



Fort Rock/Silver Lake Soil and Water Conservation District

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2024-2025 Annual Report

Background

The Fort Rock Soil & Water Conservation District has been serving Lake County for over 70 years. The mission of the district is to provide technical assistance to individuals, groups and other agencies to manage and enhance our natural resources, environment and economy with a vision to initiate and/or coordinate with local landowners and other agencies, through educational, technical and financial assistance, providing for judicial conservation and enhancement of water and soils and encouraging sustainable agricultural practices benefiting healthy rural communities and abundant wildlife.

The purpose of this Annual Report is to highlight the district programs, accomplishments, and financial report for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

Governance

The Lakeview SWCD is governed by a five-member board of directors who serve without pay. Board members are elected and serve a four-year term. Directors include Chair Scott Duffner, Vice Chair Jeremiah Thorsted, Secretary/Treasurer Conley Kittredge, Chaylon Shuffield, and Shane Forman.

Staff

Justin Ferrell serves as the District Manager. His duties include working with board members on district operations and policies, managing employees, writing grants and project management. He works directly with landowners, government agencies and other partner organizations to enhance natural resources, provide technical assistance to landowners and promote the Ag Water Quality Management program.

Brandi St. Clair serves as the District Wildlife Biologist. She provides technical and programmatic assistance for the district. Her main duties include implementing site specific plans developed for the Lake County greater sage-grouse Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances program, water quality monitoring, range health monitoring, project development, grant writing, and other tasks related to technical field work.

The district contracts with Tanya Graham for fiscal administration, Tess Baker for office administration, Riane Miles for field work assistance, and Fara Brummer for additional grant writing, implementation, and monitoring support.

Conservation Programs, Projects and Grant Funding

Board of directors and staff believe that supporting landowners with conservation technical assistance and education is a high priority. The staff supports NRCS with their conservation EQIP programs. These programs are geared to implement projects that protect water quality, improve forestry stands, and establish riparian buffers.

Staff continue to work extensively on CCAA efforts and coordinating/partnering with LCCWMA, NRCS, Watershed Council, BLM, DSL, USFWS, and others to implement the program. The district also continues to execute our OWEB Sage Grouse FIP Technical Assistance grant to support staff in implementing, monitoring, and reporting the conservation actions and achievements within the CCAA program. This project also includes identifying and developing projects in the district such as juniper removal, invasive annual grass treatments, spring developments, mesic area improvements, and fencing to improve sage grouse habitat, rangeland conditions and water quality and availability to the watershed.

Additional work has been accomplished on the 2020 Brattain Fire scar through two OWEB post fire grants closed out at the end of the 2024-2025 fiscal year. Aerial and ground seeding, aerial and ground herbicide treatment, and post fire dead tree thinning and piling have all contributed to the abatement of erosion and sedimentation into the upper Chewaucan.

An OWEB funded monitoring project began in 2023 and will continue through 2026 to examine the effects of seeding and land treatments compared with natural revegetation of bunchgrasses. This project has the goal of cost-effective land treatment post fire.

Staff also continues to work with a group of irrigators to assist with monitoring of irrigation water use. This data is being gathered to help find opportunities for efficiency upgrades.

Educational Outreach

The district hosted a speech contest for seventh graders in the region. It was held on May 6 at North Lake School. The topic was to “water conservation in agriculture.” First place was awarded to Raelea Leehmann, second place to Paislee Francis, and third place to Makayla Quinn.

Staff and contractors filmed a video for Oregon Lottery regarding post fire dollars spent on the landscape. Further educational outreach concerning this work is through Oregon State University Department of Range and Animal Sciences graduate students and colleagues that are working on the Brattain Post Fire monitoring project. Their outreach is to the scientific community, landowners, and public at large.

Financial Report

| Fort Rock-Silver Lake 2024-2025 Financial Report | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 24-Jul | 2024-2025 | 2024-2025 | 2024-2025 | 2024-2025 | 2024-2025 | 25-Jun |
| Account | Carryover | 2024-2025 | Acct Receivable | | | Acc Payable | Ending Cash |
| Description | Cash Balance | Revenues | Assets | Transfers | Expenses | Liabilities | Balance |
| Checking | 60,967.04 | 340,633.72 | (1,021.50) | 0.00 | (269,963.43) | (11,807.73) | 118,808.10 |
| Money Market | 112,414.44 | 171.83 | 0.00 | (107,552.67) | 0.00 | 0.00 | 5,033.60 |
| Savings | 0.00 | 411.57 | 0.00 | 107,552.67 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 107,964.24 |
| Totals | 173,381.48 | 341,217.12 | (1,012.50) | 0.00 | (269,963.43) | (11,807.73) | 231,805.94 |