



Fort Rock/Silver Lake Soil and Water Conservation District

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2025-2026 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 2025-2026 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 (CCAA), water quality monitoring, rangeland health monitoring, project development, grant writing, project management, collaborating and partnering with landowners, government agencies and various partner organizations, as well as manage 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.

Our District Wildlife Biologist has continued to work extensively on CCAA execution while coordinating and partnering with Lake County Cooperative Weed Management Area (LCCWMA), Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Lake County Umbrella Watershed Council (LCUWC), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Department of State Lands (DSL), United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), and others to implement the program. Staff continues to execute an Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) Sage Grouse Focused Investment Project (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 within the district such as juniper removal, invasive annual grass treatments, spring developments/off-site water, mesic area improvements, improved grazing management practices, and fencing to improve sage grouse habitat, rangeland conditions, and water quality and availability to the watershed.

Additional work was accomplished on the 2020 Brattain Fire scar through two OWEB post fire grants that closed out at the end of the 2025-2026 fiscal year. Aerial and ground seeding on 4,897 acres, aerial and ground herbicide treatment on 3,785 acres, post fire dead tree thinning and piling on 521 acres, and two miles of livestock fencing on a very steep slope have all contributed to the abatement of erosion and sedimentation into the upper Chewaucan.

An OWEB funded monitoring effectiveness projects 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 and eighth graders in the region. It was held on April 21 at North Lake School. The topic was “ways to improve, maintain, and conserve soil health.” First place was awarded to Maya Merritt-Fivecoat, second place to Gavin Forman, and third place to Caleb Mitchem.

A field day hosted in 2026 provided outreach to thirty participants including community members, nonprofit groups, and public service agencies. A graduate student presented this project information at a professional society meeting in 2025 and 2026. Additionally, information on this project was presented at CONNECT in 2026.

Financial Report

Fort Rock-Silver Lake 2025-2026 Financial Report

	25-Jul	2025-2026	2025-2026	2025-2026	2025-2026	2025-2026	26-Jun
Account	Carryover	2025-2026	Acct Receivable			Acc Payable	Ending Cash
Description	Cash Balance	Revenues	Assets	Transfers	Expenses	Liabilities	Balance
Checking	118,808.10	220,216.96	(63,048.14)	0.00	(192,444.69)	(14,397.76)	69,134.47
Money Market	5,033.60	20.17	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,053.77
Savings	107,964.24	1,079.58	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	109,043.82
Totals	231,805.94	221,316.71	(63,048.14)	0.00	(192,444.69)	(14,397.76)	183,232.06