



Oregon State Board of Agriculture Minutes

| DATE | LOCATION | START TIME | END TIME |
|--------------|---------------------------------|---------------|----------|
| 06/4-6/2025 | La Grande, OR and virtual | 5:00 pm | 12:00 PM |
| FACILITATOR | CONTACT EMAIL | CONTACT PHONE | |
| Sherry Kudna | BoardAgriculture@ODA.oregon.gov | 503.986.4552 | |

Meeting Recording:

June 4 - Meeting recording Part 1 – <https://youtu.be/prEiT8jYeWk>

June 5 – Meeting recording Part 2 – <https://youtu.be/cLU3sVrpDy0>

June 6 – Meeting recording Part 3 – https://youtu.be/Pi_qbb2dDJQ

Wednesday, June 4, 2025

Agenda Item 01 – Welcome and Introductions

Chair Elin Miller called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm. Introductions of board members followed.

- Board members present: Elin Miller, Chad Allen, Eric Orem, Kirk Maag, Josh Zielinski, Mike Dill, Miguel Lopez, Barbara Boyer, Lisa Charpiloz Hanson
- Board members remote: OSU Dean Staci Simonich
- Board members absent: Ellie Norris, Ty Kliewer
- Others present in-person/remote: Wade Bingaman, Paul Anderes, Jane Seavert, Suzanna Moore, Jonathan Sandau, Lindsay Eng, Adam Crawford, Chris Benneman, Andrea Cantu-Schomus, Rusty Rock, Christina Whitman, Shiloh Simrell, Bill Merrigan, Karla Valness, Sherry Kudna, Three Rivers Audio Visual.

Agenda Item 02 – Industry Panel –

The board heard from Union and Baker County Commissioners on the state of agriculture and community needs in northeastern Oregon.

The Commissioners emphasized that rural communities often feel excluded from state-level decision-making and called for stronger, more transparent state-local collaboration. Key priorities highlighted included wolf management funding, science-based water regulation, workforce development, expanded housing options, and reliable childcare infrastructure.

The meeting recessed at 6:30 pm until Thursday, June 5, 2025.

Thursday, June 5, 2025

Agenda Item 03 – Welcome and Introductions

Chair Elin Miller called the meeting to order at 8:30 am. Introductions of board members followed.

- Board members present: Elin Miller, Chad Allen, Eric Orem, Kirk Maag, Josh Zielinski, Mike Dill, Miguel Lopez, Barbara Boyer, Lisa Charpiloz Hanson
- Board members remote: OSU Dean Staci Simonich
- Board members absent: Ellie Norris, Ty Kliewer
- Others present in-person/remote: Hilary Doulos, Jim Webster, Whitney Rohner, Courtney Crowell, Troy Abercombie, Mark Porter, Jonathan Sandau, Lindsay Eng, Adam Crawford, Chris Benneman, Andrea Cantu-Schomus, Rusty Rock, Karla Valness, Sherry Kudna, Three Rivers Audio Visual.

Approval of minutes

Draft minutes from the March 12-14, 2025, board meeting was presented for review and approval.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Barbara Boyer to approve the March 2025 minutes as presented. Second by Miguel Lopez. Motion passed unanimously by: Elin Miller, Chad Allen, Eric Orem, Kirk Maag, Josh Zielinski, Mike Dill, Miguel Lopez, Barbara Boyer

Director's report

Director Lisa Charpiloz Hanson highlighted work done by the Oregon Department of Agriculture since the March meeting.

- ODA participated in the Oregon FFA State Convention with a staffed booth that engaged students and joined the supporters' dinner, where the Director gave a welcome. The opening session, marked by strong student energy and activities, was a highlight of the event.
- ODA has established quarterly check-ins with agricultural, organic, and conservation groups and is aligning with OWEB to streamline collaboration on shared issues.
- Amid federal trade uncertainty and tariff impacts, Governor Kotek convened a roundtable with agriculture, fisheries, and food industry leaders, where the oversupply crisis in Oregon's pink shrimp industry was highlighted. Coordinated advocacy—including a gubernatorial letter to USDA and direct delivery to Secretary Rollins—resulted in a \$16 million Section 32 purchase of pink shrimp, providing critical relief to coastal communities and marking a significant win for Oregon agriculture and fisheries.
- While in Washington, D.C., the Director joined a roundtable convened by Secretary Rollins on small farm issues, where she had the opportunity to represent Oregon agriculture, highlight the importance and challenges of family farms, and ensure Oregon's voice was included alongside largely East Coast and Midwest perspectives.
- ODA presented a request to the Capital Construction Committee, seeking \$15 million in bonding for a unified computer system to integrate all agency programs, a first-of-its-kind bonding request, though not in the base budget, remains a top priority with strong optimism moving forward.
- ODA recently appointed a large slate of new commodity commissioners but continues to face recruitment challenges, encouraging broader participation to build future agricultural leadership.
- ODA participated in NASDA's "A Taste of the States" at the National Restaurant Association's show in Chicago, achieving strong success in promoting small companies and planning future domestic trade show opportunities.
- Governor Kotek will lead a trade mission to Japan and South Korea in October as ODA continues prioritizing international relationships while also focusing on local market opportunities amid global uncertainty.

- Two Oregon agricultural entities, Shaniko Wool and the Oregon Seed Council, were honored for their global contributions to sports, including providing wool for Olympic uniforms and turf for prestigious soccer fields by the Oregon Counselor Corps at the Global Trade Gala.
- The agency confirmed \$2.25 million in funding for the next round of specialty crop grants, slightly more than in previous years.
- During a visit to Ontario, the Director toured the Durkee fire burn area, noting grass regrowth, sagebrush recovery, and ongoing challenges with noxious weeds. She met with onion industry leaders, including Grant Kitamura of Murakami Produce, to discuss ownership transitions and industry updates, followed by a no-host dinner with 14–16 producers and ranchers to address legislative challenges and express appreciation for their support. At Ontario High School, she observed the new Career Technical Education (CTE) curriculum, developed in partnership with ODA and the Department of Education, which equips students with USDA produce safety certification, enabling graduates to enter the workforce directly as auditors. This program demonstrates strong local leadership and highlights the value of expanding career-focused agricultural education and FFA leadership pathways.

Resource:

- ODA Strategic Plan quarterly update
- ODA Division Area Reports
- Oregon Agency Expectations
- Pink Shrimp Purchase
- ODA Agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plan Biennial Reviews

Agenda Item 04 – ODA Budget and Legislative Update

Jonathan Sandau, Deputy Director, ODA; Lindsay Eng, Deputy Director, ODA; and Adam Crawford, Chief Operating Officer, ODA provided a comprehensive update on 2025 legislative and budget developments as the session nears its June 29 adjournment deadline, noting that activity is expected to continue through the final days. The agency’s core budget bills have cleared the Ways and Means Committee and await floor action, alongside three fee bills covering pesticide registration, food safety licenses, and weights and measures. A fourth measure, developed with cattlemen and Senator Nash, incorporates livestock identification brand fees into the agency’s budget package. Three ODA-sponsored policy bills were also reviewed: poultry inspection authority, now law, aligning with federal standards; fertilizer label enforcement updates, also signed; and pending legislation granting civil penalty authority under animal health statutes, designed to provide alternatives to criminal enforcement.

In addition, the agency is tracking several significant measures, including Senate Bill 777 on wolf depredation compensation (passed and sent to the governor), House Bill 2548 on the Agricultural Labor Standards Board (still in Rules with no work session), and Senate Bill 1154, the governor’s major groundwater package, scheduled for hearing next week and considered the last major natural resources policy initiative of the session. Many remaining policy and funding bills will be resolved in June as part of end-of-session negotiated packages.

The co-chairs’ recommended budget aligns 98–99% with the governor’s proposed budget. Predator control funding has been restored, while minor reductions were made in farm mediation and an unfilled microbiologist position. Funding for wolf compensation under SB 777 should be included in the session-ending omnibus “Christmas tree” bill, a common appropriations practice.

At the federal level, ODA, working with NASDA and USDA, secured an additional \$16 million in FSIS's federal budget to ensure USDA continues covering 50% of state meat inspection costs. Reported progress on RFSI grants, with over \$3 million in infrastructure projects now cleared for environmental and cultural review and ready for implementation.

Agenda Item 05 – Working Lands in Oregon

The session featured presentations from Troy Abercrombie, Program Manager for ODA's Native Plant Conservation and Noxious Weed Control Programs; Mark Porter, ODA's Rangeland Stewardship Specialist; and Hilary Dillos and Katie Salter of ODFW's Natural Working Lands team.

Together, they highlighted agency collaboration, the history of rangeland conservation in Oregon, and recent progress supported through House Bill 3409 and the Natural Working Lands Fund.

Speakers emphasized the scale and importance of Oregon's rangelands, which cover nearly one-third of the state and directly support the billion-dollar beef industry, as well as wildlife habitat and ecosystem services. Abercrombie described how invasive annual grasses such as cheatgrass and Medusahead are driving habitat loss, reducing forage quality, and fueling more intense wildfires across the Great Basin, with over one million acres of perennial grassland lost annually. Porter underscored the ecological and economic costs of both invasive grasses and juniper encroachment, noting how juniper consumes scarce water resources, fragments habitat, and diminishes forage production. Both presenters stressed that early intervention and coordinated management yield the strongest results, citing successful collaborative projects with ODA, ODFW, NRCS, conservation districts, and local landowners.

Dillos and Salter shared how ODFW is working alongside partners to deploy new tools and practices, such as virtual fencing, targeted juniper removal, and grazing strategies that reduce invasive spread while improving habitat conditions. Funding from HB 3409 has already allowed ODA to expand staffing capacity with a new rangeland health specialist, with a second position planned, strengthening statewide support for landowners and conservation initiatives.

The panel concluded by urging greater recognition of rangelands as essential to Oregon's agricultural, ecological, and cultural identity.

Resource:

- Working Lands in Oregon Presentation

Agenda Item 06 – Public Comment

Two written public comments were received by the Soil and Water Conservation Commission and OrCan. The comments were distributed to the Board in their meeting packets and posted on-line on the Board of Agriculture website. The Board received no request from the public to make verbal comments at the meeting.

The board welcomed Courtney Crowell, Regional Solutions Coordinator for Eastern Oregon and Natural Resource Advisor. Ms. Crowell thanked members for meeting in eastern Oregon and recognized their service, emphasizing the Governor's priorities of transparency, customer service, and collaboration. She praised ODA's strong teamwork and efficiency, which she said makes her role as policy advisor and board appointment coordinator significantly easier.

Highlighting the Governor's commitment to the Lower Umatilla Basin (LUBGWMA), she noted progress driven by close interagency collaboration with ODA, WRD, DEQ, and OHA.

In response to questions on board support, Ms. Crowell stressed the importance of early, proactive communication, urging members to share both challenges and success stories—such as Oregon agriculture’s presence at national trade events—to strengthen alignment with the Governor’s Office.

Agenda Item 07 – Site Visits

A site visit of Arrow Leaf Farms, Eastern Oregon Agricultural Research Center, and the Eastern Oregon Livestock Show was provided for board members and ODA staff.

The meeting recessed at 5:00 pm until Friday, June 6, 2025

Friday, June 6, 2025

Agenda Item 00 – Welcome and Introductions

Chair Elin Miller called the meeting to order at 8:30 am. Introductions of board members followed.

- Board members present: Elin Miller, Chad Allen, Eric Orem, Kirk Maag, Mike Dill, Miguel Lopez, Barbara Boyer, Lisa Charpillouz Hanson
- Board members remote: OSU Dean Staci Simonich, Josh Zielinski
- Board members absent: Ellie Norris, Ty Kliwer
- Others present in-person/remote: Penny Diebel, Amy Carpenter, Sydney Peck, Gracie Dudek, Emma Ricker, Mary Grace, Ashton Helms, Jonathan Sandau, Lindsay Eng, Adam Crawford Chris Benneman, Andrea Cantu-Schomus, Rusty Rock, Penny Diebel, Misty Buckley, Sydney Peck, Sunny Summers, Sandi Hiatt, Sophie Els, Eric Quaempts, Karla Valness, Sherry Kudna, Three Rivers Audio Visual.

Agenda Item 08 – OSU Update

Dean Staci Simonich acknowledged a busy graduation season in Corvallis, noting that many students who missed traditional ceremonies during COVID are now seeking multiple celebrations, and the institution is committed to supporting them. Upcoming events include OSU and EOU graduations next weekend and a series of summer field days.

On funding, statewide Public Services (agricultural research extension and the Forest Research Lab) are slated for a 7% increase—below the 9.8% CSL need but sufficient to backfill vacancies, though not new programs. OSU colleges, including Agriculture and Forestry, face a 6.5% cut in education and general funds over two years, prompting difficult program and staffing decisions.

The Agricultural Experiment Station in Union was highlighted as Oregon’s first and a vital hub for student experiential learning in rangeland sciences, attracting students locally, nationally, and internationally. Despite its value, the EOU agricultural program continues to operate at a \$200,000 annual deficit tied to enrollment trends, though leadership remains committed to maintaining a presence in Eastern Oregon.

Agenda Item 9 – OSU’s Ag & Natural Resource Program at Eastern Oregon University

Penny Diebel, Director, the Eastern Oregon Agricultural and Natural Resource Program, a partnership between Oregon State University (OSU) and Eastern Oregon University (EOU), provides students with the opportunity to earn an OSU degree in agriculture while studying in a smaller, community-focused setting. This unique model combines the academic rigor of OSU with the affordability of EOU, as students taking in-person classes at Eastern pay EOU’s lower tuition rates.

Students consistently highlight three program strengths: affordability, applied learning, and community. Smaller class sizes and faculty mentorship create a supportive environment, while extensive fieldwork, internships, and research connect classroom concepts to real-world agriculture. From irrigation management and hay production to livestock care, GIS mapping, and virtual fencing research, students gain the technical expertise and hands-on experience needed to succeed in diverse agricultural careers.

The program's impact is best seen through its students. Gracie Dudek, graduating with a degree in Agricultural Science and Animal Science minor, found both financial relief and mentorship after transferring from OSU's main campus. She is continuing to graduate school to become an agricultural educator and FFA advisor. Amy Carpenter, a sophomore from southern Oregon, is double majoring in Agricultural Science and Agricultural Entrepreneurship. Raised on a beef operation, she has broadened her knowledge into crop production and gained business skills to one day run her family's ranch. Ashton Helms, also a sophomore, aspires to become an animal nutritionist. Through hands-on work at the Intermountain Livestock Exchange, she has deepened her knowledge of livestock systems while valuing the program's tight-knit community. Emma Ricker, a Union native, is graduating with extensive research and production experience from the Union Experiment Station, preparing her to expand her family's cattle and hay operation.

Together, these stories illustrate how the OSU–EOU partnership expands access to higher education, strengthens Oregon's agricultural workforce, and prepares the next generation of leaders in farming, ranching, and agribusiness. Students leave with both academic credentials and practical skills, ready to contribute to the vitality of rural communities across the state.

Resource:

- EOU Agriculture Entrepreneurship Program Overview
- EOU Agriculture Entrepreneurship Program Handouts

Agenda Item 10 – Public Comment

The Board received no requests from the public to make verbal comments at the meeting.

Agenda Item 11 – Confederated Tribe of the Umatilla Indian Reservation – Natural Resources Program

The Umatilla Tribes ground their natural resource management in the concept of First Foods—water, salmon, deer, roots, and berries—honored through traditional serving orders that reflect both ecological interdependence and cultural teachings of reciprocity. These foods are central to ceremonies and sovereignty, reinforcing the responsibility to protect them for future generations.

The Tribes' River and Upland Visions translate these cultural values into applied management. River restoration focuses on hydrology, connectivity, and fish habitat, with major projects such as Meacham Creek and Birch Creek demonstrating success in improving water quality and salmon recovery. Upland work includes forest thinning, prescribed fire, beetle response, and climate-related monitoring of huckleberries and pollinators, combining science with traditional ecological knowledge.

Collaboration is a key strategy, including conservation easements, integrated water rights settlements, and partnerships with state and federal agencies. By aligning cultural priorities with ecological science, the Umatilla Tribes seek to restore resilience to rivers and landscapes, ensure access to First Foods, and strengthen both community health and regional sustainability.

Agenda Item 13 – Board Business

DRAFT – June 2025

OWEB Report

The OWEB meeting on April 22–23 in Independence focused heavily on grant approvals, including funding for water acquisition, land projects, drinking water, and source protection, while Specialty Crop Block Grants and RFSI projects are advancing under compressed timelines. A significant discussion centered on the Willamette Confluence Project's unprecedented request to be released from its conservation easement, with the Department of Justice expected to provide guidance since no conclusion was reached. Concerns were raised through numerous public comments about Bureau of Land Management funding delays, which have left small watershed councils at risk of bankruptcy after completing work without reimbursement. Geoff Huntington from the Governor's Office presented on current priorities, and while ODA funding remains stable for now, uncertainties about the next fiscal year and the limitations of the outdated 2018 Farm Bill were emphasized. Updates on both the conservation easement request and federal funding issues are expected at the next meeting.

Action Items – March 2025 Meeting

The Board received copies of letters sent to DLCD and the Governor per discussions at the March 2025 Meeting.

Resources:

- Letter to DLCD commenting on proposed solar siting rules.
- Letter to Governor with concerns on HB 2548 (2025 Legislative Session)

Resolutions

Following the release of resolutions for public comment beginning in December, the board considered feedback received during two subsequent meetings. Only two resolutions generated public input, with one receiving extensive comments on March 19 and the others drawing little or no feedback.

MOTION:

A motion was made by Eric Orem to approve resolutions 107, 307, 309, 317, & 318 as written. Second by Miguel Lopez. The motion was approved by: Elin Miller, Chad Allen, Eric Orem, Kirk Maag, Mike Dill, Miguel Lopez, Barbara Boyer, Josh Zielinski.

Resolution 319, which received detailed written feedback including proposed revisions, was deferred for further review. Staff, in coordination with board member Kirk Maag, will evaluate the submitted comments and prepare a revised draft. This draft will be circulated for additional public comment and returned to the board for consideration at its September meeting

Newsletter Topics

Topics were identified for the upcoming Board of Agriculture Newsletter.

- Taste of the States Chicago Trade Show – Staff
- USDA Pink Shrimp Purchase – Staff
- Eastern Oregon Livestock Show – Chad Allen
- LUBGWAMA – Eric Orem
- OSU/EOU – Miguel Lopez

The newsletter will begin with a short summary of board meeting highlights before moving into greater depth on the individual topics described above. Staff will circulate notes and coordinate assignments to ensure progress toward a complete draft.

Meeting adjourned at 12:05 pm

Next meeting: September 3-5, 2025
In-person – Klamath Falls, OR | Virtual option will be available.