

# **BY-LAWS FOR WASCO COUNTY WATERSHED COUNCILS AND THEIR COORDINATING BOARD**

## **ARTICLE I NAME, PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITIES, MISSION, AREA**

### **SECTION 1-NAME:**

This organization shall be known as the Wasco County Watershed Councils and shall consist of the Local Watershed Councils in Wasco County and their Coordinating Board. Currently, Wasco County watershed councils include Mosier, The Dalles, Fifteenmile, White River, and Bakeoven/Buck Hollow (Wasco county portion).

### **SECTION 2-PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Wasco County's Local Watershed Councils are voluntary, local organizations authorized by the state of Oregon and recognized by the County Board of Commissioners that were set up to help address natural resource and watershed protection and enhancement in Wasco County.

Each Local Council provides a framework for coordination and cooperation among key interests in the development, adoption, and implementation of a watershed action program.

The Local Councils provide a forum for conflict resolution and ensure a high level of local citizen involvement. The Local Councils work with others in implementing an adopted Watershed Action Plan, seeking funding to implement the plan, and monitoring implementation progress. The Local Councils do not use litigation as a means to achieve their goals. The Local Councils conduct all meetings as open public meetings.

### **SECTION 3-MISSION:**

To protect, enhance, maintain and/or restore watershed functions across all land uses.

### **SECTION 4-AREA:**

Wasco County Local Watershed Councils work throughout the county based on priorities developed and adopted in a county-wide action plan. Currently, Local Watershed Councils are set up in the following priority focus areas:

#### *Mosier Watershed Council:*

The area addressed encompasses all land drained by Mosier Creek, Rock Creek, Rowena Creek and their tributaries, all three of which discharge into the Columbia River. Associated lands draining directly to the Columbia River are also included in the area.

*The Dalles Watershed Council:*

The area addressed encompasses all lands in Oregon draining to the Columbia River from River Mile 180 to RM 191, including the lands draining to Threemile Creek, Dry Hollow, Mill Creek, Chenowith Creek, Brown’s Creek, and Hidden Valley, as well as lands draining to the Columbia River as far west as Rowena Overlook.

*Fifteenmile Watershed Council:*

The area addressed is the Fifteenmile Watershed, which includes all land drained by Fifteenmile Creek and its tributaries, which discharge into the Columbia River.

*Bakeoven/Buckhollow Watershed Council:*

The area addressed is the Bakeoven watershed, which includes all land drained by Bakeoven Creek and its tributaries, which discharges into the Deschutes River in Maupin. The portion of Buckhollow watershed that is within Wasco County is also included in this council.

*White River Watershed Council:*

The area addressed is the White River watershed and closely associated small watersheds that drain from the west to the Deschutes River from Nena Creek to Winter Water Creek.

**ARTICLE II LOCAL WATERSHED COUNCILS’ APPOINTEES, EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

**SECTION 1 - APPOINTEES**

Each Local Watershed Council shall consist of a majority of local residents and represent a balance of interested and affected persons within each watershed. Any interested individual is welcome to participate in a Local Watershed Council, however, decision makers (“Appointees”) on the council are appointed by the Wasco County Board of Commissioners based upon a recommendation from that individual’s Local Watershed Council. Appointees can be representatives from local governments, nongovernment organizations, private citizens, including, but not limited to, persons/representatives from the following constituencies:

- a) Local and regional boards, commissions, districts and agencies;
- b) Federally recognized Indian tribes;
- c) Public interest groups;
- d) Residents;
- e) Private landowners;
- f) Industry/Agriculture;
- g) Members of academic, scientific and professional communities;
- h) State and federal agencies; and
- i) Public non-profits.

Individuals interested in serving as an Appointee must regularly attend watershed council meetings and complete an application form provided by the Watershed Coordinator.

Appointments for each Local Watershed Council shall consist of up to 13 volunteers representing a broad and diverse range of public and private landowner interests, as listed in this Section. Terms for appointments shall be three years, with terms ending on a staggered basis. Appointees must attend a majority of meetings per year to be eligible for a new term. There are no term limits for appointees. Appointees who repeatedly try to block constructive solutions or seek to disrupt progress may be removed as a result of formal action taken by the Wasco County Board of Commissioners, as recommended by the Coordinating Board or Local Watershed Council.

**SECTION 2 -EQUAL OPPORTUNITY:**

The Watershed Councils and their Coordinating Board will ensure compliance with all requirements regarding the nondiscrimination provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1975, as amended by the United States and the State of Oregon; which provides that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, or marital status, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination, under any activity of the Watershed Councils or Coordinating Board.

**ARTICLE III LOCAL WATERSHED COUNCILS’ OFFICERS, MEETING SCHEDULE, DECISION-MAKING PROCESS, AND COMMITTEES**

**SECTION 1 -COUNCIL OFFICERS**

Officers for each Local Watershed Council shall consist of two Co-chairs. In addition, a Secretary/Treasurer shall be an optional position. Officers shall be elected from the Appointees on an annual basis, with the elections being held at the first meeting of the calendar year. If a vacancy occurs in the office of Co-chair, the remaining Co-chair shall fulfill all duties of the Chair until the Council elects a new Co-chair to share the position. Officer’s duties shall consist of the following:

-Co-chairs - The Co-chairs of a Council shall take turns presiding at meetings of that Council. The Co-chairs shall speak for the Council on various issues through written and verbal communication, appoint members of resource committees and special committees as appropriate, and act as ex-officio members of all committees. The Co-chairs shall call special meetings as needed and represent the Council at other organizational functions in so far as possible.

-Secretary/Treasurer - The Secretary/Treasurer shall be responsible for reviewing all minutes and financial reports of a Local Watershed Council, keeping all approved minutes and financial reports in a minute book, and sending out copies of minutes and financial reports to all council appointees. Staff will assist the Secretary/Treasurer in these duties.

**SECTION 2 -MEETING SCHEDULE:**

Meetings of each Watershed Council shall be open, public meetings. Schedules are as follows:

Mosier Watershed Council:

Council meetings shall be held no less frequently than quarterly. Each meeting date will be scheduled at the previous meeting. A Co-chair may call additional in-person or electronic meetings to address particular issues in a timely manner.

The Dalles Watershed Council:

Council Meetings shall be scheduled for the second Wednesday of the following months: January, March, May, September, and November. Regular meetings are held from 6:30 – 8:30 PM at the USDA Service Center in The Dalles. The Council may elect to re-schedule certain meeting days/times. If necessary to conduct Council business in a timely manner, a Co-chair may call for a special in-person or electronic meeting and/or may delegate work on specific issues/topics to a committee.

Fifteenmile Watershed Council:

Council meetings shall be held at least once per quarter. A Co-chair may call additional meetings to address particular issues in a timely manner.

White River Watershed Council:

Council meetings shall be held at least once per year. A Co-chair may call additional meetings to address particular issues in a timely manner. A Co-chair may also cancel or reschedule meetings when they conflict with community activities.

Bakeoven/Buckhollow Watershed Council:

Council meetings shall be held at least once per year. The Chair may call additional meetings to address particular issues in a timely manner.

**SECTION 3 -DECISION-MAKING PROCESS:**

No individual council business shall be conducted in the absence of a quorum of the appointments. Each appointee shall have one vote. A quorum shall consist of over half of the appointments. Motions shall be made and seconded in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order. All appointees present may make and second motions and vote. Motions shall require a simple majority for approval.

**SECTION 4-COMMITTEES:**

The Councils may utilize both standing and ad-hoc committees as a means of carrying out the business of each Council. Standing committees will be established by the Councils to ensure that recurring issues are addressed in a timely manner. Ad-hoc committees may be appointed as needed to address non-recurring issues associated with Council activity. Committee Chairs shall be appointees and shall be appointed by a Council Co-chair.

**ARTICLE IV COORDINATING BOARD, RESPONSIBILITIES, OFFICERS, MEETING SCHEDULE, DECISION-MAKING PROCESS, RELATIONS WITH WASCO COUNTY SWCD.**

**SECTION 1- COORDINATING BOARD**

The Coordinating Board shall be the governing body for Wasco County’s Watershed Councils. The Coordinating Board will consist of one seat representing each of the Local Watershed Councils throughout the county and represents the range of geographic and natural resource interests listed in Article II Section I of these by-laws. Each seat may be represented by up to two individuals chosen by the Local Watershed Council to which the seat belongs; representatives from each Local Watershed Council will work as a team and will have one vote per seat. Terms for Coordinating Board representatives will be for three years, unless a Local Watershed Council votes to change its representative(s) on the Coordinating Board. As the councils’ fiscal agent, the Wasco County SWCD will appoint a representative to attend the Coordinating Board as a non-voting advisor.

**SECTION 2- RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Coordinating Board will be responsible for the development and adoption of a county-wide action plan, annual work plan, and an agreement defining how staff and services are shared amongst the Local Watershed Councils. The Coordinating Board will also be responsible for conducting annual self-evaluations, annual staff evaluations, and reviewing grant proposals and reports that affect all of the Local Watershed Councils, as needed.

**SECTION 3 - OFFICERS**

The officers of the Coordinating Board shall consist of a Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary/Treasurer nominated and elected by the Coordinating Board. Elected officers shall serve a term of one year. The Chair shall preside at all Coordinating Board Meetings and perform other duties as associated with the office. The Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair in case if the Chair’s absence. The Secretary/Treasurer shall be responsible for reviewing all minutes and financial reports of the Board, keeping all approved minutes and financial reports in a minute book, and sending out copies of minutes and financial reports to all council appointees. Staff will be responsible for assisting the Secretary/Treasurer in these duties.

**SECTION 4 –MEETING SCHEDULE**

The Coordinating Board will meet quarterly from 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM on the first Wednesday of the following months: March, June, September and December. The Coordinating Board may elect to re-schedule certain meetings or call for special meetings, as necessary, to conduct business in a timely manner. The Coordinating Board will conduct all meetings as open public meetings.

**SECTION 5- DECISION-MAKING PROCESS**

No business of the Coordinating Board shall be conducted in the absence of a quorum. Each Local Watershed Council shall have one vote. A quorum shall consist of at least four of the Local Watershed Councils. Motions shall be made and seconded in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order. All appointees present may make and second motions; motions must be made and seconded by appointees representing different seats.

Voting will be done on a per seat basis, with each seat allocated one vote. An effort will be made to achieve consensus for all decisions. However, if consensus is not possible, decisions shall require three-quarter majority for approval.

**SECTION 6 - RELATIONS WITH WASCO COUNTY SWCD**

The Coordinating Board shall function as an advisory body to the Wasco County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) for matters pertaining to the covered watersheds. The Wasco County SWCD will serve as a fiscal agent, employer for staff, and contracting agency for the Coordinating Board. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that defines the relationship between the Coordinating Board and the Wasco County SWCD and will be developed, adopted, and then reviewed annually by each party for possible amendment.

**ARTICLE V AMENDMENTS, DISSOLUTION**

**SECTION 1-AMENDMENTS**

These by-laws may be amended at any time by a three-quarters majority of the Coordinating Board, on the condition that the proposed changes are reviewed and agreed upon by each Local Watershed Council prior to being amended by the Coordinating Board.

**SECTION 2-DISSOLUTION**

In the event that a Local Watershed Council or the Coordinating Board ceases to function, any grant-related assets held by partner agencies shall be utilized to complete the objectives of the grants, and shall then be passed back to the agencies named in the grant, which will either continue to utilize the assets for the benefit of the community, or shall dispose of them in an appropriate and ethical manner.