high-value crops, less diversity of crops being planted, fixed costs going up, farmers spending more of their margin on infrastructure for uncertain future, hard to maintain good farming practices with less water and higher costs, loss of profitability.
 - g. We can't treat people or the land as 'commodities' to be used
2. Natural Resources: Our relationship with Nature
 - a. There is less surface and ground water available for agriculture
 - b. Water laws and policies don't address the real issues of water availability, use and differing needs
 - c. Information is lacking on Jefferson County hydrology
 - d. Water delivery system throughout the Deschutes Basin is inefficient and doesn't address real needs
 - e. If farmers quit farming, the land suffers, and what happens to the land? Sold for development?
 - f. Drought is affecting soil health and fish and wildlife habitat
 - g. Upland conditions are not optimal for capturing, storing, and releasing precipitation
 - h. How to avoid a new Dustbowl?
 - i. Drought will not go away, and we need to figure out how to live and even thrive with it

III. Goals

1. Jefferson County ag is respected and supported by ag and non-ag alike
 - a. All stakeholders in the Deschutes Basin understand Jefferson County ag's needs
 - b. All stakeholders in the Deschutes Basin are involved in collaborative solutions
 - c. Ag respects and supports all other stakeholders' needs (including people, land, and animals)
2. Agriculture thrives
 - a. Adaptability
 - i. Economic and other pathways are in place to address and relieve farmer's insecurity
 - ii. Solutions are flexible
 - iii. Farmers feel secure about their future

- iv. Ag suppliers thrive
 - v. The next generation looks forward to farming
 - vi. Funding is available to make management changes
 - vii. Ag is adaptable to changing conditions
 - viii. Farmers have figured out how to live and thrive with lower precipitation
- b. Water supply
- i. Water supplies are secure and predictable
 - ii. Water supplies are adequate to meet ag's needs
 - iii. Goal posts that ag must meet don't change (e.g., ESA requirements)
 - iv. Regulatory agreements are grounded in the reality of the Deschutes Basin and encourage effective water use
 - v. Irrigators receive their full allocations
 - vi. There is agreement on the criteria to allocate water
4. Watershed is healthy despite drought
- a. Wildfire poses less risk
 - b. Ag practices improve watershed health
 - c. Soil health is increased
 - d. Land is treated and respected as a living being instead of just a commodity to be consumed
 - e. Fish and wildlife thrive
 - f. The land is vegetated
 - g. Water is retained in the watershed
 - h. Water is transported and used effectively
 - i. Water is used efficiently
 - ii. Water is used where most beneficial
 - iii. Canals are not losing water
 - iv. No operations spills at the ends of canals.

IV. Vision (we will need one, and these are all variations on the same theme; feel free to come up with something very different!)

1. Jefferson County agriculture thrives, nurturing and enhancing Jefferson County culture, economy, and nature.
2. Jefferson County agriculture thrives, nourishing people and animals
3. Jefferson County agriculture thrives as a result of nurturing and enhancing Jefferson County people, animals, culture, economy, and nature, together with effective cooperation and collaboration with all stakeholders in the Deschutes Basin.