

**Hood River Soil & Water Conservation District
Minutes from January 8th, 2026, District Board Meeting**

Present Directors: Ben Saur, Annie Robinson (online), and Pete Siragusa

Associate Directors: Chuck Gehling, Richard Lawson

District and NRCS staff: Jed Arnold, Kris Schaedel, Cheryl Rice, and Emily Huth (NRCS)

Visitors: A notetaker from Columbia Gorge Documenters was also present.

The Annual Meeting began at 4:08 pm. The board reviewed the Annual Report. Jed presented the Annual Audit materials. The current Associate Directors, Chuck Gehling, Richard Lawson and Chal Oates, were nominated. Ben moved and Annie seconded. Ben, Annie and Pete voted in favor. Brian Nakamura was nominated as Board Chair. Ben moved and Annie seconded. Ben, Annie and Pete voted in favor. Pete Siragusa was nominated as Vice Chair. Ben moved and Annie seconded. Ben, Annie and Pete voted in favor. Andrew Halliday was nominated as Secretary and Treasurer. Annie moved and Ben seconded. Annie, Ben and Pete voted in favor. Resolution 25-26/1, the Annual Meeting Date, and the Monthly Board Meeting Dates were reviewed. Annual meeting date and board meeting dates were reviewed. Ben moved to adopt Resolution 25-26/1 and the Monthly Board Meeting Dates and Annie seconded. Ben, Annie and Pete voted in favor. The Annual Meeting ended at 4:19 pm.

Consent agenda – Ben moved, and Annie seconded. Ben, Annie and Pete voted in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

- To approve the Board Meeting minutes of December 4th, 2025.
- To accept the December 2025 Profit & Loss statement and Balance Sheet as distributed. As of December 31st, the balance in the bank accounts (including the CDs) was \$260,100.52. Income of \$21,147.50 included from the ODA Aq WQ support grant.
- Expenses were authorized at the December meeting.
- To approve payment of bills #5719-5732 and bank transfers to Lease Direct, ADP, and Ascensus as follows:

| Bills to be Paid | | Jan. 8th 2026 | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Check No. | Payee | Account | Amount |
| | DD/EP staff | staff wages and liabilities (not SIMPLE IRA) | \$20,926.91 |
| 5732 | MCAREC | office rent (May 1, 2024 rate increase) | \$1,164.20 |
| 5723 | US Bank (Jed Arnold) | 1 year cell phone fees, training reg fees | \$914.35 |
| 5722 | US Bank (Kris Schaedel) | Training refreshments and test fees | \$425.60 |
| 5720 | Kris Schaedel Reimburse | PSP and FIP Expenses | \$10.92 |
| 5719 | Cheryl Rice Reimbursement | FIP mileage and meals | \$94.34 |
| 5721 | Columbia Gorege News | Annual Meeting notice publication fees | \$75.60 |
| 5725 | Centurylink | Monthly phone bill | \$145.25 |
| 5726 | Ash Creek Forest Management | work on small grant 2024 | \$2,940.00 |
| 5727 | Amazon Capital Svcs | Technology supplies | \$93.92 |
| 5728 | Pacific Office Automation | color copies for workshops | \$175.31 |
| 5729 | Weatherly Printing | WPS training book and Annual reports | \$391.54 |
| 5730 | Larry Packer | FIP Restoration grant 224-8226-24067 Reimbursement | \$22,013.48 |
| 5724 | Number Gurus | Monthly bookkeeping serviceds | \$175.00 |
| 5731 | Lexterra Strategies | Legal Consulting fees for Workshop protocols | \$4,687.50 |
| EP | ADP | payroll services | \$61.46 |
| EP | Lease Direct | copier lease | \$73.44 |
| EP | Ascensus SIMPLE IRA | Simple IRA | \$1,179.56 |
| | | Total | \$55,548.38 |

Old Business:

N/A

New Business:

Jed reported the 2026 Staff Cost of Living Increases will be pushed back until next board meeting in February. Kris updated the board regarding the collaborative efforts on the Spanish translation of the National Pesticide Manual. 9 Conservation Districts will cover print run; OSU will cover translators. The translators will Moving are expected to be finished by mid Spring, and the print run will be completed by the end of the fiscal year. The Board discussed.

Informational Reports –

Cheryl reported the Annual Native Plant Sale opened on Monday. There are 75 orders to date which is slightly less than last year. Her Master Gardener application was approved, and she will be participating in the Master Gardener training classes beginning in February. She met with Corrie from UCD and Drew from Humble Roots regarding what our collaboration for the Backyard Habitat Certification Program (BYHCP) could look like. Kris and she will be meeting with Ash Creek Forestry tomorrow to find out their role in the Tualatin SWCD BYHCP. She will shadow 2 initial site visits with the BYHCP in Portland on Saturday. She worked on a livestock footing Small Grants project and is conducting research on wetland restoration for a Small Grant at the Mariposa Village Housing Development.

Kris reported the winter training season continues next week. The 6-week Spanish for Orchard Managers course begins next Tuesday with Jaime Riveria. The WPS/Pesticide Handler training will be next Thursday and Friday. The immigration protocols have been finalized and shared with partners.

Jed reported that he has actively participated in the proposed changes to SWCD Capacity Grant by OWEB. He is offering perspective of SWCDs lacking a tax base. He continues to work on the CWDG grant for the county as he is the point person along with Andrew with HRFC. He began working on updating the long-range business plan

Emily reported Carly has retired and she will be the District Conservationist for Wasco and Hood River Counties. She has been the District Conservationist for Wasco County since 2021. In the Wasco County office there is also a forester and 2 planners. In 2025, there were 19 landowner contracts with 1100 acres through EQIP. There was one CSP project implemented. The EQIP and CSP applications are due on January 15th. The 2026 Air Quality funds will continue to reduce open pile burning with chipping. The forestry program will also continue. Cal has been assisting in applications and working on bat box specifications. The Local Working Group will be held in Parkdale on January 13th from 9am-12pm.

Directors' reports –

Ben reported he went with Alix from the HRWG to see how the East Fork Restoration Project held up with the recent flooding. There has been some shifting of logs. He has been working on fuel reduction on the farm. They bought the farm 11 years ago and there has been a lot of new growth that needs to be thinned.

Richard reported he attended the HR and Wasco Forest Collaborative Group joint meeting this afternoon. He is a member of the Clackamas Stewardship Partners, which meets every other month at Mt. Hood Community College. He is also a part of the South Gifford Pinchot Group which is currently meeting online. This spring he will become recertified Master Gardner.

Chuck reported the HRWG hired their Administrative Position and is in the hiring process for the Restoration Program Manager. Due to the recent flooding, Indian Creek completely flooded out onto the trail, new channels have been formed at the mouth of the Hood River, and new sediment has been deposited at the Spit.

Annie reported the sewer systems did okay in the recent floods. FEMA has stated there will be new mapping of Henderson and Phelps Creek floodplains. She went to Henderson Creek with a private landowner to see where the creek was incised and undermining the trail.

Pete reported the Farmers Irrigation diversion upriver in the West Fork sustained some damage due to the recent floods. Farmers Irrigation shuts down temporarily when these types of flood events occur. Pete reiterated that 2026 will be a challenging year for all growers from a return to grower perspective.

Permits –

Jed reviewed the 3 permits. The stream overlay permit relating to the fish passage work was discussed and there is no need for the HRSWCD to comment. The forest dwelling construction request was discussed and there is a surface stream, but the construction is greater than 200 ft. Jed will contact the county for clarification to determine if there is already an existing bridge. The stream setback variance request was discussed which is less than a 100ft from a surface stream. Jed will send a letter to remind them to be cautious of sediment runoff into the stream.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, February 5th at 4 p.m. in the OSU extension office conference room.

Other business

Jed mentioned the SDAO has provided complimentary registration to any board member would like to attend. If there is an interest, please talk with Jed.

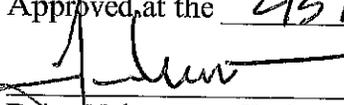
Summary of Actions Taken:

- ✓ Moved, seconded and unanimously approved Chuck Gehling, Richard Lawson and Chal Oates as Associate Directors.
- ✓ Moved, seconded and unanimously approved Brian Nakamura as Board Chair.
- ✓ Moved, seconded and unanimously approved Pete Siragusa as Vice Chair.
- ✓ Moved, seconded and unanimously approved Andrew Halliday as Secretary and Treasurer.
- ✓ Moved, seconded and unanimously approved Resolution 25-26/1 and the Monthly Board Meeting Dates.
- ✓ Moved, seconded and unanimously approved the consent agenda.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Rice, Conservation Technician

Approved, at the 2/5/25 meeting of the Hood River SWCD.



Brian Nakamura, Chair

