Okanogan Conservation District
1251 S. Second Ave, Room 102 Okanogan, WA 98840

TO: The Record
SUBJECT: October 2, 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:
Lorah Super, Chair
Jerry Asmussen, Supervisor
Steve Colvin, Supervisor
Edd Townsend, Supervisor
Ivan Oberg, Associate Supervisor
Terri Williams, Associate Supervisor
Bob Clark, Associate Supervisor
Craig Nelson, Executive Director
Kim Kogler, Programs Director
Tanya Margerison, Finance Lead
Natalie Torres, Administrative Specialist
Jordana Ellis, Water Resources Lead
Jack Owen, Water Resources Technician
Eli Loftis, Forests & Wildfire Lead
Sam Nurmi, Forests & Wildfire Planner
Chevelle Yeckel, Aquatics & Habitat Lead
Rosalie Powell, Communications & Outreach Assistant

Meeting Call to Order: Lorah Super called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. She 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. Edd Townsend seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: Jerry Asmussen moved to approve board meeting minutes as amended. Edd Townsend seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report #869, which covers the checking account activity from September 1, 2025, to September 31, 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, 09/01/2025 – 09/15/2015 for $33,523.06 and 09/16/2025 – 09/31/2025 for $33,150.61 and payroll deductions of $54409.98 for a total of **$121,083.65**. Checks – numbers 12926 – 12950 total $39,141.27 and EFT Debits and GL Adjustments of $200.00 for a total of **$39,341.27**.

The remaining outstanding expenses total **$134,821.10**.

The Beginning Balance of the checking account was $1,048,069.59, deposits totaling $39,752.02 have been made, reconciled withdrawals including the electronic credit card payment of $3787.47 amount to $150,957.48**, the ending balance of the checking account is $936,864.13**.

Tanya Margerison presented the Treasurer's Report #869. Steve Colvin moved to approve Treasurer's Report #869. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Supervisor Reports:

Jerry Asmussen – Jerry shared Emily met with the new agriculture teacher in Tonasket. Jerry also mentioned an interesting conversation with a local farmer regarding the low sulfur levels in the atmosphere. Conditions remain dry.

Steve Colvin – Steve shared that harvest has begun. The plants are brand new, so the team is essentially starting over. The first block is finished, and work is underway on the second block. Steve noted that there has been a lot of learning involved, especially with new team members.

Edd Townsend – Edd shared that conditions are the driest he has seen. Traveling 20 miles south shows much better moisture, but the southern half of the plateau has many bare spots. He spoke with a crop insurance agent regarding coverage. Groundwater conditions are concerning. Edd also noted that WSU personnel from the Weeds Herbicide program are leaving. On a personal note, his six-month-old granddaughter has yet to see rain.

Lorah Super – Lorah shared that French Creek is so dry that bees are struggling and consuming all available fruit. She also noted that cattle are coming out when driving over the loop.

Associate Supervisor Reports:

Randy Kelley –

Ivan Oberg – He is currently involved in rebuilding a fence at Bonaparte and inquired whether fences are being modified to accommodate elk.

Terri Williams – Terri shared that there are potential alternative uses for Demo Garden access at the fair, including a native plant demonstration. She is working with OSU to advance a producers program, providing support and resources for participants, with a press release planned in local outlets. Terri reported a successful honey harvest and ongoing RV spot tenancy. Progress continues on NRCS projects with contracts in place, and she noted the potential for additional involvement if gaps arise due to staffing.

Bob – Bob reported being stung by a yellowjacket while harvesting Italian prunes. He noted that they have not yet checked under the grape vines for yellowjackets. In past years, this has not been an issue, though conditions were not as dry.

Staff Reports:

Craig reported on discussions regarding potential task orders with NRCS, primarily focused on rangeland work. More information will be available once NRCS staff return. He shared that Kim is applying for a grant through NACD to support staff time in developing conservation plans. Craig also noted that he received communication from the Okanogan County Farm Bureau, inviting him to present.

Additionally, Craig shared that the district intends to shift the time frame of its annual work plan to a January–December cycle. The district will also implement its new evaluation process this winter, which will align with and inform the annual work plan.

Craig further shared that he has been in discussion with Lorah regarding a potential training session on district governance for the Board. He asked if Board members would be willing to volunteer time in November and requested specific dates and times to avoid.
The WACD Area Meeting is scheduled for October 23 in Mansfield, and registrations need to be submitted as soon as possible.

Lastly, Craig noted that the WACD Annual Meeting will be held December 1–3 in Airway Heights. He also mentioned the upcoming tour with the Senate Ag & Natural Resources Committee and then explained that he will be leaving early to participate in a roundtable discussion regarding the bill.

Chevelle announced that the district was awarded funding from the Riparian Grant Program (RGP) to support landowners.

Eli shared that the district was not awarded funding from the recent CWDG cycle and discussed the possibility of applying in the final round. He noted that there are no updates yet on the AVR project.

On a positive note, Eli and Sam have completed a significant number of forest inventories and noted encouraging finds after several years since the Walker project.

Rosalie shared that the district signed a contract with NW Fire Solutions to conduct chipping events. She also reported that the Palmer event went well, with 30 community members expressing interest in monitoring and showing appreciation for the program.

Jordana reported that the drought survey is ready and is being shared with community members. She also noted that the Save Water Save Energy (SWSE) contract has been signed and renewed for another year.

Jack shared that SWSE released promotional rates. Irrigation projects are ready to move forward, with construction expected to begin soon. Additionally, Jack informed the board that one of the six projects submitted for the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) funding was approved.

NRCS Report
There were no NRCS members present.

Partner Reports
There were no partners present.

Review, Approve and Sign Contracts and Conservation Plans:

American Forests Contract - Eli shared that American Forests, the oldest U.S. forestry nonprofit, is piloting a post-fire reforestation program in Washington. They propose contracting with Okanogan CD to develop a stewardship and reforestation plan for the Crinzi Property, with up to $12,500 in funding (expiring Jan. 31, 2026). The funds cover CD staff time only, with no direct landowner support. Jerry Asmussen moved to approve the contract with American Forests and authorize Craig Nelson or Lorah Super to sign the contract. Edd Townsend seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between Okanogan CD & Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation - Chevelle shared that the MOA between Okanogan CD and Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation (MSRF) creates a framework to collaborate on conservation projects, especially riparian, aquatic, and floodplain health in the Methow and Okanogan subbasins. Projects will be authorized through separate Work Orders detailing deliverables, budgets, and timelines. The MOA runs through Jan. 1, 2035, unless ended sooner. MSRF, based in Twisp, focuses on salmon habitat restoration and manages the Methow Okanogan Beaver Project. The agreement allows Okanogan CD and MSRF to share funds and resources, ensuring projects are implemented by the organization best suited to the work. Jerry Asmussen moved that the Board approve the Memorandum of Agreement Between Okanogan CD and Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation and authorize the Board Chair or Executive Director to sign once it has been finalized. I further move that, by approving this MOA, the Board authorizes the Executive Director to review and approve, all subsequent Work Orders issued under this Agreement in accordance with its terms. Edd Townsend seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Walking D Watering Facility Cost-Share Contract - Chevelle shared that the Walking D Ranch plans to install a solar-powered watering system to support rotational grazing on its 630-acre property. The project, originally approved in 2024 but delayed due to site compliance issues, has been redesigned to meet NRCS standards and resubmitted. It ranked third in the 2025–2027 NRI cycle and is selected for funding, pending addendum approval. Edd Townsend moved to approve the NRI Walking D Watering Facility contract and authorize Board Chair or Executive Director to sign the contract. Steve Colvin seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

HingePoint Tree Service Personal Services Contract for Methow Valley Chipping Events – Rosalie reported that the district is coordinating with several local communities—Sky Ranch, Edelweiss, Lost River Airport Association, Sun Mountain Ranch Club, Pine Forest, and Liberty Woodlands—to hold mobile chipping events in October and November. HingePoint Tree Service was contracted to perform the work for up to $27,056.64, with chips to be spread or dumped in designated community areas. The events depend on funding from the Department of Ecology's Prevent Non-Attainment program, and although notification was expected by late September 2025, no update had been received as of October 1, 2025. Jerry Asmussen moved to approve the HingePoint Personal Services Contract and authorized Craig Nelson to sign it if funding is received. Steve Colvin seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Foster Creek CD Interlocal Agreement – Craig shared that the Okanogan Conservation District staff propose entering into an interlocal agreement with the Foster Creek Conservation District to collaborate on conservation programs. The two districts are developing and implementing similar natural resource enhancement, restoration, and protection initiatives, and working together would improve the quality, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness of these efforts. Steve Colvin moved to approve the Foster Creek CD Interlocal Agreement and authorized Lorah Super or Craig Nelson to sign the finalized contract. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Christianson Ranch Irrigation Efficiency Project: 3-Corners Field – Jack reported that on September 30th, Okanogan Conservation District received unofficial notice that a project was selected for VSP Competitive Capital Funding for the 2025–2027 biennium. The district is awaiting official confirmation of $58,115 for implementation and $14,528 for technical assistance. The project involves converting a 7-acre hay field near the Twisp River from a hand-line irrigation system to two 2-tower center pivots and a new mainline, improving water-use efficiency by up to 35% and saving about 32 acre-feet of water per season. An irrigation water management plan will also be implemented. The total project cost is $77,488, with a 75% cost share capped at $58,115. Steve Colvin moved to approve the Christianson Ranch 3-Corners Irrigation Efficiency Project and authorized Lorah Super or Craig Nelson to sign the contract once official award notification from WSCC is received and the cooperator has signed. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Public Comment – There was no public comment.

Water Bank Update – Jordana reported that the Hover water right acquisition continues to progress through the change application process. On Wednesday, the draft Report of Examination (ROE) was presented to the Conservancy Board, and the official ROE will be filed with the Board in the middle of next week. Formal acceptance is scheduled for the Board's November meeting. Once accepted, the ROE will be filed with the Department of Ecology, initiating the official review and comment period, which is expected to take approximately three to four and a half months depending on any extensions granted by Ecology.

Negotiations with the Barkley Irrigation Company have successfully reached an agreement. The next step is to engage legal counsel and proceed with drafting and executing the Purchase and Sale Agreement.

The Pine Creek acquisition remains in limbo. Efforts are underway to contact representatives at the Office of Columbia River to discuss next steps for advancing the project. The existing letter of intent to sell is nearing its one-year expiration, and the goal is to reestablish communication to secure a new letter of intent. Funding opportunities for this purchase are also being explored, and a potential partner has been identified. Further updates will be provided as discussions progress.

WACD Resolutions – Craig reminded the board about the three WACD resolutions that have been approved: establishing an "OCD Day," supporting a WACD motion encouraging the Washington State Conservation Commission to take actions that improve district efficiency rather than their own, and proposing that a district employee serve on the commission as a voting member.

New Business:
Public Comment – There was no public comment.

Bonaparte Meadows Funding Support - Craig shared that Okanogan CD, along with Okanogan Land Trust, Trout Unlimited–Washington, and the Colville Tribes, have been discussing acquiring the Bonaparte Meadows fen. Okanogan CD is being asked to contribute up to $400,000 from Kinross funds, with other partners contributing a similar amount, while the Colville Tribes would cover the remaining cost to complete the acquisition. The board agreed to consider providing funding pending the outcome of related project requirements.

Aquatics & Habitat Fund Request - Craig shared that Okanogan CD plans to use up to $30,000 from the Aquatics and Habitat Fund (from Kinross Gold) to help fully fund three board-approved projects—Scholz, Walking D Ranch, and Justin Clark—by combining these funds with $40,000 from Voluntary Stewardship Program cost-share and $80,000 from Natural Resource Investment funds, which would fully expend available funds for this biennium. Steve Colvin has moved to authorize staff to withdraw up to $30,000 from our Aquatics and Habitat Fund and make it available to the Scholz cost-share project as needed. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

WSCC Cost-Share & Volunteer Reimbursement Rates - Craig shared that the Conservation Commission requires a CD resolution defining cost-share limits and labor rate matches. The new resolution updates the cooperator match rate from $22 to $25 per hour, the maximum allowed, while otherwise matching previous resolutions. Jerry Asmussen moved to approve resolution 2025-01 and authorized Lorah Super to sign it. Steve Colvin seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Lorah Super adjourned the meeting at 8:00 PM.

Summary of Motions

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

Jerry Asmussen moved to approve board meeting minutes as amended. Edd Townsend seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Steve Colvin moved to approve Treasurer's Report #869. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Jerry Asmussen moved to approve the contract with American Forests and authorize Craig Nelson or Lorah Super to sign the contract. Edd Townsend seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

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Jerry Asmussen moved to approve resolution 2025-01 and authorized Lorah Super to sign it. Steve Colvin seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

11/6/25

Lorah Super | Date
Chair

11/06/25

Natalie Torres | Date
Administrative Assistant