

## Oregon Dunes Restoration Collaborative

Quarterly Meeting

December 17th, 2020

Attendance: 20

### **Introductions, Welcome and Member Updates:**

- **Finance:** The finance committee hasn't been too active this past year. Having the strategic plan done will help specify needs for funding. Currently waiting for adoption.
- We lost a key member of the committee this past year. If anyone knows someone who is willing to help write grant applications, please contact Jeff Uebel.
- **Outreach and Education:** COVID-19 put a damper on all activities such as tabling events, getting in front of groups, and more. We are looking forward to working on the content calendar and thinking of some new ideas. We will reach out to media once we begin implementation of the strategic plan.
- **FY20 Volunteer Work:** ODRC had a decent year despite COVID-19.
- *Communications, Education and Outreach:* 33 hours
- *Fundraising:* 161 hours
- *Monitoring:* 3 hours
- Work parties: 18 volunteer work parties in FY20 totaling 665 hours
- 665 hours at \$25.43 an hour = \$26,192.90 value
- **Michael Sherman Update:** Brian, Jeff, and Michael have been working on an instructional video on how to remove invasive species from the Oregon Dunes and other areas.
- The thought behind the video was that it can be a great tool that organizations can use/ share. *Examples: OSU extension, Oregon Department of Agriculture and more.*
- Included some messaging for ODRC work. Hopefully it will get more people to share and spread the word of ODRC work organically.
- *Saving the Oregon Dunes* short filmed released December, 2019 now has over 7,500 views on YouTube and over 36,000 on Facebook.

### **FY20 Forest Service Update:**

- Armand Rebeschke- Restoration Biologist, Siuslaw National Forest presented some of the work that he and his contractors have achieved this past year.

- Most of the “protect the best” units down in Horsfall south of the road were treated as well as the “bathtub ring” of broom, beachgrass and smaller trees.
- 3 units at Eel Creek/Dellenback and only a part of the south fingers at Tahkenitch area were treated.
- They continued the cutting and spraying of gorse at Baker Beach and have made great headway there. It is now mostly reduced to small/scattered patches. Will be keeping at it until its all gone in the Spring!
- All of the work done falls under the new Environmental Assessment (EA).
- Plover Beach Grass spraying: At the northern overlook chunk, ~15 acres were treated and at the southern overlook, roughly a little over a quarter of that area have been treated.
- Given the circumstances this past year, it’s been a really good start.
- Forest Supervisor Robert Sanchez has indicated that funding implementation of the Dunes Restoration EA is a forest priority. With FY21 as a ramp up year, we’re cautiously optimistic we’ll have additional funding via stewardship contracts to increase restoration efforts in FY22. Funding needs will be ongoing and will need to come from a variety of sources to fully implement the EA.
- The plan is to do over \$100,000 worth of treatment in Summer 2021.
- Want to set the funding bar quite high and see how much we can get done with the Forest Service, ODRC, CWMA, and volunteers.
- *Is the Forest Service going to explore the idea of a visual such as an idea of areas treated and areas planned to be treated?*
  - Armand will connect with Jody and Leo and take a look at maps that Jody has sometime in January. Once they meet, they will patch in what needs to be done at Tahkenitch.
  - *GIS mapping tool suggestion:* Rather than Armand mailing maps, can we use a virtual platform with pushpins to get some feedback?
- *What is going to happen to the cut down trees at Sandtracks Picnic Area?*
  - They are in the burn plan but it depends on timing and opportunities for burning.
  - Armand wants to explore the idea of biomass reduction through pile burning.
  - Can volunteers can cut down broom and leave it for FS to burn? Great idea, however volunteers would only be removing a very small fraction of the area. Can talk more about this.

- Armand talked to the fire shop and they do not have specific burn plans in place for any foredunes or beachgrass burning.
- Armand is working with them to get contractors to get the right treatments and getting burn plans dialed in. It is unlikely that burning will occur this Winter season.
- ~80 acres accomplished this fiscal year.

### **Project Implementation Planning:**

- *Looking ahead at next year, is there enough direction lined up from the EA, work plans, etc. for Armand? Or are there things that this group can help the Forest Service with such as prioritizing areas and connecting with volunteer efforts?*
  - Yes, Armand wants help from ODRC. Thank you to Bill and Brian for dune volunteer coordination this past year.
  - CWMA has been on pause, but Armand sees it as a sub committee of ODRC and the implementation arm of the collaborative.
  - Leo and Jody have maps. Looking forward to their input in the riding areas and looking for other folks (Jim, Bill, Marty, any others) for input.
  - #1 Priority right now is to go after “protect the best” areas because the open sand plant communities are there.
  - Forest Service is going to continue with those efforts along with other Plover areas.
  - Looking forward to having conversations with maps and other visuals. A very important piece in the puzzle to flesh out in the next couple of months.
- *Jeff Uebel suggested that the ODRC discuss priorities for action areas and coordinate with the Forest Service. ODRC and SNF working together to develop a plan in terms of finding funding, volunteer projects, etc.*
  - Michele Holman- District Ranger mentioned how the past year has been a rough one due to COVID-19, fires, and more.
  - As far as priorities/implementation, we should and need to work together. Armand started on “protect the best” and other important riding areas.
  - The Forest Service can contribute by helping organize volunteers on the dunes and looking for additional funds outside of the Forest Service system to put towards restoration and to leverage Forest Service money for large treatments.
- Identifying areas and developing an implementation action plan this year with the Forest Service:

- We started last year in January and got a few ideas (Baker Beach, Unit 27 at Bull Run, Unit 21 at Dellenback, Day Use Area and Unit 36.1 are all preliminary priority areas).
- ODRC can solicit ideas among ourselves and have reps work with Cindy, Armand and others to jointly develop an implementation plan.
- Jeff and Brian will forward the original ideas back to collaborative and ask for more input. We will be asking for written input and looking for others to be involved. We will then plan with Armand and other staff to get a small group to work together.
- One difficulty with implementation is access. Thinking about how the contractors can get out to these areas with equipment and other tools. A quarter mile long might be hard to manage. Might not have ATV's or other resources.
- Leo mentioned that the Save the Riders Dunes (STRD) folks can help get people out there with ATVs. They have lots of knowledge with routes to go and Jody knows paths especially in the south area. If you need help, they can get you out there. Proceed by email.
- Armand will tap Troy Abercrombie to help with ideas of keeping CWMA going as the implementation arm of the group. ODRC can solicit some ideas and bounce back ideas back to Armand and Troy to share with other CWMA members for action areas that we can target. Anyone active or not active in ODRC or CWMA can, and is encouraged to participate.

### **Strategic Plan Overview:**

- Brian gave a broad overview of the 2020-2023 draft strategic plan.
  - The plan is *not* an implementation/on the ground plan, but a structural, foundational document.
  - In 2019, the ODRC determined a strategic plan would help guide our work in a more productive manner. Three UO graduate students worked on the plan and had weekly meetings with Brian.
  - Brian presented the proposed 2020-2023 timeline and went over the ideas behind each goal for all three of the main findings year by year.
1. Increase Staff Capacity
    - *2020-2021*: Hire a grant writer at 0.25 FTE
    - *2021-2022*: Hire a Program Manager at 1.0 FTE

- *2022-2023*: Hire a fundraiser at .75 FTE
  - *2023-2024*: Hire a part-time or intern assistant for the Program Coordinator
2. Re-engage and Revitalize Core Volunteers
- *2020-2021*: Create a consistent volunteer schedule
  - *2021-2022*: Create volunteer opportunities in the Willamette Valley
  - *2022-2023*: Diversify volunteer base
  - *2023-2024*: Community partner expansion
3. Identify New Funding to Diversify Funding Stream
- *2020-2021*: Start online requests
  - *2021-2022*: Create annual mailer donations
  - *2022-2023*: Institute membership dues
  - *2023-2024*: Host an annual fundraising event
  - *Discussion: What is the ODRC's status as a non-profit?*
    - The ODRC is not a 501(c)(3) and we receive funds through our fiscal sponsor Cascade Pacific Resource Conservation and Development (CPRCD) but by the time we become a membership organization in the next few years, we hope to be there.
    - The plan was specifically made for organizational development. Does the group agree with the elements the students prepared? Does the group agree with the priority actions and schedule/direction we want to take for development of organization? Does this capture full scope of plan?
  - *What are some of the ways that a stronger organization at the ODRC with more staff and support could help support Armand's work such as coordination, volunteers, and translating the implementation plan to the public and volunteers?*
    - Maybe the site visits. Have more folks on the ground with Armand developing site knowledge to set up things up for implementation. More details need to be fleshed out, but that is where there is opportunity.
    - There have been other discussions with the monitoring department regarding before and after photo monitoring points. It is fairly easy and we have some folders along with drawn up land and GPS monitored photo points. Putting that on the list with next steps of implementation in next month and a half or so.
    - Good idea of what to put in a job description down the line for ODRC staff!
  - *One thought that Jeff M brought up was that the plan is very linear and based off hiring this person, this person, etc. and that may be difficult. What we need to focus on is, what are the*

*tasks that we want those staff to accomplish? We need administrative work sooner rather than later with Brian's position ending. Seems like we need a leader before multiple staff people, but just a thought.*

- Should the ODRC work to establish a director/coordinator position right away? Or does the steering committee feel as they would be filling in that role?
- It's been a while since the students started creating the plan. Between now and June, who is going to follow Brian or that position? Are we going to hire another RARE?
- About six months to figure out how Brian's position will be filled.
- Six months ago, a grant writer would be first priority, but now it may be different. Good idea to identify how that continues next year.

### **Next Steps:**

- ODRC will spend the next month or two to line out the final needs to complete the plan and get the seal of approval as the collaborative's plan for next few years.
- We need feedback. Please get feedback in so the steering committee can review before finalizing.
- The ODRC will send the document back out and ask that folks look with it over a critical eye. The steering committee will take that feedback, finalize the document and take a month or so to get that together.
- **Final feedback on the strategic plan from ODRC participants and the Forest Service due January 31st!**
- Funding/Fundraising:
- It has been slow the past several months. All volunteers are welcome to assist in grant application writing and identifying funding sources.
- *Immediate needs:* RARE position and part-time grant writer.
- Brian received some great resources from RARE Winter training. They are all now in the Fundraising folder in ODRC Google Drive.
- *Does this group want to pursue a RARE for next year?*
  - Yes, a good idea. The RARE member can definitely do some of the tasks that a future staff member would be doing.

- *Emphasis for RARE member next year:* Assistance for volunteer program, outreach activities and organizing volunteer projects.
- On the ground work:
- Brian has all of the tools, gloves, volunteer material, etc. We will need to think about where those will be stored next year.
- Armand will look into idea of possibly get tools stored at Sutton work center north of Florence.
- Possibly the City since they have stored ODRC material. LCC and other businesses may be an option.
- Volunteer Coordinator position needs to be filled.
- Armand to meet with Brian sometime soon regarding after action review. What went well, thoughts around new work sites, etc. We can fill in others as much as others want.
- Continuing work parties:
- Brian will post a work party event date on Facebook and website to let folks know we are continuing with bi-monthly parties once the Winter break is over.
- Keep an eye out for emails from Jeff and Brian regarding implementation planning and strategic plan feedback
- Please let us know if anyone knows of any mapping tool for identifying areas. Send to Brian or Jeff Uebel.