



# Okanogan Conservation District

1251 S. Second Ave, Room 102

Okanogan, WA 98840

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## DRAFT

**TO:** The Record  
**SUBJECT:** May 2, 2024; Board of Supervisors Meeting  
**LOCATION:** Okanogan Conservation District Office, Okanogan, WA and  
Remotely via Microsoft Teams and Teleconference  
**FROM:** Craig Nelson, Executive Director

### PRESENT:

Lorah Super, Chair	Becky Drenner, Finance Director
Jerry Asmussen, Vice Chair	Cassandra Lange-Predoehl, Admin. Assistant
Steve Colvin, Auditor	Jordana Ellis, Irrigation Planner
Phillip Dart, Supervisor	Dylan Streeter, Wildfire Resiliency & Recovery Planner
Edd Townsend, Supervisor	Eli Loftis, Wildfire Community & Resiliency Lead
Randy Kelley, Associate Supervisor	Emmy Engle, Communication & Outreach Specialist
Dale Swedberg, Associate Supervisor	Taylor George, VSP Coordinator
Craig Nelson, Executive Director	Brant Rosenthal Smith, Science Data & Mon. Coord.

**Meeting Call to Order:** Lorah Super called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM. She completed a roll call of Supervisors, Associate Supervisors, staff, partners, and the public.

**Public Comment:** There was no public comment.

**Agenda Approval:** Phillip Dart moved to approve the agenda as amended. Edd Townsend seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes:** Steve Colvin moved to approve the April 4, 2024 board meeting minutes as presented. Phillip Dart the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

**Treasurer's Report #852,** which covers the checking account activity from April 5, 2024, to May 2, 2024, inclusive, was presented for the Board's approval. The following checks/payroll/direct withdrawals/electronic payments were approved for payment:

Checks – numbers 12406 – 12428 totaling \$76,525.25.

Two payroll direct withdrawals – numbers ACH4780 – ACH4805 totaling \$51,336.65.

Electronic payments – numbers EFT3390 – EFT3407 totaling \$40,025.43.

Deposits totaling \$186,143.80 were made.

Steve Colvin moved to approve Treasurer's Report #852 as presented. Phillip Dart seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Supervisor Reports:**

**Jerry Asmussen** – Jerry reported that snakes are out, the orchardists are having lots of fun running their fan machines, and other than that spring is just a little late.

**Steve Colvin** – Steve reported that temperatures dropped below freezing a few days ago, prompting them to run the orchard fans at night. He noted that the cherries were significantly affected by the harsh winter and cold weather, resulting in a slim crop compared to previous years. Additionally, Steve mentioned that the winter has killed some of the roots in his field of baby's-breath.

**Lorah Super** – Lorah reported that she has become more aware of Twisp being in a rain shadow, noticing the contrast between the Methow Valley and the Okanogan Valley. She also mentioned going on vacation and having a wonderful time but expressed her happiness at being back home.

**Edd Townsend** – Edd reported that the weather was dry and cool, with adequate ground moisture. He mentioned that he is currently preparing for the upcoming fire season.

**Phillip Dart** – Phillip reported that it felt like winter had returned, with significant frost and cold weather. He also observed that the snowpack had increased. Phillip added that Eli did a wonderful job presenting at a meeting up in the Molson area.

### **Associate Supervisor Reports:**

**Randy Kelley** – Randy reported that the seeds he had sown are growing well, but he noted that the weather had caused some plants to grow differently, including baby's-breath, which Randy had not seen yet.

**Dale Swedberg** – Dale gave an update on the progress of his presentation for the Conservation Celebration.

### **Staff Reports:**

Craig reported that he had handed off the Larson Road Culvert Replacement Project to Brant, and the project had been submitted to the Wells Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Tributary Committee for funding.

He also mentioned that he had contacted Rachel McClure from the Cattleman's Association to arrange a meeting for the Bonaparte Creek Straight to Implementation program which focuses on temperature and bacteria testing. Ginger Wireman from the Department of Ecology was present at the meeting and introduced herself, and she acknowledged the need for new data for the watershed and committed to obtaining it.

Craig further noted that several projects had been submitted to the Washington State Conservation Commission Riparian Grant Program, with activities paused until affected tribes were contacted, following a new, straightforward process.

Regarding staffing, Craig ended his report by letting everyone know that Cassandra had accepted

a new job, and they had posted an advertisement for the Administrative Assistant position the day prior. He then added that Rosalie Powell, the Communication and Technician Fellow, would be starting later in the month.

Eli reported that the After the Flames Conference, which he attended with Craig, Dylan, and Emmy in Colorado, was very insightful, and they learned a lot from it. Additionally, Eli mentioned attending a two-day workshop in Spokane focused on post-fire recovery.

Becky reported that all staff attending the upcoming Washington Association of District Employees (WADE) training will be staying onsite as rooms have become available. Becky provided an update on the LGIP, noting that it has been challenging to receive communication from the bank.

### **NRCS Report**

Sarah Troutman sent out a report, which was included in board documents.

### **Partner Reports**

There were no partners present.

### **Review, Approve and Sign Contracts and Conservation Plans:**

**Brothers Forestry Personal Services Contract, Methow Valley Chipping Events** – Dylan reported that the district is collaborating with residents in the Lost River, Timberline Meadows, Sun Mountain Ranch Club, Buttermilk, and Pine Forest communities for mobile chipping events scheduled throughout May. The district has contracted Brothers Forestry Inc to oversee these events, with payment not to exceed \$13,000.00. Chips resulting from the events will be spread or dumped in designated areas within the communities. Phillip Dart moved to approve the Brothers Forestry Personal Services Contract for the Methow Valley Chipping Events and authorized Craig Nelson to sign. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

**Bluebird Grain Farms VSP Cost-Share Contract** – Taylor reported that the Bluebird Grain Farms Project had been previously presented to and approved by the board at the March meeting. Subsequently, the project was presented to the VSP Work Group, which also gave its approval. Taylor then presented the cost-share contract for authorization, requesting Craig Nelson's signature. Jerry Asmussen moved to authorize Craig Nelson to sign the Bluebird Grain Farms VSP Cost-Share Contract. Phillip Dart seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Old Business:**

**Public Comment** – There was no public comment.

**Water Bank Update** – Jordana reported that the amendment is moving forward, and the requested edits were made and was sent back to the grant manager at Ecology. The Department of Ecology has released a draft proposing changes to Policy 1010, which governs the Water Resources Program's administration of the Trust Water Rights Program (TWRP) concerning water banks and water right donations and comments on the draft are due by June 21. Emmy and Jordana have started planning the next community meeting and will attempt to focus the meeting

on gathering input from the public on priorities and increased transparency regarding the business structure, particularly delineating negotiable and non-negotiable aspects in compliance with Ecology's regulations. Jordana went on to say that the county is contemplating the recruitment of a water resources manager to oversee their grant and resulting branch of the bank. Aspect is assisting them in preparing their application for the Pine Creek acquisition. The application for Lake Sullivan has already been submitted, and feedback received prompted them to provide more specific details about future water needs/projects rather than generalized information. One concern identified during community feedback was how the bank would protect and preserve tribal water rights. Craig reached out to the Colville Tribes to let them know we would like to give them an update on district efforts, and to open the conversation on how to ensure we are operating in the best interest of all individuals, groups, and communities of our region. Craig reported on information he gathered from Cody Desautel, the Executive Director of the Colville Tribes.

**Conservation Celebration Committee** – Emmy gave an update on the event and added she was very happy to have Dale as the keynote speaker.

**New Business:**

**Public Comment** – There was no public comment.

**Forest Health Collaborative Recommitment Letter** –Lorah reported that a few weeks ago, a letter was sent to all participants in the Forest Health Collaborative. This Forest Health Collaborative has been undergoing a re-visioning process which included hiring a consultant to address various topics. Lorah discussed the possibility of the district's recommitment letter with Eli and Craig, and they wanted to present it to board members for review and feedback. Lorah then provided a brief overview of the Forest Health Collaborative and the revisioning that has been taking place.

Jerry stated it is very congruent with our goals and our mission and enables an impact on a larger landscape that trickles down to the people we are trying to help. Phil agrees with Jerry and added that whenever you can get a group of diverse people together for conservation and conversation it is always good. Eli stated we are the voice of the people we serve. The board members felt the letter presented and the plan presented by Lorah, Craig, and Eli to submit the letter as presented with a watchful eye to see how the remainder of the collaborative members respond and work in the coming months was a good idea.

**Annual Work Plan** – Craig presented the annual work plan that had been reviewed and edited by staff and made available to partners and the public for comment. The Annual Work Plan is legally required to be submitted to the Washington State Conservation Commission as a statement of our program for the coming year. The fiscal year plan reflects known funding sources and projects that we intend to implement for the 12-month period beginning July 1, 2024. Steve Colvin moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2025 Okanogan Conservation District Annual Work Plan. Phillip Dart seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Lorah Super adjourned the meeting at 7:47 PM.

**Summary of Motions**

Phillip Dart moved to approve the agenda as amended. Edd Townsend seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Steve Colvin moved to approve the April 4, 2024 board meeting minutes as presented. Phillip Dart the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Steve Colvin moved to approve Treasurer’s Report #852 as presented. Phillip Dart seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Phillip Dart moved to approve the Brothers Forestry Personal Services Contract for the Methow Valley Chipping Events and authorized Craig Nelson to sign. Jerry Asmussen seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Jerry Asmussen moved to authorize Craig Nelson to sign the Bluebird Grain Farms VSP Cost-Share Contract. Phillip Dart seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Steve Colvin moved to approve the Fiscal Year 2025 Okanogan Conservation District Annual Work Plan. Phillip Dart seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

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Lorah Super  
Chair

Date

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Becky Drenner  
Finance Director

Date