

Lincoln County Local Workgroup Meeting Notes

February 10, 2021

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

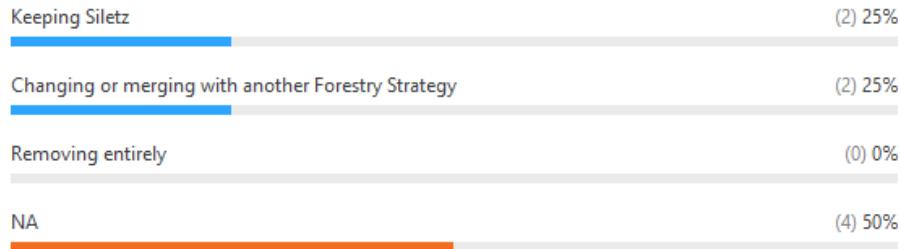
Katlyn Woodruff, Acting Lincoln-West Lane County District Conservationist

Poll Results

1. What land use do you primarily work in

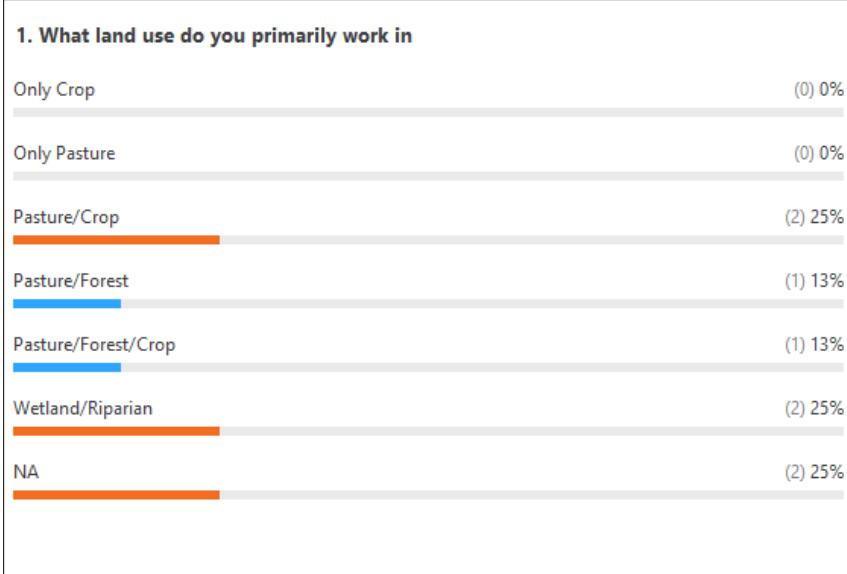


1. Which of the following would you be interested in?

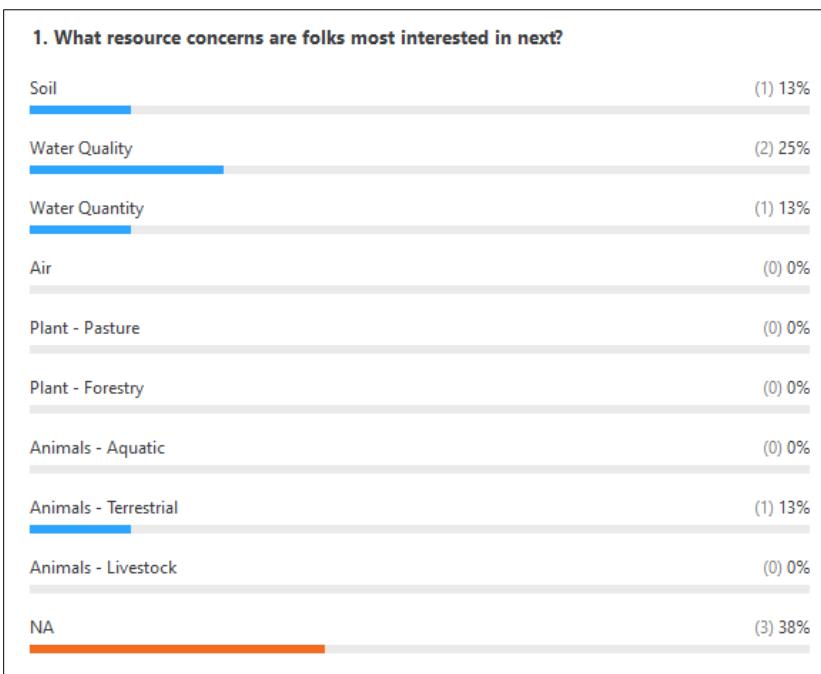


1. Would you be interested in applying to:





This poll question was asked twice. Note the discrepancy in the answer.



Discussion Notes

CREP

A question was asked regarding if the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), and if agricultural drainage ditches were eligible for restoration or work through the program. The answer was, no, CREP does not work on agricultural drainage ditches, but focuses on grassed waterways and

fencing off areas to add vegetation. Typically, agricultural drainage ditches are maintained by clearing vegetation.

NWQI and Water Quality

There was discussion on the upcoming National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) project and the ODA funded Strategic Implementation Area (SIA):

- The Upper Yaquina Basin is receiving SIA funding and there is interest in a NRCS Conservation Implementation Strategy (CIS) to support waste storage, heavy use protection, and conservation cover.
- The ability of a CIS to coincide with a SIA was clarified and there is no conflict. Examples of where CIS's and SIA's have been used in concert were described.
- It was noted several times that identifying and addressing a targeted resource concern often helps address other resource concerns. Eg. Focusing on water quality helps aquatic habitat.
- Regarding the NWQI, once a Source Water Protection Plan is developed there will not be a CIS to implement. NWQI is its own fully flushed out program that allows for national funding under its umbrella to implement.

ACEP

An update was presented on the NRCS Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP):

- The focus of the Healthy Forest Reserve Program is the Oregon North Spotted Owl. There is going to be some funding available.
- NRCS is in the process of determining how the funds will be focused as there is not a lot of money. It is likely there will be 10-year restoration contracts available.
- An announcement that will include Lincoln County will be coming

General Comments

There were many general comments including:

- The need to track conservation project inquiries to better gauge the interest and target conservation appropriately.
 - It was mentioned that NRCS works with partners and meetings like this Local Workgroup event to better understand the needs and locations of landowners who are ready and willing to implement conservation.
 - It was mentioned that at any time a land owner can apply for USDA NRCS programs and if they don't fit a current program or strategy, that the application can be kept for future reference.
- The recognition that with being strategic some people with interest are left out of opportunities
 - It was mentioned that the NRCS Conservation Stewardship Program, High Tunnel Initiative, and Organic Initiative programs are available to any private landowner in Lincoln County.

FSA Programs

It was mentioned that the Farm Service Agency (FSA) is working on fire recovery around the Otis area. Additionally, FSA has other fire, drought, and COVID-19 recovery programs currently available.

High Tunnels

High Tunnels and the possibility for more outreach and implementation of high tunnels was discussed:

- It was noted that High Tunnels is a very competitive program.
- There was interest in knowing the number of applications versus how many were funded.
- It was noted that due to severe weather several high tunnels in the Siletz valley were damaged.
The question of promoting insurance for high tunnels was discussed.
 - It was mentioned that for the life of the NRCS high tunnel contract that land owner is responsible for fulfilling all operation and maintenance stipulations

Partner Updates

The Lincoln Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) reminded folks of its upcoming, virtual annual meeting.

Siletz Tribe Updates

The Siletz Tribe noted they were able to accomplish pre-commercial thinning on their lands with assistance from NRCS.

The Tribe has purchased a 38-acre parcel of farmland and are exploring conservation and operational opportunities. One idea is to create a cultural plants nursery.