

**Foster Creek Conservation District Board
Board Meeting – March 8, 2023**

1pm – 3.00 pm

Location: Mansfield Town Hall, 26 Main St. Mansfield, WA

Please contact FCCD on Ph: 509-699-8344; 509-888-6373; or email info@fostercreekcd.org to obtain a remote access link or for additional information.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order – 1.00 pm

- Reading and approval of February 9th, 2022, Board meeting minutes

2. Public comment

3. Reports

- Review Staff Reports
- NRCS
- WSCC

4. Ongoing / Unfinished Business

- Approval of February Financial Consent Agenda
- Financial updates – Changes, transitions, and Goals
- FCCD Elections update – **March 17th Ballot return date**
- Accountability Audit update – **Exit interview March 13th**
- District and Program Updates

5. New Business

- Update Bank Signature Forms
- NRCS project Proposal

6. Other Business – Executive Session/Other Business

7. Upcoming Meetings, Dates, Deadlines and Reminders

- **March 13th** – Audit Exit Interview
- **March 16th** – Watershed Stakeholder Meeting in Nespelem at 4:00
- **March 17th**- Election Day ballots due to office
- **March 28th** – Tentative Date for NRCS WG meeting in Chelan
- **April 19th, 21st** – Sharp-tail Days on Foster Creek
- **April 20th** – Chief Joe Dam Earth Day
- **April 27th** – Envirothon

8. Meetings to be attended by more than two Board members:

Staff and Board Planning meeting booking soon!

9. Next FCCD Regular Board Meetings:

- **Wed. April 12th** – 6-8pm Mansfield Town Hall
- **Wed. May 10th** – 6-8pm Mansfield Town Hall

10. Adjourn



Foster Creek Conservation District Board Meeting

Wednesday, February 09, 2023

1-3pm

Mansfield Town Hall 26 Main Street Mansfield, WA 98830

DRAFT- MEETING MINUTES

In Attendance: John McLean (Board Chair), Lee Hemmer (Vice-Chair), Wade Troutman (Board Member), Maggie McGillivray (FCCD Staff), Ryan Lefler (FCCD Staff), Nate Schmidt (FCCD Staff), Krystal Sadler (FCCD Staff), Becca Hebron (FCCD staff), Lexi Gardner (NRCS)

Call to Order – 1.05 pm

Meeting called to order by Board Chair John McLean.

Motion to approve, as presented, Special Board Meeting Minutes of January 11, 2022, by: Lee Hemmer, seconded by Wade Troutman, passed 3/0.

Public Comment

No public comment given

Reports

Staff Reports – Staff reports were given verbally by staff members, giving brief updates about current projects like the Watershed Planning Process, Camp Sagebrush, and others.

NRCS – NRCS updates were included within the packet and presented by Lexi Gardner, NRCS resource conservationist. Programs were discussed with staff and board members allowing for discussion on more overlap of programs to streamline processes. Other updates regarding future funds were also discussed.

WSCC – No update given. Becca gave updates regarding the recent Commission Leg Days overview and recap meeting and other project updates regarding Commission Funds.

Ongoing / Unfinished Business

Becca Hebron, District Manager, presented the January financial report. Krystal Sadler, the new Fiscal Manager, was introduced and updated the Board about her first week on the job.

Motion to accept and approve the January 2023 Financial Report, summarized below, by: Wade Troutman, seconded Lee Hemmer, passed 3/0.

Summary of budget activity – from Financial Report December 2022

Vouchers Warrant	Total
January 2023 Payroll (EP23-13-EP23-18)	\$18,825.74
January 2023 Checks Written (#'s: 8323, 8328, 8338-8352)	\$17,428.96
December Electronic Payments (EP23-01-12)	\$4,974.64
Total	\$48,229.34

Board review of upcoming expense request for Change Detection Analysis through Aspect Consulting for \$19,790.00.

Motion to approve the change detection analysis expense described above, by Wade Troutman, seconded by Lee Hemmer, passed 3/0.

Becca Hebron presents new Policies and Procedures to the Board for approval:

- *Purchase Request/Budget Consent Agenda*
- *Credit Cards, Credit Accounts, and Debit Cards*
- *Meals with Meetings*
- *Event Light Refreshments*
- *Cash Receipting*
- *EFT Funds*

Motion to approve the policies and procedures listed above, by Lee Hemmer, seconded by Wade Troutman, passed 3/0.

Becca Hebron presented an update on Accountability Audit and presented the Entrance Conference Letter.

New Business

Becca Hebron presented new hire documentation to approve Krystal Sadler's title as Financial Manager and set salary, pay schedule, and benefits.

Motion to approve Krystal Sadler's employment details listed above, by Lee Hemmer, seconded by Wade Troutman, passed 3/0.

Becca Hebron presented a new signature form for the Washington State Conservation Commission to give new hire Krystal Sadler signature authority on all Commission documents for Cost Share, Vouchering, and Timesheets.

Motion to approve Krystal Sadler as an authorized signature on WSCC Documents, by Wade Troutman, seconded by Lee Hemmer, passed 3/0.

Becca Hebron presented the request for the removal of Ruth Walker from the Foster Creek CD North Cascade Bank accounts for: checking, savings, and loan, with the addition of Krystal Sadler as authorized signatory for the checking and savings accounts.

Motion to approve the request to change North Cascade bank account signatories listed above, by Wade Troutman, seconded by Lee Hemmer, passed 3/0.

The group discussed the origination of MSGCP, how the program evolved, the goals of the program, and the current issues with the program. Nate Schmidt presented new findings and updates regarding the current status of the program. Funding opportunities and how we can better integrate this program into existing program life SAFE, SGI, and CRP to maximize the monitoring efforts and streamline data across multiple platforms.

Becca Hebron presented the updated MSGCP report for 2021 to the board for approval.

Motion to approve the MSGCP Report for 2021, by Lee Hemmer, seconded by Wade Troutman, passed 3/0.

Upcoming District schedule:

- **Watershed Planning Community Meeting in Bridgeport, February 23rd**
- **Next Board meeting March 8, 2023, 1pm**

Meeting Adjourned – 2:59 pm



Date: February 28, 2023

To: Cascadia, Foster Creek, Okanogan, & South Douglas Conservation Districts

From: Sarah Troutman, Conservationist

Subject: Monthly Activities Report

Program Activities:

- **EQIP 2023** -We have received preapprovals for Classic EQIP (see below). Unfunded applications will be re-assessed in our systems for possible funding through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA).

County:	Chelan	Douglas	Okanogan
# of Ranked Applications	4/8	5/13	11/18
Dryland Agriculture	0	2/8	0
Forestry	2/3	0	5/5
Irrigation	2	2/2	4/7
Small Farms	2/4	1	0
WaterSmart - Whitestone	0	0	2/4
Range/Grazing	0	1/1	1

- **EQIP - CIC (Conservation Incentive Contracts)** - The ranking deadline is March 1st. Categories that our customers are eligible for in our area include “cropland - wind erosion” (cover crop & residue management activities) as well as forestland. We received 1 forestry application in Okanogan County, and nine applications for the wind erosion pool, 8 of which are in Douglas County. We should know if applications are selected for funding by March 8th. The activities covered under these applications should be eligible for IRA funding.
- **CSP CLASSIC 2023:** - We have no high priority eligible applications to rank for this program.
- **RCP**: We received a dozen applications through Cascadia Conservation District in Chelan County for our first signup. Ten of these were eligible by the established deadline. The project had to undergo a formal boundary adjustment and that has recently been approved by National. This means we can resume ranking applications for this first round. A second round of applications is planned to be announced in the near future.
- **CRP:** We expect another very large workload in the new fiscal year. General CRP was formally announced today with a signup deadline April 7th. FSA has received 67 SAFE signups and will now focus on the general signup.
- **IRA:** Where to start? See attached.

Local Work Group Meeting - tentative March 28th evening - Chelan or Pateros

Stay tuned for project proposal requests that will help us to complete our LWG submission!

Status of Operations -

- Okanogan office is up next!! Anticipating a move with the Conservation District and installation of new required security protocols. This move may take place in May 2023.

District Activities -

- Please talk to your RC or me if you are interested in any task orders!

Personnel -

- A selection was made for Soil Conservationist in Waterville but that person declined the offer.



United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Sarah Troutman
District Conservationist

Cc: Austin Shero, Celeste Acord, Lexi Gardner, Frank Curtin, Catherine Cannon, Mike Baden

As of the date of this email all of the North Central team Service Centers are currently OPEN to visitors!! However, we strongly encourage you to please contact us to make an appointment. Please visit farmers.gov/coronavirus for the latest information on Service Center status.



The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)

The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) – signed in August 2022 by President Biden – represents the single largest investment in climate and clean energy solutions in American history.

Assistance through Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funding is now available through NRCS-WA conservation programs. While NRCS accepts program applications year-round, producers interested in applying for Fiscal Year 2023 funding through the IRA [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) (IRA-EQIP) or IRA [Conservation Stewardship Program](#) (IRA-CSP) should apply by the batching dates below.

- IRA-CSP Batching Date: **March 31, 2023**
- IRA-EQIP Batching Date: **March 31, 2023**

Priority Resource concerns and primary practices are listed below:

<p>Soil Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Conservation Cover •Conservation Crop Rotation •No-Till, Residue and Tillage Management •Cover Crop •Reduced-Till, Residue and Tillage Management •Field Border •Filter Strips •Grassed Waterways •Mulching •Stripcropping •Vegetative Barriers •Herbaceous Wind Barrier 	<p>Agroforestry, Forestry And Upland Wildlife Habitat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Alley Cropping •Critical Area Planting •Forest Farming •Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment and Renovation •Silvopasture •Riparian Herbaceous Cover •Riparian Forest Buffer •Wildlife Habitat Planting •Hedgerow Planting •Tree/Shrub Establishment •Upland Wildlife Habitat Management •Forest Stand Improvement
<p>Nutrient Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Nutrient Management 	<p>Grazing And Pasture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Pasture and Hayland Planting •Prescribed Grazing •Range Planting
<p>Livestock Partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Anaerobic Digester •Waste Separation Facility 	<p>Energy, Combustion and Electricity Efficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Combustion System Improvement •Energy Efficient Agricultural Operation •Energy Efficient Building Envelope •Energy Efficient Lighting System

<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/conservation-by-state/washington/inflation-reduction-act-washington>



To: Foster Creek Conservation District Board Members
Subject: Monthly Staff Report: February 2023
Date: March 8th, 2023
Submitted by: Maggie McGillivray, Natural Resource Technician

1. PURPOSE

A progress update for:

1. ECY 058/059
2. VSP
3. FEMA FAC
4. Ecology 181

2. SUMMARY OF TASKS

	PROJECT	TASK	UPDATE
1	ECY 058/059	Task 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Media push for second stakeholder meeting in Bridgeport, Watershed Plan meeting in Bridgeport, coordination for 2nd Stakeholder Meeting in Bridgeport, correspondence with CCT on facility use, correspondence with different CCT departments regarding 3rd meeting in Nespelem, Streamflow equipment research,
2	VSP	Education & Outreach Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Media Outreach, post curation, tracking staff hours in budget spreadsheet, Winter Newsletter drafting/sharing on different platforms, website updates, purchase request updates, FCCD elections
3	FEMA FAC	Camp Sagebrush	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camp Sagebrush 2023 planning: correspondence with volunteers/presenters, research liability/waivers for campers/staff and meeting with insurance company regarding coverage, managed and organizing camper registration, social media outreach, website updates, agenda creation
4	ECY 181	Education & Outreach Final Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salmon in the Classroom check in, Submit Final report to Department of ECY program lead

3. UP-COMING MEETINGS, WORKSHOPS, & ACTIVITIES:

- 3rd Stakeholder Meeting, Nespelem, WA
- Northwest Groundwater Convention, Pasco, WA
- Riparian Symposium, Ellensburg, WA



To: Foster Creek Conservation District Board Members

Subject: Staff Report for the month of: February 2023

Date: Meeting on March 8, 2023

Submitted by: Nate Schmidt, Natural Resources Specialist

Figure 1 Red-Tailed Hawk

PURPOSE

A progress update for:

1. FEMA – FAC
2. VSP
3. ECY 058 – T2
4. FEMA – Re-seed
5. WSCC-IMP TA
6. ECY 181 - T7
7. WSCC IMP E&O
8. ECY 181 T7

SUMMARY OF TASKS

	PROJECT	TASK	UPDATE
1	FEMA – Fire-Adapted Communities	Coordination and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WAFAC coordination, emails, and planning, meeting • Camp Sagebrush Campaign launch • Budget/tasks/expenses tracking spreadsheet • Camp Sagebrush continue build out agenda and begin coordination
2	VSP	Education/Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MSGCP Review, edits, and planning • Staff meetings to figure out new coordinator. • VSP Review, habitat restoration priorities • Edit and update 2022 MSGCP Annual Report • Birdfest planning event
3	ECY 058 T2	Coordination Planning and Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings to address outreach • Brainstorm stakeholder meeting (tech setup) • Review deliverable table • Conduct 2nd stakeholder meeting
4	FEMA Re-seeding	Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egbert ISP Update, file organization • Deliverables review

5	WSCC-IMP TA	Admin and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications review and interviewing • Update GANNT chart • Brainstorm hiring plan • Office reorganization • File Archiving and restructure
6	ECY 181 T5	Weed Management Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend weed management meeting in Moses Lake
7	WSCC- IMP E&O	Staff Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff meeting discussions around upcoming events and outreach
8	ECY 181 T7	Camp Sagebrush	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and coordination



To: Foster Creek Conservation District Board Members
Subject: Staff Report for the month(s) of: March 2023
Date: Meeting on March 8th, 2023
Submitted by: Krystal Sadler, Financial Manager

• **PURPOSE**

A progress update for:

1. Updates of process and procedures to create easy, quick visibility of financial status.

• **SUMMARY OF TASKS**

	PROJECT	TASK	UPDATE
1	QuickBooks	Reducing Manual Calculations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bank Recon- All bank reconciliations were done manually through a separate spreadsheet. Transitioned reconciliation to the Banking module within QuickBooks. • Setup up payroll liabilities (payroll items) to utilize the Payroll Liabilities module. We can pull a report to provide a double check for paying all taxes associated with payroll.
2	QuickBooks	Accounting Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verified all employee deductions are correct. Made adjustment to Health Insurance and ESD Rates. • We have added sub chart of accounts within the bars accounting processes. This will allow more visibility on a Profit and Loss Report. Leading to easier budgeting in the future.
3	Check Runs	Approval Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will provide a snapshot of all transactions done in QB with every check run to Amanda for review. This will provide a quick verification/accountability process.

Upcoming

- I would like to start entering vouchers as invoices in QB to track all vouchers through QB reporting. This will give us an easy way to keep track of projected income. It will also allow us to easily see partial voucher payments.
- Want to start reviewing the P&L Monthly to ensure all expenses are vouchered for and well as verifying accuracy of entry.
- Incorporating Pivot tables to existing Grant spreadsheet to pull information easily.
- Need to thoroughly review existing chart of accounts comparing to bars accounting to prep for 2022 Financial Reporting. Hoping to reduce manual entries.



To: Foster Creek Conservation District Board Members

Subject: Staff Report for the month of: February 2023

Date: Board Meeting on March 8, 2023

Submitted by: Becca Hebron, District Manager

PURPOSE

A progress update for:

1. FEMA
2. VSP
3. IMP
4. ECY 181

1. SUMMARY OF TASKS

PROJECT		TASK	UPDATE
1	FEMA	FAC, Re-Seeding, Curriculum Development and Summer Camp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and prep for Camp Sagebrush! CWPP meeting and updates with fire district 1, SDCD, and DNR.
2	VSP		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working on change detection for county. Interviewing applicants currently Work Group Meeting- No Quorum Budget predictions for the year Watershed Planning for Foster WRIA Looking at budget for remainder of year
3	WSCC	NRI, DM, TA, E&O	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vouchering Training on Financials Job Advertisement work for NRT and VSP Quarterly Planning, staff planning, payroll Continued updates to administrator accounts Audit work and COMPLETION! Coordination with WSU Master's student Seasonal Position opened Work with NRCS for future project planning and resource sharing Communication with The Tribe's Conservation District to work on getting projects together to share.
4	ECY 181	Education & Outreach, Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work on finishing up grant

5	ECY 0058	Watershed Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Watershed Community meeting • 21 folks attended the Watershed Meeting in Bridgeport with several great suggestions for resource concerns and priorities and possible work with the Tribes.
6	ECY 0059	Direct Seed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost share work with 2 producers over the last couple of months. Working on getting more enrolled.

Staff Comments

Manager Update: February flew by with lots in between. Hiring has slowed a lot, currently waiting to hear back on an offer. Needs noticed were looking at improving benefits available to our staff, as they aren't quite enough to draw someone in and also it's starting to cause issues with current staff. We've entered interesting and new conversations with the Conservation District that represents the CCT. This conversation spurred from the Bridgeport Watershed meeting and has really brought some unique opportunities to increase our work with yet another agency. New inquiries for cost shares have started to come in so planning for future outlooks is important.

FEMA: We still don't know the status on our extension requests. Currently everything is operating on a normal basis like it is extended.

Camp Sagebrush is completely filled and then some. We filled our registration within a week which is very exciting for us. We've been diligently working on pinning down things for insurance, policies and procedures, hiring, and getting help to run everything. Camp is just around the corner!

VSP: There was no quorum this past month for our work group meeting, which really stalled a few things out. However, we continue to predict expenses for the remainder of the budget so we don't leave anything on the table. Updates to coordinator equipment is being done currently. We are also engaging in monitoring conversations with the tech panel to create monitoring guides that will help capture useable data to support VSP.

ECY: Our grants are all officially active as of February. We've been able to start the vouchering process for cost share expenditures and really jump start the grant. Ryan's been working on getting the new grant we were offered underway as well. Lots to come to Foster Creek over the next few years!

Becca Hebron

From: Troutman, Sarah - FPAC-NRCS, WA <sarah.troutman@usda.gov>
Sent: Sunday, March 5, 2023 1:59 PM
To: Ryan Williams; Becca Hebron; Craig Nelson (craig@okanogancd.org); Carol Cowling (carol.cowling@gmail.com)
Cc: Gardner, Lexi - FPAC-NRCS, WA; Acord, Celeste - FPAC-NRCS, WA; Curtin, Frank - FPAC-NRCS, WA
Subject: LOCAL WORK GROUP MEETING AND PROJECT PROPOSALS
Attachments: IRA-Project Proposals.docx

Hi District Managers!

We have scheduled our North Central WA local work group meeting for March 28th from 5:00-8:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Chelan School District office located at 309 E Johnson Ave, Chelan, WA 98816. At this point in time I do not anticipate having a virtual attendance option. I will be sending out the public announcement this week. The “ask” for this local work group meeting will be much the same as year’s past. Our resource priorities will be used to help shape a new State Resource Assessment for NRCS-WA though. We will also present on Inflation Reduction Act funding (what we know of it). At the end we want to provide the opportunity for landowners to touch base with District and other agencies to submit ideas for local project proposals that might be funded under IRA.

It has been my goal the past few weeks to get my head wrapped around this a bit better so that you understand how the proposals will work and can start drafting your own. Attached is a DRAFT template I put together after speaking to our state office representatives that will be coming up with one to distribute statewide. That template will not be available for at least a few weeks so I wanted you to be able to get an early start. I would also like to note that these proposals are not due by the 28th, but I would like them submitted to me closer to June 1st. We are not limited on the number of these proposals that can be brought forward through the local work group process, each will be ranked individually for statewide consideration of funding. It is important to note that, if funded, this money will be obligated through NRCS contracts and not through the partners. This is a great opportunity for each of our partners to help focus our efforts with this new IRA funding in the years to come. Districts and other agencies will likely have their own pot of money to compete for, and I wish I had more information on how that will flow but that would make things too easy! Please take a look at the attachment and let me know if you have any questions or ideas that you think would be a good fit.

Also, I appreciate your help in spreading the word about the LWG meeting, especially amongst landowners, farmers and ranchers. Thank you all!

Sarah Troutman
District Conservationist
USDA-NRCS, Okanogan
(509) 429-9663

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INFLATION REDUCTION ACT PROJECT PROPOSALS

USDA-NRCS

Chelan, Douglas, Okanogan Counties

Problem Statement

The goal of this Proposal will be to improve soil health on farms that practice conventional or chemical fallow within the project area. This will focus on the resource concern of soil quality degradation, specifically organic matter depletion. Producers are becoming more aware of the benefits of living roots and live cover, as well as reduction of chemical applications, during their fallow operation periods and the effect that cover can have on the subsequent cash crop. However, funding has been limited at providing large scale financial assistance to help mitigate the risks of adopting such practices that might result due to drought and input costs.

Background

A visible increase in interest in 340 cover crop practice has been noticed in North Central Washington. Producers began converting to reduced tillage in 2010 and the slow adoption of cover crops has been growing exponentially in recent years.

2017	46 acres
2018	467 acres
2019	455 acres
2020	910 acres
2021	4,954 acres * (fire affected)
2022	2,638 acres

The amount of financial assistance requested is unable to be met at this time as local cooperators already implementing reduced tillage systems are not competitive in NRCS statewide funding pools. With additional financial incentives the ability to see these practices implemented on a very large scale is possible.

Climate Change Mitigation Category (select 1-3)

This project proposal aligns with the Soil Health mitigation category. Benefits are also likely to be seen to Nitrogen Management as well as grazing operations as cover crops become available for forage sources and help to both scavenge and replace nitrogen in the soil.

<p>Soil Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation Cover • Conservation Crop Rotation • No-Till, Residue and Tillage Management • Cover Crop • Reduced-Till, Residue and Tillage Management • Field Border • Filter Strips • Grassed Waterways • Mulching • Stripcropping 	<p>Agroforestry, Forestry and Upland Wildlife Habitat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alley Cropping • Critical Area Planting • Forest Farming • Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment and Renovation • Silvopasture • Riparian Herbaceous Cover • Riparian Forest Buffer • Wildlife Habitat Planting • Hedgerow Planting
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Vegetative Barriers •Herbaceous Wind Barrier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Tree/Shrub Establishment •Upland Wildlife Habitat Management •Forest Stand Improvement
Nutrient Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Nutrient Management 	Grazing And Pasture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Pasture and Hayland Planting •Prescribed Grazing •Range Planting
Livestock Partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Anaerobic Digester •Waste Separation Facility 	Energy, Combustion and Electricity Efficiency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Combustion System Improvement •Energy Efficient Agricultural Operation •Energy Efficient Building Envelope •Energy Efficient Lighting System

Desired Condition

Widespread adoption of cover crops in the 3-county area that will effectively decrease chemical applications, increase wildlife habitat, and reduce erosion, all the while improving soil health.

Geographic Region

The geographic scope of this proposal encompasses fallow agriculture systems in Chelan, Douglas, and Okanogan counties.

Environmental Impacts

The environmental impacts of this proposal are almost wholly beneficial. Implementation at certain periods of the year of different species could have a negative impact of harboring pests that may affect cash crops.

Soil – Wind Erosion

Ground cover during critical periods will decrease the potential for wind erosion.

Soil – Compaction

Long term benefits should be seen to this resource concern through continued plantings of deep-rooted crops that can penetrate the compaction layers

Soil – Organic Matter Depletion

Organic matter depletion should also result in a long-term positive trend as cover cropping practices are enhanced

Soil – Soil Organism Habitat loss or degradation

Organism habitat loss is decreased through more living roots and less tillage and chemical use over time.

Soil – Aggregate Instability

Aggregates are able to stabilize with less tillage and more living roots.

Water – Pesticides transported to surface water

An expectation of less pesticide use coupled with more ground cover will result in a short-term benefit to this resource concern

Water – Nutrients transported to ground water

Plantings of nitrogen scavengers as well as reduced fertilizer inputs by using legumes as cover crops should result in a long-term decrease in the likelihood of nitrogen transport

Water – Sediment Transported to surface water

Ground cover through larger parts of the year will reduce sediment transport that sometimes occurs after summer thunderstorm events.

Air – Emissions of particulate matter

More ground cover results in less wind erosion and emission of PM-10 particles that result

Plant – plant pest pressure

Cover crops can be used strategically to reduce weed pressure and combat herbicide resistance through less application of chemicals.

Animals – Terrestrial habitat for wildlife and invertebrates

Cover crops can provide important food sources for pollinators as well as priority species, such as sage grouse.

Animals – Feed and forage imbalance

Use of cover crops as a forage source for livestock will result in less pressure on native rangelands and more adaptability for grazers’ implementing prescribed grazing

NEPA concerns will need to be evaluated on a site-by-site basis. Cultural Resource reviews will be done for each site. Due to the historical and continued disturbance on cropland in this strategy area, it is expected that none of the projects will be in conflict with NEPA concerns.

Outreach & Communication

Education and outreach will be completed for the length of the strategy by both NRCS and partners listed below. A shelf-ready list of participants is already available but success in implementation will result in more interest by neighbors and beginning farmers who are still tentative due to the perceived risk of implementation.

Partnerships and Watershed Plans

Partners that have been working to promote soil health and more widescale adoption of cover crops include Foster Creek Conservation District, WSU Extension, WSDA,

Partner Name	Technical Assistance	Financial Assistance	Description
Foster Creek CD			Soil Assessment, Outreach
Okanogan CD			Small Grants, Outreach
WSU Extension			Farm Planning Assistance, Outreach
Total			

Implementation Goals and Timelines

Year	# of Projects	Acres
2024	5-7	
2025	7-10	
2026	7-10	
2027	5-7	
2028	3-5	

Implementation can begin as soon as funding is awarded. Participation is expected to be high early on in the timeline and likely to decrease towards the end, as the pool of ready and willing producers is reached, and new customers begin adoption.

Budget

Year	Requested funding
2024	
2025	
2026	
2027	
2028	

Appendices

DRAFT