

Updating Long Range Plan – Review Priorities & Objectives

Purpose of Today’s Discussion: At the December meeting, the Board received the draft Long Range Plan outline and the updated key-points summary. Today’s goal is to lay the framework for the update process by reviewing the structure of the plan and gathering any initial reactions to the proposed priorities and objectives. This is the first step in a six-month update process aligned with the District’s budget cycle. Given the full agenda today, this discussion is intended to stay high-level. More detailed review and refinement can occur at the February 11 meeting.

What We Need to Accomplish Today:

- 1. Confirm the overall structure of the updated Long Range Plan.**
- 2. Gather initial reactions to the District’s resource and operational priorities.**
- 3. Identify any emerging issues the Board wants included.** Examples include drought and wildfire resilience, renewable energy development, urbanization pressures, and access to conservation programs.
- 4. Set expectations for the February meeting.** The February 11 meeting will be the point at which we aim to finalize the District’s updated priorities and objectives so staff can begin drafting the revised plan.

Input Requested Between Now and Early February: To keep the process moving without taking excessive time today, Board members are invited to:

- share any quick or initial thoughts during this meeting, and
- send staff additional comments, edits, or suggestions between now and early February.

Staff will compile all input and prepare a refined set of priorities and objectives for Board agreement at the February 11 meeting.

Timeline Reminder:

- **Jan–Feb:** Review and refine priorities and objectives
- **Mar–Apr:** Integrate with budget development; Budget Committee input
- **May:** Draft LRP to Budget Committee for feedback
- **Jun–Jul:** Final revisions, Board adoption, submission to ODA

Requested Board Action Today: No formal action is required. Staff are seeking initial direction and confirmation of the process and timeline, with the understanding that final agreement on priorities and objectives will occur at the February 11 meeting.

Priorities

District Resource Priorities (in order) (revised 2012)

1	Erosion control on cropland, pasture, range land
1	Water conservation (quality and quantity)
2	Integrated Pest Management Practices, including technologies that help make direct seed / no-till sustainable, and protect water quality
2	Erosion control on stream banks and forest land
2	Riparian Enhancement
3	Rangeland condition and resource management
3	Agricultural energy conservation
3	Invasive species
4	Fish and Wildlife habitat
4	Forest land condition resource management
5	Upstream flood control (including flood hazard mitigation)
5	Wetland preservation
6	Plant materials programs / demonstration Nursery
6	Drainage
6	Wind erosion
7	Other agriculture related
8	All other non-agriculture related

Operational Priorities

1	District funding, capability improvement, and mandatory items
2	Hands-on Ag/Environmental Information, Education, and Demonstration projects

Wasco County SWCD Long Range Plan – Updated Draft Outline & Key Points

1. Background & Mission

- History.
- Mission: *“To work cooperatively with others to promote and encourage conservation and wise use of natural resources.”*
- Stable tax base (\$0.25/\$1,000 permanent rate) continues to underpin district operations.

2. Partnerships

- Active collaborations: Watershed Councils, NRCS, OWEB, ODFW, BPA, WyEast RC&D, OSU Extension, FSA, USFS.
- Fiscal sponsorship role (Watershed Councils, WyEast C-REP grant, ECOP FIP).
- Expanded wildfire partnerships through CWDG: Juniper Flat RFPD, Tygh RFPD, MCFR.
- Many emerging/strengthening partnerships for invasive weed control.

3. Policy & Responsibilities

- Statutory basis (ORS 568, ORS 468B).
- District role: voluntary, incentive-based conservation delivery.
- Governance updates: succession planning adopted in 2025; SDAO Best Practices policies adopted annually.
- Financial policies: LGIP/CD investment strategy, reserve funds for vehicles and facilities.

4. Resource Base & Concerns

- **Water supply:** Mosier Groundwater & Mosier Million / Mosier Deep Wells, FAST, Fifteenmile MUS feasibility.
- **Irrigation efficiency:** Cost share projects for pivots, LESA nozzles, wheel lines, rainwater harvesting; Highline Ditch Elimination project.
- **Wildfire mitigation:** CWDG grant implementation, post-fire planning and rehab (e.g. Larch Creek funding).

- **Forestry & habitat:** Fifteenmile Creek large wood enhancement; East Cascade Oak Partnership.
- **Weeds & invasive species:** Expanded Lower Deschutes CWMA program; EDRR program with invaders such as Ravenna grass, skeletonweed, pepperweed targeted.
- **Facilities:** USDA Service Center; shop expansion; nursery.
- **Emerging issues:** Resiliency to drought/wildfire, broad access to conservation programs, renewable energy development impacts, urbanization pressures.

5. Objectives (High-Level)

- District operations: staff retention, succession planning, insurance/risk management.
- Conservation programs: irrigation efficiency, fish screening, riparian buffers, post-fire rehab.
- Weed control: CWMA coordination, invasive species management.
- Watershed improvement: Bakeoven, Fifteenmile, White River, The Dalles, Mosier.
- Emerging issues: resiliency, promoting access and stewardship.

6. Priorities

- Resource priorities: erosion, water conservation, IPM, riparian enhancement, rangeland, invasive species, fish/wildlife, forest health.
- Operational priorities: funding stability, staff capacity, facilities expansion.

7. Operational Resources

- **Current Personnel:** 10 full-time, 7 part-time (12.13 FTE).
- **Facilities:** USDA Service Center ownership; shop expansion planned.
- **Financial:** Current FY \$5.88M total budget.
- **Reserves:** Vehicle Reserve, Building Reserve (shop expansion, balloon payment savings).
- **Programs:** Tree sale, cost share program, equipment rental, watershed council support.