

Jefferson County Agricultural Drought Resiliency Group

Meeting #8 = Prioritize tools; agree on how to move forward

Monday, June 6, 2023; 1-3pm

Madras Airport: 2028 NW Berg Dr, Madras

<https://www.jeffswcd.org/managing-for-drought>

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.

I. Participants

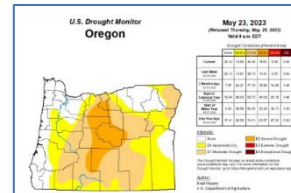
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|---|---|
| Albert Sikkens (Pratum) | Jenn Eatwell (NRCS) |
| Brad Klann (JCSWCD Board & producer) | Lars Santana (NRCS) |
| Brad Moore (Energy Trust) | Mark Wunsch (Jeff Co Commission & producer) |
| Collin Cowsill (NRCS) | Mike Britton (NUID) |
| Craig Weigand (JCSWCD Board & producer) | Rob Galyen (JCSWCD Board & producer) |
| Damon Brosnan (NRCS) | Scott Samsel ((JCSWCD Board & producer) |
| Elaine Cornick (Culver land steward) | Staci Merkt (JCSWCD) |
| Ellen Hammond (JCSWCD) | Thomas Elsinga (Central Electric Coop) |
| Gen Hubert for Lisa Seales (DRC) | |

New members: Michael Kluz (Wy’East RC&D), Thomas Elzinga (Central Electric Coop), and Damon Brosnan (NRCS Basin Team Leader). Damon has connections with other state/federal entities and at higher levels and can help us move our vision forward. He also oversees NRCS in Klamath and Lake Counties and can help us communicate ideas back and forth with those areas.

Member changes: Bailey Jenks going from OSU to Limagrains Cereal Seeds, but she will be available to help the Group with dryland grains.

II. Data

A. JeffCo is still in ‘severe drought’.



III. Updates

- Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance Conference presentation (May 3) resulted in adding 'electricity' members to Group
- OWRD Integrated Water Resources Strategy Community Conversation (Wednesday, 6-8pm COCC): JCSWCD and DRC staff will attend
- Jefferson County Commission: Ellen presentation on Wednesday, 9am
- Staff of House Republican Leader Breese-Iverson for Soil Health Bill: Ellen/Mark W/Kevin R on Wednesday

IV. Improved Matrix (attached)

The Group reviewed the spreadsheet sorted by potential Workgroup and by priority. Ratings (1-5) were adjusted for the following tools to better characterize their priority: agrivoltaics, drilling into crop residue, applying compost to irrigated lands, and increasing capacity of ponds (number and size) to capture water in irrigated cropland.

Ellen reminded the Group that the 'gold' tools were the top priorities and 1) not to worry about how they ranked against each other and 2) the other tools were lesser priorities, not non-priorities.

V. Moving Forward

Last week, Ellen talked to as many Group members as possible about how to proceed. Suggestions coalesced around the following, which were approved by the Group.

1. The Group meets as needed (at least every 3 months)
 - a. We have Workgroups to figure out how to implement the Tools
 - i. "Water Quantity" led by Mike Britton (NUID)
 - ii. "Irrigated Croplands" led by Ellen until the OSU Extension Crop Agent is hired
 - iii. "Ranch": Dryland/Range/Irrigated meadows" led by Ally Steinmetz (MDWC)
 - b. The Workgroups will work through each of their Tools and:
 - i. Better define the goals, challenges, and opportunities
 - ii. Decide who needs to be added to each Workgroup
 - iii. Develop some kind of mini-implementation plan
 - c. Workgroups report back to the Group and get feedback
 - d. JCSWCD coordinates all this 😊
 - e. Next meeting 3rd week of August
2. Ellen needs an outreach plan for non-JeffCoAg audience.
 - a. Workgroup = Ellen, Collin, Elaine, Craig, Lisa Seales, Lisa Windom, and Jeremiah (?)
 - b. Ellen will talk with Ally and Travis Ralls about getting video footage before our OWEB grant ends
3. "Landowner Gold Star" Program: the Group liked the concept of recognizing landowners that are implementing some kind of suite of practices and will pursue it, but later.
4. We need a strategy for communicating with the JeffCo Ag community, but will wait until Workgroups have had time to work on Tool implementation
5. Ag Tourism may be a way to help reach our vision.
6. Submit articles to The Ruralite
7. Ellen talk with Lisa Seales about upcoming tours sponsored by the DRC.

Next Meeting = Tuesday, August 22, 3-5pm at COAREC 850 NW Dogwood Ln, Madras