



**Virtual Commission Meeting
February 21, 2025**



Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission

Meeting Agenda

February 21, 2025

Business Meeting	February 21, 2025	3:00 pm – 5:00 pm
------------------	-------------------	-------------------

Virtual Meeting

The public is welcome to watch or listen to the meeting through the following methods:

- **YouTube Streaming/Recording:** www.youtube.com/channel/UC0dl-TOWlt4Sp--i1KEa_OA.
There may be a slight delay when streaming the meeting content.
- **Zoom:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86440887979>

Public comment

The OAHC welcomes written and verbal public comments on any agenda item. Written comments submitted by the deadline will be provided to the commission before the meeting.

Written comments and requests to make verbal comments should be submitted using the online [Public Comment Form](#). The deadline for submitting written comments and requests to make verbal comments is **5:00 pm Wednesday, February 19, 2024**.

Verbal comments are limited to three minutes and will be heard in the public comment period. For additional information on providing public comment, please refer to our website <https://www.oregon.gov/oweb/about-us/Pages/board/meetings.aspx>. If physical, auditory, language, or other accommodations are needed for this meeting, please contact [Nicole Bettinardi](#) as soon as possible, and at least 48 hours before the meeting.

Agenda

Welcome & Introductions (3:00 pm)

The Commission will welcome three new members. *Information item.*

A. [General Public Comment \(3:10 pm\)](#)

This time is reserved for the commission to hear general public comments and review the written public comments submitted before the meeting. *Information item.*

B. [Review and Approve Minutes \(3:15 pm\)](#)

Minutes from the November 7, 2024, OAHC meeting will be presented for Commission approval. *Action Item.*

C. [Vice-Chair Election \(3:20 pm\)](#)

The commission will nominate for and elect a new vice-chairperson. *Action item.*

D. [Program Updates \(3:35 pm\)](#)

Staff will update the Commission on the OWEB Board's action at their January 2025 meeting, during which they awarded OAHF Conservation Easement Grants, adopted new OAHF administrative rules and appointed three new commissioners. Staff will also give a brief overview of the OAHF Conservation Management Plan Grant Solicitation that is currently open and an update about status of Legislative session. Staff will also highlight potential refinements to the Working Land Conservation Covenant and Easement program that will inform updates to program structure and materials. *Information item.*

E. [2025 OAHC Work Schedule \(3:50 pm\)](#)

Staff will present the expected OAHP and OAHC work plan for 2025 and propose a meeting schedule for the year. *Information Item.*

F. [Working Land Conservation Easement Grant Timeline Extension \(4:05\)](#)

Staff will request the commission recommend the OWEB Board extend the grant deadline for two OAHP CE grant agreements. *Action Item.*

G. Informational Presentation and Discussion about NRCS ACEP/ALE Process (4:15 pm)

NRCS ACEP/ALE staff will give an overview of their application process and materials, ranking criteria, and general timeline associated with the program. *Information Item.*

Contact Information

OAHP Program Coordinator – Taylor Larson
Taylor.Larson@OWEB.oregon.gov

OAHP Conservation Easement Specialist – Robin Meacher
Robin.M.Meacher@OWEB.oregon.gov



Agenda Item A

Public Comment

Commission Meeting February 21, 2025

Submitted written public comment will be published in a supplemental document after the committee meeting and posted on our website here:

<https://www.oregon.gov/oweb/grants/oahp/Pages/OAHC/2024-Oct-OAHC.aspx>



Agenda Items B

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Commission Meeting February 21, 2025



Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission

Meeting Minutes

November 7, 2024

Business Meeting

November 7, 2024

9:15 am – 4:00 pm

Virtual Meeting

The public is welcome to watch or listen to the meeting through the following methods:

- **YouTube Streaming/Recording:** www.youtube.com/channel/UC0dl-TOWLt4Sp--i1KEa_OA.
There may be a slight delay when streaming the meeting content.

Attendance

- Dan Bigelow
- Jim Bob Collins
- Ed Contreras
- Nancy Duhnkrack
- Doug Krahmer, Chair
- Mark Labhart
- Lois Loop
- Amanda Lowe
- Laura Masterson
- Bruce Taylor, Vice Chair
- Sara O'Brien
- Taylor Larson
- Robin Meacher
- Renee Davis
- Ellen Ingamells
- Nicole Bettinardi
- Theresa DeBardelaben
- Sophie Els
- Karsyn Kendrick
- Renee Myers
- John Albertson
- Marc Hudson

Agenda

A. Welcome & Introductions (9:17am)

Doug Krahmer, Chair, called the meeting to order. Commissioners and staff introduced themselves.

B. General Public Comment (9:22 am)

The commission heard general public comments. Written public comments were reviewed before the meeting. Verbal public comment was provided by Sophie Els from Oregon Climate and Agriculture Network and Karsyn Kendrick from Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts. *Information item.*

C. Review and Approve Minutes (9:27 am)

Minutes from the October 21, 2024, OAHC meeting were presented for Commission approval. Laura Masterson moved to approve the minutes from October 21, 2024, OAHC meeting as presented. Ed Contreras seconded. The vote was unanimous, Jim Bob Collins abstained.
Action Item.

D. Spending Plan Update (9:29 am)

Taylor Larson, OAHP Coordinator, provided a review of recaptured funds and potential amendments to the current OAHP spending plan. Doug Krahmer, Chair, moved to add \$277,776 to the Conservation Covenant and Easement Grant line item of the 2023-2025 OAHP spending plan and to move \$250,000 from the Technical Assistance Grant line item to the Conservation Management Plan Grant line item of the 2023-2025 OAHP spending plan. Jim Bob Collins seconded. The Commission approved the motion unanimously.
Action item.

E. Conservation Easement Application Review and Funding Recommendation (9:40 am)

Staff provided an overview of the 2024 OAHP working lands conservation covenant and easement grant offering solicitation process. *Information item.*

Break (10:26 am)

Public Comment for Agenda Item E. (10:45)

This time is reserved for the commission to hear public comments and review written public comments submitted before the meeting pertaining to Agenda Item E. Public comment was provided by Renee Myers of Wild Rivers Land Trust, Marc Hudson of Oregon Agricultural Trust, and John Albertson (landowner). *Information item.*

Conservation Easement Application Review and Funding Recommendation -- Continued (10:56 am)

Staff provided an overview the technical review team rankings and evaluation summaries and answered clarifying questions from the Commission. *Information item.*

Lunch (12:00 pm)

Conservation Easement Application Review and Funding Recommendation -- Continued (1:00)

The commission made a funding recommendation to the OWEB board for consideration at its January 2025 meeting. Laura Masterson moved to reduce the funding to the Wahl Ranch property, ranked number one, sufficient to fund projects two, three, four and five ([See Item E, Attachment B](#)). Nancy Duhnkrack seconded. The vote passed with support from Dan Bigelow, Ed Contreras, Nancy Duhnkrack, Lois Loop, Amanda Lowe, Laura Masterson and Bruce Taylor in support; Jim Bob Collins and Doug Krahmer opposed. *Action item.*

F. Other Business (2:20)

Staff presented other business to the Commission. *Information item.*

Contact Information

OAHP Program Coordinator – Taylor Larson
Taylor.Larson@OWEB.oregon.gov

OAHP Conservation Easement Specialist – Robin Meacher
Robin.M.Meacher@OWEB.oregon.gov



Agenda Item C

Vice-Chair Election

Commission Meeting February 21, 2025



STAFF REPORT

Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program

February 21, 2025, Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission Meeting



Tina Kotek, Governor

ITEM C – Vice-Chair Election

To: Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission (OAHC)
From: Taylor Larson, OAHP Program Coordinator
Renee Davis, OWEB Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager

Background

OAHP's statute requires election of a chair and vice-chair from among the commission's voting members, for terms and with duties and powers necessary for the performance of the functions of the offices as the commission determines. The OAHC's former vice-chair, Bruce Taylor, termed out of his seat in January 2025, leaving the vice-chair seat vacant.

Process

The commission chair, whose position is not up for election, will open the floor for nominations. With each nomination, the commission will determine if the nominee is eligible and willing to serve as vice-chair. After nominations are closed and the discussions have ended, the commission will then vote for a new vice-chair. The newly elected vice-chair will begin their responsibilities at the end of the commission meeting when they are elected.

Recommendation

Staff recommend the commission elect a new vice-chair.



Agenda Item D

Program Updates

Commission Meeting February 21, 2025



STAFF REPORT

Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program

February 21, 2025, Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission Meeting



Tina Kotek, Governor

ITEM D – Program Updates

To: Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission (OAHC)

From: Taylor Larson, OAHP Program Coordinator
Robin Meacher, OAHP Conservation Easement Specialist
Renee Davis, OWEB Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager

Introduction

This staff report provides a brief update to the commission about program developments since the previous commission meeting in November of 2024 and provides an overview of program areas being considered for refinement within the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) working lands conservation easement grant program.

Conservation Easement Grant Awards

On January 29, 2025, the OWEB board awarded \$5,081,036 to fund the purchase of five working land conservation easements as detailed in the table below.

Application #	Project Name	Applicant	OWEB Award
225-7108-23853	Wahl Ranch	Wild Rivers Land Trust	\$1,736,567
225-7101-23837	Carman Ranch	Wallowa Land Trust	\$793,410
225-7105-23848	Country Heritage Farms	Oregon Agricultural Trust	\$1,260,478
225-7106-23849	Box T Ranch	Blue Mountain Land Trust	\$1,092,008
225-7103-23854	Albertson Ranch	Oregon Agricultural Trust	\$198,573

Updated Administrative Rules Adoption

On January 29, 2025 the OWEB board adopted updated Administrative Rules for the OAHP. On February 1, 2025, the updated rules were enrolled with the Secretary of State. The published rules can be found [here](#).

New Commissioners Appointments

On January 29, 2025, the OWEB board appointed three new commissioners to the OAHC. The board appointed John O’Keefe to a commission seat representing farming and ranching, Jan Lee to a seat representing agricultural water quality, and Mark Vargas to a seat representing Fish and Wildlife Habitat. All three new commissioners were appointed to four-year terms ending January 2029 at which point they would be eligible for a second four-year term

Conservation Management Program (CMP) Grant Solicitation Update

On February 4, 2025, OAHP staff opened a grant solicitation for the CMP grant program. The solicitation closes on April 1st and is making \$750,000 available through the Natural and Working Land Fund to support the development and initial implementation of CMPs. Staff are currently working to conduct outreach and pre-application consultations. All program materials included the [Conservation Management Planning Program Manual](#) can be found on the [OAHP webpage](#).

Legislative Updates

[House Bill 3131](#) would allocate \$17.3 million to the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Fund. As of 2/12/25 the bill has been referred by the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means. Staff will continue to track the status of House Bill 3131 and any other legislative actions that impact OAHP.

Potential Refinements for 2025 OAHP Solicitation

The 2025 OAHP working lands conservation easement grant awards wrapped up the second round of application solicitation, review, and awards for the OAHP grant program. The solicitation and review processes provided another opportunity for OWEB to collect feedback from program participants, including applicants, technical reviewers, OAHP commissioners, and program staff. Staff tracked potential refinements, presented program implementation topics for discussion over multiple OAHC meetings in 2024, and solicited feedback from program participants through surveys (one to applicants and one to technical reviewers). In addition, staff engaged in many conversations with applicants throughout the review period and after the commission recommendation. The topics identified below are those raised most frequently by program participants for potential refinement, and staff request OAHC input about these areas.

Conservation Covenants and Easements -- Application Format

OAHP staff is working with internal and external partners to inform revisions to the OAHP working lands conservation easement grant application. These revisions aim to address aspects of applicant feedback while ensuring the level of detail in completed applications supports thorough review and evaluation by technical reviewers and staff. Staff is auditing the information requested from applicants in the 2024 application, both in the application body and required uploads, to determine what information is necessary, helpful, redundant, or unnecessary. Staff anticipates making significant revisions to the application prior to a future solicitation.

Conservation Covenants and Easements -- Technical Review Process

Technical review and subsequent ranking by the technical review team (TRT) of grant applications is required by OAHP's statute and is an integral part of OWEB's application review process. TRT members bring subject-matter expertise that is invaluable in providing an accurate and fair review of applicants' description of their project and how its design is consistent with OAHP evaluation criteria. Program participants have expressed a desire for better understanding of the detailed considerations of the TRT that ultimately results in the final application ranking. Staff is exploring approaches to address this feedback, while maintaining the space for the TRT to provide feedback in a manner that facilitates openness and objectivity.

Recommendation

This is an information item only.



Agenda Item E

OAHC Work Schedule

Commission Meeting February 21, 2025



STAFF REPORT

Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program

February 21, 2025, Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission Meeting



Tina Kotek, Governor

ITEM E – 2025 OAHC Work Schedule

To: Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission (OAHC)
From: Taylor Larson, OAHP Program Coordinator
Renee Davis, OWEB Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager

Introduction

This staff report summarizes the work schedule for the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission (OAHC) over the coming year.

Background

In 2025, the OAHC will need to make funding recommendations for the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) grant solicitation currently underway and, pending funding for the 2025-2027 biennium, adopt a recommended spending plan that provides direction to staff and applicants about the allocation of available funding across the four grant types offered through the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP).

Tentative 2025 OAHC Work Schedule

The table below offers a high-level overview of the work to be completed by the commission in 2025. It is important to note that this work plan is tentative in nature, pending outcomes from the 2025 Legislative Session (see Item D staff report). During the February meeting, staff will review the proposed schedule and request feedback from the commission about the work plan and schedule.

Proposed OAHC Meeting Schedule		
Purpose	Date	Location
Informational	2/21/2025	Virtual
CMP Funding Recommendations, Ongoing Program Refinements	6/5/2025	Virtual
Spending Plan Adoption (pending funding), Preview Conservation Easement (CE) Solicitation launch (pending funding), Discuss other grant cycles	8/7/2025	Virtual
CE Funding Recommendations (pending funding)	2/5/2026	In-Person/Hybrid (TBD)

Recommendation

This is an information item only.



Agenda Item F

**Working Land Conservation
Easement Grant Timeline Extension**
Commission Meeting February 21, 2025



STAFF REPORT

Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP)

February 21, 2025 Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission Meeting



Tina Kotek, Governor

ITEM F – Working Land Conservation Easement Grant Time Extension Request

To: Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission (OAHC)
From: Taylor Larson, OAHP Program Coordinator
Robin Meacher, OAHP Conservation Easement Specialist
Renee Davis, Acquisitions and Special Programs Manager

Introduction

Staff requests the board extend the closing date for two OAHP funded Conservation Easement projects: the Aspen Valley Ranch – Rim Tract project and the Pitchfork T project.

Background

Every OAHP grant is conditioned on the grantee completing required due diligence items to the satisfaction of OWEB and the match-funding partner prior to the release of funds for the conservation easement transaction. Consistent with past practice across OWEB transaction programs, staff is presenting a recommendation to the OAHC (and subsequently the OWEB Board) for approval prior to granting the grantee's extension request.¹

Both Aspen Valley Ranch – Rim Tract and Pitchfork T were awarded in 2023 and required per the administrative rules in effect at that time to complete their transactions within 18 months of their board award². At the June 2024 OAHC meeting, staff presented the OAHC with a recommendation to extend all 2023 OAHP conservation easement grant awards by nine months to facilitate coordinated review and timelines with federal match partners. The OAHC concurred with staff's recommendation and forwarded it on to the OWEB Board, which approved the commission's recommendation. This extended the date for closing for both Aspen Valley Ranch – Rim Tract and Pitchfork T to July 28, 2025. For the reasons explained below, the grantee has requested an additional closing extension.

Extension Request

Funds for Aspen Valley Ranch – Rim Tract (Grant No. 223-7106-22616) were awarded to Deschutes Land Trust (DLT) to be used for the purchase of a working lands conservation easement on

¹ OAR 698-015-0110(3) requires staff seek OAHC and Board approval if staff is recommending *not* extending the grant award and instead recommending the funds be made available for other uses by OWEB for purposes of the OAHP.

² OAHP Oregon Administrative Rules were updated in 2025, which included changing the timeline for completion of conditions and closing on the transaction to 24 months from the Board award.

approximately 3,883 acres of important rangeland in Crook County. Funds for Pitchfork T (Grant No. 223-7105-22611) were awarded to DLT to be used for the purchase of a working lands easement on approximately 171 acres of valuable soils and rangeland in Deschutes County.

DLT has completed a significant portion of their due diligence required by OWEB and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the primary match source for both grants. Progress includes completing survey needs, environmental contamination investigations, management planning, and drafting of baseline documentation and conservation easements. The NRCS grant deadline for both projects is March 31, 2026. DLT requests that OWEB extend its closing deadline to align with NRCS, anticipating that additional time will be needed to accommodate NRCS program requirements and coordinate approval timelines with OWEB's approval requirements on due diligence items.

Recommendation

Staff recommend the Commission recommend the OWEB Board extend the grant deadline to March 31, 2026 for the Aspen Valley Ranch – Rim Tract (Grant No. 223-7106-22616) and Pitchfork T (Grant No. 223-7105-22611) with all other conditions and requirements remaining unchanged.



Agenda Item G

**Informational Presentation
and Discussion about NRCS
ACEP/ALE Process**

Commission Meeting February 21, 2025