

South Fork John Day Watershed Council  
Meeting Minutes  
April 13, 2026  
1:00 pm, Izee Schoolhouse

In attendance (remote attendance indicated by \*) for regular session:

Board Members/Staff

Jeff Maben, Chair	Phil St. Clair, Vice-Chair	Scott Hess, Secretary	Joanne Keerins, Director
Mike Keerins, Alternate	Richard Nelson, Director	*Jim Dovenberg, Director	
Amy Stiner, SFJDWC	*Lindsay Bullock, SFJDWC		

*With 6 out of 7 directors in attendance, a quorum was present.*

Agencies

Nolan Riis, US Wildlife Services	Charlie Brown, BLM	*Rebecca Schwartz, TU	*Becky Long, CTWS
Bruce Slice, USFS	Erika Porter, USFS	Elena Burlett, BLM	*Justin Rogers, Ochoco NF
John Rowell, GC Commissioner	*Hannah Smith, NRCS		

Public/Unaffiliated

*Chris Paulson, Landowner	*ErickKeerins	*Mary Lou Welby

The meeting was called to order at 1:01 pm, by Jeff Maben.

**1. Public Comment**

a. None

**2. Agency Reports (5 minutes per agency)**

- a. BLM, Charlie Brown, Elena Burlett: In re: to predator control on BLM land, last time aerial predator control was performed was in the 1990s. While looking into the NEPA process that something like this might require, they discovered that going through an APHIS (lethal control of wildlife on federal land) contract might be the simplest way. They expect to have an answer and plan in place by next winter, so BLM lands can be added to the next round. However, they have a bureaucratic mechanism in place that determines which agency they would use to fly, which may not end up being the same as what was just used; they also are not able to commit to financial support.
- b. Malheur National Forest, Bruce Slice and Erika Porter: Funding for Rail Ridge fire fencing should be coming in May, and they will start getting the fencing back up. Working on an agreement with an agency to allow for an on-call horse trucking company. This will allow for horses to be transported to holding areas in a much more efficient and timely manner. They will continue to trap nuisance horses in-house.
- c. GC Commission, John Rowell: Held a meeting to discuss road closures in the forest for elk protection, which met with negative reactions from the public.
- d. NRCS, Hannah Smith: Deadline first week of May to rank projects. 4/23: NRCS Local Workgroup meeting, 10:00 at ODF

- e. Ochoco NF, Justin Rodgers: Crazy Creek contract awarded in FY25. Prime contractor has hired subcontractor to finish up that fence. 86 miles total, projected to finish by the end of 2026. Rail Ridge fencing is what SFJDWC has been in talks with to get a contract to work on the fence reconstruction. Virtual fencing trials are going on.

**3. Action Items**

- a. Staff Time Approval

Motion to Approve	Seconded	Discussion?	Vote
Joanne Keerins	Phil St. Clair	No	Unanimous

- b. Minutes Approval

Motion to Approve	Seconded	Discussion?	Vote
Joanne Keerins	Phil St. Clair	No	Unanimous

- c. Financials Approval

Motion to Approve	Seconded	Discussion?	Vote
Joanne Keerins	Phil St. Clair	No	Unanimous

**4. Staff Report**

- a. RCPP: still getting out with Landowners through summer. Secured contract with ODF, which required an amendment to the RCPP agreement.
- b. OWEB Review team came for site visits on April 8. Virtual visit first, then went to field sites for Rocking Nine and Cottonwood projects.
  - i. RCPP Engagement
  - ii. Rocking Nine River Design
  - iii. Cottonwood Ck Design
  - iv. Cottonwood uplands
  - v. Aldrich Forestry
  - vi. Utley Culturals
- c. 2026-2028-Agreement with CTWS, \$408,108.58:
  - i. Watershed Coordination - John Day Basin Partnership \$30,000.00
  - ii. Program Support: \$111,920
  - iii. Indian Creek Diversion Design, \$60,000
  - iv. Cottonwood Creek Design, \$60,000
  - v. Cabin Creek Design, \$30,000
  - vi. Smokey Creek Implementation, \$25,000
  - vii. SFJDWC Fire Riparian Enhancement, \$91,188.58
- d. Western Big Game Grant for Battle Creek Juniper Removal
  - i. ODFW applicant
  - ii. 600 ac Juniper treatment
  - iii. Wildlife friendly fence conversion
- e. M SWCD/ODF partnership to implement EFRP-OWEB post fire recovery, SFJDWC = \$8500
- f. ONF post fire recovery:
  - i. agreement in review at ONF.
  - ii. Re-org slowing things down.
  - iii. \$160K for SFJDWC,

- iv. \$2.2 for implementation of over 70 miles of fence, virtual towers, horse capture corrals, possibly springs
- g. Contracting with ODF for implementation of the LRP grant. \$400,000
  - i. 250 acres of forestry at \$1,000/acre = \$200,000
  - ii. 250 acres of juniper at \$700/acre = \$175,000
  - iii. SFJDWC project management, 200 hours at \$75/hr = \$15,000
- h. Murderers Ck ph. II still planning for implementation this year along with another round of mussel monitoring
  - i. Side-x-side needs upgrading as it is too small and not as hardy as we need for fieldwork.

**5. Coming Up**

- a. 4/17: Natural Resource Fair
- b. 4/23: NRCS Local Workgroup meeting, 10:00 at ODF
- c. 5/11: Morgan Corrigan, CTWS, will attend our May SFJDWC Meeting and present on Beaver Restoration techniques, and why they are useful. We will tour Beaver Dam Analogues on Phil St. Clair's Rosebud Creek after the meeting.

**6. Adjourn meeting, Next meeting date: Monday, May 11th, 2026**