

Written updates for January 14, 2026 board meeting:

- **SDAO Annual Meeting:**
 - February 5–8, 2026 in Seaside. Statewide training and governance conference for special districts. Registration open through January 29. Details: <https://www.sdao.com/2026-02-05-upcoming-events-2026-sdao-annual-conference>
- **NACD Annual Meeting:**
 - February 14–19, 2026 in San Antonio. National conference focused on conservation priorities and district collaboration. Registration deadline January 26. Info: <https://www.nacdnet.org/news-and-events/annual-meeting/>
- **Mosier Groundwater Restoration & Mosier Million #2:**
 - The Mosier Million #2 grant has been successfully closed out. Final work is underway on the Diego Leon replacement well. Cascade drilling has received the final materials to complete the project; however, the orchard road necessary to access the site was washed out following the last round of atmospheric rivers. They plan on replacing the pump and decommissioning the old well in early Spring when weather permits. We are also having a meeting with the GSI crew on January 15th to discuss ongoing groundwater drawdown in the Rowena area.
- **Highline Ditch Elimination:**
 - ODFW Engineer and Screen Shop staff are meeting with Simer's and their contractor on Friday morning. Goals will be to review the site plans with the contractor who is hired for the installation of the fish screen as well as constructing the bypass and updating the intake for the well. SWCD will purchase the materials for the screen, ODFW staff will construct and help with oversight during installation. Plans are to have the materials purchased and screen built this spring, with project implementation Fall 2026. An additional water rights extension will take place in October to prove beneficial use from the new diversion. Once installed ODFW will be able to sign off on the project to meet fish passage requirements required by OWEB and OWRD. Remaining steps will be to decommission the highline ditch and reseed/plant any ground disturbed areas.
- **Fires:**
 - CWDG Grant: The seasonal crew had their final day of work last Friday. To date there have been 104 defensible space assessments completed, and work conducted on 74 properties. A Round 4 Planning session will take place

on January 26th. Melissa with the County has developed a draft proposal which includes a Comprehensive Community Mitigation Program, Community Buffers, Private Forestland Management, as well as additional asks for the grant which include updated costs for coordinator(s), printing and newsletter publications, Billboard signage promoting community programs, landowner incentives, and educational/outreach materials. In the Juniper Flat area, the district worked closely with the Juniper Flat Rural Fire Protection District to organize contractors who treated 29.25 miles and 425.09 acres, creating strategic fuel breaks along key roadways and priority locations. These fuel breaks are intended to support emergency access, strengthen evacuation routes, and help firefighters slow or stop fast moving wildfires before they threaten homes and critical infrastructure. A cost breakdown for projects completed as of the end of 2025 is attached for reference & review.

- **East Cascade Oak Partnership– CR Surveys, Block Grant, USFS, ODFW:**
 - CR Surveys: The 2025 Eastside Forest Health Survey, conducted by Warm Springs GeoVisions for Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District, assessed cultural resources within lands targeted for restoration under the Eastside Forest Health Project. The survey covered 277.8 acres and identified nine new archaeological sites, three isolates, and updated 15 previously recorded sites, most of which remain unevaluated for the National Register of Historic Places. Recommendations include avoiding ground-disturbing activities near these sites with 30-meter buffers, implementing an Inadvertent Discovery Plan, and conducting additional surveys and subsurface testing where needed. With these measures in place, the Project is expected to result in no adverse effect on cultural resources under Section 106 of the NHPA.
 - USFS CRGNSA Project: The proposed oak habitat resilience and restoration project in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area will enhance approximately 500 acres of oak ecosystems across multiple ownerships, including National Forest System lands, OPRD, The Nature Conservancy, and Friends of the Columbia Gorge. Targeting priority areas identified by the East Cascades Oak Partnership, the project addresses degraded habitat conditions caused by fire suppression and land use changes through invasive species removal, native reseeding, thinning, and prescribed fire treatments. These actions aim to restore understory structure, improve species composition, and strengthen oak resilience and ecosystem function.

A separate monitoring grant will support ongoing Forest Service-led efforts to track project outcomes.

- ODFW Stockton Oak Project: The Stockton restoration project, located on ODFW's White River Wildlife Area in southern Wasco County, aims to restore oak-pine woodland structure and improve ecological resilience across 500 acres within the East Cascades Oak Partnership's priority geography. Decades of fire suppression, conifer encroachment, and climate-driven stress have degraded habitat and increased wildfire risk. Project activities include thinning around large oak trees to reduce competition for water, removing dead trees and excess woody debris to lower fuel loads, and reseeding with native grasses to limit invasive species. These treatments will support oak survival, reduce wildfire hazards, and enhance ecosystem adaptation under changing climate conditions. Key partners include Wasco SWCD, ODFW, ECOP, and ODF.
- **Pesticide Stewardship Partnership Program:**
 - A producer meeting is being planned in late January to gather input and guide development of practical recommendations.
- **Updating SWCD Employee Handbook:**
 - Employee Handbook: I've received an updated template from SDAO with changes for 2026.
- **FY 2024-2025 Audit**
 - The audit is completed; we will receive a presentation from our auditors at the February meeting.

Juniper Flat RFPD CWDG Cost Analysis of Clearing Projects to date 12-28-25

Avg \$\$ mile >		\$8,100.11	<Includes Admin>		\$557.43	< Avg \$\$ Acre	Land & Brush Control			H&A Solutions			Duling Excavation			High Desert			JF RFPD Admin			
Project		Miles			Acres	\$211,331.64	Total \$\$	Acres	Avg Arce	Total \$\$	Acres	Avg Acre	Total \$\$	Acres	Avg Acre	Total \$\$	Acres	Avg Acre	Total \$\$	Avg Acre		
#	Name	29.25	Feet	Width	425.09	Total	\$137,441.3	236.91	\$580.1	\$47,260.3	49.88	\$947.48	\$14,108.0	16.65	\$847.33	\$12,522.0	18.12	\$691.0	\$25,625.1	\$60.28		
1	PJ1	2.91	1535	125	43.97	\$9,950.0	\$9,950.0	38.3	\$259.52													
2	PJ2	5.26	27792.6	100	63.67	\$15,000.0	\$15,000.0	42.99	\$348.92													
3b	NC-HS-TA	2.21	11673	100	26.74	\$24,100.0	\$24,100.0	25.59	\$606.4													
3b	HS	0.60	3154	300	21.68	\$0.00		14.15														
3c	BB	0.56	2957	100	6.77	\$6,758.00	\$6,758.00	6.77	\$997.59													
4e	JF NP NE	3.62	19137	100	43.84	\$21,454.75	\$21,454.75	20.24	\$1,060.02													
4n	JF NP E	1.75	9244	100	21.18	\$14,108.00							\$14,108.00	16.65	\$847.33							
4w	NP SEW	2.43	12839	100	29.41	\$18,655.00				\$18,655.00	20.19	\$923.97										
5	BS S&N	1.73	9115	100	20.88	\$12,522.00										\$12,522.00	18.12	\$691.06				
6	Jf DR	1.00	5280	150	18.14	\$14,280.00				\$14,280.00	13.56	\$1,053.10										
7	BR HS	0.52	2765	250	15.84	\$21,030.00	\$21,030.00	11.76	\$657.19													
7	HS-DN	0.75	3960	150	13.61	\$0.00		13.61														
12	Detct W	0.77	4044	120	11.12	\$24,648.57	\$24,648.57	11.12	\$670.07													
12	Detct E	0.77	4044	120	11.12	\$0.00		11.12														
12	Merrel	0.88	4620	100	10.58	\$0.00		9.19														
12	Merrel	0.50	2640	100	6.05	\$0.00		5.36														
14	EE	2.00	10560	100	24.19	\$14,325.32				\$14,325.32	16.13	\$888.12										
201	HS fen	1.00	5280	300	36.29	\$14,500.00	\$14,500.00	26.67	\$543.68													
	JF Admin		0		0	\$0.00														\$18,796.06	4/15/2025	
	JF Admin		0		0	\$0.00															\$2,286.20	8/21/2025
	JF Admin		0		0	\$0.00															\$4,542.8	12/9/2025